



Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm Region

Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region to live, work and thrive in

Adopted May 2026

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To everyone who develops Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region

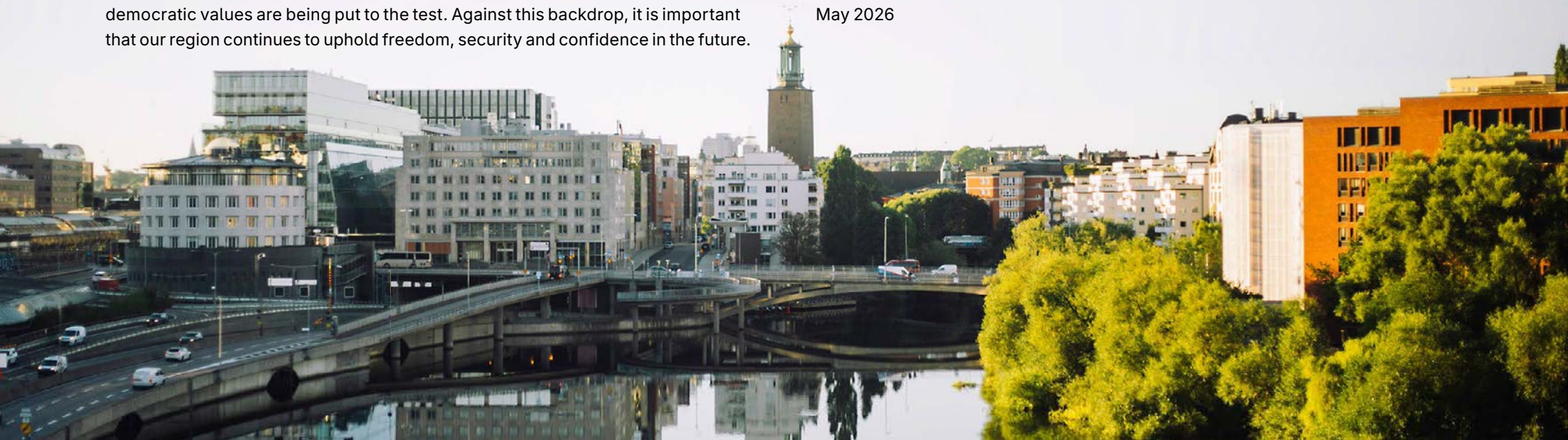
The Stockholm region is strong in many ways. Our region is unique and has considerable potential that must be harnessed. With world-class welfare services, good access to jobs, knowledge and skills, a high quality of life and a wide range of leisure opportunities – and as a place where urban, rural and archipelago environments come together – the region continues to attract both people and businesses.

However, there are also many significant challenges that require joint action. For example, we need to ensure a functioning housing market, improve security and strengthen integration, while continuing to prioritise environmental and climate action. It is also a priority to ensure a sustainable supply of skills and reduce local disparities in the labour market, so that more people have the opportunity to find work. We also face stiff competition from metropolitan regions around the world. This requires a focus on improving our international, national and local accessibility, as well as our innovation and our attractiveness. At the same time, we see a world around us that is becoming increasingly closed off, and where democratic values are being put to the test. Against this backdrop, it is important that our region continues to uphold freedom, security and confidence in the future.

In order to make the best use of and develop our strengths, there is a need for cooperation between a range of different stakeholders. Municipalities, authorities, the business sector, academia, civil society and Region Stockholm – we all need to contribute. The Regional Development Plan is a shared foundation for this cooperation, and sets the direction for Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region.

The new Regional Development Plan is the result of a comprehensive and thorough process. I would therefore like to thank everyone who has contributed their commitment, their experience and their knowledge, as well as their time and their ideas, in order to shape the future of the Stockholm region. Together, we can make a difference and develop a region where everyone can grow and thrive – both now and for future generations.

Michaela Haga
Chair of Region Stockholm's Infrastructure and Regional Planning Committee
May 2026





Shaping regional development together

Many different stakeholders – municipalities, the business sector, academia, civil society, Region Stockholm, the County Administrative Board and other government agencies – are responsible for the development of the Stockholm region. We all contribute different pieces of the puzzle and tools, based on our various circumstances, roles and responsibilities. In order to achieve the objectives we have set together for the region's development, all these stakeholders must work together. By reaching a consensus on the region's strengths, societal challenges, objectives, key regional connections and systems, we can drive development in the Stockholm region forward in a dynamic and sustainable manner. The Regional Development Plan guides us all as stakeholders in our joint efforts.

A shared way forward

The Regional Development Plan establishes a long-term direction for the Stockholm region's development. It covers many different areas and serves as a framework that clarifies how different issues and perspectives complement each other and come together to form a cohesive whole for the region's development. It also helps stakeholders to make decisions that contribute towards long-term sustainable development, and helps us to achieve our objectives for the region. The Regional Development Plan guides Region Stockholm's operations: public transport, healthcare, regional development and culture. It also guides Region Stockholm's work on the county plan for regional transport infrastructure, and shows the Stockholm region's overall focus in relation to the national transport

infrastructure plan. Since the Regional Development Plan is a structure plan and takes a long-term perspective, there is a need to further specify and clarify the direction for many of the areas covered by the plan. There are therefore a number of strategies, action plans, roadmaps, arenas and meeting places that further develop the plan's objectives and focus.

Figure 1. Many different stakeholders – municipalities, the business sector, academia, civil society, the region, the County Administrative Board and other government agencies – are responsible for the development of the Stockholm region. The Regional Development Plan guides us all as stakeholders in our joint efforts



Regional development in line with international and national objectives

The Regional Development Plan shows how we, the Stockholm region's stakeholders, jointly contribute at an overall level to the implementation of international and national goals, strategies and plans in relevant areas of society. Through the Plan, international and national goals are translated to the regional level, based on the prevailing conditions in the Stockholm region.

Figure 2. The Regional Development Plan relates to objectives, strategies and policy documents at other levels. The plan is at an overall level, and is elaborated upon in strategies, arenas, etc. The plan also guides investment plans and financing



ABOUT | THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Regional Development Plan serves both as a regional development strategy (RDS), in accordance with the Act on Regional Development Responsibility (SFS 2010:630), and as a regional plan, in accordance with the Planning and Building Act (SFS 2010:900), and has been prepared in line with these acts. The Plan remains in force until further notice. Region Stockholm must, at least once between two ordinary elections to the Regional Council, assess whether the Regional Plan remains up to date.

The Stockholm region's conditions

In order to develop the Stockholm region in a way that is sustainable in the long term, we all need to have a shared view and understanding of the conditions on which our work is based. We need a consensus on the Stockholm region's strengths and societal challenges. All stakeholders have a responsibility to contribute – both by strengthening and maintaining what already works well, and by identifying solutions to the challenges we face. The Stockholm region's strengths and societal challenges form the basis for the Regional Development Plan's objectives and spatial strategy.

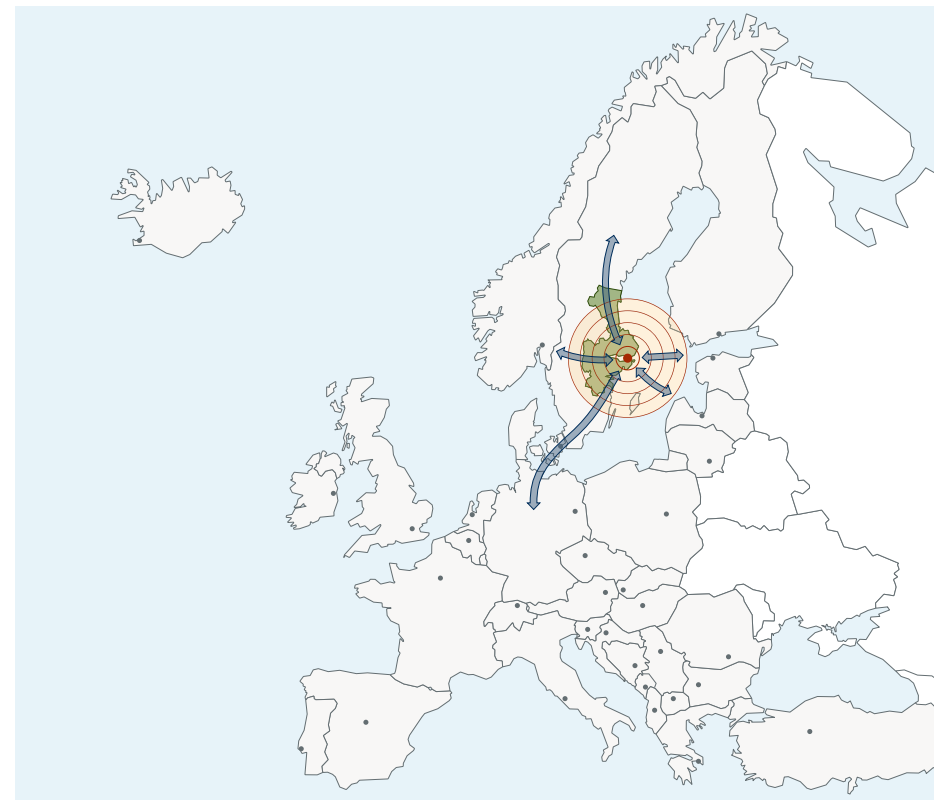
An innovative growth region

The Stockholm region is home to 2.5 million people, and is one of Europe's fastest-growing metropolitan regions – the population is expected to grow to around 3 million by 2060 (Region Stockholm, Framskrivningar av befolkning och sysselsättning i östra Mellansverige, low scenario). Our region has one of Europe's most innovative and competitive economies, and plays an important role in the EU's sustainable growth and development. The Stockholm region is also Sweden's growth engine, accounting for around 30 percent of the country's GDP. Through innovation, entrepreneurship and a wide range of industries, the Stockholm region drives the development of the whole country and guides other regions in Europe. The Stockholm region is an important business and financial centre, and is a strategic hub for trade and connections between Northern Europe and the rest of the world.

A leading force in the Baltic Sea region and Europe

Geographically, the Stockholm region is a central hub in the Baltic Sea region, a macro-region with around 80 million inhabitants and considerable economic potential. Through trade, transport links and research collaborations, the Stockholm region connects northern Europe and helps strengthen competitiveness across the Baltic Sea region. The Stockholm region's strong position in innovation, digitalisation and the green transition makes it an important stakeholder in Europe's transition towards sustainability and long-term sustainable growth. At the same time, the development of the Stockholm region is closely linked to that

Figure 3. With its strategic location in the Baltic Sea region, the Stockholm region is a hub in Northern Europe

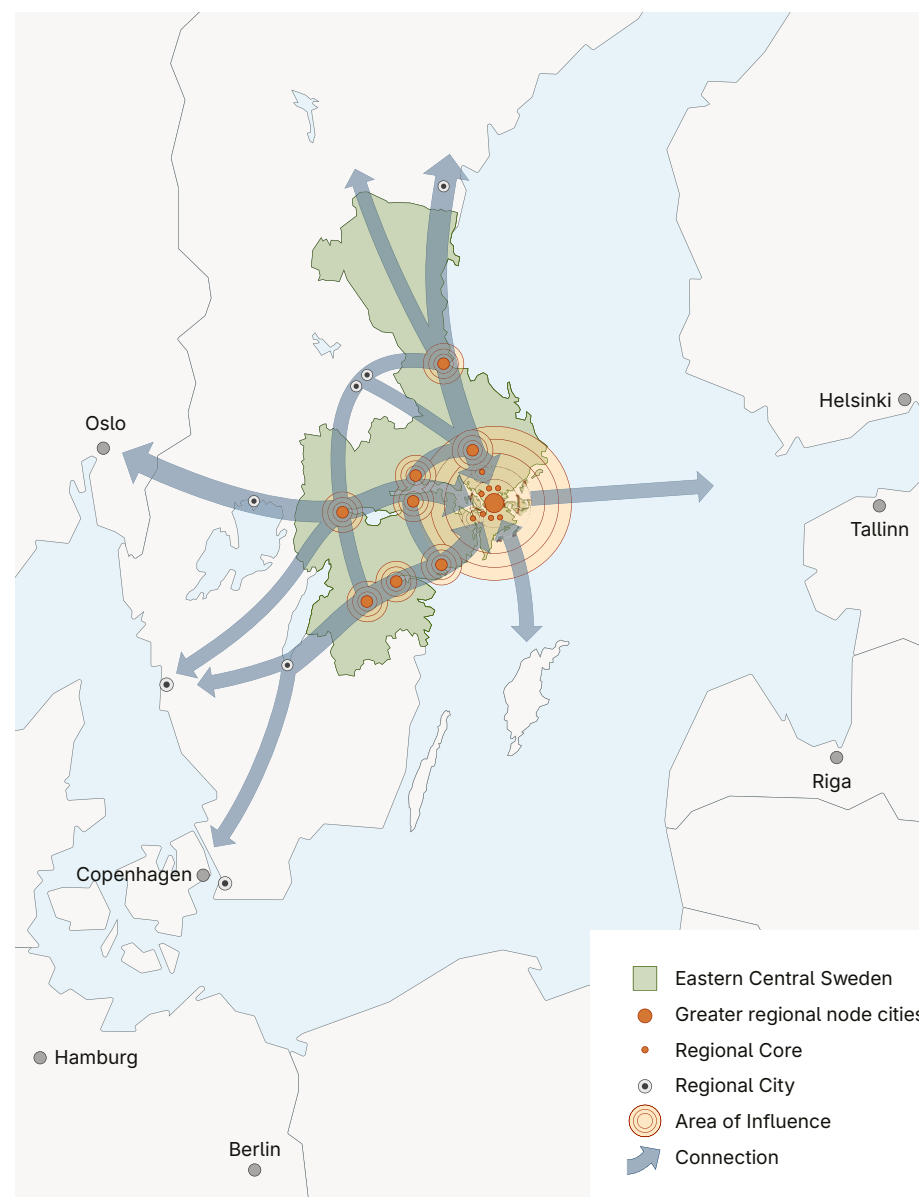


of Europe. European cooperation, investments and regulatory frameworks influence the region's conditions and circumstances in areas such as infrastructure, research and innovation, the energy transition and skills supply. Participation in European networks, programmes and value chains further strengthens the region's ability to attract capital, talent and knowledge. Thus the Stockholm region not only contributes to Europe's development, but also depends on a strong and cohesive Europe in order to continue developing, in the long term, as a competitive, sustainable and resilient region.

Part of Eastern Central Sweden

The Stockholm region is also part of the Eastern Central Sweden major region, which – in addition to Stockholm County – also includes the counties of Gävleborg, Södermanland, Uppsala, Västmanland, Örebro and Östergötland. In total, around 4.5 million people live in Eastern Central Sweden (2025). This major region accounts for almost half of Sweden's population, employment and GDP. In many respects, the counties of Eastern Central Sweden form an interconnected unit, in the form of established cooperation within various areas and highly integrated labour, education and housing markets, and they play a leading role in the country's development, international competitiveness and sustainable growth. This region is home to businesses and industries that are strategically important for the whole of Europe's future and competitiveness.

Figure 4. The Stockholm region is part of Eastern Central Sweden





There is much
to be proud of
in the Stockholm
region.

The Stockholm region's strengths

There is much to be proud of in the Stockholm region. The region often tops international rankings that measure gender equality, equal opportunities, the environment, health, innovation, competitiveness, the labour market and education.

Together, these strengths contribute towards the region's competitiveness and desirability, and attract businesses, investors, cutting-edge expertise and talent, as well as international and Swedish visitors. In order to realise our vision and achieve the objectives of the Regional Development Plan, we must build on – and develop – the strengths that underpin these rankings.

The people who live, work in and visit the region

The Stockholm region's greatest strength lies in the people who come together here – people from diverse backgrounds across Sweden and the world who contribute towards everything from a vibrant culture to society as a whole. The growing group of younger older adults is healthier than previous generations, creating greater opportunities to lead active and healthy lives. This in turn can have a positive impact on their participation in the labour market and in society in general. The region's residents are the most highly educated in Sweden. More than half of those aged between 25 and 65 have post-secondary education. This high level of education, combined with a strong entrepreneurial spirit and creative environments, also means that those who live and work here are seen as early adopters of new technology, trends and innovations. Although there are shortcomings in terms of gender equality, women and men are – compared with other parts of Europe and the world – equal. Women in the Stockholm region also have a high level of education compared with many other parts of Sweden and the world. In 2024, 62 percent of women aged between 25 and 65 had



post-secondary education. The corresponding figure for men was 52 percent. (Statistics Sweden/SCB.)

Overall, the diversity of residents' perspectives and experiences contributes to creative solutions and new ideas, both in business and in innovation. This diversity and dynamism make the Stockholm region an attractive place for global companies to try out and launch their services and products, while at the same time reinforcing the image of the Stockholm region as a world-leading technology and innovation region. It is the region's people who are the very foundation of this success. By creating an environment where everyone – from children and young people to older people – can thrive and enjoy a high quality of life, a society is being built that is characterised by trust between people and continued high confidence in our institutions. It is this development that makes the Stockholm region unique, and makes its residents one of its greatest assets.

A city close to the countryside

The Stockholm region includes vast areas of rural and archipelago settings, as well as urban environments and built-up areas. The proximity to natural and cultural environments, recreation and outdoor activities – combined with a rich and metropolitan range of entertainment, sport, culture and services – is truly unique. Rural areas also play an important role through their natural resource-based industries and agricultural land. Around 85 percent of residents in the Stockholm region say that it is easy to get to green spaces near their homes. (Region Stockholm, Livskvaliteten i Stockholmsregionen. En invånarenkät om hur det är att bo, leva och verka i Stockholmsregionen.)

The proximity between the countryside and the city, combined with excellent conditions for commuting and remote working, also provides greater opportunities to live in rural areas, with the enhanced quality of life that this brings. Almost half of the Stockholm region's residents work in sectors with the potential for remote working. (Swedish Public Transport Association/Svensk Kollektivtrafik, Kollektivtrafikbarometern.) One important condition for this is the trains, buses, Metro and water transport that link the county's various parts and connect the Stockholm region with the rest of the Mälardalen region.

Quality of life, visitor attractions and a rich offering

Good urban planning and the design of the Stockholm region's built-up areas and residential areas, together with public transport that is highly advanced by international standards, the region's cultural heritage, cultural environments, and proximity to natural areas and water all contribute towards attractive environments and a good quality of life for the region's residents. Clean water, fresh air and green spaces that are rich in biodiversity provide the ideal conditions for regional development, and ensure good quality of life and health. The range of cultural, sporting and event offerings is a key element that contributes towards residents' quality of life, and to the Stockholm region's brand and economy. This attracts many people to visit the Stockholm region, making the tourism industry one of our key strengths. By attracting visitors, tourism not only strengthens the retail and service sectors, but also enhances the region's visibility, investment climate and attractiveness to talent and businesses within other sectors.

Around 85 percent of the Stockholm region's residents are satisfied living here, and three quarters believe they will still be living here in ten years' time. Seven out of ten residents are satisfied with the range of cultural and sporting offerings. (Region Stockholm, Livskvaliteten i Stockholmsregionen. En invånar-enkät om hur det är att bo, leva och verka i Stockholmsregionen.) The region is home to the main state-funded performing arts institutions and most of the national museums, as well as a rich and independent professional cultural scene. The majority of Sweden's artists within all artistic disciplines are based here. A fifth of all businesses in the county can be found within the cultural and creative sectors. This diverse offering enhances both residents' quality of life and the region's attractiveness to visitors, investors and future residents.

An innovative and competitive business sector

The Stockholm region is Sweden's capital region, which brings unique conditions and opportunities, and is an excellent foundation for development. Economic growth has been strong since the 1990s, and in 2025 the Stockholm region accounted for around 30 percent of Sweden's GDP and half of the country's service exports (2024). The Stockholm region has a diverse business landscape, where small businesses and entrepreneurs thrive alongside manufacturing industries and global headquarters. This enables the Stockholm region to

compete with the world's leading regions in terms of innovation and competitiveness, and contributes towards Europe's position in global competition.

The business sector – together with academia and research institutions, promotional bodies and the public sector – is part of a strong, well-developed research and innovation ecosystem. A key driver of this development is the businesses that operate within the seven sectors that constitute the Stockholm region's areas of strength (see the information box below). Together, they account for more than 40 percent of employment and turnover in the Stockholm region, and have strong potential to contribute towards regional growth that is sustainable in the long term. The tech sector is the fastest-growing sector, and has more than doubled its turnover since 2010. It is also a key driver of development in other sectors and of Sweden's ability to contribute towards Europe's digital sovereignty and resilience in an increasingly complex geopolitical landscape.

Of all the global headquarters in the Nordic region, a full 57 percent are located in the Stockholm region. Together with Amsterdam, the Stockholm region ranks third in Europe, after London and Paris. Global headquarters are strategically important, as they drive regional development, create jobs and show the region's significance in the global economy. Stockholm has the highest number of unicorns per capita in the world after Silicon Valley, and has the best access to financing and capital in the Nordic region. Excellent international accessibility plays a crucial role in the Stockholm region's future competitiveness and attractiveness on the global stage.

ABOUT | THE BUSINESS SECTOR'S STRENGTHS

Sectors in which the Stockholm region is particularly strong in comparison with other national and international regions, and which drive the region's sustainable growth, exports and competitiveness. These are: Information and communication technology (ICT), life sciences, finance, environmental technology, cultural and creative industries (CCI), tourism and highly specialised industrial manufacturing (see Business and Growth Strategy for the Stockholm Region, Region Stockholm 2021).

High skills and a strong labour market

The labour market employs 1.3 million people, corresponding to an employment rate of around 80 percent in the Stockholm region. Residents' educational level is among the highest in Europe. The proportion with post-secondary education is higher than in Sweden as a whole, at 56 percent of all people aged 25–64 in the county compared with 47 percent nationally. For those with more than three years of post-secondary education, the figures are 39 percent for Stockholm County compared with 31 percent nationally. The Stockholm region is the only one of Sweden's three metropolitan regions to demonstrate a general specialisation in knowledge-intensive labour. The Stockholm region also has a strong tradition of non-formal adult education, and the region's extensive civil society enables lifelong learning and contributes to social inclusion and democracy.

Successful innovation and research environments

The Stockholm region is one of Europe's most innovative regions, and businesses in the region invest just over 3.5 percent of gross regional product (GRP) in research every year. There is a strong tradition of knowledge, culture and expertise, with highly ranked universities and several internationally renowned research environments that attract students and researchers from all over the world. For example, Karolinska University Hospital is ranked as one of the world's leading hospitals, and Karolinska Institutet is recognised as one of Europe's leading universities. The Nobel Prize – one of the most prestigious awards within literature, physics, chemistry, medicine and economics – is awarded every year in Stockholm. The region has a high concentration of Sweden's art colleges.

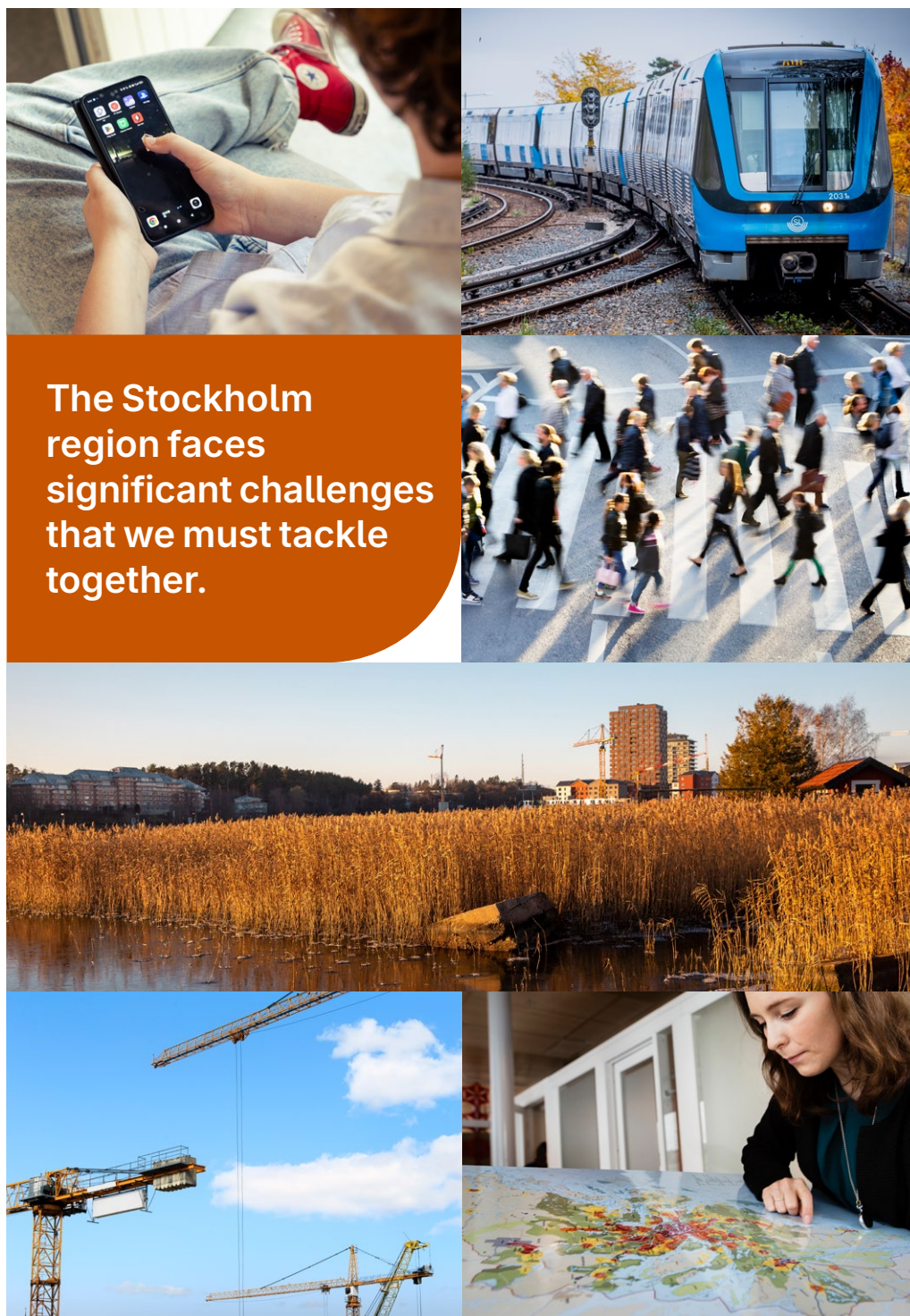
A driving force in the green transition

The Stockholm region is often highlighted as an international role model in terms of sustainability, and achieves top rankings in various international comparisons. Ambitious climate targets, low emissions, largely fossil-free public transport and investments in renewable energy – combined with excellent air quality, nature close to the city and investments in sustainable transport – mean that the Stockholm region has long been at the forefront of the green transition. The innovative strength within new green technology contributes towards business



development and enhances the region's attractiveness for investment and new initiatives within the green transition and green technology.

The Stockholm region's ambition to demonstrate climate leadership and to be a leader in the green transition is an important aspect of our international brand. The environmental technology sector is one of the region's seven areas of strength within the business sector, and has a large number of employees compared with other regions in Sweden, particularly in small businesses. At the same time, there is also the potential to reinforce this sector, and efforts are being made to bring new businesses and innovations to the market.



The Stockholm region faces significant challenges that we must tackle together.

Our societal challenges

We have a strong position, and the Stockholm region has many strengths that we should safeguard and build upon. At the same time, the Stockholm region also faces significant challenges that we must tackle together. The identified societal challenges are rooted in four global megatrends: urbanisation, digitalisation, climate change and globalisation.

More people want to live and travel here

How can we grow in a sustainable way, with reduced climate impact and sustainable use of land and water?

The Stockholm region is continuing to grow, and this means greater demand for housing, infrastructure and transport. Our railways and roads are already congested, and access to housing, technical services and recreational facilities has not grown in line with the population. Building new infrastructure to meet this demand also entails greenhouse gas emissions, environmental impact and resource consumption. Another challenge is energy supply and the growing need for electricity, which stems from both the green transition and a growing population. The capacity for drinking water supply, wastewater and management of excavated materials has also not been expanded in line with development.

As the population grows, competition for land also increases and conflicts of interest arise when different interests need to be balanced against each other. The best and most attractive locations close to public transport links involve the greatest risk that good use will not be made of qualities such as cultural heritage, outdoor environments and green spaces, or – in the worst case – they will disappear. The loss of green spaces can result in negative impacts on human and animal health, and in lower resilience to climate change. Growing pressure on nature and undeveloped land leads to wear and tear, and the loss of natural resources such as agricultural land, biodiversity and ecosystem services. The capacity for climate adaptation is also reduced. Important functions of undeveloped land, such as

recreation, flow regulation, stormwater treatment and carbon dioxide uptake, risk being lost to development.

Intra-regional differences and social challenges

How can we create equal, good living conditions and a good living environment for everyone?

In the Stockholm region, there are intra-regional disparities between residential areas in terms of living conditions, educational outcomes, voter turnout, health and access to employment. A quarter of residents in the Stockholm region live in areas characterised by low incomes and high unemployment. The proportion of residents with a foreign background also varies from area to area. There are also geographical disparities in access to welfare services, public services, culture, associations, sport, and recreation and outdoor activities. These differences in living conditions affect both people's ability to lead fulfilling lives and their views of society. This can have consequences in the form of reduced trust and



confidence in democratic institutions, and – in the long term – can also affect the attractiveness of the Stockholm region and its business climate. The Stockholm region also faces challenges from organised crime and its consequences.

The difficulty many of the Stockholm region's residents face in terms of finding housing affects people's living conditions and the region's attractiveness and competitiveness. Things are particularly difficult for those who have special needs, limited financial means or a lack of social networks, or who for other reasons are in a weaker position in the housing market. Related challenges include long-term unemployment and the employment opportunities among groups of structural/long-term unemployment. The demographic structure of the Stockholm region is also changing, with an ageing population that includes more older people and fewer children. The growing number of older people presents a challenge in terms of care needs and skills provision.

The world around us is perceived to be increasingly uncertain

How can we create a safe and resilient region?

As a result of events in the surrounding world, the Stockholm region's resilience needs to be reinforced in view of various types of societal disruption. As a capital region, we are particularly vulnerable to both external and internal threats. Climate change, loss of biodiversity, pollution, organised crime, disruption to supply chains, social unrest, disinformation and military threats are examples of risks that we need to strengthen our resilience for. For the Stockholm region, it is important that our supplies of electricity, clean water, sewage and other societal functions remain sufficiently resilient in order to function during crisis situations, and that our residents have the necessary knowledge and resilience. Climate change brings challenges such as extreme weather, high temperatures, flooding, erosion and harm to ecosystem services.

Sustainable land use is an important issue for strengthening resilience. How should we in the Stockholm region use our land resources so that we can secure our long-term food, energy and infrastructure needs, for example, while still maintaining the functionality of our ecosystems? At the same time, these must also be balanced against other needs, such as the need for more housing.



Global competition is intensifying

How can we strengthen the conditions for research and innovation, entrepreneurship and skills provision?

The geopolitical situation is intensifying the uncertainty for Stockholm as an export-dependent region, where growth relies on a stable international regulatory framework for trade based on European cooperation. Within a global context, the Stockholm region is a relatively small region with long distances to other markets. Although we are dependent on links with the wider world, international accessibility by rail, sea and air is limited. Stockholm Arlanda Airport has a unique position as Sweden's gateway to the wider world. Its strong position compared with other Nordic airports creates the right conditions for more direct routes to long-haul destinations. International rail and maritime connections need to play a greater role in the future for closer destinations.

The Stockholm region's small and open economy is affected by the world's intensifying competition and protectionism. Our share of global exports has already shrunk. Although the region's business sector is currently at the forefront, this is no guarantee of high competitiveness in the future. Strategically important technologies are crucial for our future global competitiveness, for the green transition, and for security and resilience. The business sector plays a central role in the application of these technologies, including both manufacturing industries and knowledge-intensive businesses. Higher education, basic research, applied research and innovation are all of crucial importance. As a result, increased public and private investment is required, alongside access to funding at European level.

Several sectors are currently struggling to find people with the right skills, and not enough people are being trained in those professions where demand is high. Many businesses also depend on people from different parts of Sweden and the rest of the world wanting to move here. The Stockholm region's unique strengths and identity, such as the high quality of life and the region's excellent living conditions, are not sufficiently well known. At the same time, the ability to attract labour and match jobs within the Stockholm region is hampered by the housing shortage, combined with inadequate public transport links across the entire region – in both urban and rural areas, as well as in the archipelago, and at different times of the day. Being sufficiently attractive to entice and retain businesses and investments, as well as the workforce and visitors, in the region in a sustainable manner, is a challenge.

OUR VISION:

Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region to live, work and thrive in

The Stockholm region's vision is to be Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region to live, work and thrive in. This is a long-term and timeless vision. It is intended to help us, as stakeholders, to maintain a common focus. It sets the tone and paints a picture of the Stockholm region we want to be:

An accessible, resource-efficient and resilient region with no climate-impacting emissions

The Stockholm region meets its climate targets, and our society features circular solutions and business models. This means that resources are used efficiently. The Stockholm region is a hub for the whole of Sweden, with excellent accessibility both within and beyond the region. Our transport infrastructure is sustainable, accessible and efficient. It is easy and convenient to travel, transport goods and operate commercial traffic. The technical supply systems provide residents and businesses with clean water, energy, and sewage and waste management, with circular systems that recover and reuse used resources.

Digitalisation, electrification and resource-efficient land use have brought people and businesses closer together. Natural resources are used responsibly and contribute to nutritious food, carbon sequestration and beautiful natural surroundings with a wealth of biodiversity. The region's water and air are clean. Overall, the Stockholm region has a strong ability and the necessary capacity to prevent and manage both known and unknown disruptions, such as climate change, crises, disasters or scarce resources.



An equal, safe and inclusive region with a good living environment

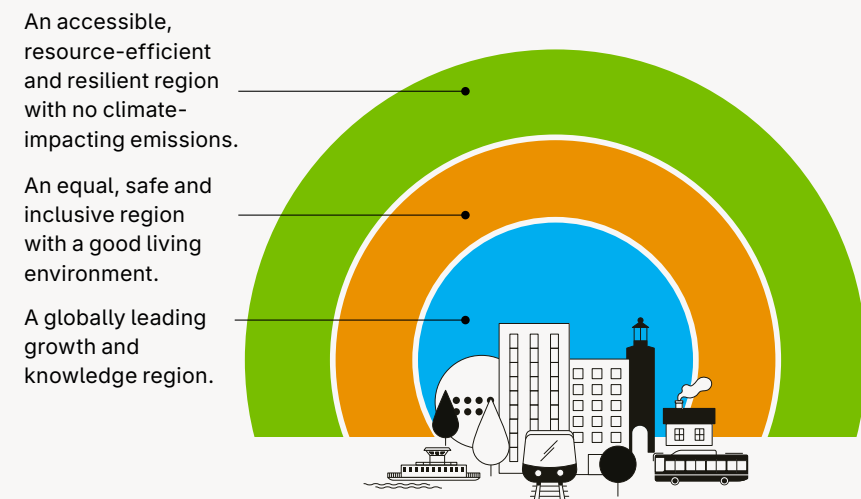
The Stockholm region offers good living environments and equal and equitable opportunities. Here, people can realise their dreams and participate in society according to their abilities. The social climate is open and inclusive, with high levels of participation and trust. Democracy is strong, and every resident has a say and the opportunity to influence their own living situation. Here, people feel free and safe. The foundation for this has been laid by providing good conditions for children and young people to grow up in across the region, and by making good use of people's unique resources and experiences throughout their lives. The opportunities for education, work, further training and entrepreneurship are excellent, and benefit not only those of us who live here but also development throughout Sweden. There are good opportunities to find housing in attractive residential areas, where residents have equal access to public services, public transport, parks, sport and culture. The region's rich biodiversity and its healthy ecosystems contribute towards a resilient, attractive region. Our natural and cultural environments provide opportunities for good living environments and contribute to people's health and wellbeing. The Stockholm region offers a combination of urban vitality and vibrant rural and archipelago environments. Public health in the Stockholm region is good and equitable, with promotional and preventive measures being the norm. Healthcare and social care are available throughout the region.

A globally leading growth and knowledge region

Successful businesses create jobs, support sustainable growth and are essential for maintaining welfare services. The business climate in the Stockholm region is innovative and creative, and is built on well-established collaboration between businesses, academia and the public sector. The start-up scene is thriving, and businesses that have grown from an initial idea into global unicorns lead the way for more innovative scale-ups in the Stockholm region. The region is home to world-leading research and innovation, and the green transition has led to a circular society with climate- and energy-smart solutions. Digitalisation and the application of AI and other advanced

technologies contribute to the development of the business sector, the public sector and people's everyday lives. The Stockholm region has strong skills provision, attractive training, and an equal and inclusive labour market, supporting sustainable growth throughout the region. International connections are strong and contribute to increased skills, business establishments and excellent export opportunities. The Stockholm region's unique strengths shape our shared identity and are well-known worldwide, attracting investments, business establishments and visitors to the region.

Figure 5. The illustration shows how regional development planning relates to the three sustainability perspectives and their mutual interdependence



A prerequisite in order for the Stockholm region to be seen as attractive is that the region develops in a sustainable manner. The illustration shows how regional development planning relates to the three sustainability perspectives and their mutual interdependence. Investments and development initiatives will lead to increased competitiveness, health and wellbeing for residents, while also ensuring that planetary boundaries are not exceeded, as both human health and economic development depend on ecosystems being in balance.

Our vision: Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region to live, work and thrive in

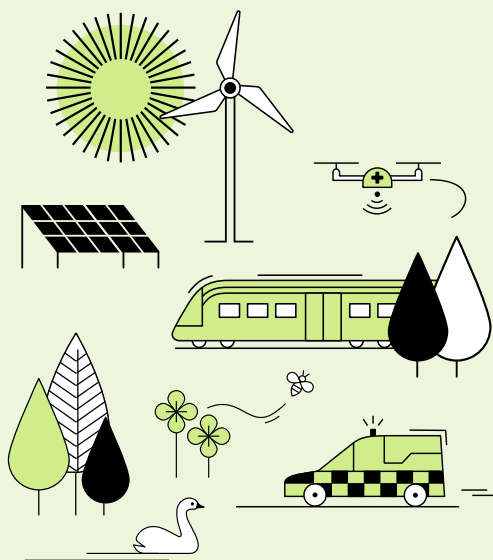
An accessible, resource-efficient and resilient region with no climate-impacting emissions

OBJECTIVE 1: By 2045, the Stockholm region will have zero net greenhouse gas emissions

OBJECTIVE 2: The Stockholm region has resilient systems that ensure functionality, safety and resilience

OBJECTIVE 3: The Stockholm region has a sustainable and reliable energy supply that meets its needs

OBJECTIVE 4: The Stockholm region has a resource-efficient and sustainable transport infrastructure that improves accessibility for residents and businesses



An equal, safe and inclusive region with a good living environment

OBJECTIVE 5: The housing supply in the Stockholm region is sustainable, and meets the needs and circumstances of residents

OBJECTIVE 6: Democracy in the Stockholm region is strong, and residents feel a high degree of involvement, trust and security

OBJECTIVE 7: Public health in the Stockholm region is good and equal

OBJECTIVE 8: The development of the spatial structure in the Stockholm region is polycentric and sustainable and contributes to good living environments and business development



A globally leading growth and knowledge region

OBJECTIVE 9: The Stockholm region has a resilient and internationally competitive business sector

OBJECTIVE 10: The Stockholm region is at the forefront of research and innovation

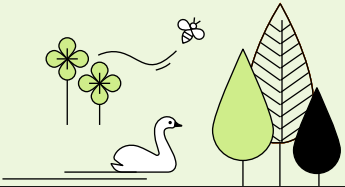
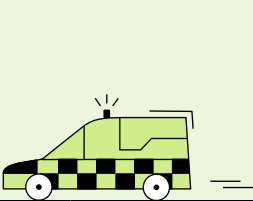
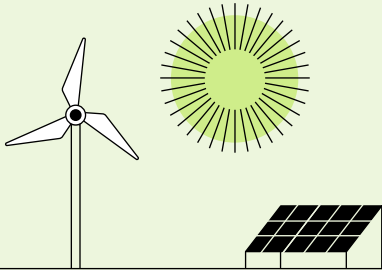
OBJECTIVE 11: The Stockholm region has strong skills provision, attractive education and an inclusive labour market

OBJECTIVE 12: The Stockholm region has a clear identity and excellent international connectivity



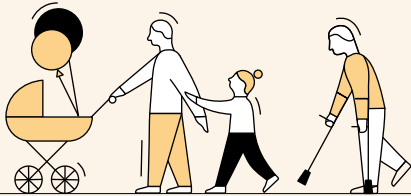
An accessible, resource-efficient and resilient region with no climate-impacting emissions

Our vision: Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region to live, work and thrive in

OBJECTIVE 1 By 2045, the Stockholm region will have zero net greenhouse gas emissions	1.1 Carbon dioxide emissions have fallen by an average of at least 12.5 percent per year since 2022, in line with Sweden's carbon budget	1.2 Greenhouse gas emissions from domestic transport in the Stockholm region will have ceased by 2040 at the latest	1.3 Greenhouse gas emissions from the construction and civil engineering sector have decreased	1.4 Greenhouse gas emissions from consumption have decreased	1.5 Carbon dioxide removal and sequestration have increased 
OBJECTIVE 2 The Stockholm region has resilient systems that ensure functionality, safety and resilience	2.1 The Stockholm region has enhanced its ability to provide essential social services and critical infrastructure during peacetime crises and heightened states of alert	2.2 Resilience to climate-related crises in the Stockholm region has increased	2.3 The capacity and resilience of technical supply systems have increased		
OBJECTIVE 3 The Stockholm region has a sustainable and reliable energy supply that meets its needs	3.1 The electricity supply in the Stockholm electricity bidding zone has been improved	3.2 The capacity of the electricity grids has increased, and meets the needs of the Stockholm region	3.3 Intra-regional production of renewable electricity has increased	3.4 District heating and combined heat and power play a key role in the county's energy supply	
OBJECTIVE 4 The Stockholm region has a resource-efficient and sustainable transport infrastructure that improves accessibility for residents and businesses	4.1 Transport efficiency in the Stockholm region has improved	4.2 Accessibility within the transport infrastructure has improved for residents and businesses	4.3 The share of trips made by sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) within the county will have increased to at least 75 per cent by 2035		

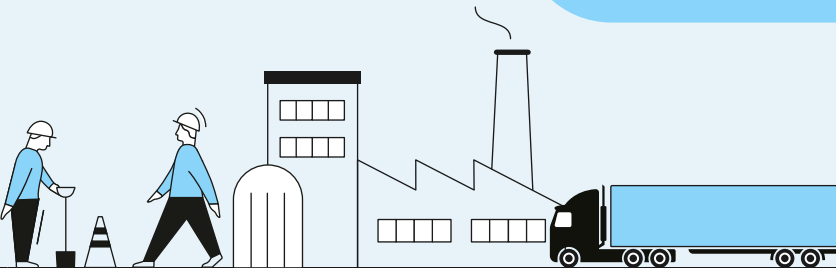
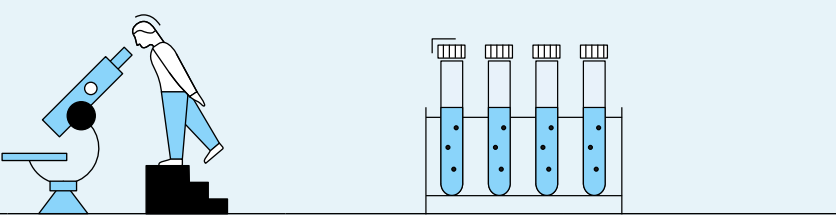
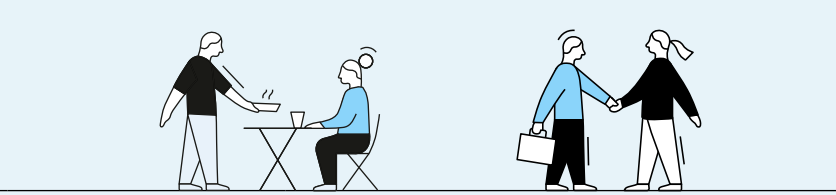
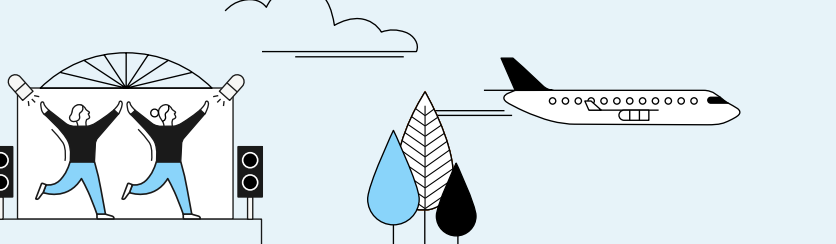
An equal, safe and inclusive region with a good living environment

Our vision: Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region to live, work and thrive in

Objective 5 The housing supply in the Stockholm region is sustainable, and meets the needs and circumstances of residents	5.1 The number of new homes meets demographic needs	5.2 The housing shortage in the Stockholm region has decreased	5.3 Innovations and new solutions have contributed to a sustainable housing supply			
Objective 6 Democracy in the Stockholm region is strong, and residents feel a high degree of involvement, trust and security	6.1 The proportion of electoral districts with turnout of at least 70 percent has increased	6.2 Trust in institutions has increased among the Stockholm region's residents	6.3 Safety and security in the Stockholm region have improved	6.4 All residents have good opportunities to participate in civil society and associations	6.5 In the Stockholm region, women's and men's opportunities to shape society and their own lives have improved	6.6 Culture and non-formal adult education have strengthened democracy
Objective 7 Public health in the Stockholm region is good and equal	7.1 Health has improved for all residents, and health equality has increased	7.2 The proportion of residents with good living conditions has increased	7.3 All children complete compulsory education with the qualifications required for upper secondary school, and the proportion of pupils who complete upper secondary education has increased	7.4 The proportion of residents living in health-promoting environments has increased		
Objective 8 The development of the spatial structure in the Stockholm region is polycentric and sustainable, and contributes towards good living environments and business development	8.1 A significant share of new development has been located within the regionally prioritised development structure.	8.2 The Stockholm region's regional cores have continued to develop as attractive and accessible locations for key functions	8.3 The conditions for vibrant rural and archipelago environments have been strengthened	8.4 All residents have good access to welfare services, amenities and leisure activities	8.5 Living environments within the Stockholm region's green and blue structure have improved, and bio-diversity has increased	8.6 The Stockholm region's cultural environments are preserved, used and developed carefully and sustainably

A globally leading growth and knowledge region

Our vision: Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region to live, work and thrive in

OBJECTIVE 9 The Stockholm region has a resilient and internationally competitive business sector	9.1 It has become easier to start, run and develop small and medium-sized enterprises	9.2 The green and digital transition has boosted businesses' competitiveness	9.3 Access to funding and venture capital for businesses in the Stockholm region has increased	
OBJECTIVE 10 The Stockholm region is at the forefront of research and innovation	10.1 The Stockholm region's international position within research and innovation has been strengthened	10.2 The Stockholm region has developed a stronger innovation ecosystem, with strong collaboration and successful, innovative companies		
OBJECTIVE 11 The Stockholm region has strong skills provision, attractive education and an inclusive labour market	11.1 It has become easier to recruit international talent and cutting-edge expertise	11.2 Matching between education and the labour market has improved	11.3 Unemployment in the county has decreased, particularly among groups of structural/long-term unemployment	
OBJECTIVE 12 The Stockholm region has a clear identity and excellent international connectivity	12.1 Awareness of and access to the Stockholm region's unique strengths and experiences have increased	12.2 Greater international accessibility via more strategically important links and strong logistics hubs		

OBJECTIVE 1

By 2045, the Stockholm region will have zero net greenhouse gas emissions

We are already experiencing the effects of a changing climate, and in the Stockholm region – just as in other parts of the world – we will need to both deal with the effects of climate change and contribute towards reduced emissions by changing how we consume and produce goods and services. We can also contribute to reduced emissions by ensuring that solutions from the Stockholm region are shared with other parts of Sweden and beyond the country's borders. The national climate objective states that Sweden shall have net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045 at the latest. The regional objective is based on the national objective and on the Stockholm region contributing to our commitments under the Paris Agreement. In order to achieve this, we need to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions to a greater extent than we have done so far. According to the carbon budget for Stockholm County, a reduction of at least 12.5 percent per year is required. This involves what are known as territorial emissions, but the emissions generated by our consumption outside our region must also be reduced. These emissions are estimated to be many times greater than our territorial emissions, and a sharper focus on these is needed.

We need to move towards a circular economy where resources are used more efficiently. This applies to residents, the public sector and the private sector. Despite these measures, it will be hard to fully achieve the objective by 2045, and supplementary measures are therefore also needed – uptake and capture of carbon dioxide that results in negative emissions. Climate change affects people

ABOUT | GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Territorial emissions: Direct emissions from activities carried out within the county's borders.

Consumption-based emissions: Emissions caused by consumption in the county, regardless of where in Sweden or the world the emissions occur.

and geographical areas in different ways, and this needs to be taken into account in our ongoing efforts. Areas that account for large proportions of emissions include the transport sector and the construction sector.

At the same time, the Stockholm region is growing rapidly, and we need more housing and enhanced infrastructure. In order to reduce our emissions, we must develop alternatives to new construction and make better use of existing buildings and resources. Good international accessibility is important for ensuring the Stockholm region's attractiveness, competitiveness and talent attraction. Here, sustainable travel is a key condition for simultaneously achieving the climate objectives. The aviation industry's goal is for all flights departing from Swedish airports to be fossil-free by 2045 at the latest, and in order to achieve this the aviation sector's green transition and future electrification must be accelerated. Many of our exports involve heavy road transport, which accounts for a large proportion of climate emissions. For this transport to become sustainable, comprehensive measures are needed linked to aspects such as the choice of means of transport and routes, fossil-free fuels and load factors.

Outcome targets:

1.1 Carbon dioxide emissions have decreased by an average of at least 12.5 percent per year since 2022, in line with Sweden's carbon budget

Stockholm County's carbon budget (Koldioxidbudget för Stockholms län 2023–2045) shows the maximum amount of carbon dioxide the Stockholm region can emit if it is to meet its targets under the Paris Agreement. The budget shows the county's total emissions allowance, i.e. the maximum volume of carbon dioxide that may be emitted for all future time. The budget focuses on those emissions that occur within our geographical borders, known as territorial emissions or direct emissions. The budget is updated annually with statistics, and the latest update shows that emissions in the Stockholm region need to be reduced by at least 12.5 percent annually in order for the emissions allowance to last until 2045. If the necessary emissions reductions are not made in one year, a greater reduction will be needed in the following year. If the county continues at the same rate of emissions as in recent years, its carbon budget will be used up as early as 2030, and emissions will then have to cease entirely.



1.2 Greenhouse gas emissions from domestic transport in the Stockholm region will have ceased by 2040 at the latest

Transport accounts for around half of the territorial greenhouse gas emissions in the Stockholm region, with passenger cars accounting for the majority, at just over 60 percent. Lorries account for around 25 percent, while domestic civil shipping and domestic aviation account for 8 percent and 3 percent respectively. Emissions from public transport, however, are low. According to the national interim target for domestic transport, emissions must be reduced by at least 70 percent by 2030 compared with 2010. This target also serves as a starting point for the Stockholm region, and with effective measures, emissions will have ceased by 2040 at the latest. At the same time, Region Stockholm will work actively to ensure that climate-impacting emissions from transport in the Stockholm region cease as early as 2035. In order to achieve these targets, better conditions are needed for fossil-free fuels, such as electricity, biofuels and hydrogen. Electrification of the vehicle fleet and the expansion of charging infrastructure are central parts of the solution. Nevertheless, there are challenges associated with the transition to electricity, including the availability of power in the electricity system.

1.3 Greenhouse gas emissions from the construction sector have decreased

The construction sector accounts for around 20 percent of national emissions. These emissions are largely from production, foundation works and transporting construction materials. For example, transporting rock and earth masses to and from construction sites generates significant emissions. The extent of foundation work and management of excavated materials can be influenced by the choice of building type and location. When fittings and building materials are not preserved or reused, resources – and, in some cases, valuable cultural heritage – are wasted. Within the framework of Fossil-Free Sweden, the construction sector has drawn up a roadmap for becoming fossil-free. This includes a target of a fossil-free sector by 2045 and a target of a 75 percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2040 compared with 2015. Construction operations in the Stockholm region should contribute to this. Alternatives to new construction and solutions for how we can utilise existing built-up areas need to be developed. By minimising the number of transport journeys and developing more measures for a circular planning and construction process that promotes innovation and ensures materials are used in a resource-efficient manner, we can reduce emissions.

1.4 Greenhouse gas emissions from consumption have decreased

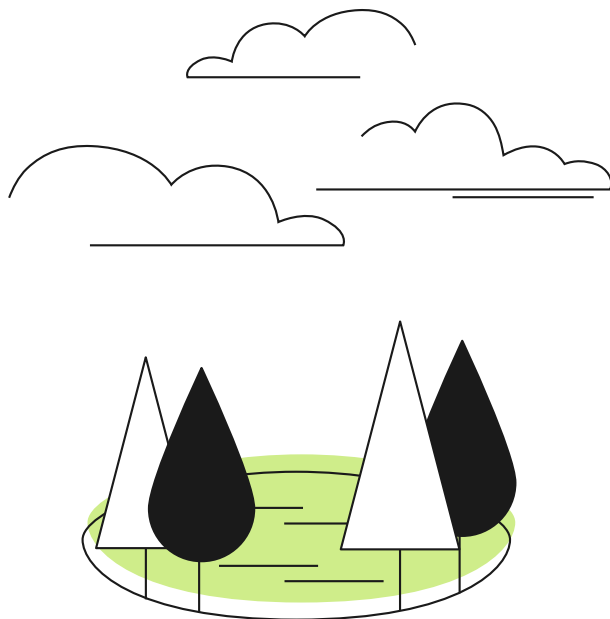
Currently, territorial greenhouse gas emissions – i.e. emissions occurring within the county's borders – are normally measured. In order to measure the emissions caused by our consumption in the county, regardless of where in Sweden or the world the emissions occur, we need to measure what are known as consumption-based emissions instead. Consumption takes place among citizens, within businesses and through public-sector operations. No statistics are currently available at regional level, but measurements (the Stockholm Environment Institute's Consumption Compass and statistics from the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency) indicate that consumption-based emissions in the Stockholm region may be up to five times greater than territorial emissions. According to the Environmental Objectives Committee, Sweden needs to reduce consumption-based emissions by 69 percent by 2040 compared with 2010. Efforts within the Stockholm region need to be accelerated so that greenhouse gas emissions from consumption can achieve climate neutrality by 2045, in order to meet EU targets and international agreements such as the Paris Agreement. The road towards reduced climate impact from consumption needs to be developed further through improved statistics, a clearer direction and knowledge of the effectiveness of these measures. Efforts to transition towards a circular economy in which resources are used efficiently are crucial if this goal is to be achieved. Businesses may need to adjust steps within their production cycles, and new business models are required in order to increase reuse and recycling. Consumers' opportunities for sharing and repairing need to be improved. Transport and housing are two areas that produce significant consumption-based emissions. Other areas that account for a large proportion of consumption-based emissions include air travel and food. One specific material stream from our consumption that currently accounts for a large proportion of emissions is the plastic waste that households do not separate from their other waste. This plastic produces emissions when waste is incinerated to generate district heating. Technical solutions are currently being developed to address part of this problem, but a number of steps remain.

1.5 Carbon dioxide removal and sequestration have increased

In order to achieve the climate objectives, supplementary measures are needed. These measures result in so-called negative emissions through the uptake or capture of carbon dioxide. One way to create negative emissions is through increased uptake of greenhouse gases in forests and soil, known as carbon



sinks. Carbon sinks can be increased through measures within the forestry and agricultural sectors, but also through nature-based solutions in the built environment. By preserving, restoring and increasing the proportion of green spaces, more carbon can be sequestered. Another way of achieving this is to use technical solutions to capture carbon dioxide during energy production or within industry, known as CCS (carbon capture and storage). This can take place, for example, through capture at district heating plants where biofuels (known as bio-CCS) are used, which may be relevant for the Stockholm region, with its high proportion of district heating. The production and use of biochar is another way of creating negative emissions. Biochar can be produced from several different types of organic material, including waste products such as park and garden waste, and sludge.



OBJECTIVE 2

The Stockholm region has resilient systems that ensure functionality, safety and resilience

A deteriorating global situation, a changing climate and a growing population are placing greater demands on resilience for all stakeholders in the region. As the capital region, the Stockholm region has both symbolic and strategic significance in that it is Sweden's political, economic and administrative centre, with a high concentration of population and critical functions. We need to ensure that society has sufficient resilience in the event of civil emergencies or heightened states of alert. This can be achieved by ensuring that essential social services and critical infrastructure are adequately protected, and that adaptations are made in order to address climate-related risks. All technical systems need to be high-capacity, resource-efficient and resilient in order to meet growing needs and greater demands for resilience. Several of these are interdependent, which can strengthen their functionality, but can also lead to increased vulnerability.

Outcome targets:

2.1 The Stockholm region has enhanced its ability to provide essential social services and critical infrastructure during peacetime crises and heightened states of alert

Resilient systems are crucial for maintaining essential social services and critical infrastructure during peacetime crises and heightened states of alert. This could, for example, involve critical infrastructure for healthcare, transport infrastructure, communications, water supply, sewage management, waste management and energy. The Stockholm region's stakeholders need to plan for systems that can manage, adapt to and recover from various types of disruption, such as extreme weather conditions or deliberate sabotage attempts. Essential social services and critical infrastructure have a number of critical dependencies, including functioning electricity supply, energy supply and digital infrastructure. In order to secure the county's water supply and back-up water supply, resilient water and wastewater systems are needed. In addition, many essential social services and critical



infrastructure rely on an effective supply of goods and services, regardless of disruption in the transport infrastructure. The Stockholm region's stakeholders therefore need to integrate preparedness considerations into spatial planning in order to identify and address conflicts between objectives at an early stage and enable long-term sustainable trade-offs and priorities to be made.

The conditions for food supply and food security need to be strengthened. A robust food system requires, among other things, good conditions for maintaining regional food production and strong food supply chains to the Stockholm region. Public catering can be a driving force and a reliable customer for regional farmers. The Stockholm region's stakeholders need to contribute towards the joint development of a resilient agricultural sector and a robust food industry. In order to reduce vulnerability within the food system, planning, preventive work and effective infrastructure are all important, while flexibility within the system must be maintained.

2.2 Resilience to climate-related crises in the Stockholm region has increased

According to the County Administrative Board's regional action plan for climate adaptation for Stockholm County, the county's greatest climate risks are high temperatures, flooding due to torrential rain and sea-level rise, and loss of biodiversity. We are already experiencing the effects of climate change. Heatwaves, the increased spread of hard surfaces in the county and extensive human activity raise temperatures further and create urban heat islands in densely developed areas. Here, temperatures can be several degrees higher than in nearby green spaces. The opportunities for protecting against heat and high temperatures vary depending on socioeconomic conditions. In addition, certain groups have a reduced ability to regulate their body temperature, including children, pregnant women, older people and people with illnesses, as well as animals. This means that vulnerable groups are more often affected and social health inequalities can be exacerbated.

A large part of the land is low-lying and is situated on the coast, by Lake Mälaren or in valleys. This means that the population, infrastructure and housing in these parts of the county are particularly vulnerable to risks linked to extreme rainfall, flooding, landslides and erosion. Solutions that can reduce these risks and involve

multiple stakeholders need to be managed through inter-municipal cooperation, with regional risk analyses being a key basis for this.

How we locate both new built-up areas and infrastructure, as well as how existing built-up areas and infrastructure are adapted, is crucial in order to withstand the damage that will be caused by a changing climate. An important part of this work involves planning for more cost-effective and nature-based solutions in urban environments, the agricultural landscape, and forest and coastal environments. Stronger cooperation is needed if we are to be able to tackle the challenges posed by climate change. Measures need to be designed with local needs and vulnerable groups in mind.

2.3 The capacity and resilience of technical supply systems have increased

In order for society to function, reliable and well-maintained technical supply systems are needed. A growing population and greater demands on resilience mean that the county's stakeholders need to contribute towards ensuring that all systems are protected, maintained and developed. Many existing systems have significant maintenance backlogs, and reinvestment is required to enhance their capacity and efficiency. Water use must be made more efficient to reduce the strain on both water and sewage systems, as well as on underlying water resources.

As a result of electrification and the transition towards a fossil-free society, dependence on an effective electricity supply is increasing. Focusing on a single energy solution risks increasing vulnerability. Contingency planning must therefore be taken into account as the transition progresses, ensuring access to various fuels while also requiring a comprehensive expansion of electricity generation capacity, electricity grids and storage capabilities. It is also important to choose the right energy source to suit the purpose.

The digital infrastructure needs to meet society's need for digital services in a secure and adequate manner. This places functional demands on the infrastructure's coverage, capacity, stability and security, which must continue to be developed to become more robust.

**OBJECTIVE
3**

The Stockholm region has a sustainable and reliable energy supply that meets its needs

A reliable electricity and energy supply for the Stockholm region is essential for businesses and everyday life to function. It is important that the region's growth is not limited by bottlenecks in the energy supply. In order to be sustainable, efficient and resilient, the region's energy supply needs to be developed. Innovative new solutions are needed. A robust energy production system strikes a balance between predictable and renewable energy and opportunities for energy storage.

District heating and combined heat and power in the Stockholm region need to enhance their competitiveness and account for the majority of local energy production. To ensure a resilient, high-capacity energy distribution system, we need to improve the stability of the grids. Existing bottlenecks at various levels of the electricity grids need to be eliminated so that the capacity meets the demands of the green transition and industry. In addition to increased transmission capacity and electricity generation, the county's electricity supply can be improved through energy efficiency measures.

Outcome targets:

3.1 The electricity supply in the Stockholm electricity bidding zone has been improved

The Stockholm region will continue to be dependent on importing electricity from other parts of Sweden, and the electricity supply in the electricity bidding zone that includes the Stockholm region needs to increase. Future increases in electricity demand can be met by expanding the electricity grid to remove the bottlenecks in the system – which currently drive up electricity prices – or by the electricity bidding zone in which the Stockholm region is included increasing its fossil-free electricity generation, or by a combination of the two. One way to meet demand would be through increased flexibility in electricity use and storage. This

would contribute to the electricity supply while the grid is being expanded, strengthen resilience and allow for more efficient use of the grid. Energy efficiency improvements in the building stock and businesses' processes are also important for reducing electricity consumption. An advanced electricity supply will enable the county to continue with the green transition, businesses to be established, and housing and infrastructure projects to be developed.

3.2 The capacity of the electricity grids has increased, and meets the needs of the Stockholm region

Electricity demand in the Stockholm region is growing due to the green transition, business development and population growth. Local electricity production in the Stockholm region is low, meaning that the region is dependent on electricity imports from the rest of Sweden, and this will continue to be the case.

The transmission capacity of the national transmission grid and the underlying regional and local grids therefore needs to increase. Projects that have already been planned involve new power lines, upgrading substations, and voltage increases in existing power line corridors. In order to eliminate bottlenecks and ensure that electricity reaches the end-user, it is important that these projects are completed on schedule. Energy efficiency improvements are also an important tool for reducing electricity consumption and the ability to use existing grid capacity efficiently over time.

3.3 Increased production of renewable electricity within the region/county

Increasing intra-regional electricity production brings a number of advantages. From a resilience point of view, there are advantages in increasing local electricity production, promoting solutions for increased production of renewable energy, and working towards a renewable energy supply. In addition, local electricity production does not use the transmission grid, meaning that it does not burden it further.

3.4 District heating and combined heat and power play a key role in the county's energy supply

District heating and combined heat and power are essential if Stockholm County's energy supply is to function well. To optimise its use, it should be prioritised as a heating source where possible. An advanced district heating system brings



opportunities to increase electricity production at combined heat and power plants, which are the region's most important form of local electricity production. District heating is resource-efficient, while the electricity it generates is dispatchable, meaning that it is independent of weather conditions and seasonal variations. The county's district heating operators also need to develop opportunities for technical carbon sinks (bio-CCS and carbon capture and utilisation, CCU), and must reuse the energy for multiple purposes.

**OBJECTIVE
4**

The Stockholm region has a resource-efficient and sustainable transport infrastructure that improves accessibility for residents and businesses

An effective transport infrastructure is characterised by transport efficiency, accessibility and sustainability, and is crucial for the Stockholm region's long-term development. The transport infrastructure connects the Stockholm region with the whole of Eastern Central Sweden, the rest of the country and other countries, by bringing places, people and businesses closer together. The Stockholm region's residents need an effective transport infrastructure that enables everyone to get to work and education, carry out various everyday tasks and participate in society. The transport infrastructure is also essential in order for the region's business sector to attract workers, to be accessible to customers and visitors, and to allow goods and services to be imported and exported. Efficient, robust freight transport contributes towards the region's supply of goods, strengthens the competitiveness of the business sector and reduces vulnerability in logistics chains. A growing population and more jobs mean that the pressure on the transport infrastructure is increasing, and in the long term new bottlenecks will arise. The challenges include being able to ensure mobility, accessibility and capacity, while also minimising resource consumption and environmental impact.

Outcome targets:

4.1 Transport efficiency in the Stockholm region has improved

A transport-efficient region is a society where transport operates in a resource-efficient manner that maximises the benefits while minimising economic, environmental and energy-related issues. A transport-efficient region is characterised by a high degree of sharing and more efficient use of common resources.

Key starting points include using spatial planning, economic instruments and technological development to influence the need and demand for transport. This can be achieved, for example, through high use of public and sustainable transport,



higher vehicle occupancy rates, a greater degree of digitalisation and automation, and coordinated planning of built-up areas, public services and transport infrastructure.

All types of future measures and investments in the transport infrastructure must contribute towards enhancing the Stockholm region's overall transport efficiency. Economic, environmental and energy-related resources impose constraints on developing the transport infrastructure, and it is therefore important to choose smart, well-considered solutions. In order to create the right conditions for development that leads towards this target, measures need to be evaluated from a systemic perspective and further planning must take place in cooperation between regional stakeholders.

4.2 Accessibility within the transport infrastructure has improved for residents and businesses

The transport infrastructure's most important functions include providing accessibility, bridging barriers and contributing towards a cohesive region. Fast, equitable and reliable transport brings places, people, visitors and businesses closer together, which in turn leads to stronger social sustainability and creates improved conditions for regional development as a whole.

Accessibility within the Stockholm region needs to be improved. Future accessibility improvements within the transport infrastructure must be based on sustainable transport, and the conditions for more travel by foot, bicycle and public transport must be strengthened. Accessibility needs to be improved through well-considered investments in the transport infrastructure and an improved public transport infrastructure that reduces journey times. In order to create greater accessibility throughout the county and to the wider world, the transport infrastructure must also be supported by an appropriately designed development structure. Planning new development with consideration for the development and

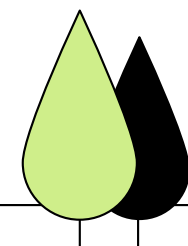
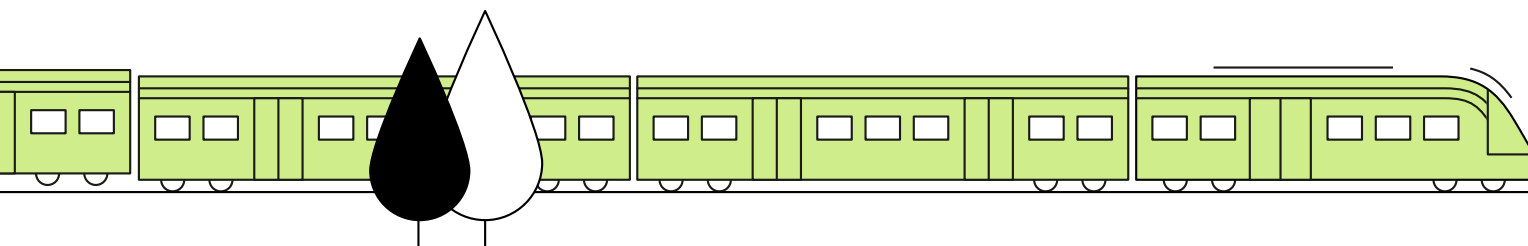
function of the transport system creates good conditions for increased accessibility both within the county and to surrounding regions. This also applies to locations with a high concentration of jobs, where improved transport connections, for example, contribute to higher employment and a stronger business sector.

4.3 The share of trips made by sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) within the county will have increased to at least 75 percent by 2035.

The transport infrastructure currently accounts for a large proportion of society's climate-impacting greenhouse gas emissions, and measures must be taken to reduce these emissions. In order to meet short-term targets for reduced climate impact and long-term objectives for the Stockholm region to have net-zero greenhouse gas emissions – and to contribute towards objectives regarding improved accessibility, increased transport efficiency and public health – the conditions for sustainable transport need to be strengthened further.

An important part of this involves increasing the attractiveness of public transport by offering safe and efficient services, as well as expanding cycling infrastructure and creating pedestrian-friendly built environments in order to create the right conditions for a higher proportion of journeys being made using sustainable transport. This is particularly true for routes where the proportion of public transport is low or where there is the potential to increase the proportion of public transport, for example for journeys to and from Stockholm Arlanda Airport. Efforts are also required to influence behaviour and attitudes, as well as measures within other areas, such as various types of economic instruments and regulatory changes.

→ Find out more about spatial development and the regional transport infrastructure on page 67 and in the appendix *Long-term development needs for the transport infrastructure in the Stockholm region*.

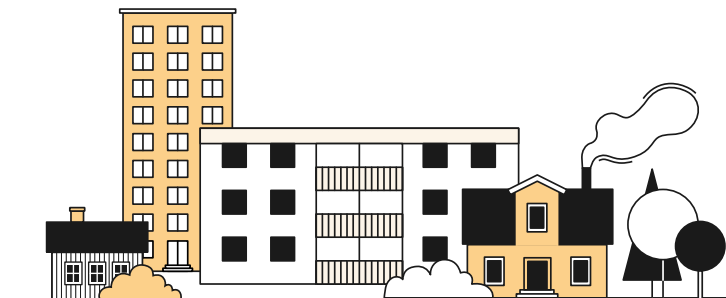


**OBJECTIVE
5**

The housing supply in the Stockholm region is sustainable, and meets the needs and circumstances of residents

Access to good housing is a fundamental requirement for people's health and wellbeing. A well-functioning housing supply contributes to increased security and better integration, and is essential if people with different conditions are to be able to live in good housing. A well-functioning housing supply is also needed in order for the Stockholm region to attract talent and to meet the labour market's need for skills, which is essential for the region's competitiveness and attractiveness. To meet the needs and life circumstances of different individuals and households, the region needs to be able to offer a mix of housing – different sizes, tenancy types and price levels – so that everyone can find a home that meets their needs at different stages of life. The supply of and access to housing need to be stabilised and better adapted in line with demographic trends within the county in order to avoid reactive and short-term solutions. Better use needs to be made of the existing housing stock, and the households with the greatest needs must be prioritised.

At the same time, the construction sector accounts for around 20 percent of national greenhouse gas emissions. The new housing construction that is needed must be sustainable, and must be carried out using healthy materials with a low climate impact. Existing housing and residential environments need to be maintained and adapted to suit a changing climate, for example in order to cope better with high temperatures or heavy rainfall. The fact that different groups and geographical areas are affected differently must be taken into account.



Outcome targets:

5.1 The number of new homes meets demographic needs

The Stockholm region's population is growing. To ensure that both current and future residents can live in good-quality housing, new homes must be built continuously in line with population growth. We need to work together to ensure that the demographic need for additional housing is met. New housing can be created through both new construction and the conversion of existing buildings. By working to achieve more and new housing and accommodation solutions, efficient and predictable planning processes, clear regulations and predictable processing times, we can increase the chances of achieving this target. More efficient use of the existing housing stock, for example through greater housing mobility and better matching according to needs, can help to reduce the need for newly built homes. New development can either reinforce or counteract existing residential segregation within the county. The planning of new housing should therefore highlight, take into account and seek to counteract residential segregation.

5.2 The housing shortage in the Stockholm region has decreased

The Stockholm region's housing market is divided. Households with strong finances find it easier to access housing that meets their needs, while others are forced to join long waiting queues, resort to precarious and expensive subletting options, or settle for housing that is otherwise inadequate. This can be seen in overcrowded living conditions, young people being unable to move out of their parents' homes, older people and those with disabilities being unable to move into accessible or adapted housing, and households being unable to separate. On average, women have lower incomes than men and are affected by the housing shortage to a greater extent. Sixty percent of the Stockholm region's residents believe that it is hard to find suitable housing within their financial means. The housing shortage is particularly acute for people with lower incomes. For many key workers, it is becoming increasingly difficult to find housing that matches their financial circumstances and needs. The housing shortage is also hampering the business sector's opportunities to find the right skills and attract talent. Moreover, homelessness – both social and structural – is a challenge that affects everyone from families with children but no permanent housing to people without a roof over their heads. Having a home of one's own is important for everyone's security, health and quality of life, not least when it comes to children and



young people. Homelessness can lead to long-term social exclusion and involves personal suffering. We need to work to lower the barriers to the housing market so that more people have access to good housing that meets the needs and circumstances of their households. We also need to protect the existing housing stock and ensure that there is local variation in tenancy types, housing sizes and cost levels. Better use can be made of the existing housing stock by developing and adapting it in line with new needs. Lock-in effects that hamper efficient use of the existing stock must be counteracted. At a regional level, strategic cooperation is needed between different stakeholders in connection with housing supply, partly to be able to set joint requirements for central government stakeholders, but also to learn from one another and to promote innovation and new solutions.

5.3 Innovations and new solutions have contributed to a sustainable housing supply

To ensure a housing supply that is sustainable in the long term, new thinking and innovative solutions are required that promote climate-related, economic and social sustainability. We need to work to achieve circularity, greater diversity in housing and living solutions, and more innovation within the construction sector. New financing solutions are also needed to help address the challenges in the housing market. A broader range of ways of living and building, such as collective and shared forms of housing, flexible housing and co-housing communities, can contribute towards a more varied housing market that enables more people to find homes. With a combination of innovative thinking and more efficient use of resources, we can create a more sustainable and inclusive housing supply.

→ Find out more about the demographic need for housing in the appendix *Demographic housing needs in the Stockholm region 2022–2060*

OBJECTIVE 6

Democracy in the Stockholm region is strong, and residents feel a high degree of involvement, trust and security

A strong democracy is based on residents feeling trust in, and having the opportunity to participate in, society. This involves both creating the right conditions for high voter turnout across the entire Stockholm region and strengthening the opportunities to engage in civil society and associations. Trust and participation often go hand in hand – we need to have confidence in one another, and in society's institutions. In order to strengthen this, we must work to ensure a high level of security and a social climate that is open, inclusive and non-discriminatory, where all residents have a say in their own living situations and equal opportunities to influence social development. A rich, multifaceted cultural life and strong public education are both of great importance for sustainable regional development and a strong democracy, as well as for residents' quality of life, participation and identity. Freedom of expression is a cornerstone of democracy, and is a prerequisite for trust and participation. An open social climate – in which people can express their views freely and participate in public debate without fear of reprisals – strengthens democracy's resilience and the opportunity for shared responsibility in social development.

ABOUT | GROUNDS OF DISCRIMINATION

The seven grounds of discrimination are gender, gender identity or expression, ethnic origin, religion or other declaration of faith, disability, sexual orientation and age.

Outcome targets:

6.1 The proportion of electoral districts with turnout of at least 70 percent has increased

A strong democracy is based on high and equal voter turnout, where all opinions and perspectives are taken into account. Voter turnout is an important measure of participation in society, and in the Stockholm region there are significant differences between different areas. Fundamental conditions such as level of education and social living conditions are of great significance in terms of people's participation. When residents feel that they lack influence, this can reduce both trust in democracy and faith in the future. To strengthen democracy, opportunities for influence must be equal and equitable, participation must be high, and voter turnout must increase across the entire region – particularly in those areas where it is currently the lowest.

6.2 Trust in institutions has increased among the Stockholm region's residents

If society is to function well, people need to have confidence in public authorities and institutions. When we have trust in the judicial system, healthcare and schools, for example, our sense of belonging and social cohesion are reinforced. High levels of trust also contribute towards stability, security and a strong democracy. In Sweden, trust in institutions is generally high compared with many other countries. However, there are differences between different groups and areas. In order to maintain high levels of trust, society must be able to deal with crime and threats, such as welfare fraud, disinformation, influence campaigns and cyberattacks. Targeted initiatives are needed to reduce the risk of digital exclusion, particularly among those with low levels of digital literacy.

6.3 Safety and security in the Stockholm region have improved

Safety and security – both perceived and actual – are important for people's trust in one another and for confidence in society's institutions. Factors such as education and employment play major roles in creating safety, security and stability, but so does the design of our living environments. A decline in safety and security can lead to reduced engagement in social development, and can have a negative impact on social cohesion. Organised crime and threats cause great suffering for victims, and also affect the attractiveness and competitiveness of

the Stockholm region. The negative trend of rising crime and insecurity must be reversed. To ensure safety and security for both residents and businesses, crime prevention and safety-promoting initiatives must be prioritised. Domestic violence is also a widespread problem that must be tackled. We need to work with raising awareness of crime and its consequences, and violence prevention work must be carried out in a coordinated and knowledge-based manner through cooperation between relevant stakeholders, encompassing initiatives across various sectors of society.

6.4 All residents have good opportunities to participate in civil society and associations

Trust and participation are important building blocks of a strong democracy, and associations and non-formal adult education play a significant role here. When more people are involved in civil society, for example through associations and organisations, social cohesion and trust between people are strengthened. In order to safeguard democracy, everyone must have good opportunities to participate in social development and civil society. Today, levels of engagement vary between different residential areas in the Stockholm region. This is due to factors including social and economic aspects, such as level of education and living conditions. It is important that there is core funding for culture, non-formal adult education and associations, and this core funding should keep pace with changes in society's costs and expenditure.

6.5 In the Stockholm region, women's and men's opportunities to shape society and their own lives have improved

Positions of influence over working life remain unevenly distributed between women and men, which affects the opportunities for influence and participation in society. Gender interacts with socioeconomic factors and other grounds of discrimination, and unequal conditions are exacerbated by a gender-segregated labour market and an uneven distribution of responsibility for unpaid domestic and care work. Despite objectives for equal conditions, women generally earn lower wages and have higher rates of ill health than men, with more women receiving sickness benefits. Gender differences affect both individuals' living conditions and the region's development. In order to increase gender equality in the Stockholm region, initiatives are needed that can enhance women's and men's opportunities to shape working life and everyday life on equal terms.



These initiatives should focus on giving greater influence in working life, reducing gender segregation in the labour market and promoting economic gender equality, as well as a more equitable distribution of unpaid care work. They should also help to prevent men's violence against women and honour-related violence.

6.6 Culture and non-formal adult education have strengthened democracy

A rich and varied cultural offering promotes experiences, interpersonal encounters, education and participation. Non-formal adult education strengthens and develops democracy within the region by offering forums for interpersonal encounters that contribute towards trust and a sense of community. It also contributes towards people's development and learning, encourages democracy-promoting dialogue and bridges social divides. Both cultural life and a well-functioning democracy draw people from around the world to the Stockholm region.

Achieving this goal requires cooperation between stakeholders in the region, and there needs to be a particular focus on increasing access to and participation in cultural life and non-formal adult education. A rich and diverse cultural life and non-formal adult education also need to be integrated into spatial planning as tools for promoting participation, trust and a sense of security.



OBJECTIVE 7

Public health in the Stockholm region is good and equal

Good and equal public health is essential for a sustainable and resilient Stockholm region. In order to create an inclusive society, all residents – regardless of their background, circumstances and gender – must enjoy good living conditions and equal opportunities for a healthy life. Health promotion initiatives that are universally designed, accessible and adapted to suit the needs of people of different ages and life situations are important for the region's long-term development. Better public health strengthens both social cohesion and the region's attractiveness.

Good and equitable public health requires improved opportunities for education, work, good living environments and housing, financial security and social participation. For the individual, this includes better health, more secure living conditions and improved quality of life. By working broadly and inclusively towards equitable health, we can create healthy living environments, strengthen people's life chances, and contribute towards a sustainable and vibrant region.

Outcome targets:

7.1 Health has improved for all residents, and health equality has increased

There are differences in health between different groups and areas due to inequalities in living conditions, living standards and lifestyle habits. In order to create good and equitable public health, initiatives are required to reduce these differences. There is a need for both broad initiatives, which can reach many people, and targeted initiatives for the groups and areas with the greatest needs. This work needs to focus on improving living conditions, increasing individuals' access to health-promoting resources, and preventive measures. Reducing the health inequalities that can be influenced requires coordinated efforts and long-term cooperation between different sectors.



7.2 The proportion of residents with good living conditions has increased

Good living conditions are the basis for the development of both the individual and society as a whole. In order to reduce the number of residents with vulnerable living conditions and to promote good public health, we need to work with initiatives that both improve people's individual living conditions and strengthen regional development. By improving access to – and conditions for – education, work, good housing and social networks, as well as opportunities for sport and culture in areas with poor living conditions, we can create more equitable and equal living environments. This will enhance both individuals' quality of life and regional cohesion, which is essential for building a healthy region that is sustainable in the long term.

7.3 All children complete compulsory education with the qualifications required for upper secondary school, and the proportion of pupils who complete upper secondary education has increased

Education is a key to good health, employment and social participation. All children have the right to equitable schooling and high-quality education. In order to ensure that more pupils complete compulsory education with the qualifications required for upper secondary school, resources must be directed towards the schools and pupils with the greatest needs. An upper secondary school diploma plays a crucial role in young people's transition to adult life, and strengthens the individual's life chances through increased empowerment, improved socioeconomic conditions and a lower risk of ill health over time. An equitable and equal education system strengthens individuals' life chances, the economy and public health.

7.4 The proportion of residents living in health-promoting environments has increased

The way we plan our living environments affects both public health and sustainable social development. By creating living environments that encourage and support physical activity, recreation and wellbeing, we can create the right conditions for good public health. This involves planning for safe, clean and healthy environments, both indoors and outdoors. We need to ensure healthy living environments in terms of ambient noise, air quality, clean soil and water, and access to green spaces, particularly in those areas where the risk of ill health is highest. Exposure to – and the consequences of – harmful environmental factors vary across the population, and we need to take this into account in our planning.

OBJECTIVE 8

The development of the spatial structure in the Stockholm region is polycentric and sustainable, and contributes towards good living environments and business development

How we plan and locate built-up areas, infrastructure and services has a major impact on how we live our everyday lives, and on our quality of life. A cohesive and polycentric structure creates resource-efficient land use in urban areas, rural areas and the archipelago, thereby giving more people access to workplaces, education, services, culture, nature and recreation. When we take natural and cultural values into account and develop the built environment with a view to care and quality, we create pleasant environments where people can thrive and engage with society. A polycentric structure also helps us to use land and water sustainably, and to ensure healthy ecosystems. The development of the spatial structure in the Stockholm region shall contribute towards a connected and robust Eastern Central Sweden.

Outcome targets:

8.1 A significant share of new development has been located within the regionally prioritised development structure.

By planning development and public transport together, we can use shared resources and investments more efficiently. When new development is planned in locations where good public transport and services already exist, or are planned, it becomes easier for more people to travel sustainably. This improves access to workplaces, education and public services. Cohesive development also helps to preserve valuable land resources and natural resources, which are important for biodiversity.

It is important to ensure that public transport is given the space it needs at stations and transfer nodes in order to develop and operate efficiently. We need to improve cooperation between municipalities, regions, public transport operators and



property developers to ensure a holistic approach and to deal with the conflicting objectives involved in development close to public transport.

8.2 The Stockholm region's regional cores have continued to develop as attractive and accessible locations for important functions

A polycentric region, with eight regional cores, is of great importance for meeting future population growth in a sustainable manner. The cores' strategic locations and regional accessibility provide the right conditions for them to continue developing into attractive locations for business, housing and key regional functions, such as education, innovation, healthcare, retail, culture, leisure and sport.

By continuing to improve accessibility and strengthen the regional cores, more of the region's residents will be close to workplaces, services and housing throughout the region. A polycentric region also helps to relieve pressure on parts of the transport infrastructure, allows for the efficient use of land and shared resources, and promotes sustainable travel with lower carbon emissions. The work to strengthen the regional cores is being carried out through cooperation between stakeholders in the Stockholm region, and with the support of the road-maps for the regional cores.

8.3 The conditions for vibrant rural and archipelago environments have been strengthened

Vibrant rural and archipelago environments are crucial to the Stockholm region's attractiveness, and the link between the city and the countryside needs to be reinforced.

In order to strengthen rural and archipelago environments, more people need to have the opportunity to live and work in these areas. By concentrating development in the less densely populated parts of the region, ideal conditions are created for housing with good access to public transport and for the development of local businesses and essential services. At the same time, valuable natural and cultural environments, agricultural land, farming and fishing can be protected. Good conditions for living and working in rural areas also benefit land-based industries. The archipelago has unique conditions, and is dependent on good accessibility to and from the mainland.

8.4 All residents have good access to welfare services, amenities and leisure activities

Proximity to welfare services, amenities, culture, sport, recreation and well-designed environments contributes to good living environments and health. These types of facilities should therefore be located in areas that provide good access both in the more central parts of the county and in rural and archipelago areas, based on local conditions.

It is particularly important to improve access to welfare services, amenities and leisure activities in those areas where many people have poorer socioeconomic and living conditions. So that people can travel sustainably and have access to important functions, these should be located where there are already good amenities and public transport. Access to a good variety of places and spaces or leisure activities that promote physical activity is essential for public health, particularly for children and young people.

8.5 Living environments within the Stockholm region's green and blue structure have improved, and biodiversity has increased

As the region's population and businesses grow, the pressure on our natural and cultural environments – in the form of water and green spaces – increases. At the same time, climate change and the loss of biodiversity are continuing, affecting ecosystems and our future living environment. If ecosystems are to function and the trend is to be reversed so that biodiversity increases, there needs to be a wealth of variation in the form of varied landscapes, many different habitats, diverse plant and animal species, and significant genetic variation within these species. A cohesive and well-functioning regional green and blue structure is a decisive factor for this. Greenery and water contribute vital ecosystem services such as carbon sinks, water purification, pollination and recreational opportunities, which are important conditions both for the environment and for human health and wellbeing. We need to continue to protect, develop and adapt these environments for the benefit of people, animals and plants. By using greenery and water strategically and consciously, we can promote and improve human health and biodiversity, and can help our cities and communities adapt to climate change. An important tool in this work is the use of more nature-based solutions in different landscape types. Planning must also take into account the fact that

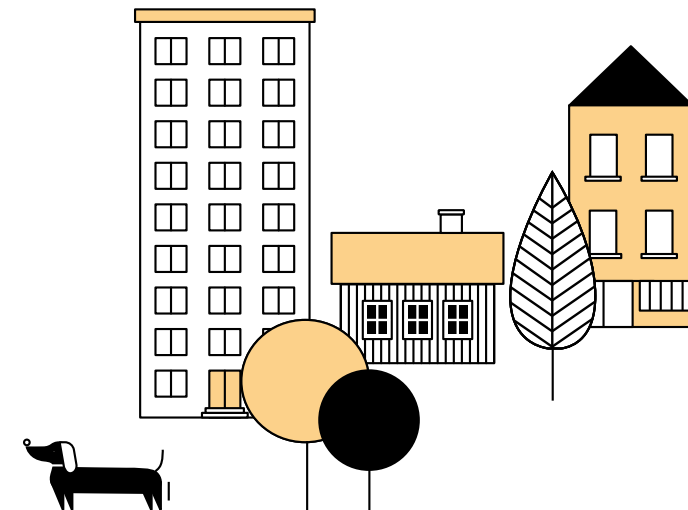


access to – and use of – green spaces may differ between different population groups and areas.

8.6 The Stockholm region's cultural environments are preserved, used and developed carefully and sustainably

Many of the region's attractive environments are cultural environments that contribute towards the Stockholm region's identity and attractiveness. Here, there are traces and remains from the people who lived here around 9,000 years ago, a range of urban planning ideals from the Middle Ages to the present day, manor houses and industrial environments, and a unique archipelago. With up-to-date knowledge, and by taking natural and cultural values into account early on in the planning process, we can preserve and use the cultural environment as a valuable resource and a source of knowledge, identity and attractiveness. The cultural environment is a cross-sectoral issue, with a bearing on ecological, economic and social sustainability. It is important to increase knowledge about cultural environment issues and to improve cooperation between different stakeholders.

- Find out more about the region's green and blue structure in the knowledge bases "*Utveckling av grönstruktur och landskap i Stockholmsregionen*" and "*Blåstruktur och VA-tjänster i Stockholmsregionen*" (in Swedish) at regionstockholm.se.
- Find out more about the Stockholm region's spatial development on page 42, and by reading the "*Landsbygds och skärgårdsstrategi*", "*Livsmedelsstrategi*" and "*Kulturstrategi*" strategies (in Swedish) at regionstockholm.se
- Find out more about the county's cultural environments in the knowledge base (in Swedish) currently being produced by Region Stockholm via Stockholm County Museum at regionstockholm.se
- Find out more about food supply by reading the "*Stockholms läns livsmedelsstrategi*" and "*Livsmedelsstrategin 2.0*" strategies (in Swedish) at regionstockholm.se



**OBJECTIVE
9**

The Stockholm region has a resilient and internationally competitive business sector

In order for the Stockholm region to have a resilient and globally competitive business sector, it must be easy to start, run and develop businesses of all sizes. The conditions are favourable, with a broad business structure and areas of strength within the business sector (see page 10). Businesses need the right basic conditions in the form of housing, public services, safety and security, infrastructure for goods and services, and access to finance, skills and talent in order to grow. The green transition and digitalisation bring both opportunities and challenges for businesses. The Stockholm region aims to be a leader in the use of new technology and the development of sustainable products and services, while also working towards a low-carbon society. Exchanging innovation, expertise and creativity between global companies, innovative start-ups, academia and the public sector is a strength and a competitive advantage for the Stockholm region.

Outcome targets:

9.1 It has become easier to start, run and develop small and medium-sized enterprises

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may need extra support in order to start, grow, adapt and develop. This is particularly clear in rural areas, in the archipelago and in areas with socioeconomic challenges, and also for businesses in the tourism sector and the cultural and creative industries. Many SMEs find that differences in regulations at municipal, regional, national and EU levels are difficult to navigate.

It is important that businesses have the same conditions and similar access to services, regardless of the municipality in which they operate, particularly with regard to permit issues. Another area for development involves dividing up procurements into smaller lots so that more SMEs can compete for public contracts.

The Stockholm region's prosperity depends on exports, and it is important that both large and small companies can internationalise and do business with other countries. At the same time, our share of global exports has shrunk. SMEs have great potential, and through regional export collaboration companies can be guided towards the right partner to get off to the right start and gain the expertise, help and support they need to succeed in the global market.

9.2 The green and digital transition has boosted businesses' competitiveness

Sustainable goods and services benefit both the climate and society, while also creating significant growth opportunities for the business sector. Many businesses in the Stockholm region are already at the forefront of the green transition. Large companies and the manufacturing industry in particular play a central role in driving this development forward. However, the municipalities also contribute, for example by streamlining permit processes for environmental improvement measures.

Despite this, much remains to be done. It is not just a matter of bringing climate-smart products to market, but also of ensuring low climate impact throughout the entire product life cycle, developing circular and fossil-free business models, and developing resource-efficient production methods. At the same time, the region's electricity supply needs to be strengthened, as demand for electricity is increasing in line with electrification and green technology. The green and digital transitions can reinforce each other. For example, digital solutions enable traceability in material flows and smart control systems that optimise the consumption of energy and resources.

There is a growing need to strengthen businesses' digital maturity in order to drive innovation, transition and competitiveness. At the same time, there is also a need for a higher level of resilience, for example within cybersecurity. Advanced technologies such as AI are developing at a rapid pace, fundamentally affecting both society as a whole and the business sector. In order to create new business models and digital services, and to develop better products using digitalisation and AI, businesses can benefit from support. The Stockholm region's global headquarters and innovative start-ups, as well as growth companies in the tech sector, are an asset in the ongoing transition. Through collaboration and



support, more businesses can benefit from technological developments and boost their competitiveness in a global market. AI and other advanced technologies must be applied responsibly and ethically in order to boost productivity while contributing towards competitiveness that is sustainable in the long term.

9.3 Access to funding and venture capital for businesses in the Stockholm region has increased

An effective supply of capital is crucial when starting and developing businesses. As the Nordic region's financial centre, businesses in the Stockholm region have relatively good access to finance, including venture capital. However, in order to confront global competition head on, the whole of Europe needs to step up a gear. A lack of financing means that many European entrepreneurs are looking outside the EU to scale up and grow. In recent years, there has also been a decline in the inflow of early-stage international investors in the Stockholm region's SMEs. Businesses' external capital needs should primarily be met by the private market, but in order to ensure that good business ideas are realised, there are areas where there may be grounds for market-complementary public financing initiatives at regional, national and EU levels. This could involve the early stages of development, innovative companies developing products with long lead times for commercialisation, and new industries.



OBJECTIVE 10

The Stockholm region is at the forefront of research and innovation

The Stockholm region is a leading research and innovation hub in Europe, with strong research institutions and businesses. Maintaining and strengthening competitiveness requires long-term investment, international cooperation, and both interdisciplinary and internal collaboration between different fields of research. The Stockholm region's innovation ecosystem is successful, but continued financing and access to research infrastructure are needed. Public procurement and cooperation between the public and private sectors are important for supporting the development of innovative and sustainable solutions.

Outcome targets:

10.1 The Stockholm region's international position within research and innovation has been strengthened

The Stockholm region is one of Europe's leading research and innovation regions, with a significant concentration of research organisations, highly ranked higher education institutions and research-intensive businesses. A competitive research and innovation ecosystem with world-leading universities and research-intensive businesses is based on long-term regional, national and international investment, and on international cooperation and partnerships. The Stockholm region's stakeholders have a presence in many international settings, and a stronger international position can be created through collaboration. In order to remain at the forefront, higher education, basic research and applied research are of crucial importance in the research and innovation chain. Long-term resources, cooperation, and partnerships with research institutions, businesses and innovation environments allow for interdisciplinary collaboration and lead to groundbreaking results. By working together with other leading regions, both in Sweden and internationally, the Stockholm region contributes towards solving complex societal challenges. To meet future needs, both strong in-house research expertise and



leading international cooperation are required within strategically important technologies. This lays the foundation for developing cutting-edge capabilities and creating clusters of strength within areas such as AI, cybersecurity and semiconductor technology. Continuing to have leading higher education institutions that attract ambitious students and researchers from both Sweden and abroad is essential for research and education within strategically important technologies. This is also important for the tech sector and its ability to grow and recruit locally.

10.2 The Stockholm region has developed a stronger innovation ecosystem, with strong collaboration and successful, innovative companies

The regional innovation ecosystem's stakeholders play a vital role in sustainable growth, contributing research-based knowledge and developing innovative solutions. Innovative businesses may need support via targeted programmes, access to open data and computing power, and research and innovation infrastructure being made available. This will enable the Stockholm region to keep developing innovative businesses that evolve into globally leading companies.

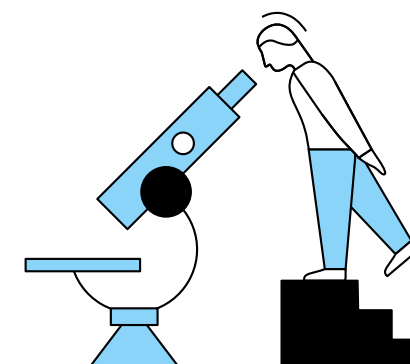
Public and private investment in research and innovation as a proportion of GRP needs to increase. Regional, national and European public funding contributes towards realising the growth potential within smart specialisation. Investments in all four smart specialisation areas should be combined with the further development of greater regional initiatives, such as the Stockholm Uppsala Life Science Cluster – Capital of Life and the production cluster focused around the automotive industry, both of which are of great importance for Eastern Central Sweden's business sector.

The public sector plays an important role by contributing to the development and implementation of innovative and sustainable products and services via various procurement methods, such as pre-commercial and innovation procurement. There is a need for awareness-raising initiatives regarding public-sector stakeholders' and businesses' different procurement methods. Social innovations can help to solve important societal challenges, for example within sustainable urban development, safety and security, education and care. By setting requirements regarding sustainable supply chains, universal design and accessibility in public procurement, living conditions and equitable public health can also be strengthened.

ABOUT | SMART SPECIALISATION

Smart specialisation involves promoting research, innovation and technological development within a small number of areas where public funding is expected to have the greatest benefit and where the conditions for developing international competitiveness are good. Identified areas for smart specialisation in the Stockholm region are:

- Life sciences, care and health
- ICT, tech and digitalisation
- Industrial transition through sustainable production
- Climate and environmental initiatives for sustainable urban development



**OBJECTIVE
11**

The Stockholm region has strong skills provision, attractive education and an inclusive labour market

An effective labour market and satisfactory skills provision are essential if the Stockholm region's businesses are to be able to compete internationally and in the face of ongoing structural change. It is important to make the most of the skills that are already present in the region, and also to attract external talent. The rapid development of AI is changing job content and skills requirements in many industries, bringing a need for greater adaptability and continuous skills development. In order to meet recruitment needs, better alignment between education and the labour market's requirements is required, together with more attractive education programmes. Lifelong learning throughout working life promotes mobility and skills provision, as well as the inclusion of older workers in the labour market. For groups of structural/long-term unemployment, collaboration between the public and private sectors is needed.

Outcome targets:

11.1 It has become easier to recruit international talent and cutting-edge expertise

Access to a highly skilled workforce is crucial if businesses and research and innovation environments are to choose to establish themselves, develop and grow in the Stockholm region. At the same time, businesses of various sizes and in different industries have a significant need to recruit workers from different educational backgrounds. Competition for international talent is becoming tougher, and if opportunities to recruit highly specialised expertise are lacking, innovative companies will relocate to areas where their skills needs can be met. Talent attraction and skills provision are also affected by shortages in the housing supply and long commuting times to certain workplaces. The Stockholm region should be welcoming, attractive and open, and should welcome both talent and

accompanying family members who choose to live, work and thrive here. Stronger cooperation in order to attract and retain talent is therefore of great importance, for example through improved reception and settlement in the Stockholm region, and efficient, predictable processes.

11.2 Matching between education and the labour market has improved

Within many industries, employers in the Stockholm region struggle to find the right workforce. The right education and skills are essential for people to meet future recruitment needs. At the same time, some educational courses are not sufficiently attractive to individuals or do not meet the demands of the labour market. Many people also work in professions for which they are not trained. Gender equality in the labour market drives growth, and requires that both women and men have equal opportunities to work and develop. In terms of skills provision, it is also important that more people can have a long and sustainable working life, with opportunities for skills development and employability throughout their professional lives.

In order to secure skills provision in the Stockholm region, it is important to maintain high standards throughout the education system, from primary and secondary school through to vocational and higher education. Regional learning centres can help to give residents across the region access to education close to home. For the Stockholm region, it is also essential that STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects attract young people to both upper secondary and higher education. There are significant differences within and between the municipalities in the proportion of pupils who leave primary and secondary school with pass grades and go on to vocational and higher education. Skills provision is strengthened through more labour market-adapted education programmes and initiatives that boost interest in vocational training, particularly in occupations where there are shortages of workers, entry-level jobs and new growth areas. At the same time, it is important to take a long-term view and to ensure preparedness for future needs. Validation is a tool which, by mapping and confirming skills, improves the conditions for strategic skills provision and career development. The opportunity to carry out further training during working life contributes towards mobility in the labour market and good skills provision, while also giving individuals opportunities for lifelong learning.



11.3 Unemployment in the county has decreased, particularly among groups of structural/long-term unemployment

Many people find it hard to enter the labour market, or work in sectors that are undergoing structural changes, such as digitalisation and automation, which increases the risk of unemployment. The labour market has both an economic and a social function, providing the opportunity for self-sufficiency and serving as an arena where people from different backgrounds and of different ages come together. This contributes towards building a secure and cohesive society with good public health. In order to meet people's different needs, initiatives should be designed to make support, training and workplaces more accessible and usable. It is important to reinforce and establish sustainable collaborative structures between public- and private-sector stakeholders, industries and municipalities in order to support long-term labour market integration. This also involves tried and tested initiatives with a focus on the individual, in order to reduce long-term unemployment, alongside measures to improve accessibility and physical connections between different residential and workplace areas.



OBJECTIVE 12

The Stockholm region has a clear identity and excellent international connectivity

With its unique combination of city life, countryside and archipelago, rich natural and cultural environments, an innovative business sector, and extensive cultural and leisure offerings, the Stockholm region attracts international businesses, investment, talent and visitors. Many international businesses have chosen the Stockholm region as their global or Nordic hub. Businesses and head offices drive development through investments in research and innovation, and through their ability to attract cutting-edge expertise. We need to strive to ensure that these businesses stay in the Stockholm region, and that more of them choose to establish themselves and invest here. As a relatively remote region with long distances to other major markets, the Stockholm region needs good international accessibility with strong connections to strategically important hubs around the world.

Outcome targets:

12.1 Awareness of and access to the Stockholm region's unique strengths and experiences have increased

It is important that we have a shared vision of the Stockholm region's strengths and identity, and how these should be communicated and packaged. With cutting-edge research and innovation, high-tech expertise and a well-educated workforce, an innovative and sustainable society is being developed, along with an attractive region for investment and business development. A climate with distinct and pleasant seasons, combined with proximity to natural and cultural environments and a unique, easily accessible archipelago, brings opportunities for a wealth of outdoor activities. At the same time, the region also offers a broad and varied range of culture, entertainment and shopping, whether in the city, the countryside or the archipelago. Cultural life contributes towards the Stockholm region's development and attractiveness. The region has a strong profile within sustainable urban development, with a focus on renewable energy,



climate action and digital infrastructure. Democracy, a welfare system with world-class healthcare and public services, and accessible public transport provide security for all citizens. Residents have the opportunity to enjoy a sustainable everyday existence with a high quality of life. At the same time, worries and vulnerability have increased, and we need to continue working towards a safe and secure Stockholm region, which is essential if we are to attract businesses, visitors and residents.

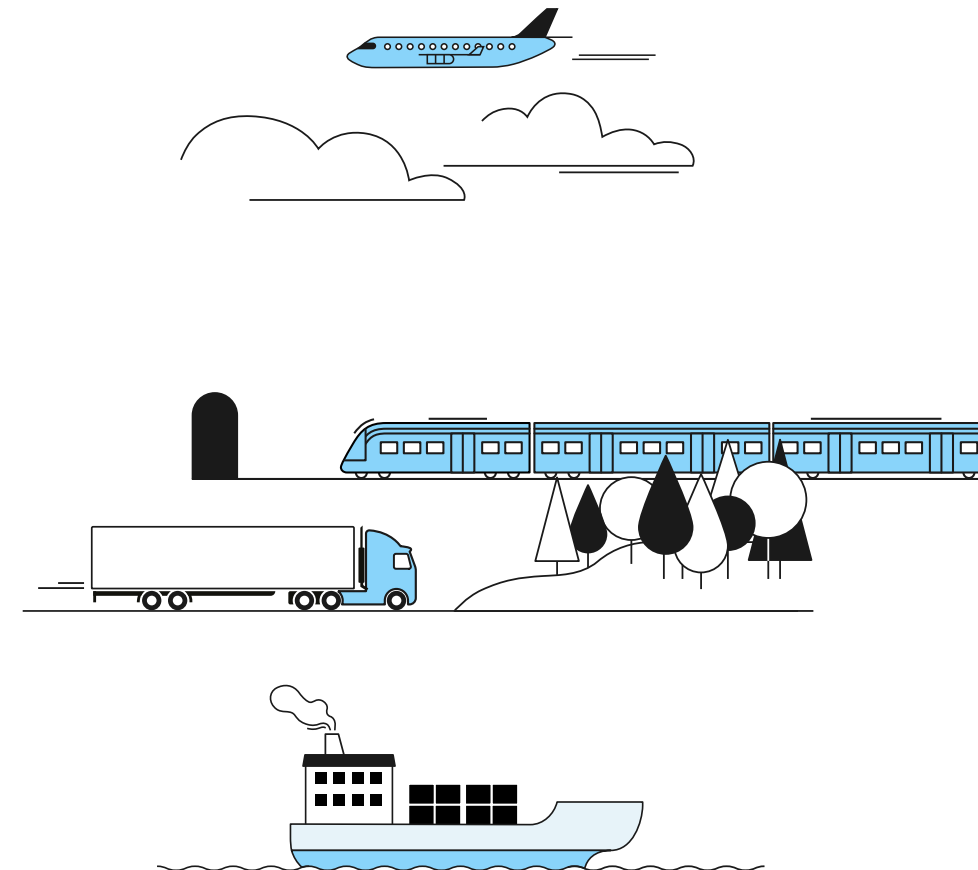
12.2 Greater international accessibility via more strategically important links and strong logistics hubs

International accessibility, sustainable travel and efficient flows of goods by sea, air and rail are important for strengthening the Stockholm region's attractiveness, competitiveness and talent attraction. This is important not only for residents' quality of life and everyday lives, and for businesses' ability to trade, but also for the Stockholm region's resilience and security. Within a global context, the Stockholm region is a relatively small and remote region, which is situated at a considerable distance from other major markets and is thus dependent on good domestic and international contact and cooperation. In order to maintain its international competitiveness, it is important that the Stockholm region can compete with other metropolitan areas that enjoy a more favourable geographical location.

We need to work to strengthen the conditions for sustainable travel across multiple modes of transport and with as little environmental impact as possible. Stockholm Arlanda Airport has a unique position as Sweden's primary airport and its gateway to the wider world, and shall lead the way within the aviation industry's green transition. It also serves as a hub for domestic flights, which strengthens Arlanda's functionality as an airport hub.

At the same time, Arlanda Airport also needs to be able to strengthen its position in competition with airports in other Nordic countries, and to establish more strategically important air routes for the business community and residents of both the Stockholm region and the whole of Sweden. Similarly, accessibility by public transport to and from Arlanda Airport needs to be improved, and land needs to be secured for the airport's future development. This also applies to the Stockholm region's key ports and rail links. In addition, we need to work towards good rail, maritime and road connections to countries and cities in the Nordic region and around the Baltic Sea, not least by taking advantage of the potential offered by

the Fehmarn Belt link to Hamburg and the rest of Europe. The ports in the Stockholm region – as well as throughout Eastern Central Sweden and on Gotland – are vital for the competitiveness of the whole of Sweden, and serve multiple functions, not least for trade, industry and tourism, but also for emergency resilience.



The Stockholm region's spatial strategy

Where we locate new development, infrastructure and recreational areas, and how we design them, affects how we travel, interact and feel in the future. The region's spatial strategy is of great importance for the ability to achieve the Regional Development Plan's objectives. This spatial strategy helps us, as stakeholders, to take advantage of the region's strengths and to address societal challenges in a sustainable manner.

The Stockholm region's spatial development – an interaction between different levels

The themes addressed in the spatial strategy relate to issues that are dealt with at the international, national, regional and local levels of spatial planning. Agenda 2030 and the targets, strategies, directives and regulations developed within the EU are examples of how decisions made at international level affect spatial planning in Sweden. At national level, legislation, drafting regulations and national objectives, and designating areas of national interest set the framework for spatial planning. At regional level, regional issues of significance to the county's physical environment are addressed. In the Stockholm region, the Regional Development Plan is an important tool for providing guidance in connection with regional interests. In ongoing planning, the Regional Development Plan is used to help position municipal strategic planning and local objectives within a broader geographical context. The responsibility for drawing up comprehensive plans and detailed plans to regulate the use of land and water lies at municipal level. The final assessment of what constitutes appropriate land use takes into account the national policy and legislation and the guidance available at regional level, however local objectives and the site's specific conditions are central starting points.

Figure 7. Illustration showing the international, national, regional and local levels in planning

International level

This is where global targets, as well as EU targets and regulations, are set. These include Agenda 2030 and strategies, regulations and directives at EU level concerning e.g. land, water and air.



National level

This is where the framework for spatial planning is established. For example, legislation, drafting regulations and national objectives.



Regional level

This is where regional issues of significance for the county's physical environment are addressed. For example, regional plans, regional objectives, strategies and programmes.



Local level

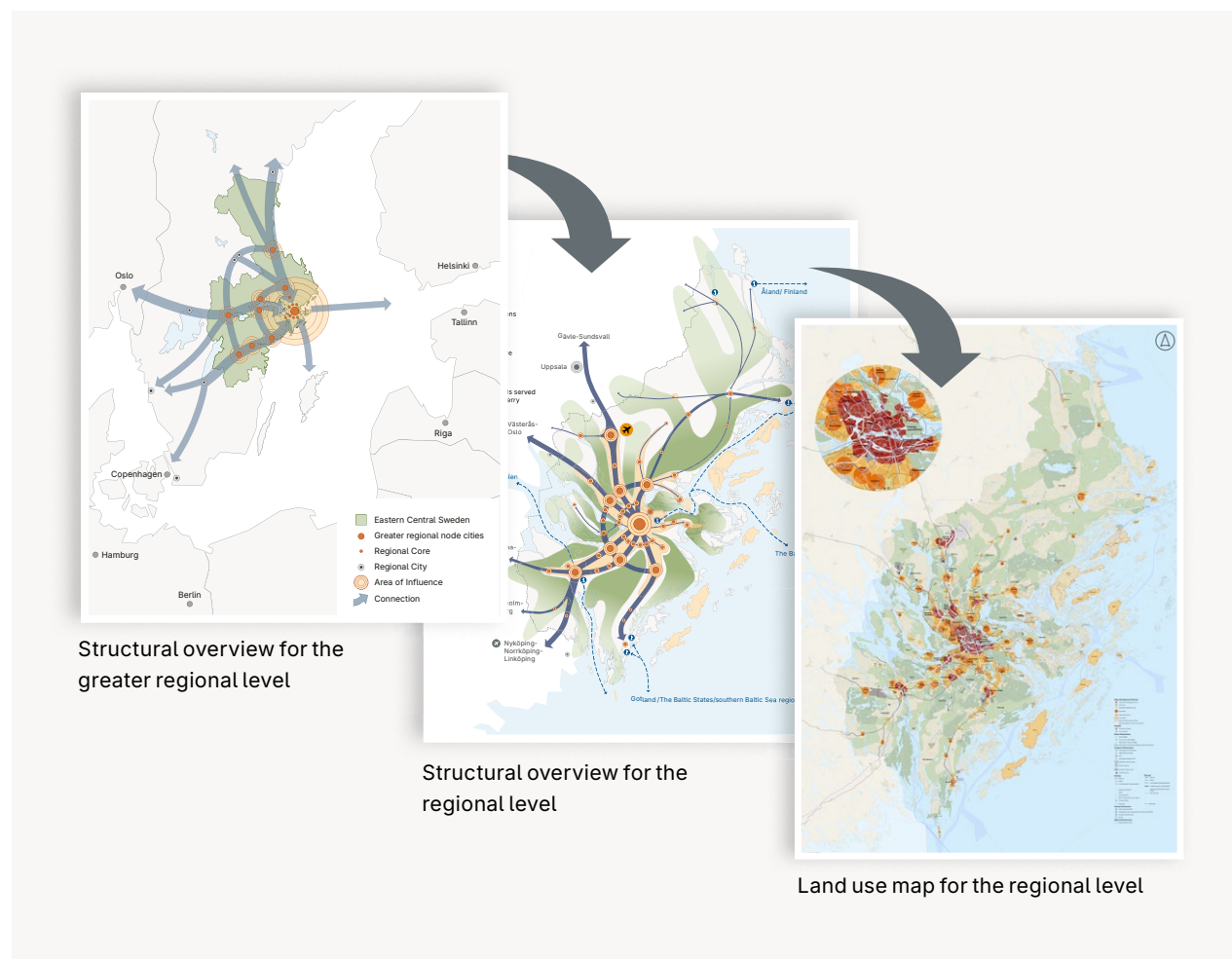
This is where responsibility for detailed planning of land and water use lies. For example, comprehensive plans, detailed plans, local targets, strategies and programmes.



The Stockholm region's spatial strategy is described on different scales

The spatial strategy is based on the vision and objectives of the Regional Development Plan, and is described from a greater region perspective for Eastern Central Sweden, and from a regional and inter-municipal perspective for the Stockholm region and the county's municipalities. At the greater region and regional levels, the regional objectives are translated into spatial principles that guide the Stockholm region's long-term spatial development. The spatial principles also underpin the design of the land use map and the guidelines that describe how the region's land and water areas should be developed in order to reach our objectives.

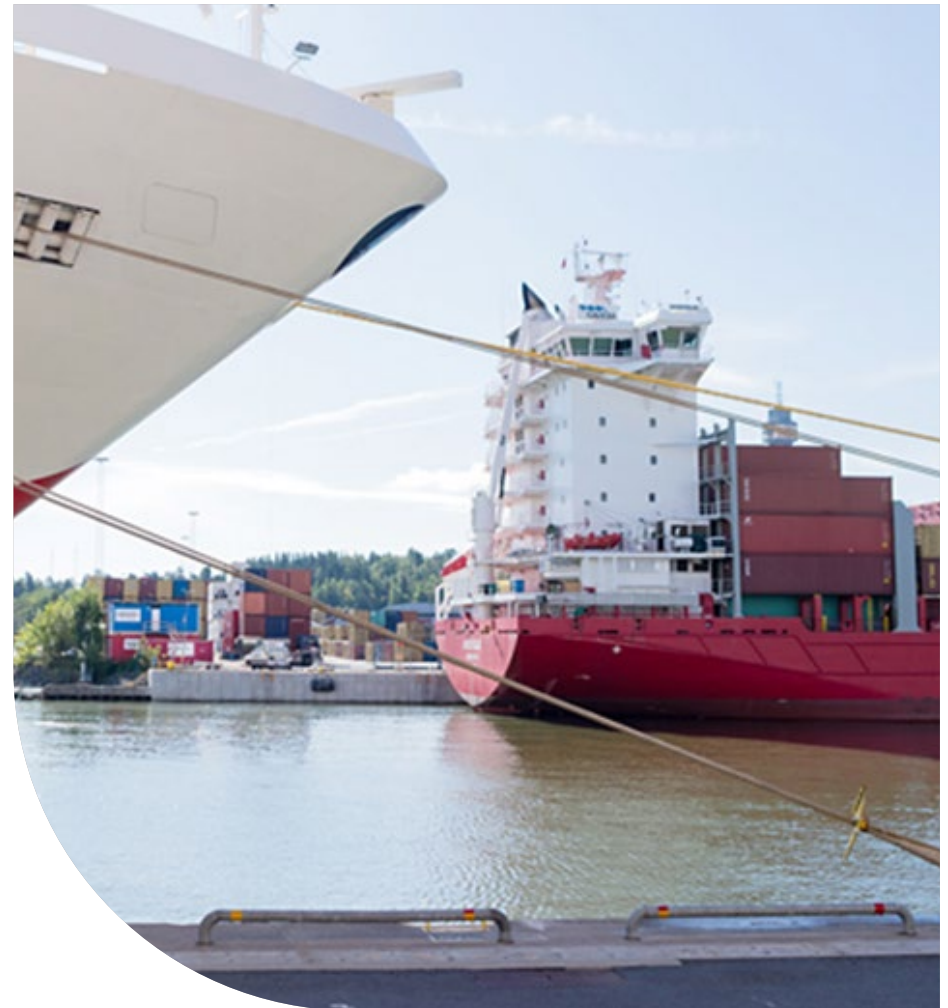
Figure 8. Illustration showing the spatial strategy for the Stockholm region – on three scale levels



International links and strategic objectives

The Stockholm region's competitiveness is dependent on strong international accessibility. An interconnected transport infrastructure comprising road, rail, air and maritime transport will ensure efficient flows of both people and goods. This strengthens export opportunities for the region's businesses, facilitates the provision of skills, trade and tourism, and contributes towards increased resilience when disruptions occur in individual parts of the system. Oslo, Öresund/Hamburg and Helsinki are prioritised destinations for the region's international connections.

Good rail connections within Sweden and to the rest of Europe are a priority. Stockholm Central Station will be further developed as a national and international hub for long-distance rail traffic, and will be strengthened within the TEN-T network, particularly towards Oslo and Öresund/Hamburg. Air travel is the most common means of international travel to the region, with frequent connections to major metropolitan areas in Europe and the world. Stockholm Arlanda Airport's long-term development as an airport hub, together with other commercial airports in Eastern Central Sweden, is crucial for ensuring the region's international accessibility. Ferry ports are also important hubs for flows of passengers and goods, not least within the tourism industry.



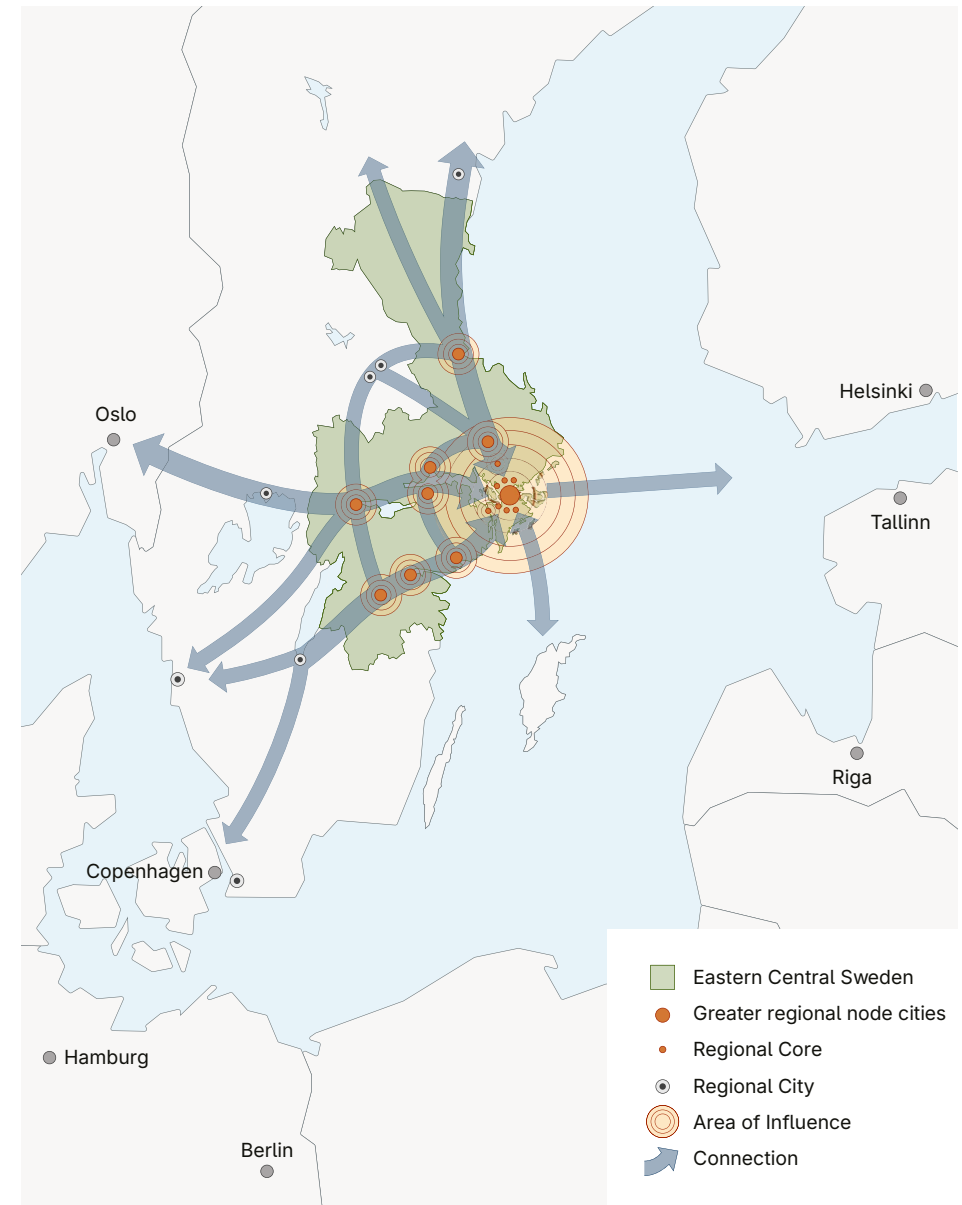
Spatial strategy for Eastern Central Sweden

The spatial strategy for Eastern Central Sweden shows the Stockholm region's role and function within a broader regional context, with a focus on the counties in Eastern Central Sweden. This focus highlights the functional links and physical structures that extend beyond county borders and which are significant for the regions' collective competitiveness and for strengthening shared housing, labour and education markets. It is based on the objectives and principles that the regions in Eastern Central Sweden are jointly striving towards.

The overarching objective is "An interconnected Eastern Central Sweden with strong competitiveness and good opportunities to live and work". The spatial strategy for Eastern Central Sweden is described in five principles, and focuses on creating accessibility – for both the population and the business sector – to Stockholm and the regional cores, as well as to the larger cities in Eastern Central Sweden, the so-called Greater regional node cities.

- Link the Greater regional node cities with Stockholm and each other via transverse connections.
- Work towards mixed-use areas and resource-efficient land use in public transport locations with greater regional accessibility.
- Strengthen Eastern Central Sweden's links and connections with other metropolitan regions, both nationally and internationally, for people and goods.
- Work towards a digital connectivity infrastructure that is robust and meets the needs of Eastern Central Sweden.
- Work towards a sustainable, robust and competitive electricity supply in Eastern Central Sweden.

Figure 9. International and greater regional structural overview

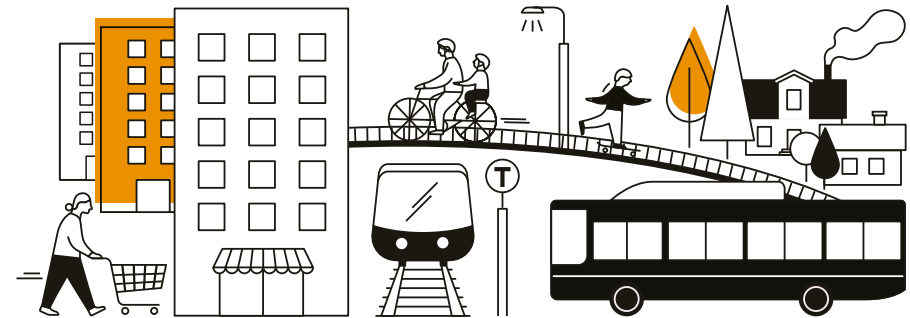


Five spatial principles for the Stockholm region's development

The spatial strategy for the Stockholm region is summarised in five spatial principles. These principles express what we need to base spatial planning on in order to achieve the regional objectives and sustainable development. The principles are summarised in a structural overview on page 56, which shows the underlying physical structures and how they interact.

The five spatial principles:

- Cohesive development areas, with a focus on proximity and accessibility
- A polycentric Stockholm region, in urban and rural areas as well as in the archipelago
- A region with good connections between the city, the countryside and the world
- A cohesive and robust green and blue structure
- Smart use of the region's undeveloped land

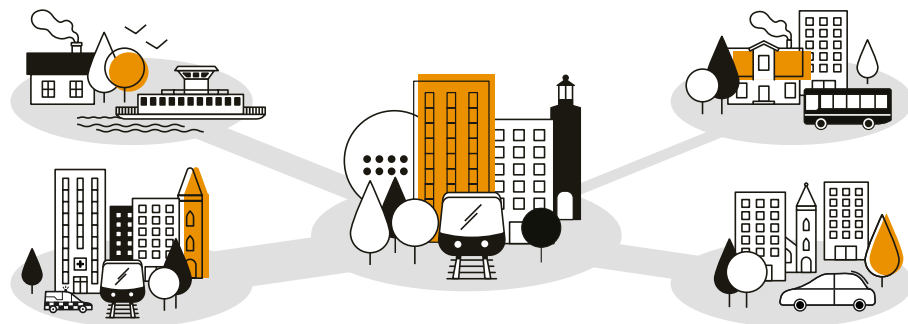


Cohesive development areas, with a focus on proximity and accessibility

The location of development within the region has an impact on our need to travel, both today and in the future. In order to achieve a transport-efficient region with reduced carbon emissions, new development must contribute towards increasing proximity and accessibility between people and important functions by developing areas with a high level of public transport. This will enable the provision of services that are close to residents, and will help to ensure that people have access to attractive public transport. Co-planning new development with existing and planned public transport contributes towards sustainable travel and efficient use of our shared resources. Spatial development can also support increased connectivity by overcoming barriers in the physical environment. This creates new opportunities for people to come together, and enables people to walk or cycle in their everyday lives.

LINKS TO OUTCOME TARGETS

- | | |
|---|--|
| • Reduced greenhouse gas emissions from transport (1.2) | • Travelling by foot, bicycle and public transport (4.3) |
| • Efficient technical supply systems (2.3) | • Co-planning development areas and public transport (8.1) |
| • Electricity supply (3.2) | • Access to welfare services, amenities and leisure activities (8.4) |
| • Transport efficiency (4.1) | |
| • Accessibility in the transport infrastructure (4.2) | |



A polycentric region – in urban and rural areas, as well as in the archipelago

The Stockholm region is currently dominated by the central core. In order to create good opportunities for living and working throughout the Stockholm region, the polycentric structure needs to be reinforced.

The polycentric structure comprises the central core, regional cores, local cores, rural nodes, rural service points, core islands and islands served by state road ferry. These are all places that fulfil a specific function for their surroundings by bringing together a variety of services, leisure, workplaces and housing in locations close to public transport. The different geographies complement both each other and the central core. By continuing to strengthen these locations and the links between them, we can create good conditions for a multifaceted business sector, while also ensuring that more residents enjoy proximity and access to important functions, and enabling more people to travel sustainably in their everyday lives.

LINKS TO OUTCOME TARGETS

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions from transport (1.2)
- Transport efficiency (4.1)
- Accessibility in the transport infrastructure (4.2)
- Polycentric region (8.2)
- Vibrant rural and archipelago environments (8.3)
- Access to welfare services, amenities and leisure activities (8.4)



A region with good connections between the city, the countryside and the world

The Stockholm region is Sweden's capital region. Access to and within the Stockholm region, for both people and goods, is therefore of great importance for the whole of Sweden.

The Stockholm region needs good connections to the world. An interconnected transport infrastructure – via road, rail, air and sea – is essential for the region's development potential and our ability to cooperate with other regions, both nationally and internationally. Together with a digital infrastructure, this allows for expanded labour, education and housing markets. Within the region, there is also a need for good connections between major urban areas, rural areas and the archipelago, as well as to regionally important destinations, particularly the central core and the regional cores, where the majority of the county's business sector, public services and tourist attractions are located. Public transport is the backbone of the transport infrastructure. Together with a stronger walking and cycling network and fossil-free vehicles, this contributes towards sustainable travel with good connections, both regionally and locally.

LINKS TO OUTCOME TARGETS

- Transport efficiency (4.1)
- Accessibility in the transport infrastructure (4.2)
- Travelling by foot, bicycle and public transport (4.3)
- Polycentric region (8.2)
- Vibrant rural and archipelago environments (8.3)
- Access to welfare services, amenities and leisure activities (8.4)
- Recruitment of international talent and cutting-edge expertise (11.1)
- International accessibility (12.2)



A cohesive and robust green and blue structure

The Stockholm region's green wedges and its network of sea, lakes and watercourses are of great importance for the region's attractiveness and the opportunity to achieve our long-term objectives in connection with sustainable development. The region's green and blue structure needs to be safeguarded, strengthened and developed in interaction with the built environment and infrastructure. Overcoming barriers and increasing accessibility to these areas is important in order to ensure that people can take advantage of the qualities that green spaces and water contribute.

Strengthening a cohesive green and blue structure contributes towards health and wellbeing by creating opportunities for physical activity and social interaction, as well as through quieter environments and cleaner air. A cohesive green and blue structure is essential for rich biodiversity and functioning ecosystem services. The Stockholm region's green and blue structure also contribute towards significant natural and cultural values, and reducing climate impact. Greenery and water create the right conditions for nature-based solutions that mitigate the consequences of climate change.

LINKS TO OUTCOME TARGETS

- Carbon dioxide removal and sequestration (1.5)
- Climate adaptation (2.2)
- Health-promoting living environments (7.4)
- Biodiversity (8.5)
- Cultural environments (8.6)



Smart use of the region's undeveloped land

The region's undeveloped land is an important resource that brings significant value to the Stockholm region. It is home to land-based industries which, together with valuable natural and cultural environments, contribute towards a vibrant and attractive region for both residents and visitors. The land also supports important ecosystem services and technical systems that are important for supplying the Stockholm region with energy, clean water, food and raw materials. Access to undeveloped land is of great importance for developing a vibrant and resilient region that can deal with civil emergencies and contribute to greater resilience. Building cohesive communities in designated areas and protecting undeveloped land and agricultural land helps to create a robust region with secure resources and systems to meet the needs of future generations.

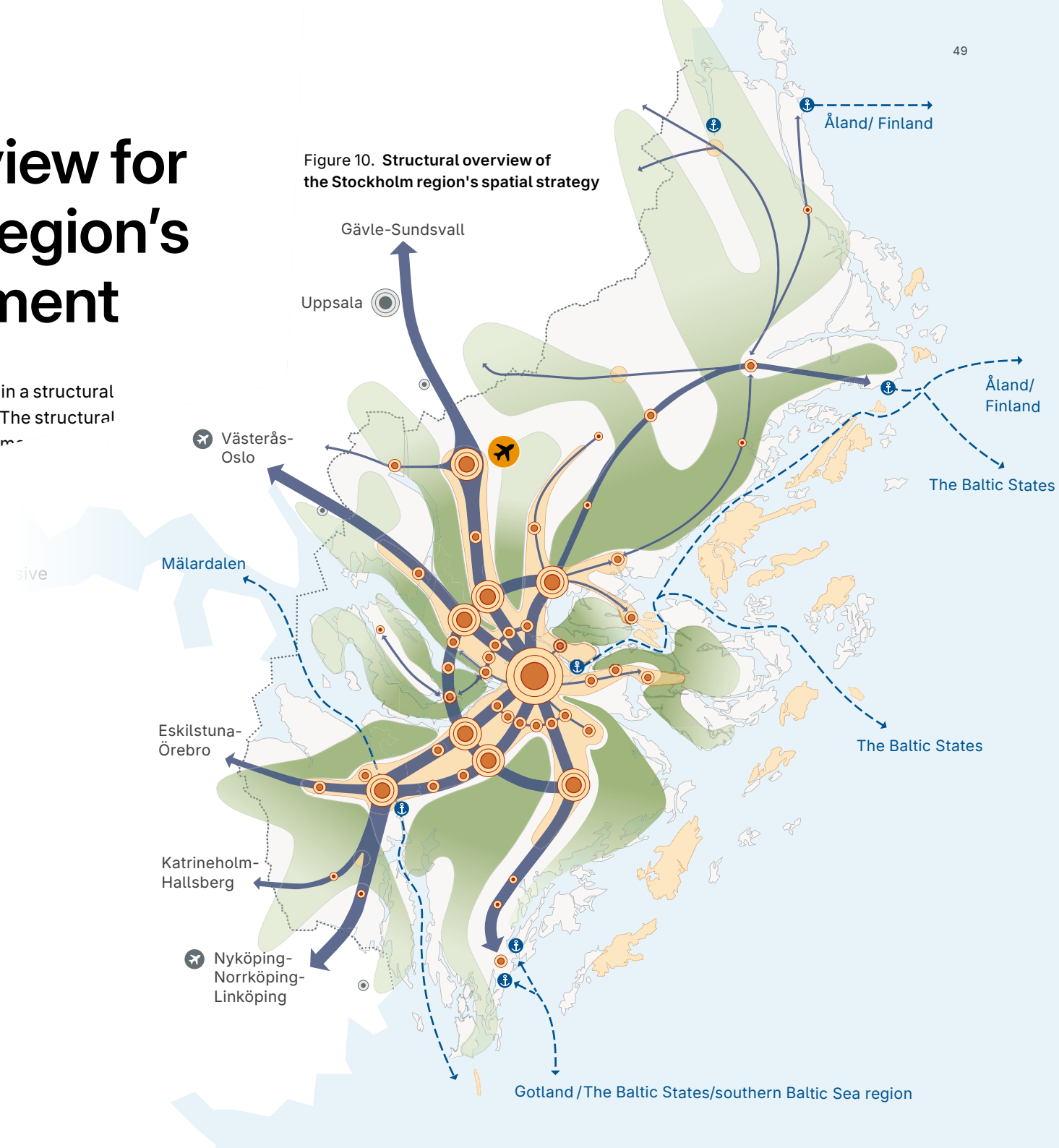
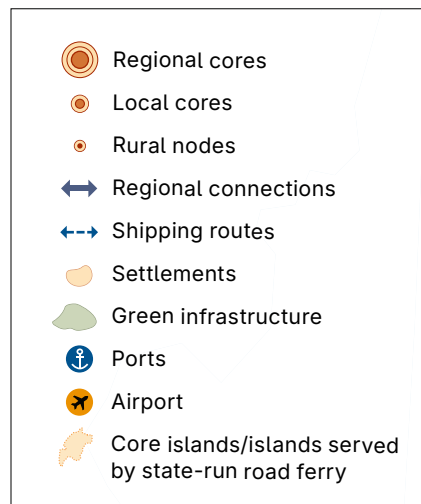
LINKS TO OUTCOME TARGETS

- Carbon dioxide removal and sequestration (1.5)
- Resilience considerations (2.1)
- Climate adaptation (2.2)
- Development of the transmission network (3.2)
- Vibrant rural and archipelago environments (8.3)
- Biodiversity (8.5)

Structural overview for the Stockholm region's spatial development

The spatial principles are summarised and visualised in a structural overview for the Stockholm region's spatial strategy. The structural overview shows how a polycentric, cohesive development structure is supported by a transport infrastructure that connects the region's various parts and connects them to other parts of Sweden and the world.

The development structure also interacts with green and blue structure, which consists of coastal areas stretching from neighbouring counties to the region's outer areas, and right into the central area.



Inter-municipal coordination

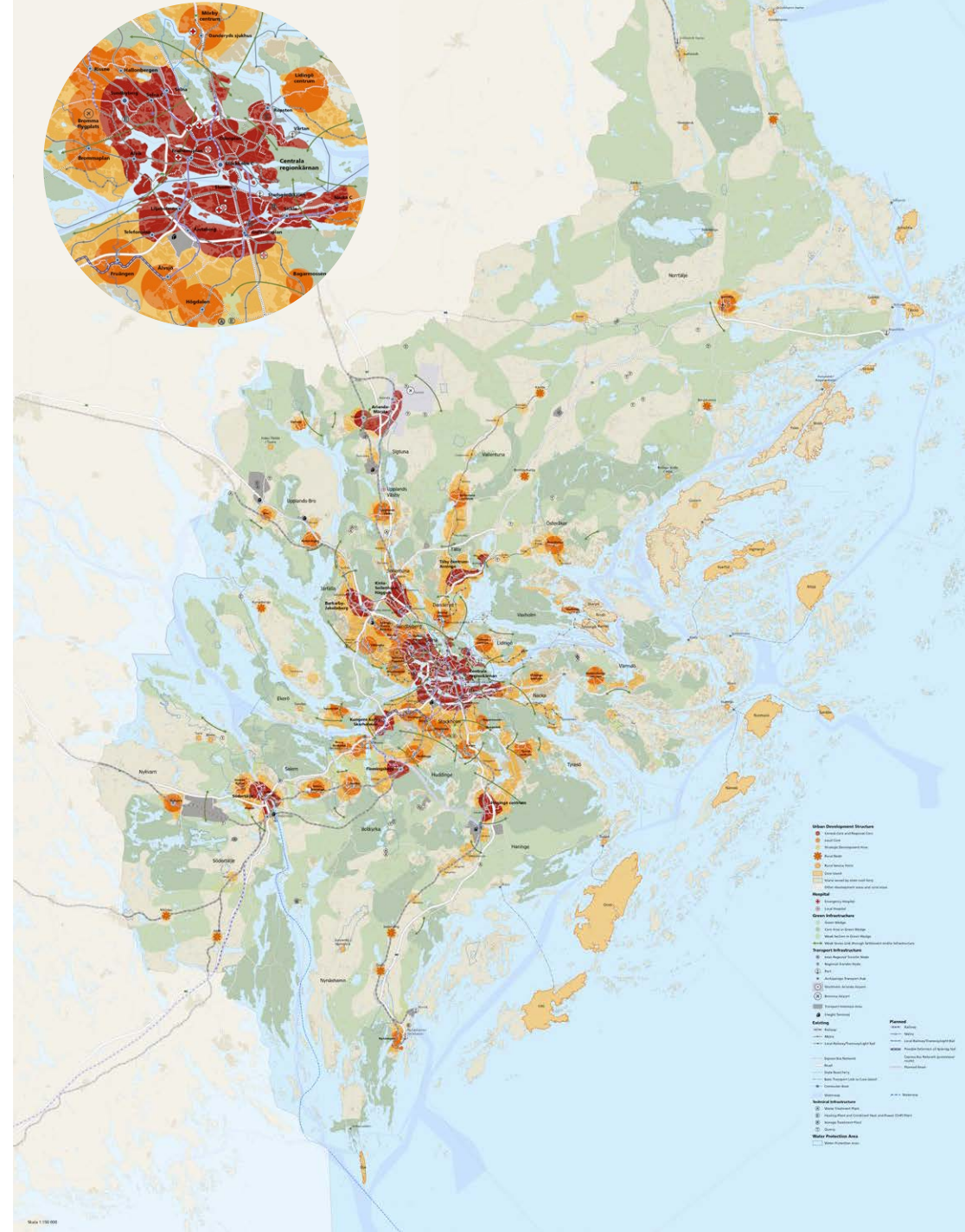
Inter-municipal coordination is of great importance for spatial planning in the Stockholm region. Many regional issues are of an inter-municipal nature, as they often concern structures and values that extend beyond municipal borders or have a function that is of significance to multiple municipalities. Housing, labour and education markets, for example, cover larger areas than a single municipality, and sometimes even areas that are larger than an individual region. Physical structures – such as transport infrastructure, green and blue structure, as well as energy supply, and water and sewage – are additional examples.

The conditions in the Stockholm region are favourable for addressing inter-municipal issues of regional significance in a way that creates effective structures and systems. There is active inter-municipal and regional cooperation in spatial planning processes, which provides a sound basis for continued coordination and dialogue on inter-municipal issues, in which government agencies, the business sector, landowners, civil society and others should also participate, depending on the issue and the planning conditions.

Examples of inter-municipal issues of regional significance that are addressed in the Regional Development Plan:

- Development structure, including the spatial structure of rural areas and the archipelago
- Transport infrastructure
- Green and blue structure
- Cultural heritage environments
- Technical supply systems
- Housing provision
- Economic development
- Larger service facilities, such as sports facilities
- Emergency resilience and civil defence, including climate adaptation





National interests in the Regional Development Plan

The national interests situated within the county represent a wide range of values and functions that are deemed to be of national importance. These national interests are also important from a regional perspective, as they represent values and functions that are crucial for the development of an attractive, robust and sustainable region.

Descriptions of the national interests and assessments of how they may be affected by the proposed development can be found in the appendix "National interests in the Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm region". The appendix also contains assessments of how impact can be avoided or mitigated, as well as general recommendations on how the national interests can be addressed in subsequent planning processes. Particular attention is paid to national interests that affect more than one municipality.

The spatial strategy for the Stockholm region includes guidelines that highlight the importance of ensuring the functionality and the future development of the transport infrastructure's and technical supply systems' facilities in subsequent

planning processes, as well as taking into account the interests of total defence. It is also clear from these guidelines that natural, cultural and recreational values should be taken into account when planning new development areas and various types of new infrastructure. Through these guidelines, the Regional Development Plan helps to ensure that national interests are met in subsequent planning processes. Furthermore, national interests relating to cultural conservation, outdoor recreation and nature conservation have been important bases for considerations in the development of the regional green structure. In certain cases, the assessments of the impact on national interests have formed the basis for developing the land use map, so that the plan better serves the county's national interests.

There are sometimes conflicting objectives between national interests and the development of regionally prioritised development areas. For example, national interests relating to cultural conservation often coincide with the regionally prioritised development areas. This requires that the cultural aspects of these areas, values of national interest and the legibility of the landscape are taken into account when planning new development areas. Densification must therefore take place in a careful and considerate manner, and must be adapted in line with local conditions. Considerate siting, design and density are examples of how negative impacts on national interests in cultural conservation can be avoided. Greater knowledge about cultural heritage issues and up-to-date knowledge bases are important for avoiding negative impacts. Overall, it is of great importance that subsequent planning processes take into account national interests that risk being affected.



ABOUT | DEVIATIONS FROM THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The aim of making the Regional Development Plan guiding rather than being legally binding is to allow for the consideration of circumstances and interests that are not addressed in the plan when working on, for example, a comprehensive plan or a detailed plan. In comprehensive plans and detailed plans, any deviations from the Regional Development Plan should be reported together with an account of the reasons for the deviation. This ensures transparency regarding the application of the Regional Development Plan.

The regional development structure

The region's development structure comprises a wide variety of environments with different conditions for development. We have dense urban environments with a broad range of workplaces, retail and culture, etc. but we also have suburbs and small towns with a more local range of services and a variety of low and high density residential areas. The smaller communities in the countryside and the archipelago complement the urban areas in the region's more central parts by offering more rural living environments. The regional development structure also includes areas for different types of business, such as commerce and light industry. The diversity of different built environments is a strength that contributes to the attractiveness of the Stockholm region.

Regionally prioritised development areas

The land use map shows sites that are regionally prioritised for development. These are the best sites in each municipality from a regional perspective, based on both accessibility by public transport and the function and location of the sites within the region. The designation of the regionally prioritised development areas is schematic, and is based on the regional objectives and the five spatial principles for the region's development. The regionally prioritised development areas are divided into seven categories of built-up areas:

- Strategic development areas
- Central core
- Regional cores
- Local cores
- Rural nodes
- Rural service points
- Core islands and islands served by state road ferry



The diversity of different built environments is a strength that contributes towards the attractiveness of the Stockholm region.

The strategic development areas are the foundation of the regionally prioritised development areas. These are sites that have been identified based on their good accessibility with high-capacity public transport, both to the central core and to the regional cores. Together, the central core, regional cores, local cores, rural nodes, rural service points, core islands and islands served by state road ferry make up the region's polycentric structure. These are sites that are of particular

significance for creating proximity and accessibility to important functions that residents use in their everyday lives. By developing within the prioritised development areas, new development can contribute towards the regional objectives regarding sustainable development.

Other settlement locations and rural areas

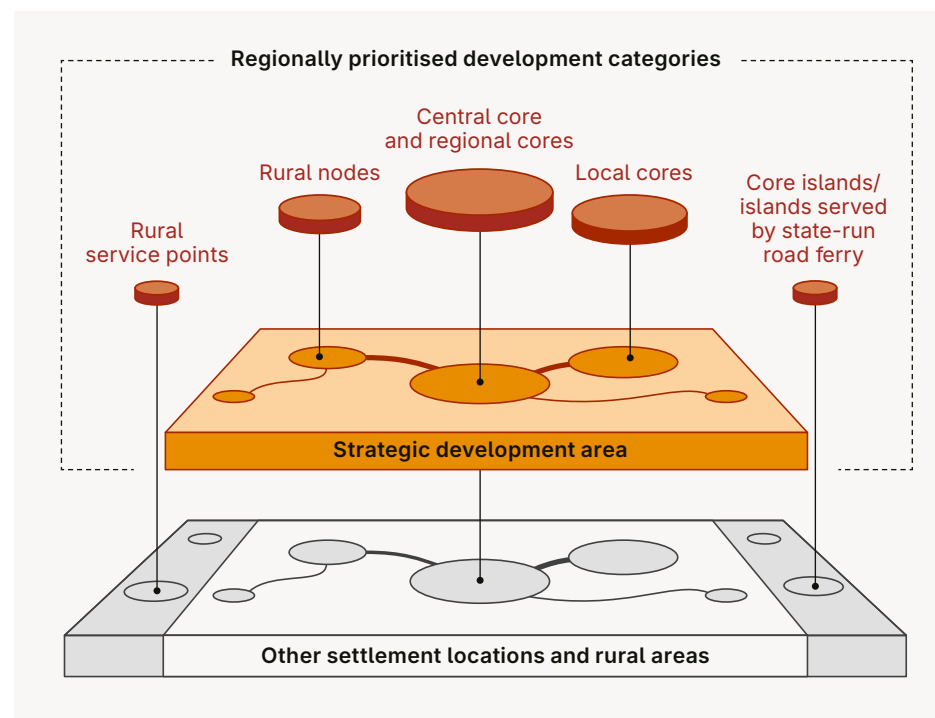
The areas located outside the regionally prioritised development areas constitute a separate category: Other settlement locations and rural areas. There is some potential for land development here, but there are also larger undeveloped areas that should not be used for land development due, for example, to their value for land-based industries or because of their high natural, cultural and recreational values.

The importance of the regional development structure

Development within the prioritised development areas can contribute towards the objectives in the Regional Development Plan in several ways. It supports an efficient transport infrastructure and sustainable travel, and means that we can take advantage of investments in public transport and the transport infrastructure that have already been made or been decided on. It also provides more residents with proximity and accessibility to quality-of-life factors such as public transport, workplaces, education and services, as well as cultural and leisure activities. The designation of the regionally prioritised development areas also helps to ensure that valuable natural and cultural areas can be preserved, and that the region's land and shared resources can be used efficiently. Development in these areas creates good opportunities to live and work throughout the Stockholm region in a sustainable manner.

Within the other settlement locations and rural areas, new built-up areas can help to enhance the variation of different living environments and business areas, while land of significance for land-based industries is preserved and high natural, cultural and recreational values are safeguarded.

Figure 12. The development structure's design



ABOUT | EFFICIENT LAND USE

Efficient land use involves making the best possible use of a site's potential and its good accessibility. This may mean locating the right function in the right place. For example, visitor-intensive businesses located near stations can help to reduce the need for both car journeys and parking spaces. In the same way, the land claims for development can be reduced by avoiding land-use-intensive facilities and large car parks in the most accessible locations. Efficient land use can also involve facilitating shared use and a mixed-use approach to land and buildings. As in all cases, the density, design and location of new built-up areas must be based on the site's character and its conditions for development.

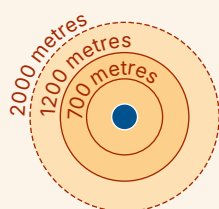
Development of the regional development structure

The following section describes each category of the development structure and the specific guidelines for development within the different categories. In addition to the specific guidelines for each category, there are also supplementary guidelines that are applicable to all development – regardless of which category it is located within.

Strategic development areas

The strategic development areas form the foundation of the regionally prioritised development areas. They extend along the region's major public transport routes, and are characterised by good accessibility by public transport. The character of the areas varies between denser, mixed-use environments, commercial and business areas, and areas with low-density housing.

Development in the strategic development areas helps to strengthen a regionally cohesive structure and land use that allows undeveloped land to be preserved as far as possible. Development in these locations also promotes sustainable travel and the efficient use of shared resources such as infrastructure, public transport, technical supply systems and services. The potential for development may vary between different areas, depending on factors such as level of accessibility, existing values and other specific conditions at the site.



The strategic development areas are designated based on proximity to high-capacity public transport, using a fixed radius from public transport stations or stops for radial express buses. This radius is either 1,200 metres or 700 metres, depending on where in the public transport system the location is situated. For locations further out in the region that have a stronger local labour market, a distance of 2,000 metres from a public transport node has been used. This applies, for example, to Norrtälje, Märsta, Nynäshamn and Södertälje. The designation of the strategic development areas also includes areas that have high accessibility to a regional core and where you can reach a core within 15 minutes by public transport (including walking time to the station, waiting time and transfer time).

The designation is schematic and, in some cases, includes areas where there are decisions or discussions regarding the preservation of existing land use, for example through nature reserves. Norra Kymlinge in Sundbyberg is an example of this, where future land use is to be investigated. The intention of the strategic development areas is to identify locations where development can support sustainable travel and a cohesive development structure, for example, which is prioritised from a regional perspective. At the same time, the scope of new development will be adapted to site-specific conditions and prioritisations made at the municipal level. This means that municipalities have the opportunity to make their own assessments and to decide, for example, on establishing nature reserves or other forms of area protection.

Guidelines for development within the strategic development areas

- Plan for cohesive development structures with efficient land use in the best public transport locations. Locate workplace-intensive operations, as well as public services and retail that generate extensive travel, within a walking distance of around 700 metres from a station or other major bus terminal.
- Good accessibility by public transport should be maintained and, if necessary, improved. The link to major local and regional destinations, such as the nearest regional core, should be prioritised.
- Adapt density and design to the character of the site and site-specific conditions. Plan new development with consideration for existing natural and cultural values.
- The siting of new business areas should take into account surrounding areas, and should be in locations that limit any negative effects on the transport infrastructure, road safety and noise. Ensure that there is sufficient receiving capacity in the transport infrastructure when developing existing transport-intensive areas.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 64–65

The polycentric structure

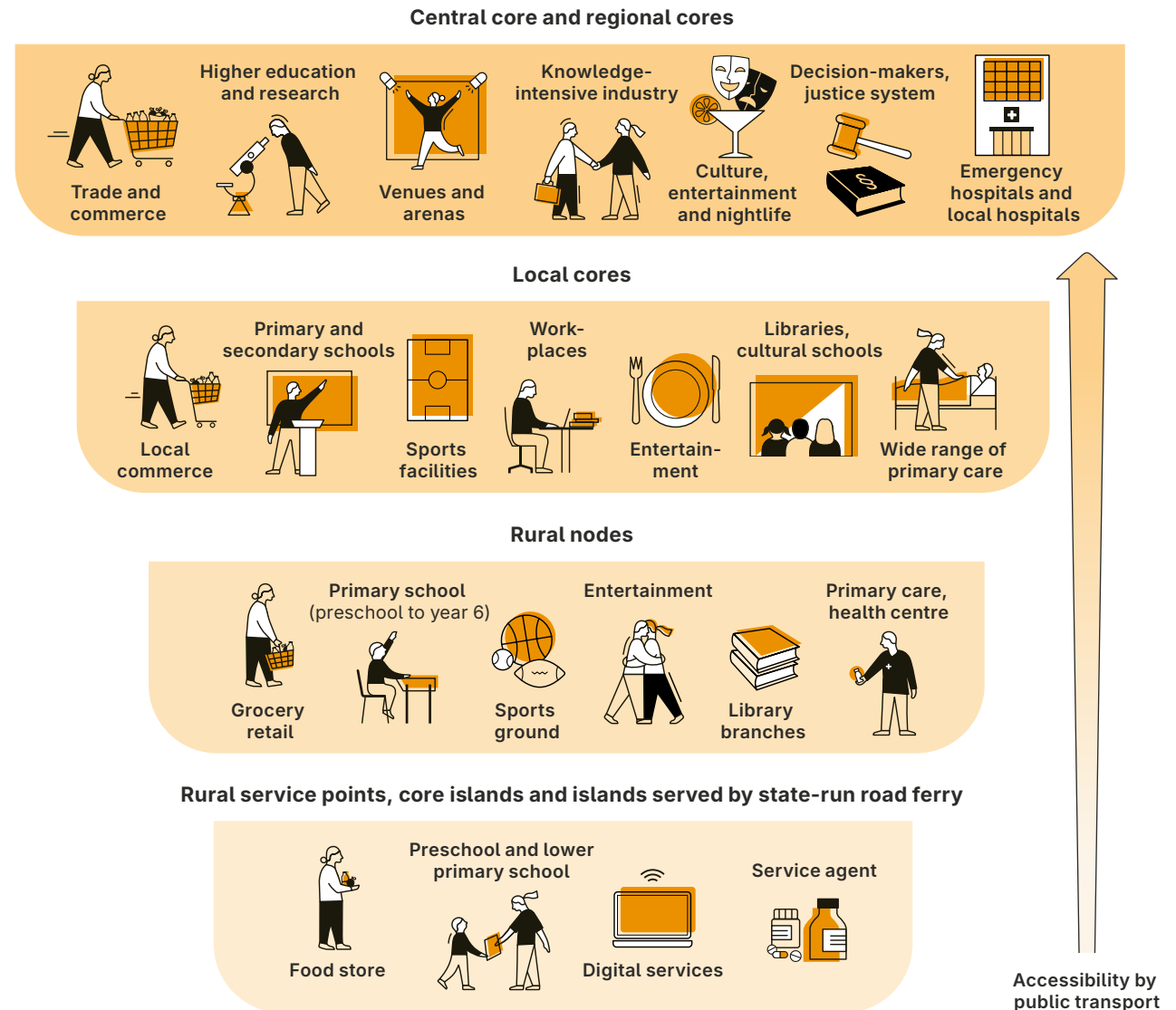
This polycentric structure includes the following categories: Central core, Regional core, Local core, Rural node, Rural service point, Core island and Island served by state road ferry. These are all destinations for business, services and public transport within their geographical context, and serve a regional, sub-regional or local catchment area.

Locating workplaces, services and housing in places within the polycentric structure is of great importance for strengthening the Stockholm region as a polycentric region. This helps to ensure that more people have proximity and access to important functions in the region. The more visitor-intensive a function is and the larger its catchment area, the more important it is that the function is located in a place with high regional accessibility by public transport – see the figure opposite.

ABOUT | PLANNING CONCEPT FOR CREATING PROXIMITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

A polycentric region – in urban and rural areas, as well as in the archipelago – is an underlying planning concept for promoting proximity and accessibility to the functions that the Stockholm region's residents need and use in their everyday lives. The 15-minute city is a planning concept that is used by some stakeholders, and is based on a similar idea. The 15-minute city promotes the planning and design of towns and neighbourhoods so that people can reach everything they need in their everyday lives within a 15-minute journey from home on foot, by bicycle or by public transport. The concept was established by Carlos Moreno at the COP21 climate conference in Paris, and had a significant impact on the discussion about how cities and individual neighbourhoods can be developed sustainably.

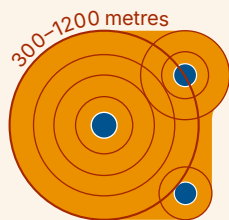
Figure 13. The service ladder. The image illustrates how the degree of specialisation in the business sector and the offering of amenities and welfare services – such as education, healthcare, culture, retail and entertainment – can vary depending on places' size, location and accessibility by public transport





The central core

The central core comprises the central parts of Stockholm, Solna, Sundbyberg and Nacka. The central core is Sweden's political, administrative and cultural centre, and plays a vital role in the country's sustainable development, international competitiveness and attractiveness. Both regional and national accessibility are high, attracting much of the business sector, particularly within knowledge-intensive industries. A large proportion of Sweden's international head offices are located here. The central core is also home to several national cultural institutions, a wide range of commercial services such as retail and restaurants, and many unique visitor attractions. The regional core is characterised by dense, urban areas with mixed-use functions, and features high cultural values, not least within Stockholm's inner city, which has been designated as a site of national interest for cultural conservation.

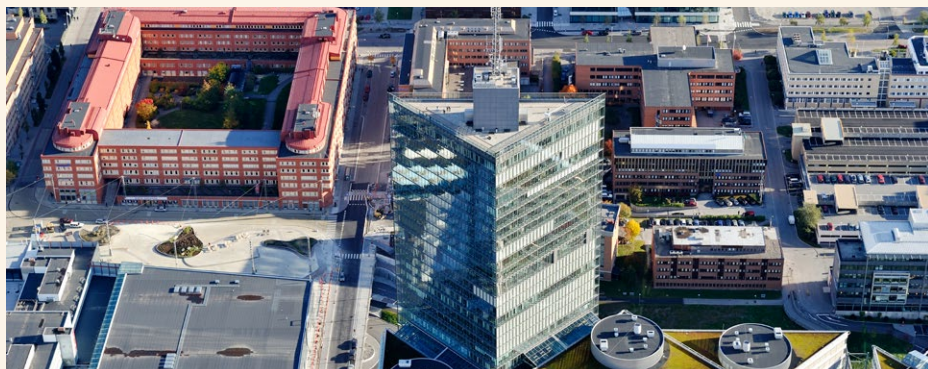


The designation of the central core is primarily based on access to high-capacity public transport and proximity to regionally and nationally important functions, such as decision-making environments, specialist healthcare, higher education and major workplaces. The designation is also based on varying distances to the core's public transport stations, depending on their function within the core.

Guidelines for the further development of the central core

- Strengthen the central core's role as Sweden's growth engine by continuing to develop the qualities that are important for attracting a knowledge-intensive and innovative business sector, such as high accessibility, attractive and well-designed urban environments, proximity to water and large green spaces, and a rich cultural, entertainment and service offering, including in the evenings.
- Plan for mixed-use and high-density environments with urban qualities within the central core.
- Prioritise the location of public services with a regional or national catchment area within the central core and the regional cores, such as higher education, hospitals, specialist healthcare, culture and the judiciary.
- Make use of the public transport system's high accessibility by prioritising visitor- and workplace-intensive businesses with a large regional catchment area within the central core.
- Manage and develop the high cultural and natural values that characterise large parts of the central core, and treat them as a resource based on their specific conditions.
- Prioritise high-capacity public transport, as well as walking, cycling and commercial transport, when designing the street environment.
- Regulation of and access to car parking must encourage increased travel by foot, bicycle and public transport, and an attractive urban environment.

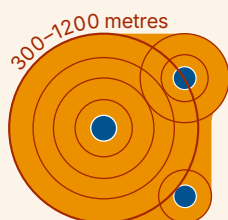
See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 64–65



Regional cores

There are eight regional cores in the Stockholm region (central Södertälje, Kungens Kurva-Skärholmen, Flemingsberg, central Haninge, Arlanda-Märsta, Kista-Sollentuna-Häggvik, Barkarby-Jakobsberg and Täby Centrum-Arninge). Together with the central core, these make up the backbone of the Stockholm region's polycentric structure. These cores are strategically located close to some of the region's major transport infrastructure hubs, and feature high accessibility by public transport. They are destinations for a large regional catchment area, and several of the regional cores also have a greater regional catchment area and form part of an overall urban network in Eastern Central Sweden.

A polycentric region, with eight regional cores, is of great importance for meeting future population growth in a sustainable manner. Due to their locations, functions and high regional accessibility, they have good opportunities to develop into attractive locations for business, housing and key regional functions such as education, healthcare, services, culture, leisure and sport. They all differ in size and character, and development must therefore be based on each core's unique conditions and characteristics.



The designation of the regional cores is based on different distances from the core's stations, based on the stations' function within the core and with the intention of including regionally important functions such as healthcare, higher education and major workplaces within the designation.

Guidelines for strengthening regional cores

- Plan for a mixed-use environment with urban qualities and a focus on increasing the establishment of offices and contact-intensive businesses.
- In the first instance, locate public services with a regional catchment area within the central core and the regional cores, such as higher education, hospitals, specialist healthcare, services, culture and sport.
- Plan for increased housing provision and a population base that strengthens the foundation for services, entertainment and nightlife, and that provides the right conditions for attractive public transport.
- Plan for efficient land use in the best public transport locations. Prioritise the location of workplace- and visitor-intensive businesses within the "core of the core", i.e. around 700 metres from the regional core's regional transfer nodes.
- Strengthen the different identities and profiles of the regional cores as they develop, for example business, architecture, culture or social identity profiles.
- Use cultural values as a resource when developing the cores, and plan new development with consideration for natural and cultural values.
- Improve accessibility by foot, bicycle and public transport to, within and between the regional cores. Plan for a cohesive urban fabric that links the core's various destinations.
- Regulation of and access to parking must encourage increased travel by foot, bicycle and public transport.

Specific guidelines for the Arlanda-Märsta regional core apply in conjunction with the above approaches.

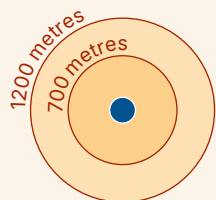
- The development of the Arlanda-Märsta core should take into account the airport's function, and its need for land and surrounding areas for future development.
- The development of the core should safeguard access to Stockholm Arlanda Airport through coordinated planning of new development and transport. Make use of the potential for residential development near Märsta station and, in the first instance, locate visitor- and people-intensive operations at the core's public transport transfer nodes. Land-use-intensive facilities and less workplace-intensive operations can ideally be located in less central areas.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 64–65



Local cores

Local cores are places with central functions and good local travel opportunities by foot, bicycle and public transport. Public transport from the local cores offers competitive travel times to the central core. The aim of the local cores is to promote equal access and proximity to the types of services that people need and use in their everyday lives, such as childcare, libraries, healthcare clinics, grocery shops and restaurants for instance. Municipalities that do not have a regional core have at least one local core, which consists of the respective municipal centre. Here, priority is given to development that strengthens the provision of amenities and welfare services, culture and sport. The development and expansion of the housing stock is also an important aspect of development in the local cores.



The local cores are defined by a fixed radius of 1,200 metres from a public transport node and/or central location. Some cores have a lower level of public transport or services, and are therefore demarcated by a radius of 700 metres.

Guidelines for strengthening local cores

- Plan to strengthen the function of local cores as local centres through an increase of welfare services, amenities, culture and sport. It is particularly important to develop this offering in those locations that currently have significant shortcomings.
- Plan for mixed-use environments with urban qualities and efficient land use in strategic central locations.
- Make use of and build on the character and identity of the site when developing local cores. Plan new development with consideration for existing natural and cultural values.
- Locate workplace-intensive businesses, as well as public services and retail that generate extensive travel, within a walking distance of around 700 metres from the public transport node.
- Good public transport provision should be maintained and, if necessary, developed. Prioritise the link to major local and regional destinations, such as the nearest regional core.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 64–65



Photo: Helene Skoglund/Nynäs Hamns Posten

Rural nodes

Rural nodes are settlements in rural areas that serve as important hubs for the surrounding countryside and are considered suitable for further development as both residential areas and service centres. These nodes either have a population of at least 1,000 inhabitants or are assessed to have the potential to reach this population level in the future. Rural nodes offer a certain level of services, which may include a grocery shop, a school and a sports ground. There is also some healthcare service offering here. The level of service may vary, depending on factors such as the population base, accessibility by public transport and the location within the county. The service ladder illustrates examples of how the service level can vary. All rural nodes should have access to regular public transport to the nearest municipal centre, in order to provide residents in the rural nodes and their surroundings with access to basic public services and welfare services, culture, sport and everyday goods. Development in rural areas should be prioritised in rural nodes in order to support sustainable and robust development with access to services and public transport.



Rural nodes are indicated by a symbol on the land use map centred on the locality's central point, and therefore have no geographical demarcation.

Guidelines for strengthening rural nodes

- New development in rural areas should, in the first instance, be located in rural nodes through infill and expansion adjacent to existing built-up areas.
- Plan to strengthen the role of rural nodes as centres for the surrounding countryside through an increased offering of welfare services, amenities, culture and sport.
- When establishing healthcare and social care services in rural areas, rural nodes and rural service points should be prioritised.
- Strive for regular public transport for travelling to work, school and leisure from rural nodes to municipal centres. Facilitate combined journeys by ensuring that there is space for bicycle and car parking at stations and bus stops.
- Adapt new development to the site's natural, cultural and recreational values.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 64–65



Rural service points

Rural service points are smaller locations in a rural area with a population of at least 250 inhabitants. They are often important for the local business community, and provide the surrounding countryside with certain services, such as preschools, primary and lower-secondary schools, care for the elderly and grocery shops. There may also be a certain healthcare service offering here, such as service points, local clinics and mobile healthcare services. The level of service may vary, depending on factors such as population base, accessibility by public transport and location within the region. The service ladder illustrates examples of how the level of service can vary. In order to provide residents in rural service points with access to other basic services, there must be public transport links to the nearest municipal centre. Development in rural service points contributes towards an increased supply of rural housing close to services and some public transport. Rural service points can also serve as designated assembly points during civil emergencies or heightened states of alert



Rural service points are indicated by a symbol on the land use map centred on the locality's central point, and therefore have no geographical outline.

Guidelines for strengthening rural service points

- Plan for careful development by, in the first instance, adding to existing built-up areas.
- Plan for the development of the area's local services, such as grocery shops, preschools, and primary and lower secondary schools, to strengthen access to these facilities in rural areas.
- When establishing healthcare and social care services in rural areas, rural nodes and rural service points should be prioritised.
- Ensure public transport links to municipal centres. Facilitate combined journeys by ensuring that there is space for bicycle and car parking at stations and bus stops.
- Adapt new development to the site's natural, cultural and recreational values.
- Ensure a sustainable water and sewerage supply. This is particularly important in areas located near key surface and groundwater sources.
- Ensure the continued expansion of robust digital infrastructure as part of creating accessibility in rural areas.

See also the supplementary guidelines on page 63–64

Core islands and islands served by state road ferry

The county's archipelago features a multitude of islands, islets and skerries, of which only a few islands have a permanent population. Some of these islands have a fixed link in the form of a state road ferry. These are Tynningö, Rindö, Skarpö, Ljusterö, Yxlan and Blidö. These islands are deemed to have the potential for developing more housing, services, local businesses and a certain level of care services. Developing the islands served by state road ferry will help to strengthen the conditions for an increase of housing in the archipelago, with proximity to services and some public transport.

Core islands are larger islands in the archipelago with a permanent population that lack a fixed link in the form of a bridge, tunnel or state road ferry. The core islands have a year-round resident population, and are considered to have the potential for a basic range of services, including a certain offering of healthcare services such as service points, local clinics and mobile healthcare services. The core islands are Arholma, Tjockö, Gräskö, Ingmarsö, Möja, Sandön, Svartsö, Ramsö, Runmarö, Nämndö, Ornö, Utö and Öja.

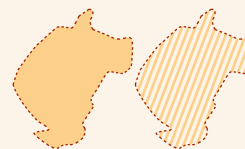
The core islands shall be served by a basic public transport link, enabling travel to and from the mainland all year round. This basic transport link is based on travel needs and passenger trends to and from the core island in question. In addition to the basic transport link, there are also other important travel links to the mainland and also between archipelago islands that are significant for accessibility in the archipelago. The core islands are considered to have the potential for careful development of new housing and increased services.

The development of services and technical infrastructure also strengthens the conditions for living and working in the archipelago, and contributes towards the core islands' function as service points for the population on surrounding islands, as well as for tourism and outdoor recreation.

Both core islands and islands served by state road ferry can fulfil functions as designated assembly points during civil emergencies or heightened states of alert.

ABOUT | BASIC TRANSPORT LINKS

Public transport must be ensured all year round between the mainland and designated core islands in the archipelago. This public transport is referred to as "basic transport links". On the mainland, basic transport links connect to strategic transfer nodes known as archipelago transport hubs. Basic transport links shall facilitate daily commuting and travel to municipal centres with access to public services. Basic transport links are also important for the archipelago's business community and for visitors.



Core islands and islands served by state road ferry are marked in their entirety to show which islands are prioritised in the archipelago.

Guidelines for development on core islands and islands served by state road ferry

- Locate new housing within or adjacent to existing built-up areas with long-term water and sewerage supply. Where this is lacking, new development must be located in areas where access to drinking water is acceptable. The choice of technical solutions must be adapted to local conditions at the site.
- Plan new development with consideration for sensitive marine and coastal environments and shallow bays, and ensure water quality in surface water and groundwater bodies.
- Promote innovation and new technology as a way to reinforce robustness. Ensure the continued expansion of digital infrastructure as part of creating accessibility in the archipelago.
- When establishing healthcare and social care services in the archipelago, core islands and islands served by state road ferry should be prioritised.
- Use and build upon the islands' characteristics as a starting point for development. Adapt new development to the site's natural, cultural and recreational values.
- Ensure public transport links between islands served by state road ferries and municipal centres.

Specific guidelines for core islands, applicable in conjunction with the above approaches

- Plan for careful development in villages and communities with a cohesive structure, focusing on the development of the local business sector, housing and local services to strengthen access to these functions in the archipelago.
- Ensure that there are basic transport links (see "About" box) to and from the core islands with a predictable basic timetable. Develop basic transport links to facilitate business in the archipelago and to enable more travel opportunities for residents and visitors on core islands.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 64–65



Other settlement locations and rural areas outside the prioritised development structure

The characteristics of these areas vary greatly in terms of density, function, character and location within the region. Some areas are situated in relatively central locations within the region and have a denser structure, while others are characterised by more scattered built-up areas in rural or archipelago environments. The potential for new development varies and needs to be assessed based on the specific conditions of the location.

Access to undeveloped land is of great importance for the ability to maintain and develop a robust region with secure resources and systems to meet the needs of future generations. In the county's rural environments, for example, there is undeveloped land that is important for land-based industries and drinking water production, as well as forest land and other natural and cultural environments with significant recreational, historical and biological values. Land-based industries are land-use-intensive facilities that are also dependent

on site-specific conditions. Agricultural land represents an important part of the Stockholm region's food supply, and helps to strengthen the county's resilience. When planning development, the conditions for regional food production – including drinking water – must be prioritised to ensure robust food security. Certain technical facilities may also be dependent on being located outside more densely populated areas. This may be because they are reliant on site-specific conditions, such as water treatment plants that need to be located near a raw water source. It may also be because these operations are unsuitable for being located in development areas due to the fact that they are disruptive or pose a risk requiring large safety distances.

Other settlement locations and rural areas do not have the same access to public transport as the regionally prioritised development areas, which have been defined on the basis of existing and planned public transport. Further

development of public transport, over and above what has already been planned or decided on, may therefore mean that areas currently located within other settlement locations and rural areas gain regional accessibility at the same level as the areas within the regionally prioritised development structure.

Guidelines for development within other settlement locations and rural areas outside the prioritised development structure

- Plan development with particular regard to the opportunities for creating public transport provision and in early consultation with Region Stockholm's Transport Administration.
- The conditions for potentially more extensive development are that resource-efficient and high-capacity public transport provision with good regional accessibility can be ensured, and that the development does not have negative traffic impacts on the transport infrastructure in general.
- Plan for a street and road network that provides the right conditions for good accessibility for buses.
- Avoid dispersed development structures and the development of agricultural land.
- Adapt the density and design of development in line with the site's natural, cultural and recreational values.
- Preserve the character of the outer archipelago as an undisturbed natural and cultural landscape.
- Ensure the continued expansion of robust digital infrastructure as part of creating accessibility in rural areas.
- Ensure a sustainable water and sewerage supply. This is particularly important in areas located near key surface and groundwater sources.
- The siting of new business areas should take surrounding built-up areas into consideration, and should be in locations that limit any negative effects on the transport infrastructure, road safety and noise. Ensure that there is sufficient receiving capacity in the transport infrastructure when developing existing transport-intensive areas.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 64–65



Supplementary guidelines that apply to all development categories

The supplementary guidelines address aspects that are important to consider in order to ensure that development contributes towards a varied housing supply and the creation of attractive, healthy and robust living environments. These supplementary guidelines must be taken into account when planning for new development, regardless of their location within the Stockholm region, and should be read in conjunction with the guidelines for the category in question.

The diversity of different living environments is a strength that contributes towards the region's attractiveness. All areas must be developed based on the qualities that distinguish the specific location, thereby safeguarding this diversity. Through an awareness of the site's values, such as its cultural and natural values, the site's identity and attractiveness can be strengthened. It is therefore of great importance that planning is based on knowledge of existing values and how these can be addressed and developed. A wide range of different types of

housing, including both low- and high-density housing, also contributes towards varied living environments, and gives the Stockholm region's residents the opportunity to find housing that suits their circumstances and preferences. The design of the region's built environments is also of significance for public health. New development should be planned with consideration for the site's conditions regarding soil and air pollution, noise and risks, thereby creating healthy living environments.

The location and design of built-up areas can affect our ability to deal with civil emergencies and heightened states of alert. By siting and designing new development and essential social services and critical infrastructure with consideration for risks of accidents, high temperatures, flooding resulting from sea-level rise and torrential rain, landslides, erosion and armed attacks, the impact on society can be reduced. The effectiveness of essential social services and critical infrastructure can also be safeguarded by ensuring that they have sufficient space to grow.

ABOUT | ESSENTIAL SOCIAL SERVICES AND CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Essential social services and critical infrastructure perform a function that is necessary for society's fundamental needs, values or security. These functions are maintained and ensured by essential social services and critical infrastructure. Examples of important societal functions:

- The ability to provide healthcare and establish disaster medical preparedness.
- The ability to provide public transport and carry out the transportation of goods and passengers by rail, road, air and sea.
- The ability to meet society's supply needs for drinking water, food, electricity, district heating and district cooling.
- The ability to manage waste safely and ensure its ultimate disposal through preparation for reuse, recycling or removal.
- The capacity to treat and discharge wastewater.
- The capacity to collect, protect and preserve tangible, intangible and digital cultural heritage and documentation of cultural heritage, and to maintain services at museums, libraries and archives.

Supplementary guidelines that apply in all development categories

These guidelines apply to all development categories, and complement the guidelines for the development category in question.

- Plan for a mixed housing stock where households and individuals with different needs and circumstances have the opportunity to live, and which offers a variety of different housing types, sizes and tenancy types.
- Plan for safe, secure and inclusive living environments for everyone, and take into account the needs of vulnerable groups such as children, older people and people with disabilities when developing new and existing environments.
- Plan new development so that existing cultural values are preserved. Take advantage of the qualities that characterise the site, such as design, scale and silhouette, when densifying or otherwise altering the urban and landscape character.
- Prioritise the re-development of existing buildings over new ones, and use recycled construction materials in the first instance.
- Plan for healthy environments with regard to ambient noise, air quality, clean soil and access to parks and green spaces.
- Avoid the development and fragmentation of agricultural land.
- Take into account the space requirements of land-based industries when siting new development and facilities.
- When planning new development, the operations and functions of hospitals must be safeguarded. For example, this can be done by ensuring the functionality of hospitals' technical supply systems and accessibility by public transport and emergency transport, including helicopter transport.
- Plan new development with due regard to areas of importance for total defence, and ensure that new development and essential social services and critical infrastructure are prepared for and resilient to disruption and risks associated with civil emergencies and heightened states of alert, as well as a changing climate.
- Plan new development with consideration for the national interests concerned, and use value descriptions and other relevant documentation from the authorities regarding these national interests as prerequisites early on in the planning process.

Figure 14. Map: The spatial structure of rural areas and the archipelago

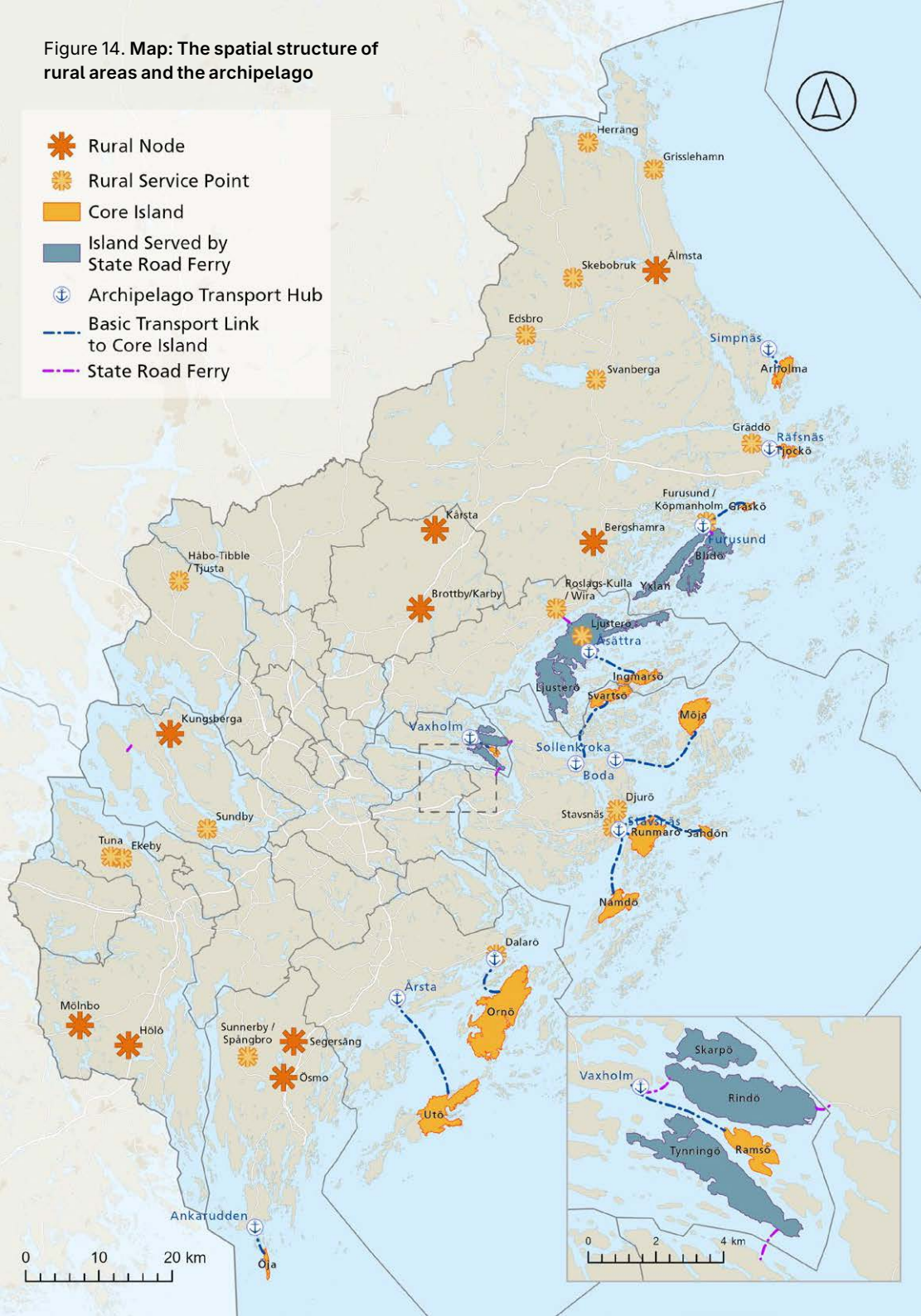
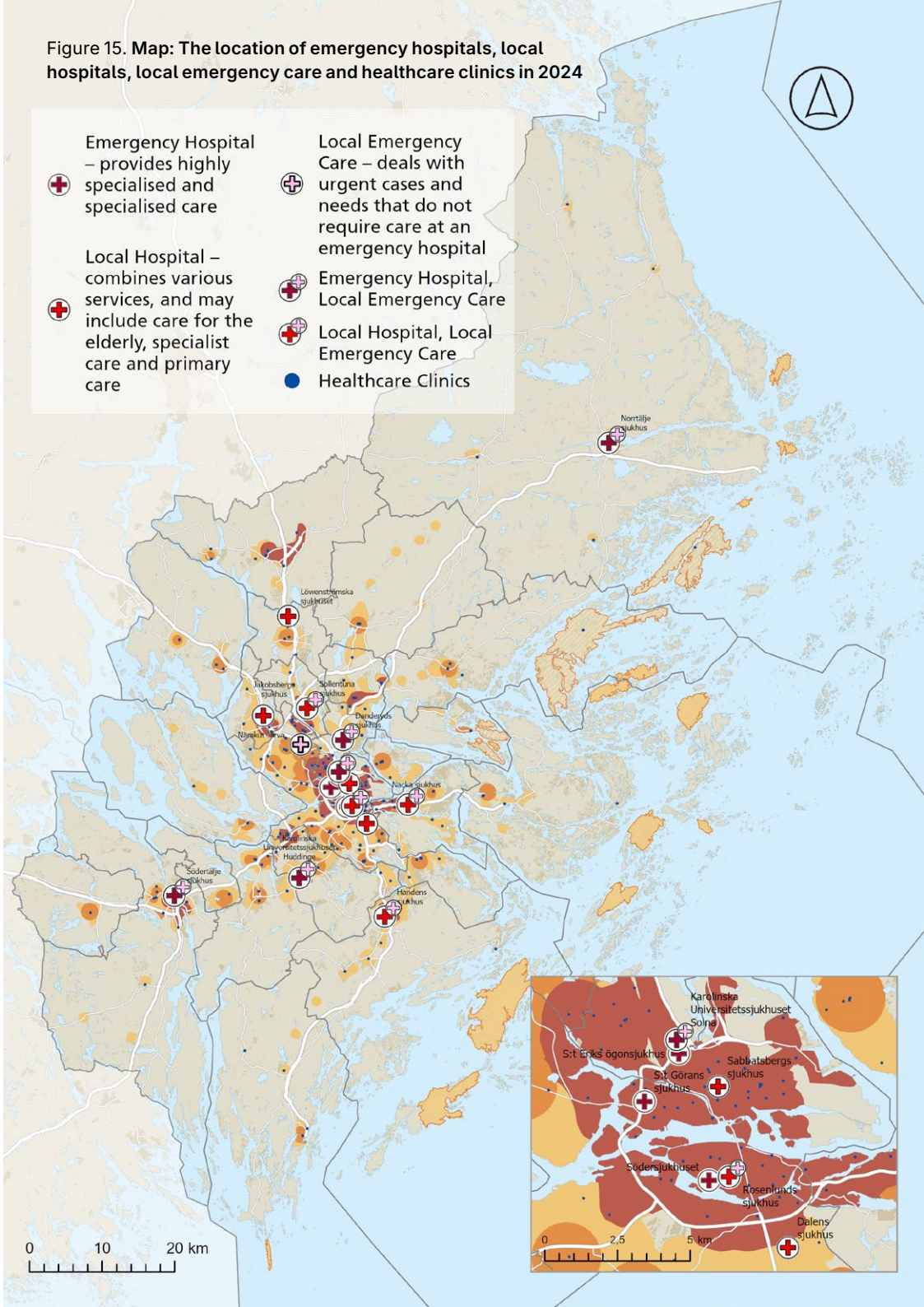


Figure 15. Map: The location of emergency hospitals, local hospitals, local emergency care and healthcare clinics in 2024



The regional transport infrastructure

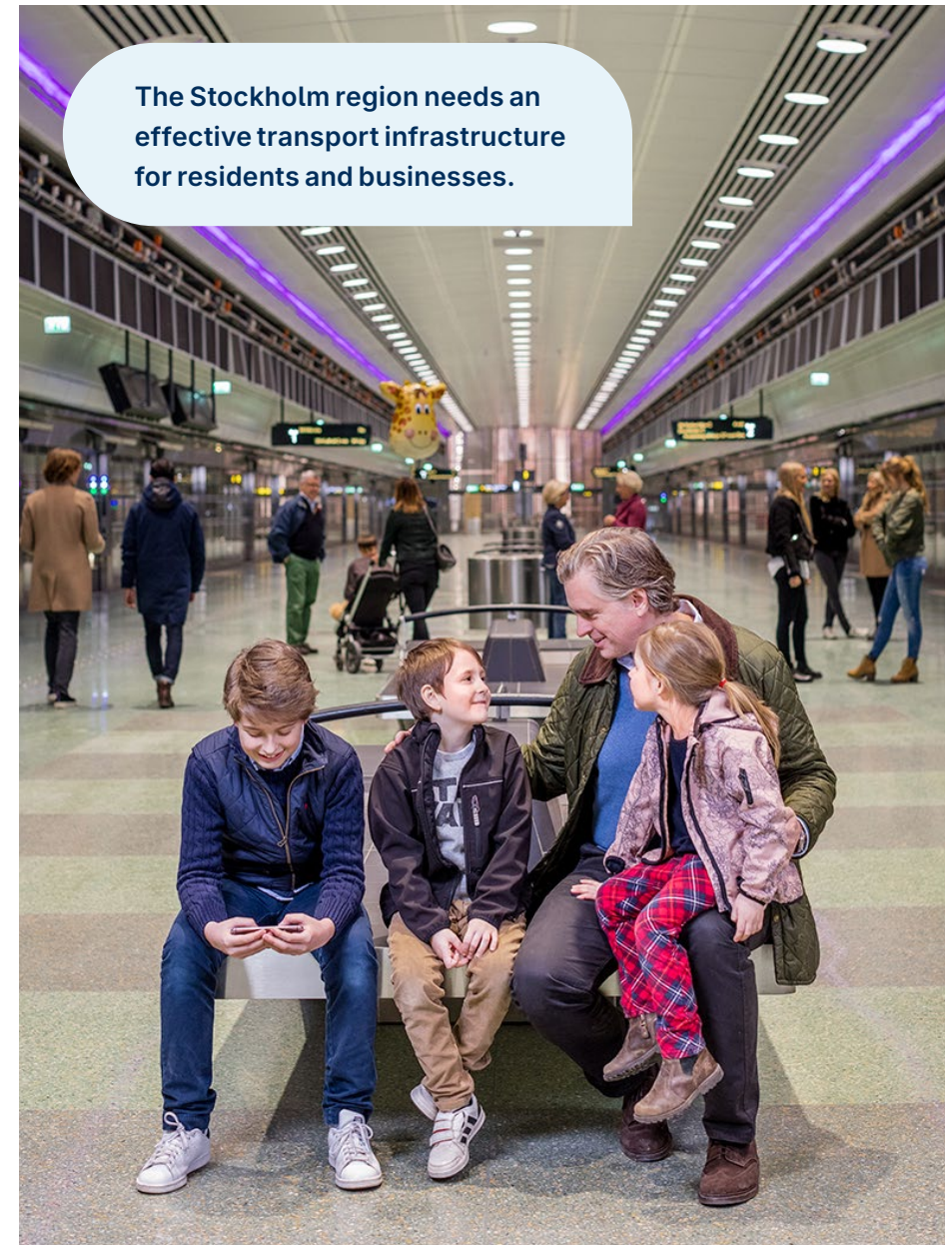
The regional transport infrastructure consists of all transport systems in the region: the international, national and regional road and rail networks, the public transport network for commuter trains, Metro, local railways/tramways/light rail, express bus networks, sea and commuter boat services, and the regional cycle network. Airports, ports, stations, depots and freight transport infrastructure are also included.

The transport infrastructure's categories

The transport infrastructure consists of eight categories:

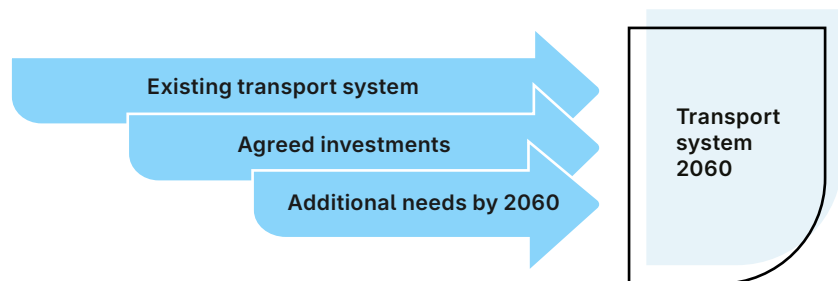
- The regional rail system
- Regional road infrastructure
- Regional cycle network
- Inter-regional and regional transfer nodes
- Archipelago transport hubs
- Transport-intensive areas
- Airport
- Ports and waterways

The land use map includes existing infrastructure as well as approved infrastructure investments. The approved investments will make a significant contribution to the region's transport infrastructure. Certain infrastructure projects are underway, while others are at various stages of the planning process or awaiting funding decisions. These measures aim to create better development opportunities for the Stockholm region as a whole, and the investments are needed in order to achieve several of the aims in the Regional Development Plan. Although the approved investments will be able to address certain shortcomings in the Stockholm region's transport infrastructure, the region's population and



business sector will continue to grow, demand for transport will increase, and new shortcomings and needs will arise. An overview summary of the long-term needs can be found at the end of this chapter, and in a separate appendix.

Figure 16. Development of the transport infrastructure up until 2060



The transport infrastructure's function and importance

In order to generate development potential, the entire Stockholm region needs an accessible and functional transport infrastructure that is adapted to suit its users and future needs. The regional transport infrastructure helps to connect the region, and fulfils an important function for the county's passenger and freight transport. One of the underlying principles for the transport infrastructure in the Stockholm region is to increase the attractiveness and capacity of sustainable transport, thereby facilitating more travel by public transport, on foot and by bicycle. This requires the transport infrastructure to be designed so that journeys and transfers work well for all users, which is particularly important for vulnerable groups with limited mobility, such as children and young people, older people and people with disabilities. Overall, this is clearly linked to national and regional objectives regarding sustainability, transport efficiency and accessibility. Although public transport and other sustainable modes of transport form the basis for the future, all modes of transport will be needed to achieve objectives relating, in particular, to accessibility. Increased opportunities for combined journeys facilitate seamless travel chains and supports more efficient use of the transport infrastructure. A sustainable transport system supports the county's supply of goods and freight, emergency services, resilience and passenger transport, which together form an important part of the region's transport

infrastructure. Cars will continue to play a role in the future in areas where it is difficult for public transport to meet travel needs.

The Stockholm region's residents need an effective transport infrastructure in order to be able to get to work, carry out various everyday tasks and pursue their leisure interests. In a similar way, the region's business sector needs the transport infrastructure in order to be able to attract workers, be accessible to customers and visitors, and export goods and services to the market. In this context, freight transport plays a central role. A robust and sustainable transport infrastructure must ensure that goods and freight can flow efficiently. Efficient freight transport contributes towards the supply of goods for both the region and the rest of Sweden, strengthens the competitiveness of the business sector and reduces vulnerability in logistics chains. Much of the regional transport infrastructure serves national functions for passenger transport, goods and freight, and this is one of several systems that are crucial for maintaining essential social services and critical infrastructure during civil emergencies and in the event of heightened state of alert.

Certain parts of the transport infrastructure are of national interest for transport links using the four modes of transport: road, rail, air and maritime. National interests also include claims on land and water areas for future transport links, noise impact zones, and planned facilities where development is underway. Parts of the regional transport infrastructure are included in the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T), which comprises links and nodes designated by the EU as important for the movement of people and goods across Europe. Certain parts of the road network also fulfil important functions for the transportation of dangerous goods.

The challenges for the transport infrastructure of the future are primarily within the sustainability aspect, particularly the transition to sustainable fuels, increased congestion and resource-efficient land use. In order for transport to become sustainable and form part of a climate-neutral future, comprehensive measures are needed linked to the choice of transport mode, choice of route, fuels and vehicle occupancy rates, which will drive developments towards reduced greenhouse gas emissions. This transition needs to be supported by a combination of technological development, electrification, expanded charging infrastructure, behavioural change and the prioritisation of space. To achieve climate- and transport-related objectives, developed economic instruments will be necessary to address future congestion and accessibility issues, as well as climate-related challenges.

Development of the regional transport infrastructure

The following section describes each category within the transport infrastructure and the specific guidelines that guide the development of the transport infrastructure in parallel planning processes and subsequent planning. In addition to these specific guidelines, there are also supplementary guidelines that need to be considered in all development that affects the regional transport system. The supplementary guidelines apply to all categories.

The regional rail system

The regional rail system consists of national and regional rail infrastructure, and is of great importance for the Stockholm region's passenger and freight transport. It forms the backbone of the transport infrastructure through its ability to provide sustainable, high-capacity transportation of passengers and freight. The commuter train system, the Metro system and local railways all fulfil important functions by connecting the county and having the capacity to handle large flows of passengers. In order for the train system to be able to handle both more passengers and increased freight volumes as the Stockholm region's population and business sector grow, land needs to be set aside for measures to increase the system's capacity. This also applies to space for sidings and depots. The shortcomings in the rail system primarily relate to insufficient capacity for passenger and freight transport, reliability and deferred maintenance.

A significant expansion of the Stockholm region's Metro system and local railways is currently being carried out. The investments that have been decided on will create new capacity and travel opportunities, and will link the Stockholm region together in a new way. Projects that have already been approved include the expansion to four tracks on the Mälarbanan railway corridor between Tomtebodavägen and Kallhäll, the expansion to four tracks on the Ostkustbanan railway corridor between Stockholm and Uppsala, and the rail projects that are part of the Stockholm Negotiation and the Sweden Negotiation. These rail investments will result in greater capacity and accessibility in public transport. In addition to the projects that have already been approved, additional investment is also needed to increase rail capacity and redundancy, for example on main railway corridors heading south, west and north to key national and international rail destinations.



Guidelines for maintaining and developing the functionality of the regional rail system

- Secure land for the development of the rail system, such as depots and sidings for railways, tramways and local railways.
- Ensure space for bicycle parking facilities at transfer nodes and stations to facilitate sustainable combined journeys. At transfer nodes and stations further out in the system, space for car parking may also be needed.
- Ensure that the rail infrastructure can maintain basic functionality during civil emergencies and heightened states of alert.

See also the supplementary guidelines on page 76



Regional road infrastructure

The regional road infrastructure consists of national, regional and local roads that together connect the Stockholm region. The road system is of great importance for both passenger transport and business travel, as well as transporting goods and freight. The shortcomings in the road system primarily relate to maintenance needs, sustainability aspects, capacity, and congestion and accessibility for both passenger and freight transport. The regional road infrastructure is an important part of the express bus network. This network connects the Stockholm region efficiently, with a high standard in terms of service frequency, journey times and accessibility. By giving express bus networks high priority and, if necessary, their own space within the road system, passenger transport capacity along several of the county's busiest roads can be increased while relieving pressure on the radial rail network. To ensure the functionality of public transport, the long-term need for terminals and depots must also be met.

Increased load-bearing capacity on strategic road sections will allow for longer and heavier vehicles, creating the right conditions for greater transport efficiency and more direct routes.

Good accessibility in the road network ensures reliability and punctuality. This is important in order to ensure predictable journey times and for the system to function effectively. Several major investments in road infrastructure are underway or planned within the county. The Förbifart Stockholm and the Cross-Regional Link Södertörn are two of these, and together they will link the Stockholm region and the regional cores through improved cross-city connections, while also relieving pressure on the inner parts of the road transport system. Planned investments will significantly boost capacity and improve accessibility within the road network.

Guidelines for maintaining and developing the functionality of the regional road system

- Prioritise public transport and commercial traffic in the event of capacity shortages in the regional road transport system.
- Ensure good accessibility for existing and planned express bus networks within the road network when carrying out development.
- Ensure that public transport's long-term needs for space for terminals and depots are met.
- Ensure that the road infrastructure can maintain basic functionality during civil emergencies and heightened states of alert.
- Adapt new development and road standards so that dangerous goods can be transported safely. This applies to both managing risks and safeguarding the opportunities for transporting dangerous goods in the future.
- Maintain good accessibility through preventive maintenance, reinvestment, economic instruments and optimisation.

See also the supplementary guidelines on page 76

The regional cycle network

Cycling is a resource-efficient and flexible mode of transport that has positive effects on public health, the local environment and the climate. Cycling also helps to promote equality by giving everyone – regardless of their gender, age or socioeconomic background – greater freedom and access to mobility, thereby making it easier to participate in society and the labour market. Cycling often takes place across municipal boundaries, which means that multiple road authorities share responsibility for the infrastructure used during a single journey. We therefore need to coordinate cycling planning so that it is easy to travel by bicycle throughout the entire region.

The regional cycle routes have been identified to link together key regional destinations. The routes were identified when the first regional cycling plan was drawn up, and have since been partly realised. The cycling infrastructure and designated regional cycle routes need to be further developed to enable increased cycling throughout the county. The map shows a schematic plan of the cycle routes. Some routes are designated “proposed routes”, as their potential, feasibility and routing need to be investigated further. Cooperation between several stakeholders in the region is necessary when developing the cycle routes. The Swedish Transport Administration and the municipalities in Stockholm County are responsible for the expansion, signage, operation and maintenance of the regional cycle routes, while Region Stockholm is responsible for coordination and monitoring. Other parts of the cycle network are important for creating further regional and local accessibility by bicycle, and for ensuring that the regional cycle routes fulfil their purpose.

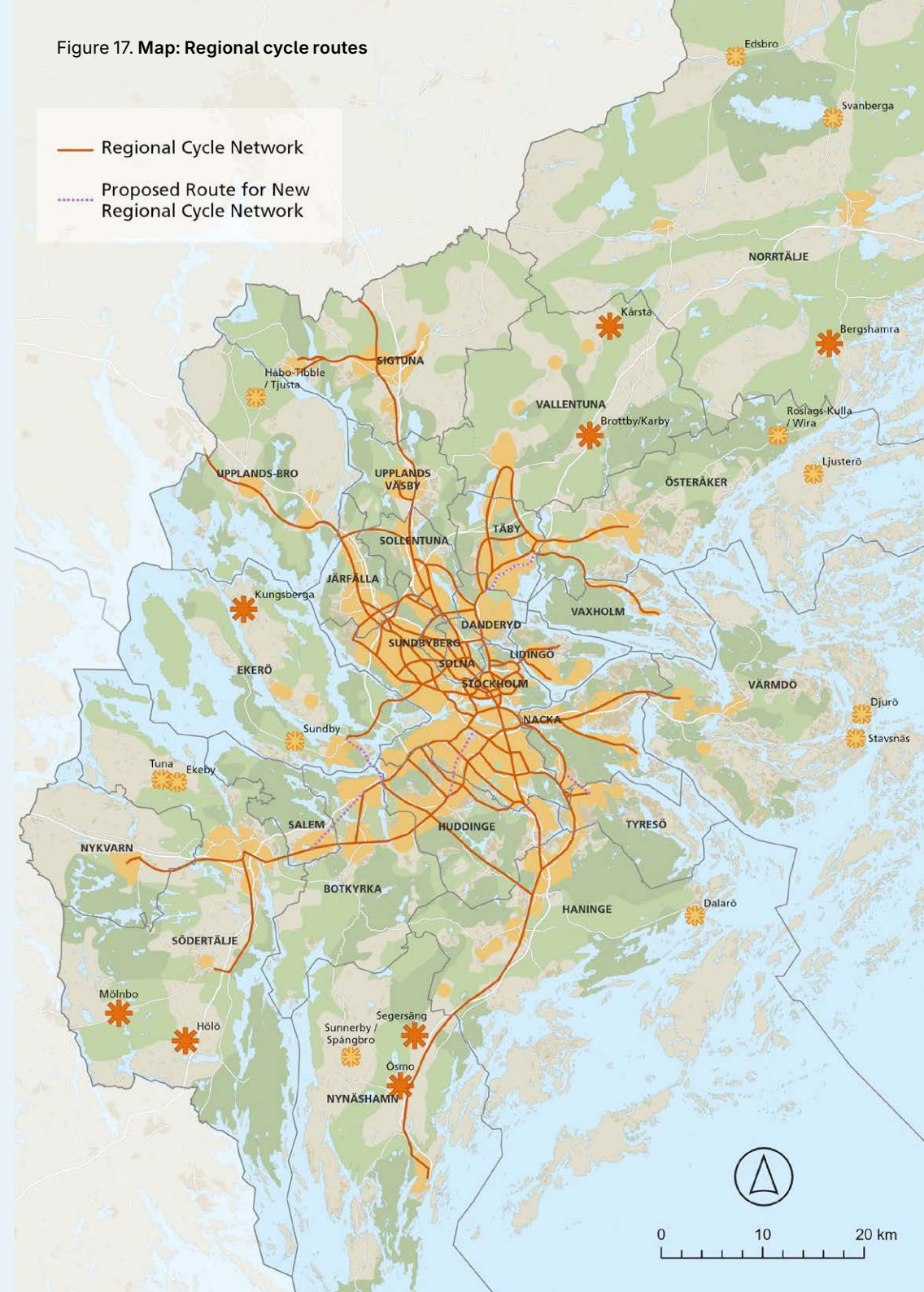
→ Find out more about cycling in *The Regional Cycling Plan for Stockholm County* (in Swedish) at regionstockholm.se

Guidelines for maintaining and developing the regional cycle network

- Strengthen accessibility by bicycle throughout the county.
- Ensure good accessibility and road safety for cyclists on the regional cycle routes.
- Prioritise the completion of longer continuous stretches in the regional cycle network.
- Ensure space for bicycle parking facilities at transfer nodes and stations to facilitate sustainable combined journeys.

See also the supplementary guidelines on page 76

Figure 17. Map: Regional cycle routes



Regional and inter-regional transfer nodes

Regional transfer nodes are major hubs in the regional public transport system. These locations have high passenger volumes and are of great importance for intra-regional travel and regional accessibility by public transport. The inter-regional transfer nodes are transfer nodes in strategic locations that are also served by regional trains, giving them a greater regional function within the system with connections to Eastern Central Sweden. Increased opportunities for easy combined journeys create seamless travel chains and ensures that the transport infrastructure can be used efficiently. In order to contribute towards the attractiveness of public transport and to increase its market share, the transfer nodes should provide efficient, safe, accessible and comfortable connections. Developing transfer nodes with complementary service functions is part of sustainable urban development, creates social meeting places and helps to increase the attractiveness of public transport.

Passenger flows are expected to grow in the future, particularly at the larger transfer nodes, and the transfer nodes' functions and potential for future development need to be safeguarded. Part of this involves ensuring that there is physical space to develop the transfer nodes' functions in order to handle increasing passenger flows, more vehicles and services.

Guidelines for maintaining and developing the functionality of transfer nodes

- Prioritise the location of new inter-regional transfer nodes in the central core and regional cores with inter-regional connections.
- Ensure that the transfer nodes' transport functions and their space requirements are met when planning for new development.
- Promote easy and safe transfers between different modes of transport by taking into account the need for space for bicycle parking, bus parking, turning areas, etc. Develop mobility hubs at strategic transfer nodes. At transfer nodes in the outer parts of the public transport system, take into account the need for park-and-ride facilities for cars.
- Develop and supplement the transfer nodes with service functions to facilitate everyday tasks, create more equal conditions for using public transport, and increase its attractiveness.

See also the supplementary guidelines on page 76

Archipelago transport hubs

The archipelago transport hubs are important transfer nodes for public transport journeys between core islands and municipal centres. The purpose of the archipelago transport hubs is to ensure effective passenger and freight transport to and from the core islands via what are known as basic transport links. (See the "About" box under the section on islands served by ferries and core islands on page 62.) The archipelago transport hubs all differ in nature, and the conditions for development vary depending on local circumstances and the availability of land and infrastructure.

The identified archipelago transport hubs include Simpnäs, Räfsnäs, Furusund, Åsättra, Vaxholm, Boda, Sollenkroka, Stavsån, Dalarö, Årsta and Ankarudden. Östernäs may replace Furusund as an archipelago transport hub for Gräskö, provided that it meets all the requirements for standards in accordance with Region Stockholm's guidelines for planning public transport in Stockholm County.

Guidelines for maintaining and developing the functionality of the archipelago transport hubs

- Basic transport links to and from core islands shall operate from the archipelago transport hubs. A definition of basic transport links can be found in the "Core islands and islands served by state road ferry" section on page 62.
- Coordinate and ensure simple transfers at the archipelago transport hubs between public transport on land and by water.
- Each relevant stakeholder must contribute within their remit to ensure the functionality of the archipelago transport hubs.
- Ensure public transport connections between the archipelago transport hubs and municipal centres and the nearest regional core.
- Take into account the need for space for jetties, turning and loading areas, and infrastructure for renewable fuels, as well as space for car and boat parking for both residents and visitors.

See also the supplementary guidelines on page 76

Transport-intensive areas

Transport-intensive areas can be disruptive and space-intensive, but their functions – such as areas for freight transshipment, warehousing and goods handling – are vital to the county's supply of goods, fuels and materials. In some respects, they constitute essential social services and critical infrastructure. Strategic locations for this type of business offer good accessibility through proximity to e.g. ports, airports and rail and road transport routes, which extend within the county as well as nationally and internationally. Transport-intensive areas are, by virtue of their location and their transport infrastructure, suitable for transport-intensive businesses and ancillary services. Logistics-dependent and multi-modal operations, space-intensive freight and goods transport, and related functions should be located in these designated areas.

Guidelines for supporting the Stockholm region's need for transport-intensive areas

- Safeguard existing strategically located transport-intensive areas where, for example, proximity to ports, airports and rail and road transport routes is a strategic advantage, and take into account these areas' need for space in development.
- New transport-intensive areas should be sited taking into account the capacity of existing transport infrastructure, existing development, and natural and cultural values.
- Ensure adequate electricity capacity to enable the electrification of heavy transport.
- Take into account safety distances with regard to noise and other disturbances, as well as the risk of conflicts in connection with or impacts on water resources.

See also the supplementary guidelines on page 76



Airports

Stockholm Arlanda Airport is part of the Arlanda-Märsta regional core. Arlanda is one of Sweden's contingency airports, and provides essential social services and critical infrastructure. In addition to passenger transport, the airport also has an important function in Sweden's supply of high-value goods. The airport's function as a hub for international and domestic air traffic means it is of great importance for the international and national accessibility of the Stockholm-Mälaren region and Sweden as a whole. In addition, the Arlanda area and the regional core constitute one of the region's largest employment areas. Should Bromma Airport be closed, air traffic will be transferred to Arlanda, which will strengthen Arlanda's significance and function for domestic air traffic. The land lease agreement for Bromma Airport with the City of Stockholm expires in 2038. The Regional Development Plan is based on the direction set by the City of Stockholm, which involves developing a new housing district in the airport area following the airport's closure. Bromma's airport functions will remain in place until it closes and until the designation of the airport as a national interest is revoked.

In order to strengthen Arlanda's competitiveness and the development of the regional core, accessibility to Arlanda needs to be improved in the long term, particularly with sustainable transport. In addition to measures on the railways to increase capacity and accessibility, there is also a need for measures to improve accessibility by road, primarily with public transport links. To rapidly increase the share of public transport in traffic to Arlanda, the national government needs to initiate negotiations on the Arlanda Line, with the aim of reducing ticket prices by removing the station charge. A move towards stronger national and international accessibility with more flight routes will also create a need for space to develop the airport itself. At the same time, the green transition of aviation – including sustainable fuels and future electrification – needs to be accelerated, with Arlanda serving as an international role model. Arlanda's long-term development will require broad cooperation between municipal, regional, state and private stakeholders.

Airborne mobility, through for example drones and other types of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), is an area that may become more significant from a long-term perspective. In particular, it may become significant for time-critical freight and passenger transport, and for the development of rural and archipelago areas.

From a long-term perspective, spatial planning should take into account the fact that airborne mobility needs to be integrated at an early stage of planning processes by coordinating land-use and airspace planning.



Guidelines for maintaining the functionality of Arlanda Airport

- Secure land for future development needs at Arlanda Airport.
- Ensure good accessibility, primarily with sustainable transport, to and from Arlanda Airport.
- Safeguard and develop capacity and space in the major transport corridors to Arlanda.
- Ensure contingency and critical infrastructure functions at Arlanda Airport.
- The green transition of aviation – including sustainable fuels and future electrification – needs to be accelerated, with Arlanda serving as an international role model.

Ports and waterways

The county's ports and waterways in the Baltic Sea and Lake Mälaren fulfil an important function for freight transport and passenger traffic. They play an underlying role in the region's supply of goods, fuels and materials, and constitute essential social services and critical infrastructure. The ports, together with the connecting transport infrastructure, are central to the resilience of the region and of Sweden as a whole. Designated ports consist of passenger terminals and freight ports with important functions, both for international freight transport flows and for freight transport flows to and through the Stockholm region and the rest of Mälaren. Ferry ports are essential for Sweden's intra-European trade, and the central ports are important for passenger traffic and Stockholm's attractiveness as a visitor destination. An effective freight transport structure also relies on ports having good waterways and land connections.

Guidelines for maintaining the functionality of ports and waterways

- Ensure safe conditions for approaching the Stockholm region's ports and safeguard the functionality of waterways in the Baltic Sea and Lake Mälaren.
- Develop and ensure appropriate infrastructure to promote well-functioning coordination between maritime transport and other modes of transport.
- Ensure that the basic functions of ports and shipping can be maintained during civil emergencies and heightened states of alert.
- Secure and further develop strategic ports and quay locations for freight and passenger transport.
- Take into account safety distances with regard to noise and other risks when planning new development near ports and waterways.
- Take into account the risk of impact on water resources and underwater noise when developing waterways and ports.
- Ensure good electricity capacity for designated ports to enable the electrification of shipping and port operations.

See also the supplementary guidelines on page 76

Figure 18. Map: Freight and logistics infrastructure



Supplementary guidelines for maintaining and developing the functionality of the transport infrastructure

Shared conditions for the development of the transport infrastructure include that all future measures have to support the regional objectives for transport efficiency, accessibility and sustainability. The transport infrastructure's ability to promote this development is determined by several factors. One of the fundamental factors is the co-planning of the urban development structure and the transport infrastructure in order to create the right conditions for improved objective achievement. The focus should be on sustainable transport, and public transport should form the backbone of the transport infrastructure. Together with initiatives for cycling and walking, this creates the right conditions for increasing the proportion of journeys made by sustainable transport in the Stockholm region. In addition, the development of the transport infrastructure must be as resource-efficient as possible. Measures and investments must be implemented with the aim of achieving the greatest possible accessibility while limiting resource consumption.



Supplementary guidelines on maintaining and developing the functionality of the transport infrastructure

These guidelines apply to all parts of the transport infrastructure, and shall be applied in conjunction with specific guidelines for the transport infrastructure's various categories.

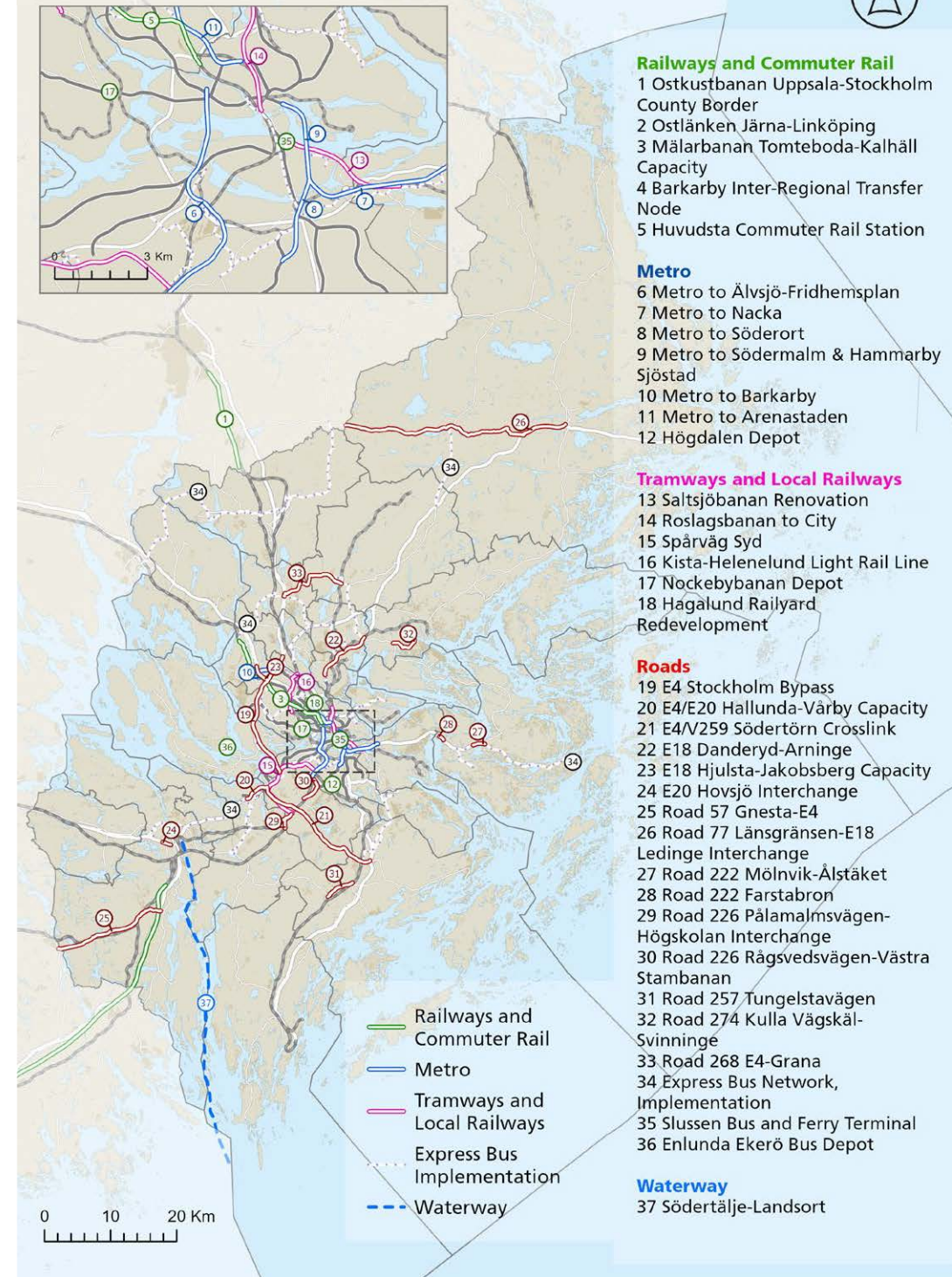
- Co-plan the transport infrastructure's development with the development structure and other land use. Use the Swedish Transport Administration's four-step principle as a starting point.
- Ensure the current and future functionality of the regional transport infrastructure by earmarking land for future development. Pay particular attention to public transport's need for space for existing and future facilities.
- Counteract and remove barriers when planning new infrastructure, and improve the physical integration between different areas.
- Strengthen regional and greater regional public transport, particularly the cross-regional connections between the regional cores.
- Develop a resilient transport infrastructure that is flexible and is able to maintain its functionality during civil emergencies and heightened states of alert. The system shall be able to cope with the risks and consequences of a changing climate.
- Plan new infrastructure with consideration for existing natural, cultural and recreational values.
- Adapt new development and railway and road standards so that dangerous goods can be transported safely. This applies to both managing risks and safeguarding the opportunities for transporting dangerous goods in the future.
- Ensure safe traffic environment based on national objectives.
- Maintain good accessibility through preventive maintenance, reinvestment, economic instruments and optimisation.
- Take the disability rights perspective into account when developing the transport infrastructure so that everyone can use it on equal terms, regardless of their functional ability.

Long-term development needs for the transport infrastructure

One starting point for the transport infrastructure's long-term development needs is the regional objectives, as well as the overall shortcomings and challenges that currently exist within the transport infrastructure, or that are expected to arise in the longer term. Additional starting points should be transport-efficient and accessibility-enhancing planning with a focus on sustainable transport and strengthened regional cooperation. From a systems perspective, the shortcomings relate to aspects such as accessibility and capacity, but challenges also exist in connection with maintenance, financing, the environment, electrification, and the conditions for public transport to constitute an attractive and competitive travel alternative. In order to address these shortcomings, all types of future measures must contribute towards fulfilling national and regional objectives.

Relevant stakeholders in the Stockholm region must work together to investigate the long-term needs of the transport infrastructure. These investigations must be cross-modal and in accordance with the four-step principle. The gradual development of economic instruments and development that supports sustainable travel will be essential in order to achieve the objectives of a transport-efficient and accessible Stockholm region. At the same time, there are uncertainties that affect long-term spatial planning, as well as shortcomings and needs within the transport infrastructure. The Stockholm region's long-term development needs must be described at an overall level, and in a way that does not lock in the conditions or single out specific solutions in advance. In order to avoid pre-empting future processes, and to deal with uncertainties, the final choice of measures, transport modes and routes needs to be finalised in subsequent collaborative processes and plans.

Figure 19. Map: Major ongoing or planned investment measures in the transport infrastructure





Below is an assessment of key requirement areas that the region's stakeholders need to work on further

- Invest to clear the maintenance backlog
- The need for advanced economic instruments
- Complete investments that have already been decided on
- Capacity-strengthening measures on rail and roads within the county and to the rest of the world
- Increased capacity, accessibility and future-proofing of transfer nodes and depots
- Further expansion of the regional cycle network
- Increased service frequency and accessibility within the public transport system
- Continued development of cross-city connections between the radial routes, particularly between the regional cores
- Arlanda Airport's future functionality and accessibility need to be secured
- Development of public transport by water
- Development of high-capacity public transport in the east and the south-east
- Capacity across/beneath the Saltsjö-Mälaren section in the longer term
- Increased investment in the county's charging infrastructure and the need for technical development
- Invest in accordance with the TEN-T Regulation
- Improved conditions for freight, business transport and the county's supply of goods
- Ensure that basic transport needs are met, including outside the county's densely populated areas

→ Find out more about long-term development needs in the appendix *Long-term development needs for the transport infrastructure in the Stockholm region*

The regional green and blue structure

The regional green and blue structure comprises major landscape and ecological connections in the form of continuous green and water areas. These areas have high biological and recreational values. The designation of the regional green and blue structure has taken into account national interests regarding cultural conservation, nature conservation and outdoor recreation, and has also been based on the County Administrative Board's documentation for green infrastructure. It does not include all green infrastructure of high value in the region. Historically, the archipelago islands have not been identified as part of the regional green structure in regional development planning. However, an overview analysis of the coastal strip and the archipelago islands has been carried out, resulting in the identification of a landscape connection through the inner archipelago.

→ Find out more in the knowledge bases "*Utveckling av grönstruktur och landskap i Stockholmsregionen*" and "*Blåstruktur och VA-tjänster i Stockholmsregionen*" (in Swedish) at regionstockholm.se

The regional green and blue structure's categories

The regional green and blue structure is divided up into five categories:

- Green wedge and wedge areas
- Core area in green wedge
- Weak section in green wedge
- Weak green link through settlement and/or infrastructure
- Watercourses, lakes and sea

Figure 20. Map: The development of the Stockholm region's green and blue structure from RUFs 2050 to the current structure



The regional green and blue structure is based on a number of green wedges comprising large and continuous areas, as well as corridors of nature, green spaces and parks. Within the green wedges, there are both areas of particularly high recreational, natural and cultural value and narrow – or otherwise vulnerable – sections that risk losing their connecting function for the green wedge. The areas of particularly high value constitute core areas within the green wedges, while the vulnerable sections are identified as weak sections in the green wedges. The regional green and blue structure also includes weak green connections that pass through or alongside built-up areas and infrastructure, and that are important for maintaining an ecologically functional landscape.

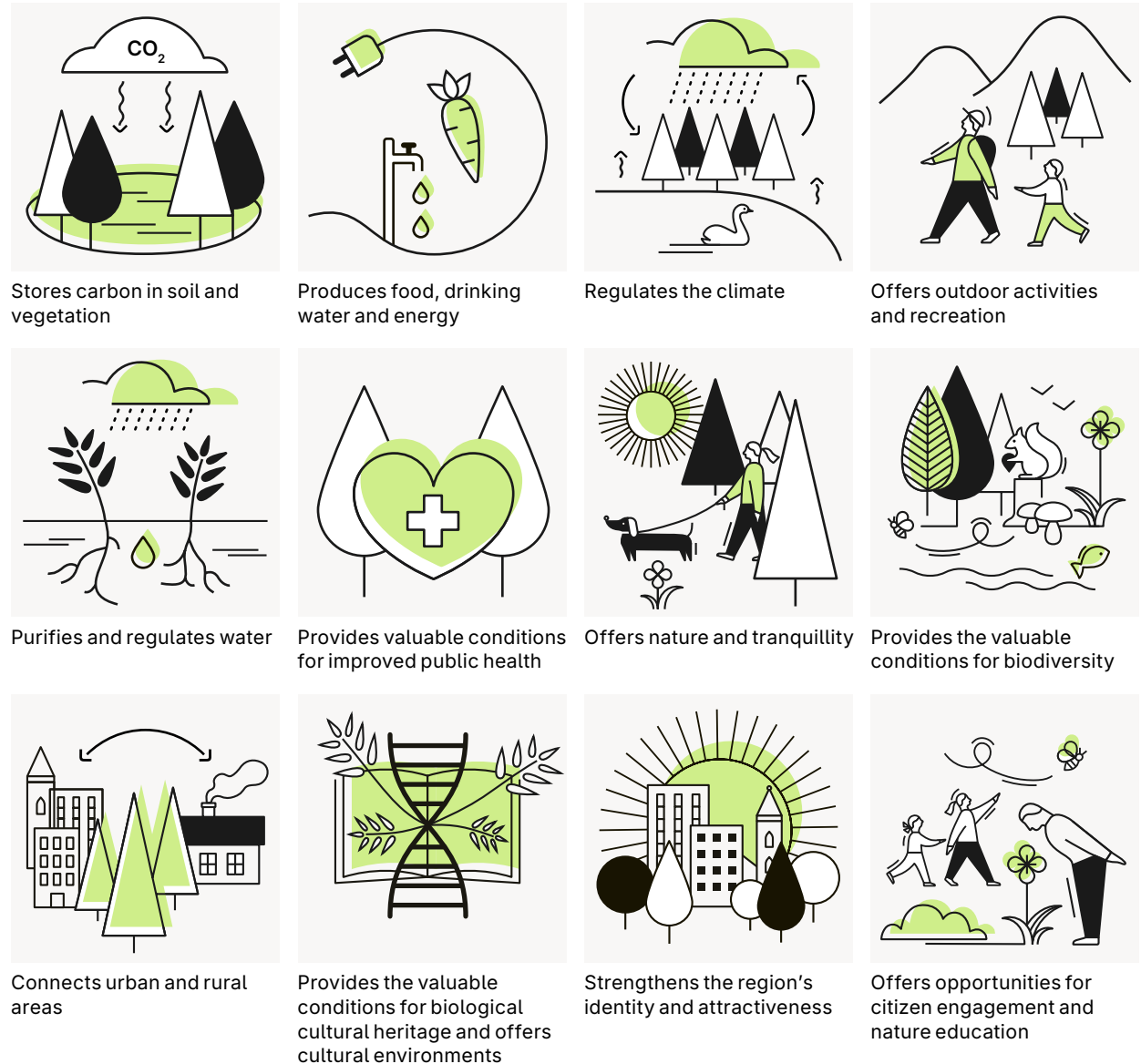
In addition, the structure includes surface water, which is a central part of the landscape and consists of watercourses, lakes and the sea. The most prominent features are Lake Mälaren, which supplies millions of people with drinking water, and the Baltic Sea, which is one of the world's largest brackish seas.

The importance of the regional green and blue structure

A cohesive, robust green and blue structure is crucial for biodiversity, animal and plant habitats, and the ecosystem services that benefit people. The ecosystem services generated by nature and the measures we carry out in the form of nature-based solutions provide us with essential benefits by, for example, purifying air and water, moderating temperatures, and sequestering carbon in soil and vegetation. The region's capacity for climate adaptation also depends on the functional landscapes that the regional green and blue structure intends to preserve and develop.

The regional green and blue structure aims to ensure that residents continue to be close to both large- and small-scale natural experiences, and that our shared history remains visible in the landscape and through biological cultural heritage.

Figure 21. Illustration showing examples of some of the many functions and values of the regional green and blue structure



Development and preservation of the regional green and blue structure

The following section describes each category within the regional green and blue structure, and the specific guidelines that guide the development of the structure's various parts. In addition to these specific guidelines, there are also supplementary guidelines that need to be considered in all development that affects the regional green and blue structure. These supplementary guidelines apply in all categories.

Green wedges

The green wedges consist of a cohesive structure of unique natural and cultural environment areas in Stockholm County. They are often large and wide, but should not be less than 500 metres wide. They are important for the dispersal of species between the green core areas and other habitats within all wedges. The green wedges thus form the backbone of the county's green infrastructure. Large parts of the wedges are of national interest for nature conservation, outdoor recreation and cultural conservation.

In the more densely built-up parts of the region, the boundary of the green wedges is closely linked to built-up areas and the network of footpaths and cycle paths. They consist of different types of green areas, from urban parks to cultivated landscapes with a long history of management and recreational woodlands close to built-up areas. The green wedges within the more densely built-up areas comprise the Järva Wedge, the Rösjö Wedge, the Angarn Wedge, the Bogesund Wedge, the Nacka-Värmdö Wedge, the Tyresta Wedge, the Hanveden Wedge, the Bornsjö Wedge, the Ekerö Wedge and the Görvåln Wedge.

In the region's more rural areas, the designation of the green wedges is linked to rural nodes, rural service points and walking trails. The designation also follows a network of green infrastructure, mostly linked to the forest landscape, but also linked to cultivated landscapes with high overall recreational, natural and cultural values.



Guidelines for maintaining and strengthening the green wedges and their wedge areas

- Preserve the cohesive structure and avoid locating new development, facilities and businesses that fragment, disrupt or risk having a significant impact on the values and functions of the green wedges.
- A wedge should have a width of at least 500 metres. The loss of important functions and values must be compensated for with appropriate measures.
- When planning land development projects that could affect a green wedge, an impact assessment needs to be carried out to evaluate the effects on the wedge's functions and values. This assessment shall be based on the wedge's cohesive values and functions, and may include multiple municipalities.
- Clear-cutting is avoided in the green core areas. Forestry within the green wedges should be diversified and considerate of ecological, recreational and cultural values.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 86–87

Core areas in green wedges

The green asset cores are the parts of the green wedges that are most important to protect. This is where the highest recreational, natural and cultural values are found, often in the form of nature reserves or areas of national interest. The core areas often have rich experiential values, include quiet areas, and feature great biodiversity and a wealth of variation.

Guidelines for maintaining and strengthening the core areas in the green wedges

- Preserve the cohesive structure and avoid locating new built-up areas, facilities and businesses that fragment, disrupt or risk having a significant impact on the values and functions of a core area.
- When planning land development projects that risk negatively affecting a green asset core, an impact assessment shall be carried out of the wedge's functions and values. This assessment shall be based on the wedge's cohesive values and functions, and may need to include multiple municipalities.
- The loss of important functions and values must be compensated for with appropriate measures.
- Clear-cutting is avoided in the green core areas. Forestry within the green wedges should be diversified and considerate of ecological, recreational and cultural values.
- When establishing disruptive operations adjacent to a green asset core, a buffer zone should be designated next to the core area to avoid negative impacts.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 86–87

Weak section in green wedge

Weak sections are areas with narrow or vulnerable sections within the green wedges. They are usually between 500 and 1,500 metres wide, but are sometimes narrower. They often feature mixed land use and sometimes include agricultural land. They may also be crossed by an existing or planned road/railway line that acts as a barrier. These sections are crucial for holding the green wedges together and linking the core areas with one another. If these sections are further weakened or built on, the wedge will be broken up into separate parts, and regional functions and values thus risk being lost.

Guidelines for maintaining and strengthening weak sections in the green wedges

- Secure and protect weak sections so that the green wedges remain connected and retain their values and functions.
- Avoid locating new development, facilities and businesses that fragment, disrupt or risk having a significant impact on the values and functions of a weak section.
- Develop and strengthen the weak sections through improvement measures that are adapted to the site's conditions.
- Overcome or minimise existing and planned barrier effects based on the site's conditions.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 86–87

Weak green link through settlement and/or infrastructure

Weak green connections are fragmented parts of the regional green structure that pass through or alongside built-up areas and infrastructure, and that are important for maintaining an ecologically functional landscape.

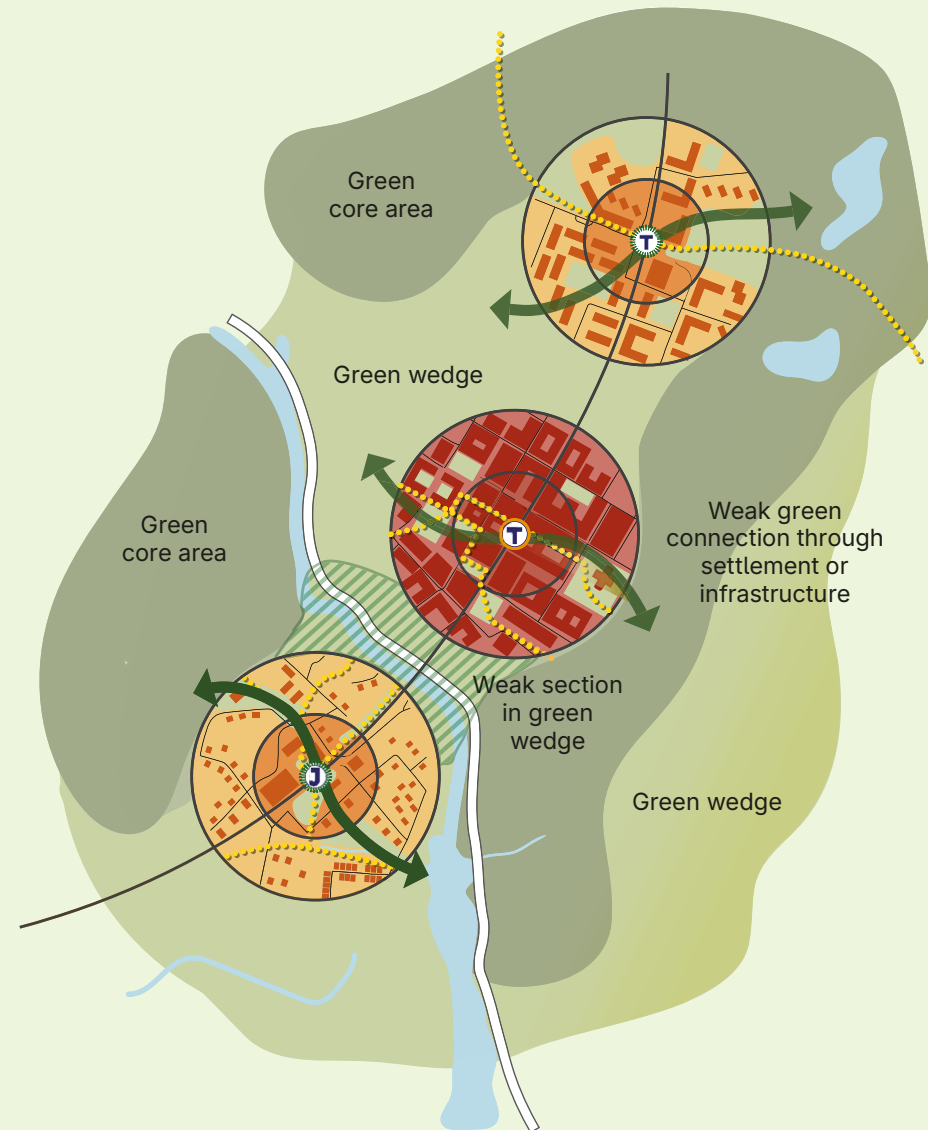
These connections consist of water, vegetation or valuable trees, and help to link the local and regional green structure. They are also often important for the green infrastructure. In some cases, they are crossed by an existing or planned motorway or railway that creates a barrier effect. If these connections are built on or broken up into separate parts, the ecological and recreational functions of the landscape are impaired.

Guidelines for maintaining and strengthening weak green connections through settlement or infrastructure

- Avoid further fragmentation of the weak connections.
- Develop and strengthen weak green connections and the link between regional and local green structure through improvement measures that are adapted to site specific conditions.
- Overcome or minimise existing and planned barrier effects based on the site's conditions.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 86–87

Figure 22. Illustration showing how local and regional green structures are interlinked and can be connected





Blue structure

Blue structure aims to highlight, value and take into account the functions and values of aquatic environments. This includes watercourses, lakes, the sea and other water-related elements of the green structure, such as wetlands, ditches, ponds and stormwater systems. Water resources are crucial for agriculture and drinking water supply, and also play important roles in transport, sanitation, recreation, and food, industrial and energy production. Access to water is thus a prerequisite for economic development, and for welfare and quality of life in the region. For the Stockholm region, the blue structure also constitutes a cultural feature of the landscape and is a central part of the region's identity. The functions of the blue structure need to be safeguarded in balance with development, so that they are strengthened and biodiversity is protected for the future.

Environmental quality standards and the status of the region's water bodies

The blue structure's aquatic environments are often subject to environmental quality standards (EQSs), which are governed by the Swedish Environmental Code (SFS 1998:808), the Swedish Water Management Ordinance (SFS 2004:660) and the Swedish Marine Environment Ordinance (SFS 2010:1341). Together, these require that water bodies and marine areas meet quality requirements in all land and natural resource use, and that measures must be taken when a good status is not achieved.

According to the Swedish Water Management Ordinance, EQSs apply to groundwater, watercourses, lakes and coastal waters, in order to protect aquatic environments and ensure access to clean water. The Swedish Marine

Environment Ordinance covers the entire marine area, including Sweden's Exclusive Economic Zone, and emphasises long-term sustainable use and good environmental status. It also includes marine-specific quality factors such as underwater noise, erosion and littering.

In the Stockholm region, no surface water bodies achieve good chemical status, primarily due to mercury and polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs). Only around one-fifth achieve good ecological status, often due to eutrophication. Where water bodies do not achieve good status, land claims in detailed planning may be restricted and requirements for restoration or ecological compensation may be imposed. Natural purification functions, such as those found in wetlands, are difficult and costly to recreate, making densification more suitable than developing natural land.

There are also physically altered water bodies, known as hydromorphological changes. These include barriers to fish migration, altered flows and water levels, and changes to the shape and structure of banks resulting from the drainage, straightening and dredging of watercourses. Deteriorated hydromorphology not only affects habitats for aquatic organisms, but can also increase the risk of landslides and flooding in connection with increased precipitation as a consequence of climate change.

All 199 groundwater bodies in the region have good quantitative status, but eight have unsatisfactory chemical status, mainly due to PFAS. This is a common and challenging problem that is likely to be more widespread than current surveys suggest. Groundwater recharge and groundwater quality can be affected by quarries, waste treatment plants and other activities. Residential development can also affect groundwater, but the risk is generally lower and can often be managed through requirements for stormwater treatment and infiltration.

Marine areas are affected by both marine-based and land-based activities. In the Stockholm region, the EQSs for nutrients, environmental toxins, marine litter, underwater noise and biodiversity are not being met. It is therefore important to take these standards into account when planning ports, treatment plants, maritime traffic, etc.

Guidelines for maintaining and improving water quality in accordance with EQSs

- Measures to maintain and improve water quality and aquatic environments in accordance with EQSs should be prioritised within catchment areas under high land development pressure. If a catchment area spans more than one municipality, the work to identify measures must be carried out in cooperation.
- When planning new development or other changes in land use, the impact on the ability to achieve the EQSs for water should be assessed. Potential conflicts between objectives should be resolved early on in the planning process, and consultation and dialogue should take place with the relevant municipalities within the catchment area.
- Ensure that sufficient land is available for measures within catchment areas when planning new development or other changes in land use.
- Planning of marine areas, including facilities and designated waterways, must not jeopardise achieving the EQSs for the marine environment in future.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 86–87

ABOUT | PFAS

PFAS are present at several locations within the Stockholm region, and are deemed to pose a widespread risk to the environment and water supplies. Sources of PFAS are scattered across the region, primarily at firefighting training grounds, airports and military areas where firefighting foam containing PFAS has been used, but also at industrial areas, waste treatment plants, landfill sites and areas where contaminated soil is processed or reused.

Stricter legislation and new limit values in the Swedish Food Agency's regulations on drinking water mean that PFAS is becoming a prioritised and long-term area of action for municipalities and water and sewage companies. The necessary soil remediation measures are complex, and are costly to plan and implement. The water and sewage sector in the Stockholm region has already made relatively good progress in the work involved in PFAS treatment, but investment needs remain.

Since PFAS are highly persistent and are readily dispersed via groundwater and surface water, the impact may affect several municipalities within the same catchment area or water supply system, with a risk of affecting regionally important drinking water resources. Inter-municipal cooperation is a fundamental requirement for protecting human health against PFAS. In practice, this cooperation involves identifying and demarcating sources of contamination, allocating responsibilities, and financing and implementing remediation measures.

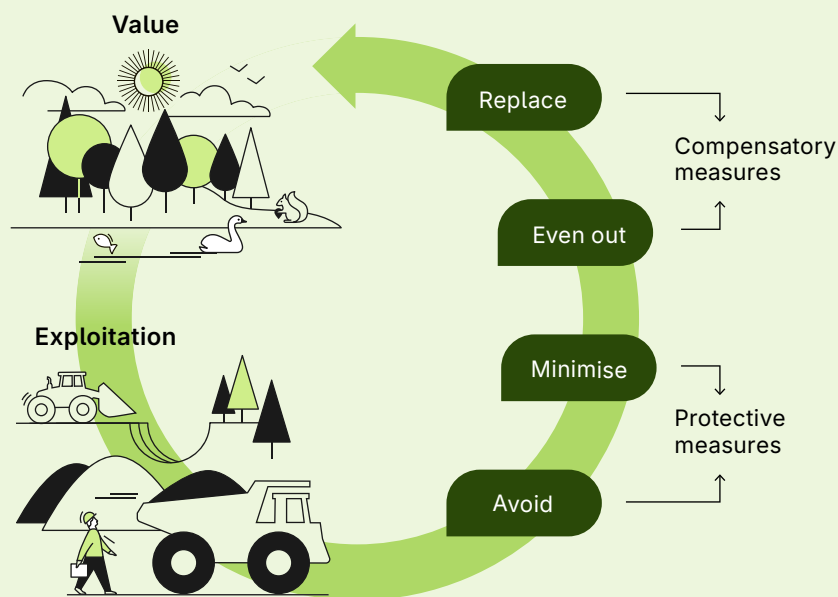
Complementary guidelines to the development and preservation of the regional green and blue structure

In order to strengthen biodiversity and nature's ecosystem services, it is important to continue to safeguard, develop and recreate the values and functions that the green and blue structure provides. For example, this can be done by providing long-term protection for the most valuable areas, continuing to work with green infrastructure, and highlighting the biological cultural heritage in green structure planning. Measures in the form of nature-based solutions can strengthen both biodiversity and ecological functions, and can contribute towards addressing societal challenges such as climate change. The preservation and development of green and blue structure shall be approached from a landscape perspective, in order to safeguard ecologically functional habitats, for example.

Access to and the availability of green spaces and water also have health-promoting effects, and enhance people's wellbeing and quality of life. When carrying out planning, it is therefore important to work towards increasing accessibility to these types of environments, for example through initiatives to create well-designed and well-functioning routes, green footpaths and cycle paths, attractive entrances and destinations, and improved accessibility by public transport. Accessibility can also be improved by overcoming barriers and supporting the interconnection of local and regional green and blue structure. There is also a need for continued efforts to raise awareness about the right of public access and the application of both rights and obligations, in order to show consideration for nature, other people and landowners. We have the right to enjoy the countryside, as long as we do not disturb or damage it. For example, this means not littering, knowing when to keep dogs on leads, showing extra consideration for growing crops and fenced-in animals, and being aware that the right of public access may be restricted by specific regulations in protected areas.

Where there is a risk that planned development or changes in land use will have a negative impact on the values of green and blue structure, measures must be carried out in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy in order, in the first instance, to avoid or minimise damage to these values.

Figure 23. Illustration of the mitigation hierarchy



The mitigation hierarchy means that damage should be avoided in the first instance, should secondly be minimised and remedied on site, and should only be compensated for as a last resort. This means that damage caused by land development should, in the first instance, be avoided through good planning; secondly, consideration should be given during operational design to minimising the damage caused by land development; and thirdly, remediation and other corrective measures should be carried out on site to mitigate the negative effects that arise as far as possible. Compensation can only be considered if damage can be expected to remain despite all these measures having been taken.

(Source: Swedish Environmental Protection Agency/Naturvårdsverket, 2016, *Ekologisk kompensation* ISBN 978-91-620-0179-7)

Supplementary guidelines for maintaining and strengthening the functions and values of the regional green and blue structure

These guidelines apply to all areas within the regional green and blue structure, and must be applied in conjunction with the specific guidelines that apply for each category.

- Work to achieve development that preserves and strengthens biodiversity.
- Link the local and regional green structure together.
- Give particular priority to preserving and developing beaches, shallow bays and wetlands, areas with low noise impact, and corridors of green and blue structure, which are of great importance for connectivity between valuable habitats. This applies in particular to hardwood forest and older coniferous forest environments, as well as aquatic and marine environments of unique value for which the Stockholm region has a special national responsibility.
- Long-term protection should be considered for land and water areas of very high natural and recreational value.
- Adapt recreation and tourism in sensitive green and blue natural and cultural environments in order to prevent damage and negative environmental impact.
- If there is a risk of negative impact on the regional green and blue structure, the mitigation hierarchy should be applied and appropriate measures should be implemented to maintain its values and functions.
- Planning measures in the form of protection, development and nature-based solutions, for example, must be based on landscape-level connections and prioritised habitats or ecological functions at the specific site.
- Use knowledge about the green and blue cultural heritage and cultural environments as a resource for development and management.
- Work to improve access to recreational areas through, for example, easily accessible information, well-maintained trails, footpaths and cycle paths, public transport, and attractive entrances and clear destinations.

→ Find out more about the regional green and blue structure at regionstockholm.se

Figure 24. Map: Green structure

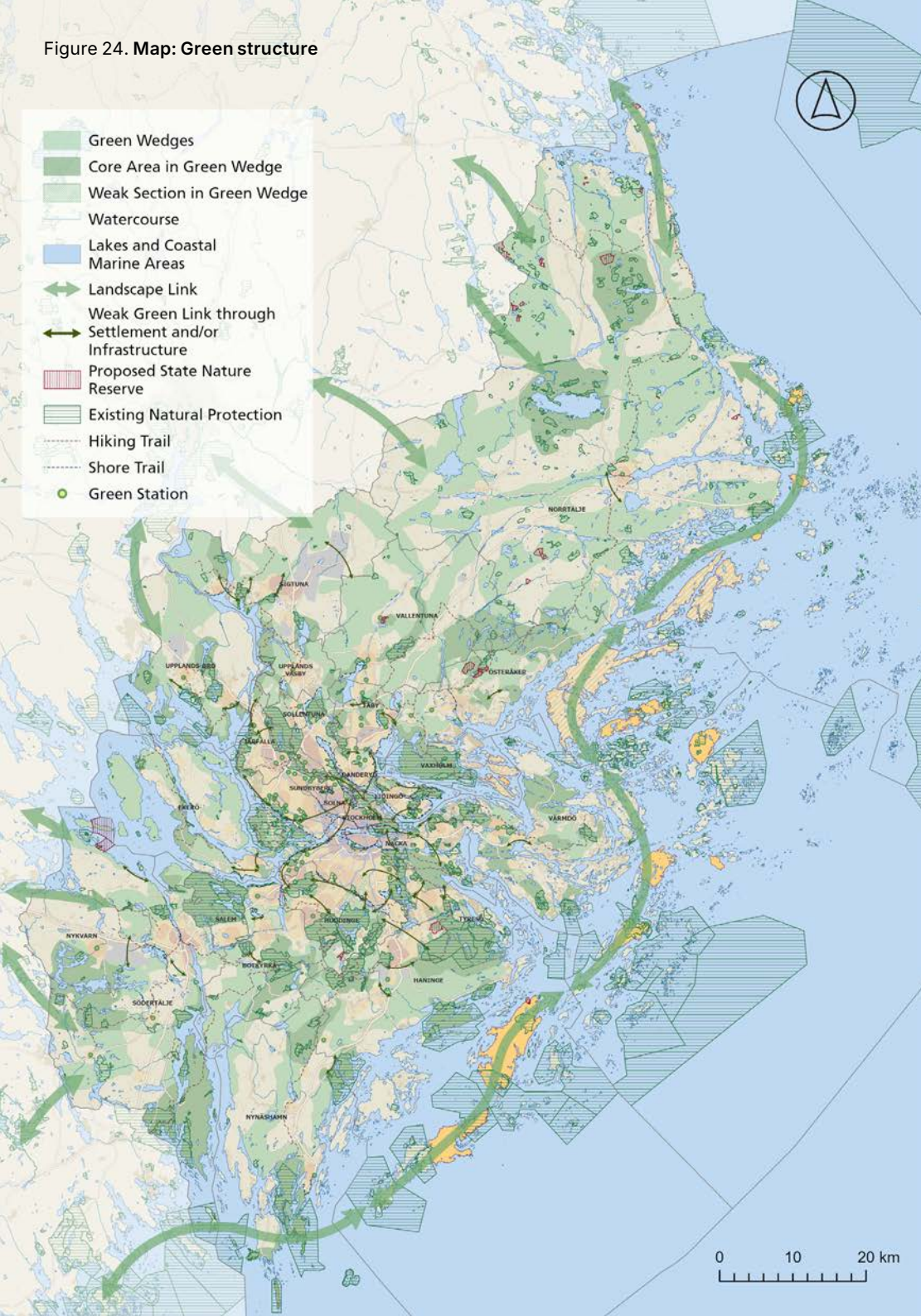


Figure 25. Map: Blue structure

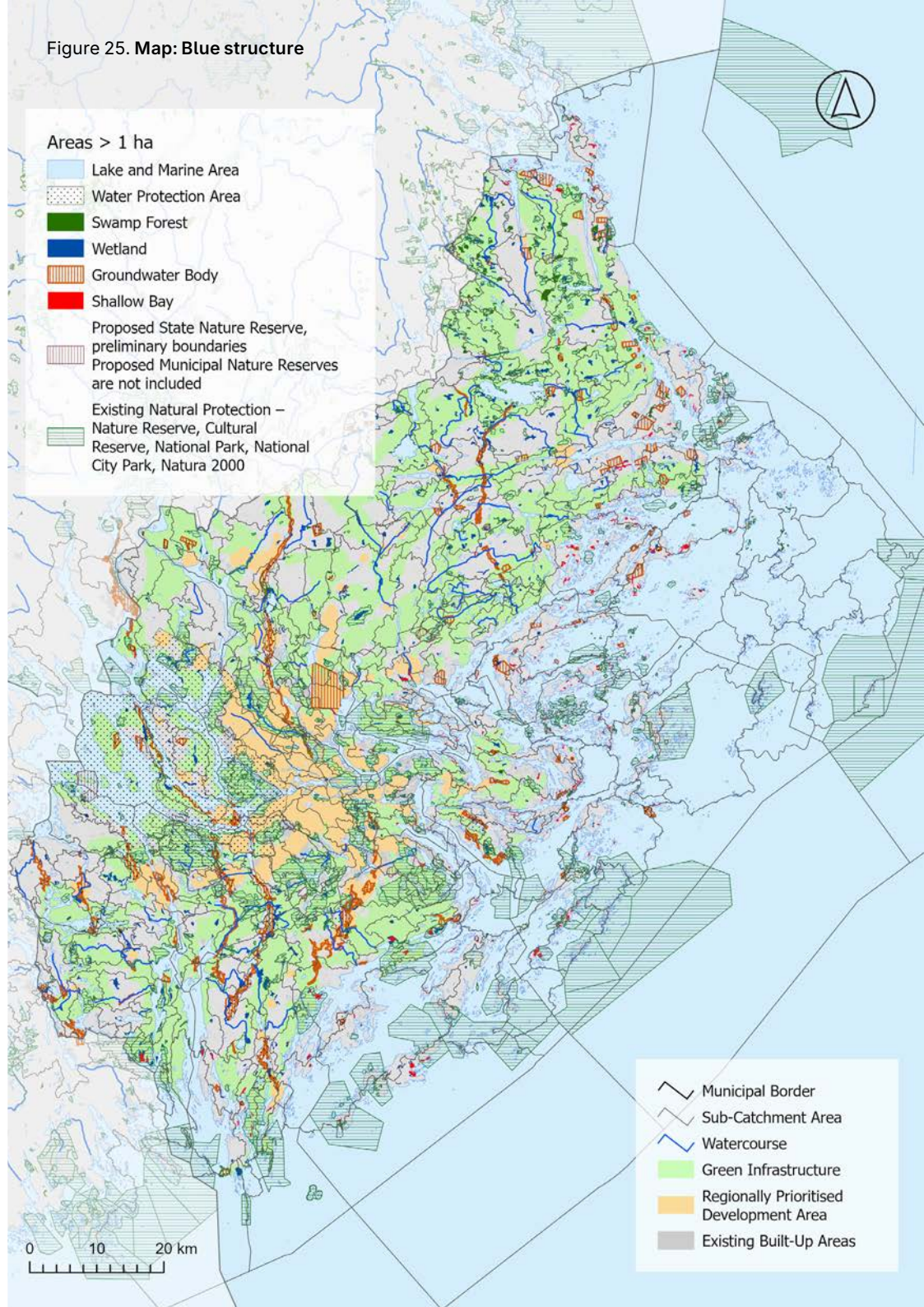


Figure 26. Map: Status classification for environmental quality standards (EQSSs) for water (nutrients)

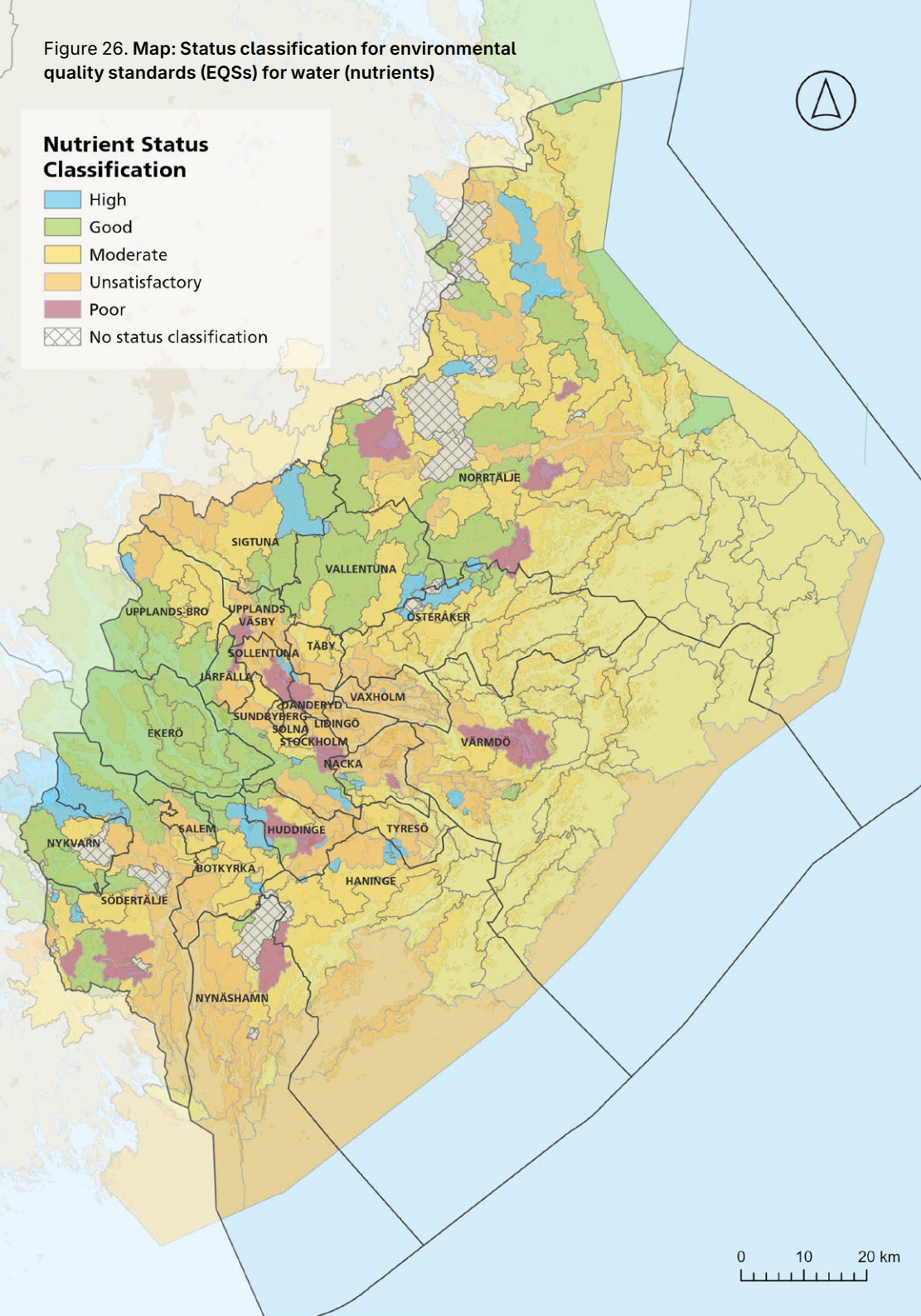
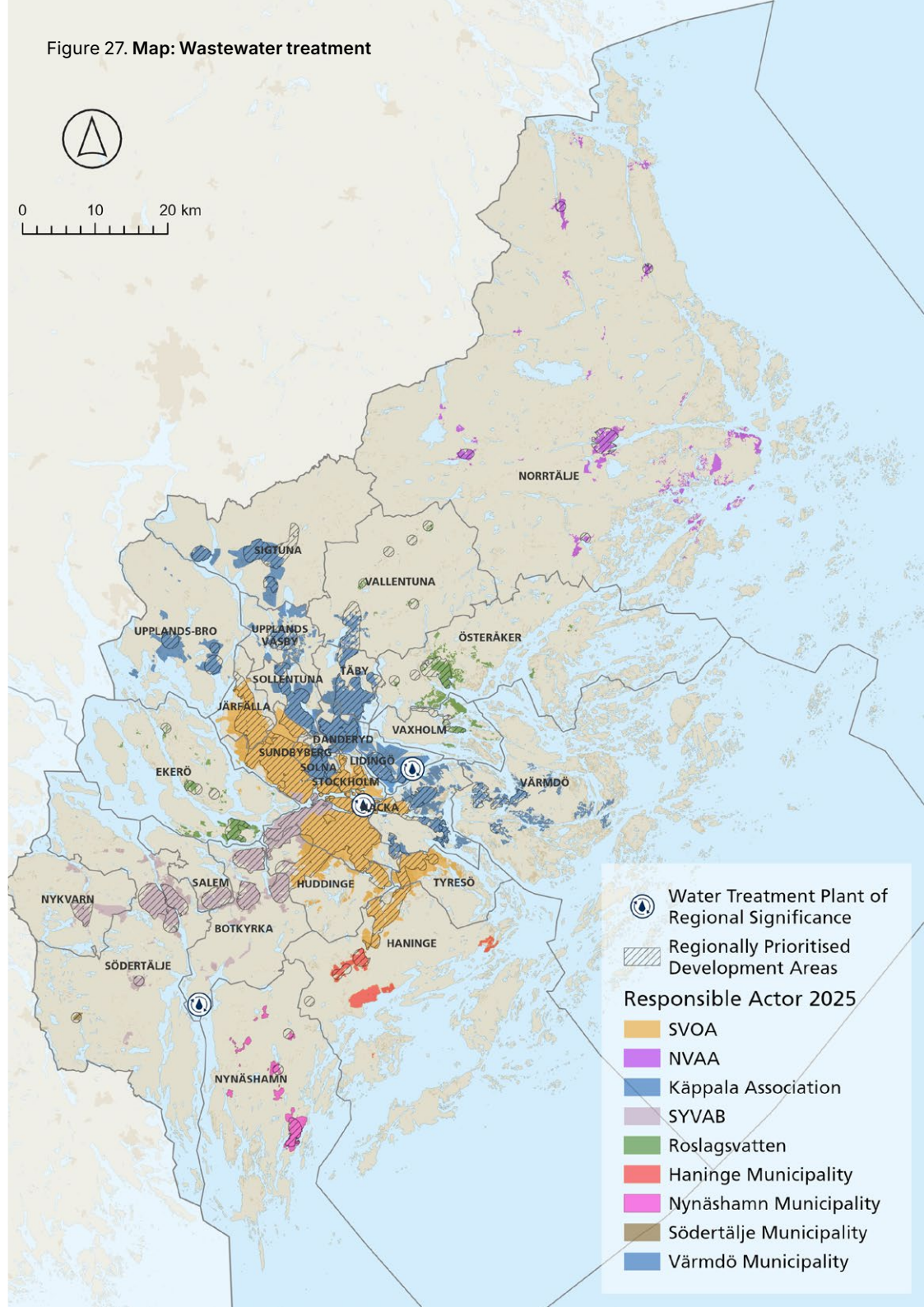


Figure 27. Map: Wastewater treatment



The regional technical supply systems

The regional technical supply systems comprise facilities, pipelines and other infrastructure for a variety of different systems, including energy supply, the drinking water and sewerage system, the waste management system and the soil management system. These systems have different requirements regarding geographical location, and the need for expansion and development also varies between the different systems. In order to ensure the future capacity of the technical supply systems, several measures are required. Increased circularity, technological development and other efficiency improvements are required, as well as expanding these systems with both regional and local solutions. There are potential synergies between several of the systems which, if exploited, could further improve the systems' efficiency. For example, heat recovery from wastewater could become a resource for the energy system. At the same time, there are also conflicting objectives between different facilities and systems. One of the most obvious conflicts concerns the need for land for facilities in strategically favourable locations near the ports of Lake Mälaren, while Lake Mälaren is an important source of drinking water for the Stockholm region.

The regional technical supply systems' categories

The technical supply systems are divided into six categories, and the objects shown on the land use map include existing facilities with environmental permits. The regional technical supply systems' categories:

- Energy plants and energy distribution
- Digital infrastructure
- Water treatment plants and water protection areas
- Sewage treatment plants
- Waste treatment plants
- Management of excavated materials



The technical supply systems' function and significance

Effective technical supply systems are a fundamental requirement for continued development and a good living environment. The technical supply systems perform functions that are vital for society by ensuring access to clean drinking water, electricity and heating, wastewater treatment, stormwater management and waste management. Ballast and facilities for the management of excavated materials are required for construction work for new development and transport infrastructure. The development taking place in the Stockholm region depends on the technical supply systems being able to meet growing demand. They therefore need to be more efficient, continuously developed and maintained. At the same time, they also need to be adapted in line with a changing climate and developed to become resilient and to meet emergency resilience requirements.

Development of the regional technical supply systems

The following section describes each category within the technical supply systems and the specific guidelines that guide the development of the various supply systems. In addition to the specific guidelines, there are supplementary guidelines that we need to consider in all development that affects the technical supply systems. These supplementary guidelines apply in all categories.

Energy plants and energy distribution

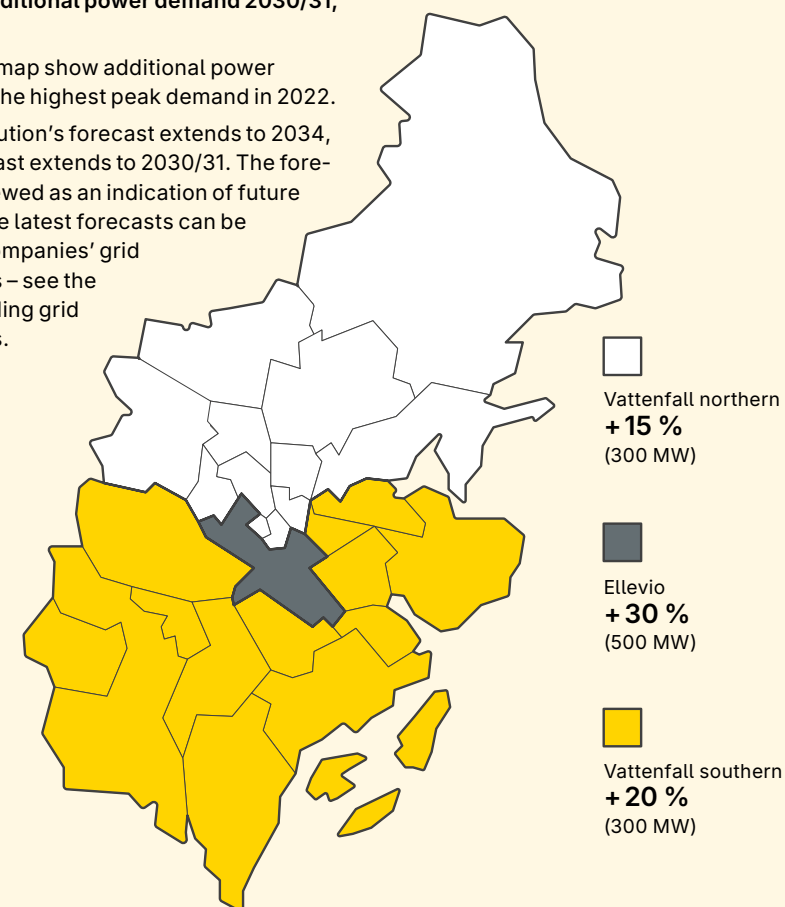
District heating and combined heat and power plants provide the county with base production of heat, cooling and electricity. By heating buildings with district heating rather than electricity, the pressure on the electricity grid can be reduced. Combined heat and power plants can also generate electricity, which relieves the burden on regional and transmission grids. District heating and combined heat and power systems therefore play a crucial role in the county's energy supply. In order to make these systems more efficient, they need to be linked together in a resilient and interconnected distribution system. In addition to district heating and combined heat and power, there are also benefits from generating renewable energy in the form of solar and wind power.

The Stockholm region will continue to be dependent on electricity imports, even though local electricity production has the potential to increase. The Stockholm region is therefore dependent on an effective, high-capacity electricity grid, at all voltage levels. The electricity grid to and within the region needs to be expanded and upgraded to provide the capacity and the power required in a growing region, and to create the right conditions for electrification and transition. The right type of cables must be prioritised to ensure the functionality of different levels of the electricity grid, where the conditions vary for transmission grids, regional grids and local grids. According to Ordinance SFS 2025:34 amending the Swedish Electricity Act (1997:857), power lines intended for voltages of 130 kilovolts or higher must be installed as overhead lines. Underground cables are primarily an option for short distances where overhead lines are not feasible, for example in densely built-up areas. Upgrading the electricity grid also includes new substations and reinvestment in existing substations.

The expansion and upgrading of the electricity grid in a densely populated region such as Stockholm County – particularly in the county's more populous areas – will entail difficult trade-offs between various land claims and interests, and it will be important to have solution-oriented dialogue between the stakeholders.

Figure 28. **Map: Additional power demand 2030/31, regional grids.**

The figures on the map show additional power demand based on the highest peak demand in 2022. Vattenfall Eldistribution's forecast extends to 2034, and Ellevio's forecast extends to 2030/31. The forecasts should be viewed as an indication of future power demand. The latest forecasts can be found in the grid companies' grid development plans – see the "About" box regarding grid development plans.



ABOUT | GRID DEVELOPMENT PLANS

According to the Swedish Electricity Act, electricity grid companies must produce grid development plans every two years. These describe how the companies' electricity grids will develop over the coming ten-year period, including planned network expansions and upgrades, as well as facilitating the integration of renewable electricity generation, promoting the development of energy storage and the electrification of the transport sector.

→ Find out more about grid development plans – see *the electricity grid companies' grid development plans 2025–2034 (in Swedish)* at ei.se

Guidelines for maintaining and developing facilities for energy and energy distribution, and power lines

- Safeguard and develop existing district heating and combined heat and power plants.
- Locate energy plants that rely on fuel transport in strategically favourable locations, close to ports or rail connections and near access to fuel.
- Secure land for the expansion of the transmission grid and the regional grid, including the utility corridors required around the lines and safety distances from buildings.
- Secure land for the expansion of future energy plants.
- Secure land for the expansion of district heating infrastructure.
- Promote solutions for increased intra-regional production of renewable energy and work towards a renewable energy supply.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 98–99



Digital infrastructure

Digital services for the county's residents, public-sector and businesses require an infrastructure that is reliable, functional and adequate in scope. Fixed and wireless connections serve different functions and complement each other. To meet current and future needs, both wired broadband via fibre and wireless solutions need to be continuously expanded. Fibre provides secure, fast data transmission to fixed points and acts as the link between the mobile network and the internet. Wireless solutions make it possible to connect people, vehicles and objects in motion. New generations of mobile networks are gradually increasing capacity and security. Data centres and server rooms are also critical operations in order for digital communication to function.

An effective digital infrastructure requires continuous development – the mobile network is upgraded every ten years, for example. This means that new technical equipment needs to be installed in both urban and rural environments. This expansion is largely market-driven, which requires cooperation between the municipalities' spatial planning departments and market players.

Guidelines for promoting a robust digital infrastructure

- Work to facilitate land access for fibre ducts, technical cabinets and other technical equipment.
- Work to facilitate land access for mobile phone masts and associated equipment.
- Ensure access to properties for technical equipment.



Water treatment plants and water protection areas

Lake Mälaren is the region's largest raw water source, and supplies water to around two million people. This water is mainly produced by three main companies: Stockholm Vatten och Avfall, Norrvatten and Telge Nät. Reserve water production (back-up water supply), on the other hand, relies on a combination of surface and groundwater sources, with Stockholmsåsen and Lake Bornsjön being key resources.

The water supply systems in the Stockholm region are undergoing a major transition, driven in part by the EU's Water Resilience Strategy. This transition aims to ensure that the population's need for drinking water is met, protect and restore the water cycle, promote efficient water consumption, and meet growing demands for robustness and redundancy. Risks linked to climate change also necessitate the development and adaptation of the water supply systems. Furthermore, the water supply systems in the Stockholm region have become outdated, and new requirements for drinking water treatment have been introduced. To meet the demands for transition, all water treatment plants of regional significance are currently being developed through refurbishment and modernisation work, and through the expansion and interconnection of distribution networks.

Securing and enabling drinking water production from sources other than Lake Mälaren is a key focus of Stockholm County's Regional Water Supply Plan. In order to avoid conflicts of interest with development in locations close to regionally prioritised drinking water resources or areas of national interest for drinking water supply, it is essential that new development is sited, designed and technically adapted with consideration to the water source. Planning new development must take into account EQSs and local regulations for water protection areas.

Distribution and drinking water production are crucial for maintaining essential social services and critical infrastructure during civil emergencies and heightened states of alert. Solutions for the distribution and supply of drinking water that are independent of the network of water mains therefore need to be planned in all areas of civil society. This applies to securing access to reserve and emergency water not only for essential social services and critical infrastructure, but also for the population as a whole.



Guidelines for promoting a robust water supply

- Safeguard and develop existing water treatment plants of regional importance.
- Ensure that suitable areas are available for the expansion of drinking water production and distribution.
- Improve the capacity for dealing with disruption and production losses in the water supply system by linking together the distribution networks between water treatment plants and diversifying drinking water extraction by enabling the use of and connection to additional water sources.
- Take into account the risk of impact on surface and groundwater sources, including conditions for groundwater recharge, in the event of changes in land use.
- If necessary, establish additional water treatment plants and water protection areas to ensure the region's long-term water supply.
- Access to drinking water in healthcare and other essential social services and critical infrastructure must be ensured during civil emergencies and heightened states of alert.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 98–99

Sewage treatment plants

Around 2.2 million people in the Stockholm region are connected to the municipal sewerage system. There are just over 40 wastewater treatment plants in the region operated by seven companies, three of which are of regional significance: the Henriksdal, Käppala and Himmerfjärd treatment plants. The Bromma treatment plant – as well as other smaller treatment plants in the county – will be replaced, and wastewater will be diverted to the larger regional treatment plants. A growing population, ageing infrastructure, stricter treatment requirements and climate-related risks mean that the wastewater treatment systems will need to be overhauled. This will lead to financial, technical and institutional challenges for all municipalities and for water and sewage companies. This is also one of several systems that are crucial for maintaining essential social services and critical infrastructure during civil emergencies and heightened states of alert.

The wastewater treatment systems in the Stockholm region currently have good capacity, but work is underway to increase robustness and redundancy in critical parts of the pipeline network, and in sewage treatment plants of regional interest. The wastewater pipe networks in the Stockholm region are well distributed geographically, but there are nevertheless local challenges. For example, older pipes need to be replaced so that the systems can connect future development, cope with larger loads, and reduce the risks of leaks and overflows in the future.

An increased volume of wastewater may also make it more difficult for water and sewage companies to meet the EQSs for water and the new treatment requirements set out in the EU's Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive. Furthermore, additional water from rain, groundwater and leaks in the pipe networks are leading to further overloading of the wastewater treatment systems.

It is essential to integrate a resilience perspective into the planning of future sewage management. This could, for example, involve the integration and capacity expansion of the pipe networks to compensate for failures at individual sewage treatment plants or in parts of the pipe networks. In order to deal with sewage in the event of a civil emergency or heightened state of alert, effective regional coordination is also required between municipalities, Region Stockholm, water and sewage companies, and other public- and private-sector stakeholders in civil society.

Treatment plants capture large volumes of energy, nutrients and water that need to be processed. Today, energy is reused by extracting biogas from sewage



sludge at several treatment plants, and the recovery of waste heat is becoming increasingly common. Nutrients are used by spreading sewage sludge on agricultural land, and this method needs to be developed in the long term due to negative environmental impacts. Reusing treated water from treatment plants – known as process water – in both the treatment plant's own processes and other operations is also an important resource efficiency measure required by the Urban Wastewater Treatment Directive.

Guidelines for maintaining and developing the functionality of treatment plants

- Secure existing treatment plants of regional importance and take into account the need for increased capacity.
- Review the conditions for interconnecting the wastewater network in order to compensate for operational disruption.
- Promote the development of circular solutions for the reuse of water, nutrients and energy from sludge and wastewater.
- Site new facilities in locations that allow for the recovery and exchange of energy, nutrients and process water from sewage management.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 98–99

Waste treatment plants

Waste treatment plants require a lot of space and are often perceived as disruptive, but are essential for achieving a regionally effective waste management. These facilities are increasingly evolving from landfills into sites where waste is prepared for reuse and for material and energy recycling. Effective waste management at large facilities is dependent on the entire treatment chain functioning properly. In other words, there must be sufficient capacity for collection, sorting, transshipment and storage, reuse and recycling. Developing circular production and the production of goods that are easy to reuse, repair and recycle is also important for effective waste management. There are strong links between waste management, wastewater treatment and energy supply. Waste is increasingly regarded as a resource, as it is important for material recycling and for biogas and energy production. The facilities are generally located in semi-peripheral areas, but have good road connections, and sometimes also rail connections.

Guidelines for maintaining and developing the functionality of waste treatment plants

- Safeguard and develop existing waste treatment plants of regional importance.
- Strive to co-locate waste treatment plants with energy facilities for waste incineration as well as biogas, biofertiliser and fuel production when planning new facilities and developing existing ones.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 98–99



Management of excavated materials

Development and infrastructure development in the Stockholm region relies on access to rock and gravel materials for construction and ground preparation work. Quarries and material terminals are generally located far from the central core and the regional cores where many large building and construction projects are being developed and planned, leading to long and heavy transportation by lorries.

This bulk transportation places a particular strain on the road infrastructure, and has negative environmental and health impacts in the form of emissions, noise, air pollution and increased exposure to road traffic accidents. The use of quarries for ballast materials also has an irreversible impact on the land environment and the natural environment, and results in significant greenhouse gas emissions. In order to avoid the use of virgin rock material and to reduce long, heavy transportation, ballast material of suitable quality need to be handled and reused locally as far as possible, and close to land development projects.

Facilities for the management of excavated materials require a lot of space, and can be disruptive to the surrounding area. New technical solutions and effective coordination between municipalities and private-sector actors are required in order to create facilities for circular management of materials in densely populated areas. Increased load-bearing capacity is also needed in strategic parts of the road network in order to allow for less heavy transportation between facilities for management of excavated materials and construction sites.

Local access to virgin rock material also risks diminishing in the future despite anticipated high demand, which could lead to more long-distance and heavy transportation. This is often due to conflicts of interest with water and nature conservation, and with residential development. Identifying and securing suitable sites for quarrying operations must therefore be prioritised in the county.

→ Find out more about the management of excavated materials in *Stockholm County's Strategy for the Management of Excavated Materials* (in Swedish) at regionstockholm.se



Guidelines for ensuring efficient management of excavated materials

- Create the right conditions for establishing small-scale and temporary solutions for management of excavated materials that are appropriate for urban environments.
- Ensure local extraction of rock material by identifying and securing existing and new suitable sites for quarrying operations.
- Secure existing new facilities for the management of excavated materials and develop new facilities for the reception, storage and processing of surplus masses, as well as the production of circular ballast products, with good access to major infrastructure and urban development projects.
- Strive to minimise the negative environmental impacts of handling and recycling construction materials.
- Adapt the load-bearing capacity and design of the road network in strategic locations to enable efficient heavy transportation.

See also the supplementary guidelines on pages 98–99



Supplementary guidelines for developing the technical supply systems

The siting and expansion of the technical supply systems is closely linked to development and the expansion of transport infrastructure.

These facilities are often space-intensive and, to some extent, disruptive to the surrounding area. At the same time, they are dependent on certain site-specific qualities. It is important that the siting of technical facilities and associated infrastructure is coordinated at the regional level, and that co-planning takes place between the technical supply systems, new development and transport infrastructure. This ensures that the existing technical infrastructure can be used as efficiently as possible, while the need for new investments is reduced.

Suitable sites for new technical facilities and infrastructure must be secured at an early stage of the planning process, at both regional and municipal levels. It is also important to ensure the functionality of existing facilities and opportunities for future development. For example, urban densification may involve a need to expand the capacity of existing systems. When planning new development areas, it is therefore important to ensure sufficient safety distances from existing and planned technical infrastructure and to take transport needs into account.

Key aspects to consider when selecting a location include disturbances in the form of noise, air pollution and odours, the risk of soil and water contamination, and risks linked to climate change and negative impacts on biodiversity. By planning for nature-based solutions, resilience can be improved. With regard to dangerous goods, consideration must be given to aspects such as explosion and fire risks, and accidents involving hazardous substances.

Supplementary guidelines for developing the technical supply systems

These guidelines apply to all technical supply systems, and shall be applied in conjunction with the guidelines for the system in question:

- Co-plan new technical infrastructure with new development. The functionality and future development of existing facilities must be ensured when planning new development. Safety distances may be required in order to manage risks and disruption caused by these operations.
- When planning new development that have a negative impact on the functioning of the technical supply systems, an impact assessment of the system as a whole must be carried out at an early stage in order to ensure that functionality can be maintained.
- Strive to co-locate cables where technically and legally possible, and without increasing the vulnerability of the system. Co-location involves efficient use of space for cable routing.
- Develop robust and resilient technical supply systems that are flexible and are able to maintain functionality during civil emergencies and heightened states of alert, such as sabotage and risks linked to a changing climate.
- Take into account the risk of impact on water bodies when developing the technical supply systems. Also plan new facilities, buildings and pipelines based on the mitigation hierarchy and with consideration for existing recreational, natural and cultural values. The impact assessment should include consequences in neighbouring municipalities and, if relevant, also an assessment of the impact from a sub-regional or regional perspective.

Figure 29. Map: Energy supply

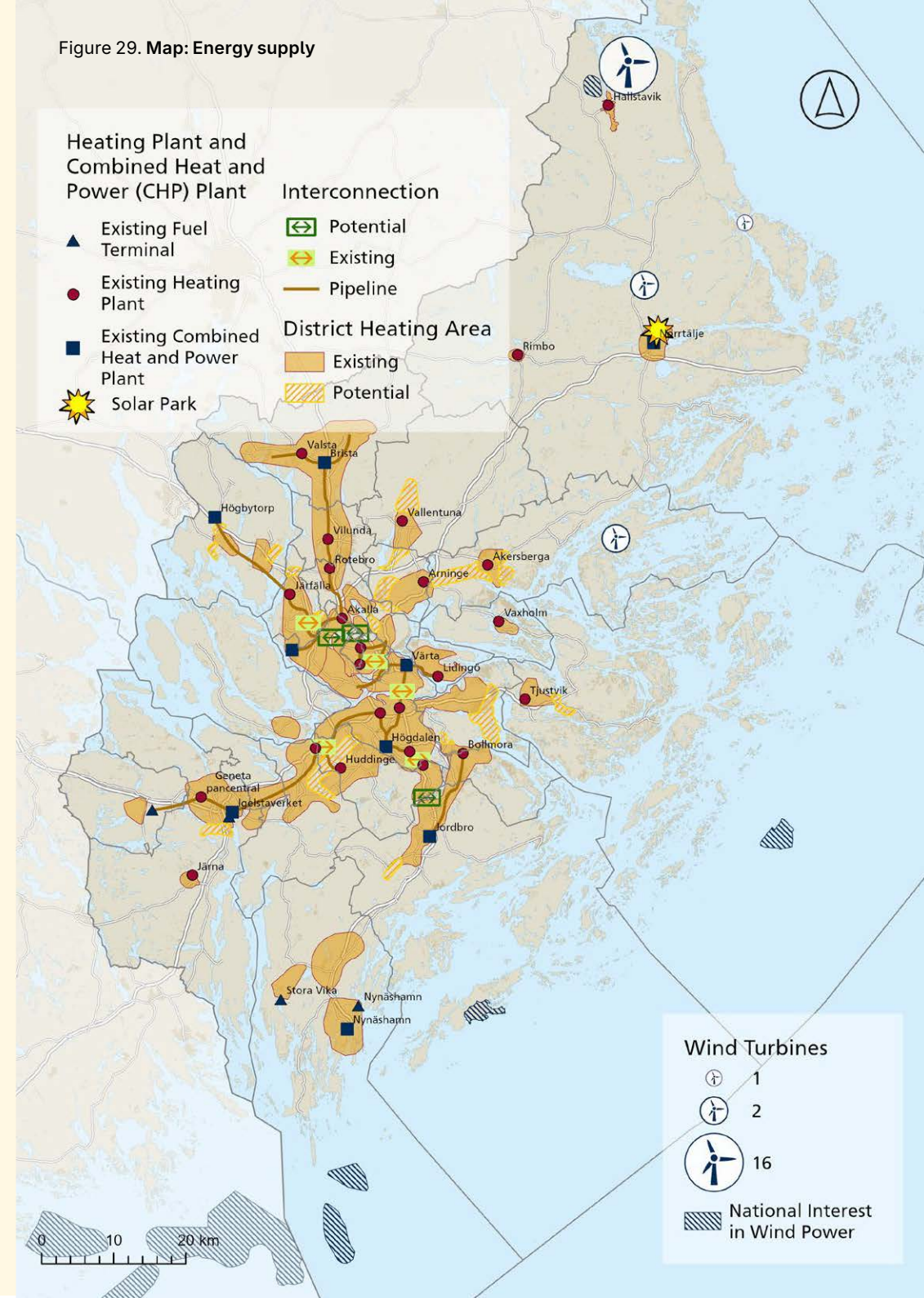


Figure 30. Map: Territorial division of drinking water production and drinking water protection

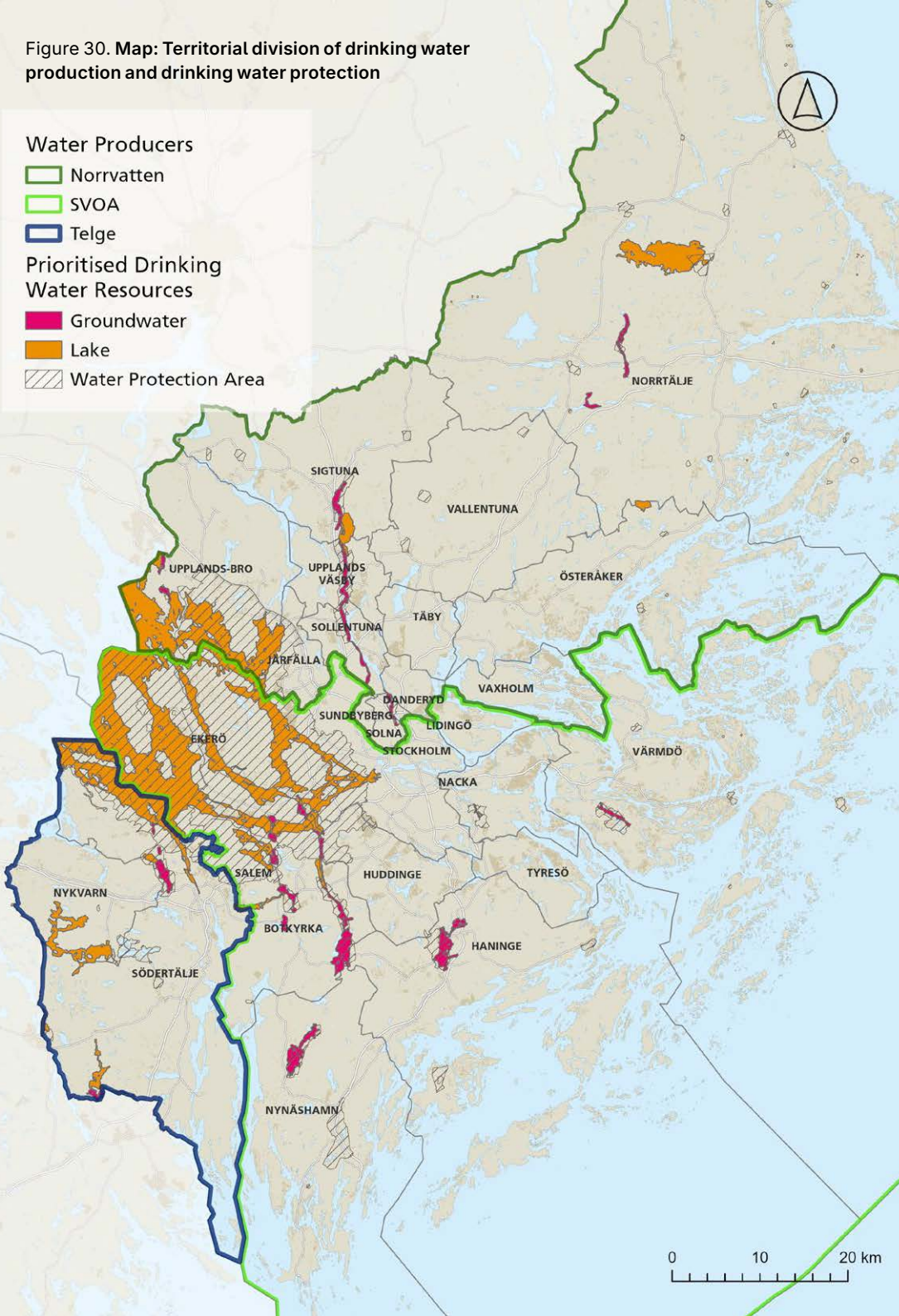


Figure 31. Map: Waste treatment plants of regional significance

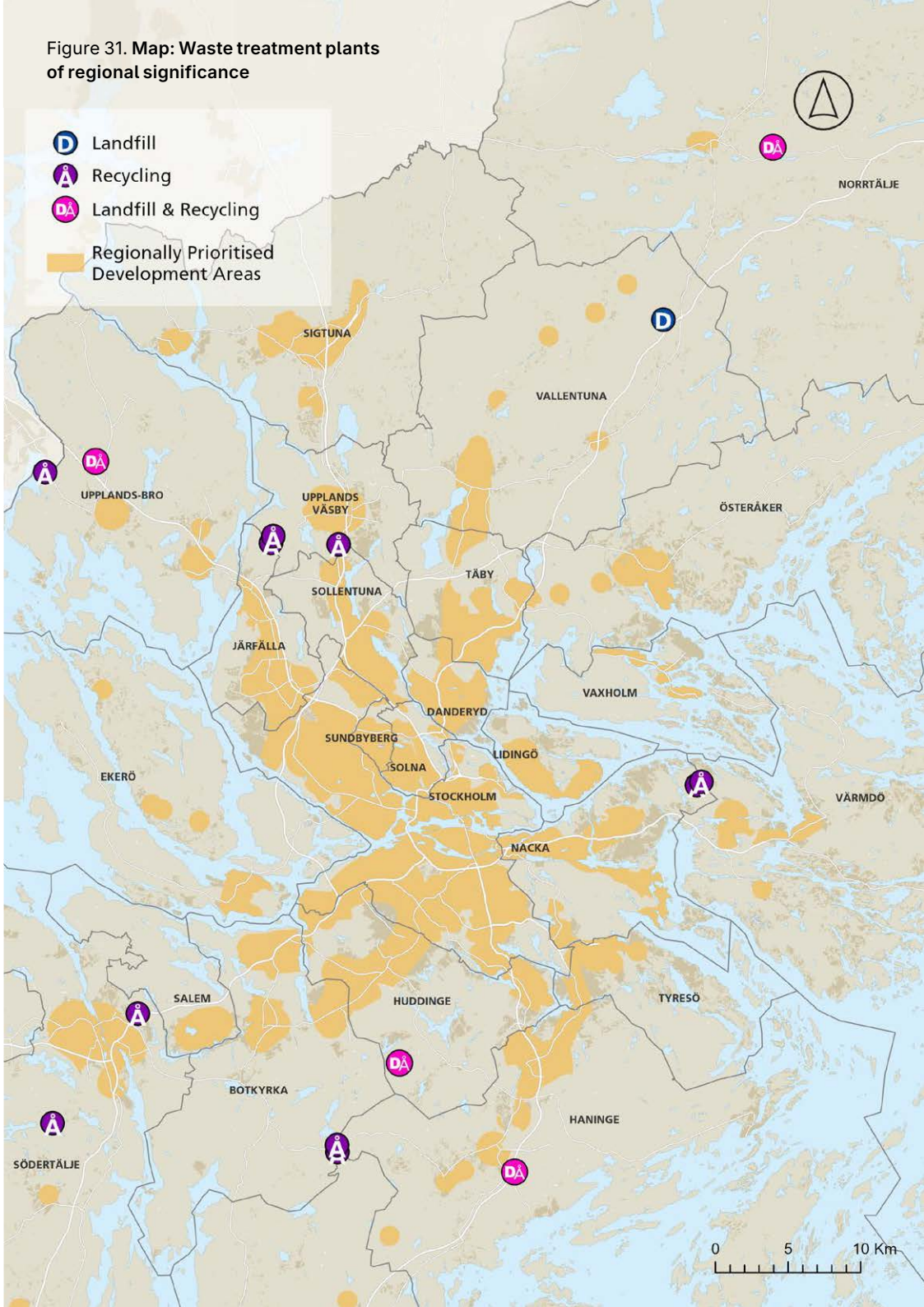
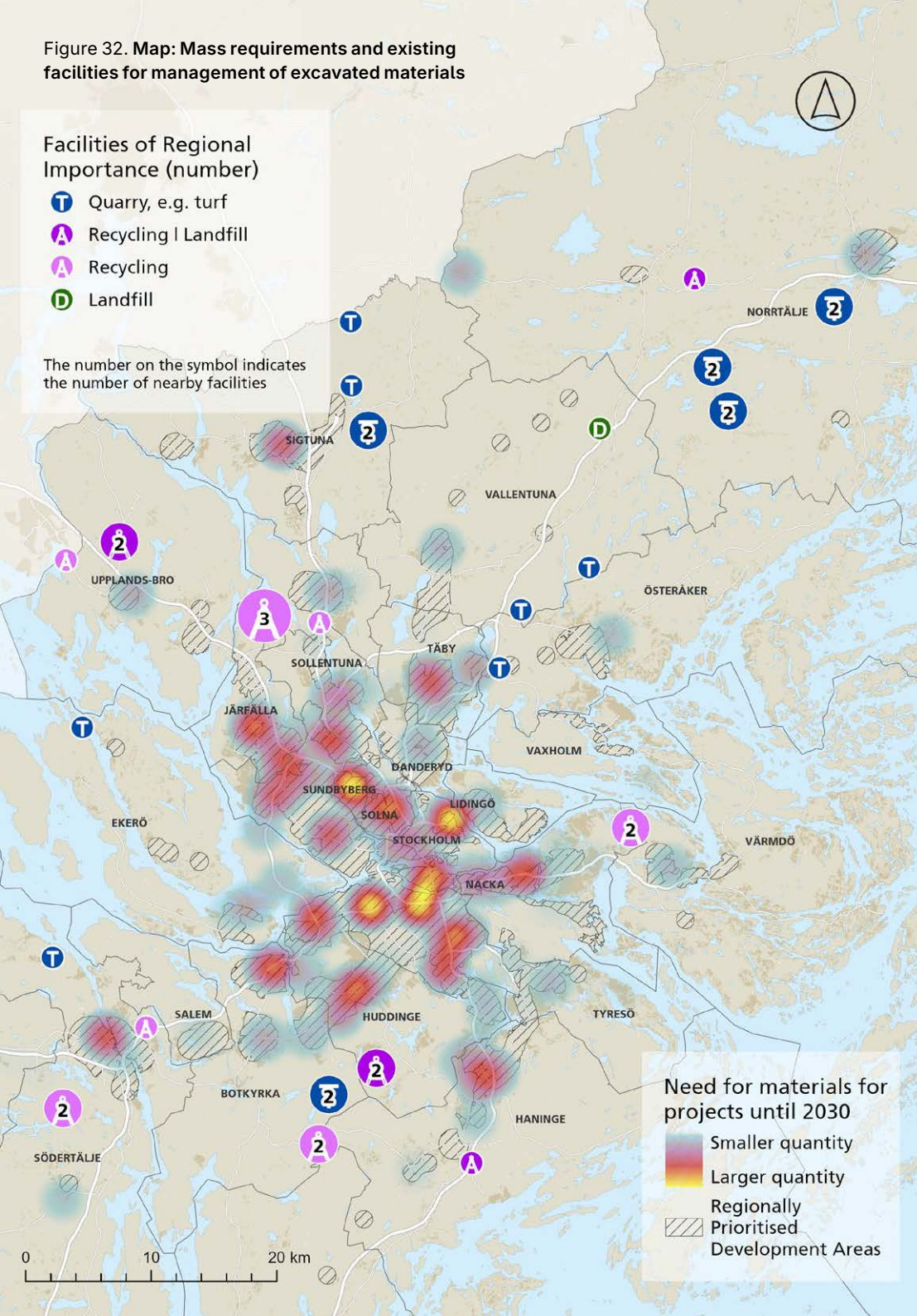
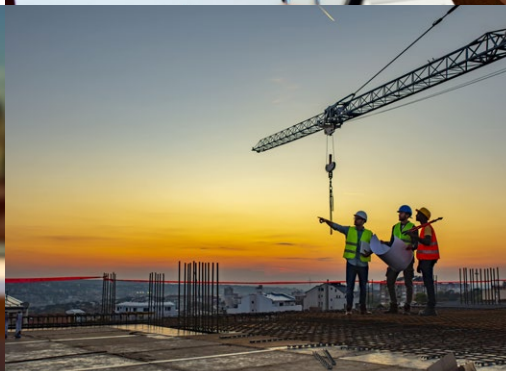
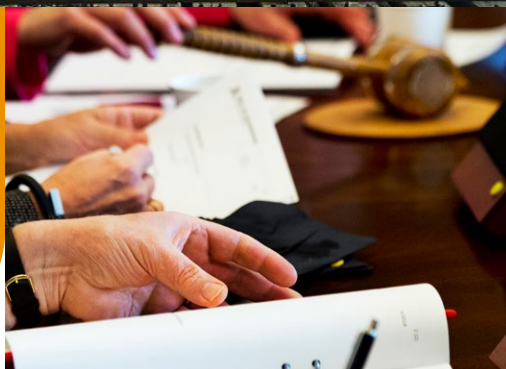


Figure 32. Map: Mass requirements and existing facilities for management of excavated materials





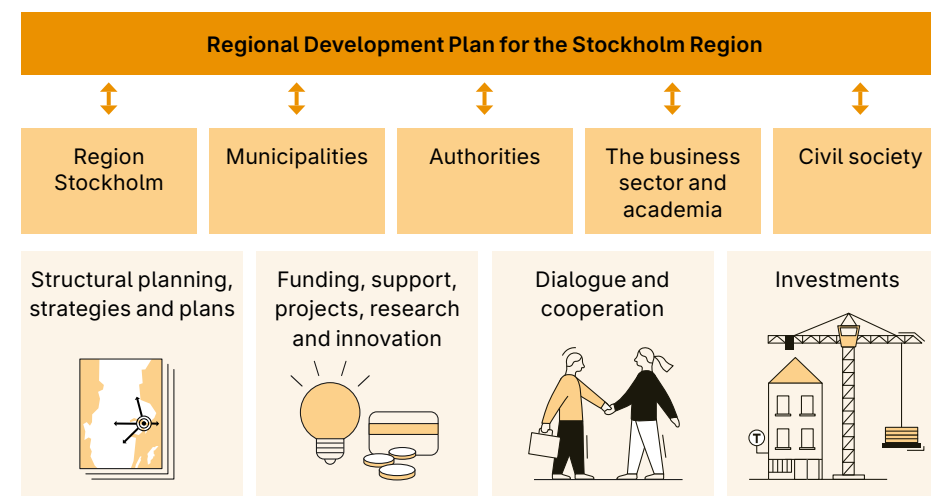
All stakeholders across the Stockholm region contribute – together, we create strong and sustainable regional development.



Turning words into action

The Regional Development Plan sets out our shared vision, the overall direction and the objectives we need to achieve for the Stockholm region to develop sustainably. However, turning words into action and creating real change requires all stakeholders across the Stockholm region to work together to identify priorities and determine the actions and initiatives needed. This must be done with due regard to each stakeholder's financial capacity and other available resources. Stakeholders across the Stockholm region also need to share knowledge and experience to make well-informed strategic decisions. As a foundation for dialogue, learning and prioritisation, monitoring and evaluating the Regional Development Plan is an important tool. At the same time, we need to combine the capacity for change with a long-term perspective, and have the commitment and perseverance to achieve results that take time to deliver.

Figure 33. Illustration showing the Regional Development Plan in relation to other plans and decision-making processes



The Regional Development Plan is a shared framework that shall be used as guidance in strategic decisions, planning and prioritisations. Every stakeholder needs to translate the plan's objectives and focus into their own processes, for example in comprehensive planning, investment decisions, operational strategies and collaborative initiatives. By using the Plan as a common reference point, we can ensure that local and regional efforts are aligned, so that together they contribute to the shared vision for the Stockholm region.

Collaboration – the key to strong regional development

Collaboration is essential if we are to create strong regional development. By working together, we can use our resources more efficiently, avoid duplicated efforts and identify synergies. We can also highlight more perspectives and gain a broader understanding of issues, thereby enabling us to identify better solutions. By working together, we can also have a greater impact by speaking with one voice to have an influence, both nationally and internationally. This requires close cooperation between the region, municipalities, government agencies, the business sector, academia, civil society and relevant authorities – stakeholders who together contribute different skills, mandates and capabilities. Cooperation also creates better conditions for identifying, addressing and, in certain cases, resolving conflicting objectives through joint analysis and deliberation.

The collaboration ladder serves as a basis for developing effective collaboration. The collaboration ladder describes the different levels of collaboration between

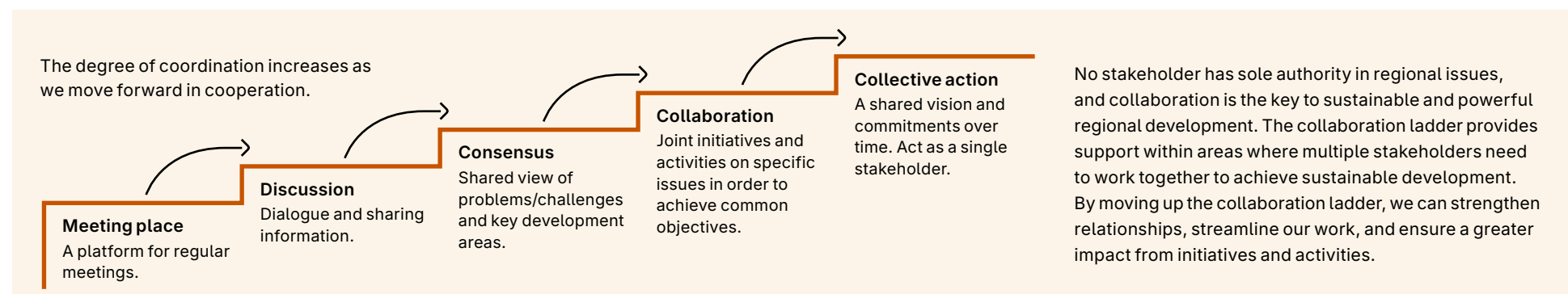
stakeholders, ranging from sharing information to fully integrated initiatives. The higher up the ladder we are, the more effective and in-depth our work can be. The ideal conditions for good collaboration are greater information-sharing, joint analysis, and working together to evaluate and decide on possible initiatives and activities.

A Forum for ongoing dialogue between municipal and regional political leaders

To drive the development of the Stockholm region forward, we need to set the right priorities, pool resources and manage conflicts between different objectives. This requires a shared understanding between the county's municipalities and Region Stockholm. Successful collaboration must involve all levels – from elected representatives and senior officials to case officers and other employees. Today, there are well-functioning partnerships and collaborative initiatives in several areas, such as skills supply, climate action and energy supply. However, we need to strengthen the culture of collaboration and create the conditions for a deeper and more well-established political dialogue between municipal and regional elected representatives across the Stockholm region.

At present, there is no permanent platform for ongoing political dialogue on issues that affect regional development. Region Stockholm therefore proposes the establishment of a regional forum. The purpose of the forum is to create better conditions for cooperation and collaboration, while providing the county's municipalities and Region Stockholm with an opportunity to discuss important future issues – not only short-term challenges.

Figure 34. Illustration of the collaboration ladder with explanation



In addition, the forum could serve as a shared meeting place where representatives from the business sector, academia and civil society can engage in dialogue with municipal and regional political leaders on strategic issues of importance to the long-term development of the Stockholm region.

The forum is expected to become an arena for learning, the exchange of ideas and joint decision-making. Over time, it should also develop into a forum where we can agree on key priorities for the future development of the Stockholm region – for example, where and which future investments will deliver the greatest benefits, or which other initiatives require coordinated action.

Based on the Regional Development Plan, the ambition is for the forum to identify priorities that are considered important for the Stockholm region as a whole. In this way, efforts and investments can be directed towards achieving the greatest possible benefit for the region's long-term development. The forum should serve as a hub for scaling up collaboration, providing greater clarity on strategic

choices and strengthening the implementation of regional development. Through the forum, the political leadership can monitor progress, support the work and contribute to a stronger implementation of the Regional Development Plan. The forum could also play an active role in future reviews of the Plan's relevance and in future revisions of the Regional Development Plan.

Monitoring and learning as a driving force for development

Monitoring involves more than just collecting figures and reporting statistics – it is also key to understanding, analysing and steering development in the right direction. By monitoring objectives, measures and initiatives, we can learn what works well, what needs adjusting, and how we can best prioritise moving forward in order to achieve our shared objectives for the Stockholm region's development. Which results are we seeing, and how do different stakeholders interpret this development? By jointly analysing these issues, we can build a foundation for sound decisions and continued development.

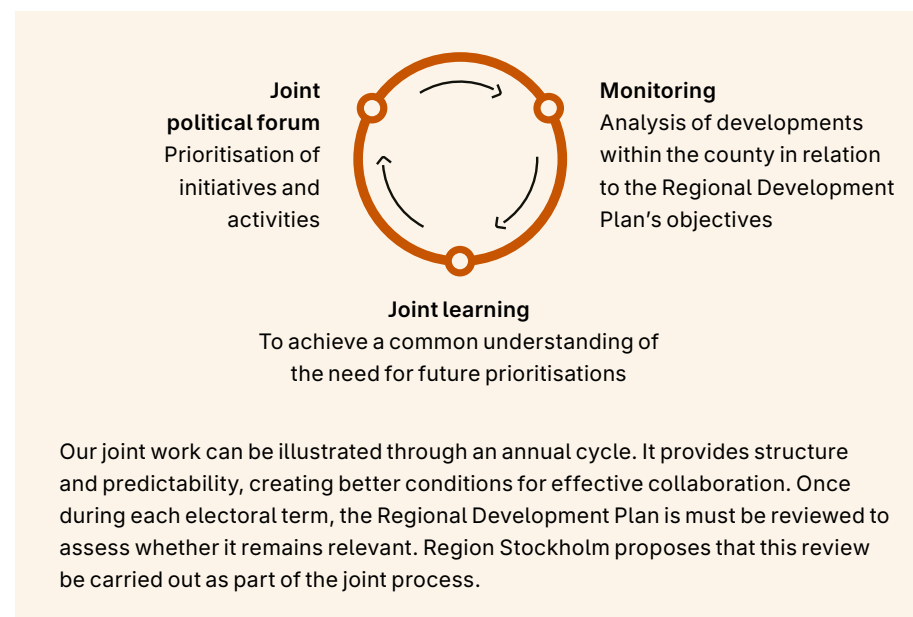
Shared learning and continuous knowledge development

In order to drive regional development forward, we need shared learning that features curiosity, commitment and a continuous exchange of experience and knowledge between stakeholders. By learning from one another and cooperating within effective networks, new opportunities can be identified, changes can be managed and innovative solutions can be developed, thereby contributing towards more powerful regional development. Close collaboration with academia is essential for the continued development of knowledge and methods.

Monitoring provides a basis for dialogue, learning and prioritising initiatives and activities

Continuous monitoring of the Regional Development Plan's objectives is essential if we are to ensure that development in the Stockholm region is moving in the desired direction and that initiatives are adjusted where necessary to achieve the desired effect. If monitoring is to result in actual improvements and action, results and conclusions – where relevant – must be used as a basis in our various governance and management processes. This requires stakeholders to be given the

Figure 35. Illustration of a proposed joint annual cycle for analysis and monitoring, learning and forums



opportunity to analyse, discuss and draw conclusions from the results together, for example in strategic forums and at conferences.

In order to strengthen this work, development is also placed within a broader context through comparisons with other internationally leading metropolitan regions. This allows trends, good examples and risks to be identified, and provides a better basis for priorities that can help to ensure that the Stockholm region remains competitive, attractive and sustainable from a global perspective. Key questions for monitoring could include: What do the results show, and what do they mean for the region's development? How does this development align with the objectives in the Regional Development Plan?

Region Stockholm's responsibilities and tools

Region Stockholm has a range of tools and areas of responsibility that together contribute towards regional development. Through Region Stockholm's responsibilities for healthcare, public transport, culture, regional development and regional spatial planning, Region Stockholm helps to create the right conditions for a region that is sustainable in the long term and functions effectively.

The Regional Development Plan is a guiding document for Region Stockholm's operations. It provides strategic direction for all activities related to regional development and helps align Region Stockholm's different roles and responsibilities with the shared objectives for the long-term development of the Stockholm region.

Region Stockholm's tools for regional development work

Region Stockholm uses a range of tools and working methods to implement its regional development responsibilities and to carry out regional spatial planning. Through funding, governance and guidance, analysis and knowledge, influence and structured collaboration, we can create the right conditions to translate the objectives of the Regional Development Plan into concrete actions and long-term development throughout the entire county.

Funding

Regional, national and European funding is essential if Region Stockholm is to be able to initiate and implement measures that support the objectives contained in

Figure 36. Illustration showing Region Stockholm's core operations and their contributions towards regional development



the Regional Development Plan. The most important sources of funding include programmes linked to the European Structural Funds. These programmes are based on the Regional Development Plan, and contribute directly towards achieving its objectives. State development funds, specific state calls for proposals and regional project funds are also important resources that strengthen Region Stockholm's opportunities to drive development initiatives forward.

Another significant source of funding is the County Plan for Regional Transport Infrastructure. This finances the expansion and improvement of the state roads in the county. The County Plan also co-finance municipalities and the public transport authorities within the areas of cycling, public transport, road safety and the environment. The County Plan's guiding principles are based on the Regional Development Plan.

Region Stockholm also offers its own forms of funding to organisations and businesses in the Stockholm region. This includes project funding for sustainable regional development, support for the development of SMEs, and grants for commercial services in areas where there are few services. Academia and research are supported through specific research and project funding within healthcare, public transport and regional planning.

Region Stockholm also contributes towards cultural stakeholders, associations, sport, outdoor activities and non-formal adult education. This improves residents' quality of life through participation in and access to a rich cultural life and associations, which is also an important part of the region's attractiveness and social development.

Governance and guidance

Strategies, guidance documents, action plans and guidelines across different policy areas are an important part of Region Stockholm's contribution to regional development. They help clarify the objectives of the Regional Development Plan in different ways. These documents are developed either on Region Stockholm's own initiative or in collaboration with other stakeholders. Their purpose is to further develop, clarify and translate different policy areas into practical action, while providing additional guidance and support for implementation. Some of these documents also serve as guiding documents for Region Stockholm's own operations.

Analysis and knowledge

By initiating, drawing up and sharing analyses, knowledge and statistical data, Region Stockholm contributes towards the development of regional perspectives. Collaboration agreements and close dialogue between Region Stockholm and academia contribute towards new knowledge and cooperation on issues of importance for the region's development. Region Stockholm also has a specific mandate to investigate and provide documentation on issues of significance to the Stockholm region's physical environment. This documentation strengthens and highlights aspects such as knowledge about the region's current situation, needs and challenges within various areas. We regularly share and further develop this knowledge through research collaboration, dialogues, seminars, workshops and learning sessions.

Regional advocacy

Advocacy work at various different levels is a long-term and important task in order to ensure that the Regional Development Plan has an impact. Region Stockholm acts as both a unifying force and a driving force, and – through collaboration and dialogue with municipalities, the business sector, civil society and other stakeholders – it can drive forward and influence issues at national and international levels. By engaging various stakeholders and building strong relationships based on trust, consensus and mutual understanding, we can work together to create visibility for issues of regional importance and opportunities for active influence at different levels. This includes active participation in relevant national and international forums, where Region Stockholm contributes knowledge, drives issues forward and monitors developments that affect the Stockholm region's long-term conditions. Region Stockholm also works to ensure that the regional focus has an impact at municipal, state and European levels, including by commenting formally on municipal comprehensive plans, guidelines for housing provision and municipal business strategies, national infrastructure planning, government inquiries, EU legislation, the EU's funding structure, etc.

Facilitating collaboration

Region Stockholm promotes collaboration by building structures for dialogue, knowledge exchanges and joint initiatives. As a stakeholder with responsibility for regional development, Region Stockholm brings together municipalities, the business sector, academia, civil society and government agencies to address strategic issues such as the climate, energy supply, public health, tourism, cultural heritage and sustainable transport. This is done via jointly run projects, networks and collaboration platforms such as Competence Arena Stockholm (Kompetensarena Stockholm), Stockholm Climate Arena (Klimatarena Stockholm), the Public Health Arena (Arena Folkhälsa), Stockholm Regional Power System Forum (REST), Regional Archipelago Council (Skärgårdsrådet), Stockholm Region Tourism Forum (Besökskraft Stockholmsregionen) and the Stockholm Region's Business Advisory Council (Stockholmsregionens näringslivsråd). This collaboration also helps to manage inter-municipal coordination on issues that require joint solutions. The aim is to build consensus and to drive sustainable development forward in the Stockholm region.

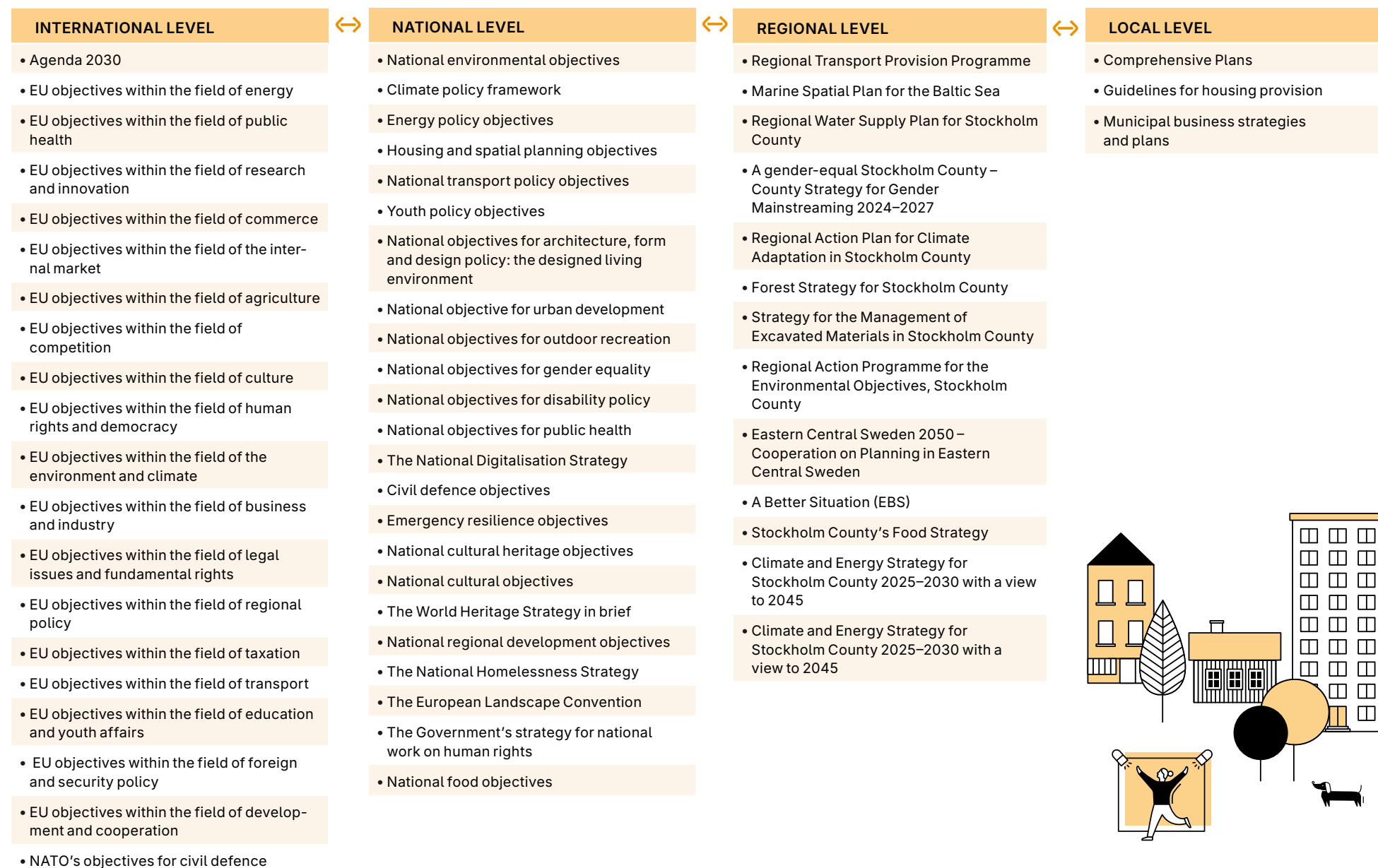


How the Regional Development Plan relates to international, national and regional objectives

The Regional Development Plan shows how the Stockholm region's stakeholders work together and at a strategic level to implement international and national objectives, as well as strategies and plans within relevant areas of society. The illustration on the next page shows how the plan relates to these.

Objectives at global and European levels have been combined under the heading "International level". This summary does not include related strategies or action plans, except for strategies that include objectives. At regional level, it reports on guiding documents that the Regional Development Plan relates to. Strategies that describe the objectives and focus of the Regional Development Plan in greater depth, such as the business and growth strategy or the rural and archipelago strategy, are not reported on. Applicable legislation, such as the Swedish Environmental Code or the Swedish Planning and Building Act, is not reported on in the summary, since objective fulfilment is ensured through the respective implementation processes.

Figure 37. Illustration of international, national, regional and municipal objectives that the Regional Development Plan relates to



The global Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the UN Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In it, the Member States committed to leading the world towards a sustainable and equitable future by 2030 by eradicating poverty and hunger everywhere, combating inequality within and between countries, building peaceful, just and inclusive societies, ensuring that everyone can enjoy human rights, promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, taking action to reach the most vulnerable first, and ensuring the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources.

Agenda 2030 is an action plan with 17 goals for the transition towards a sustainable society for people, the planet and prosperity. Agenda 2030's goals and targets cover all three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.

National environmental objectives

Sweden has 16 environmental quality objectives and one overall objective, the Generations Goal, which guides environmental work at all levels of society. The environmental objectives concretise the national implementation of the environmental sustainability dimension, and cover the areas of waste, biodiversity, hazardous substances, sustainable urban development, air pollution and the climate.

The objectives in the Regional Development Plan contribute towards the global Sustainable Development Goals and the national environmental objectives

The illustration on the next page shows how the Regional Development Plan's objectives contribute towards and relate to the global Sustainable Development Goals and the national environmental objectives. The assessment of the contribution to these goals and objectives is based on three assessment levels: direct contribution, indirect contribution and no contribution.

"Direct contribution" means that the objective in the Regional Development Plan makes a direct contribution to one of the other goals or objectives. For example, *Objective 3: The Stockholm region has a sustainable and reliable energy supply that meets its needs* makes a direct contribution towards Global Goal 7: *Affordable and clean energy*. Meanwhile, *Objective 3* has also been assessed as making an indirect contribution towards Global Goal 11: *Sustainable cities and communities*. A direct contribution is indicated by a green square, and an indirect contribution by a yellow circle. An empty box means that it is assessed as making no contribution to the goal.

The Regional Development Plan's objectives contribute most towards the fulfilment of Goal 9: Industry, innovation and infrastructure, and Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities. The new Regional Development Plan also contributes towards the fulfilment of Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth, through its objectives for sustainable growth in the Stockholm region. Goal 17 of the 2030 Agenda concerns the implementation and realisation of the other 16 goals. Since implementation in the new Regional Development Plan is managed outside the goal structure, the assessment is that the Regional Development Plan's objectives make no contribution towards Goal 17.

The Regional Development Plan contributes most to the fulfilment of the national environmental objectives Reduced climate impact, A good built environment, Clean air, and Flourishing lakes and streams. It contributes to a lesser extent towards the objectives A safe radiation environment, Thriving wetlands and Sustainable forests, and makes no contribution to the objective A magnificent mountain landscape.

The Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the Regional Development Plan

Figure 38. Illustration of how the Regional Development Plan's objectives contribute towards the global Sustainable Development Goals.

A green square indicates a direct contribution and a yellow circle indicates an indirect contribution between the Regional Development Plan's objectives and the global Sustainable Development Goals. An empty box means that it is assessed as making no contribution towards the goal.

■ = direct link ● = indirect link

Regional objectives

		1 NO POVERTY	2 ZERO HUNGER	3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING	4 QUALITY EDUCATION	5 GENDER EQUALITY	6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION	7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH	9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE	10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES	11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES	12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION	13 CLIMATE ACTION	14 LIFE BELOW WATER	15 LIFE ON LAND	16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS	17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
1	By 2045, the Stockholm region will have zero net greenhouse gas emissions			●				■	●	■		■	■	■	●	●	●	
2	The Stockholm region has resilient systems that ensure functionality, safety and resilience	■	■				■	■		■		■		■		●		
3	The Stockholm region has a sustainable and reliable energy supply that meets its needs							■		■		●	■	●				
4	The Stockholm region has a resource-efficient and sustainable transport infrastructure that improves accessibility for residents and businesses		●	●					●	■		■		●				
5	The housing supply in the Stockholm region is sustainable, and meets the needs and circumstances of residents			●	●	●					●	■	●					
6	Democracy in the Stockholm region is strong, and residents feel a high degree of involvement, trust and security	●				●	●			●	■	■					■	
7	Public health in the Stockholm region is good and equal	●		■	■	■	■		■		■	■			●		●	
8	The development of the spatial structure in the Stockholm region is polycentric and sustainable, and contributes towards good living environments and business development		●	■	●	■	■	●	●			■	■	●	■	■		
9	The Stockholm region has a resilient and internationally competitive business sector	●	●		●	●		■	■	■		●						
10	The Stockholm region is at the forefront of research and innovation		●	●	■	●		■	■	■			●					
11	The Stockholm region has strong skills provision, attractive education and an inclusive labour market	●		●	■	■			■	●								
12	The Stockholm region has a strong identity and good international accessibility.								■	●								

Figure 39. Illustration of how the Regional Development Plan's objectives contribute towards the national environmental objectives. A green square indicates a direct contribution and a yellow circle indicates an indirect contribution between the Regional Development Plan's objectives and the national environmental objectives. An empty box means that it is assessed as making no contribution towards the objective.

■ = direct link ● = indirect link

[illegible]



Sustainability appraisal, including strategic environmental assessment

The Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm region is a tool to enable the region's stakeholders, both collectively and individually, to work towards a shared vision and overall objectives aimed at the long-term and sustainable development of the entire Stockholm region. When drawing up a regional development plan, a strategic environmental assessment shall be carried out with the aim of integrating environmental aspects into the plan so that sustainable development is promoted. Region Stockholm has chosen to expand the strategic environmental assessment into a sustainability assessment which also includes economic and social sustainability perspectives. The sustainability assessment has been carried out in parallel with the planning process. All assessments of environmental impacts are made in comparison with the current situation, and primarily focus on two target years: 2040 for the short and medium terms, and 2060 for the long term. Climate impact and agricultural land as a long-term resource are assessed with a longer time horizon extending to 2100. Social and economic consequences – apart from health and *living environment*, and the *management of land, water and the physical environment*, which are assessed as arising from the Regional Development Plan – are assessed using an objective-oriented approach, which means that they are assessed against the national environmental objectives and Agenda 2030.

Compared with the zero alternative, which in this case corresponds to a projected current situation, the Regional Development Plan entails the use of less land. The plan is assessed as contributing to a greater extent than the zero alternative towards the achievement of national environmental objectives via the

presented guidelines. The Regional Development Plan is assessed as entailing slightly lower negative impact and effects on environmental aspects compared with the zero alternative. The practical outcome of the plan is determined by the interaction between several different stakeholders.

The Regional Development Plan sets high ambitions, including for the Stockholm region's green and blue structure and for the climate. The plan highlights the importance of addressing a range of environmental aspects in future planning. As a result of the plan's overall nature, its effects and consequences are hard to assess. Development means that areas of natural and cultural value and sensitive water quality may be affected. Health and living environment may also be affected in terms of noise and air quality, primarily from traffic. The construction of housing and infrastructure leads in turn to increased greenhouse gas emissions, despite the ambitious climate targets in the Regional Development Plan. The environmental consequences are mitigated by the plan's focus on concentrated built-up areas rather than scattered built-up areas. With regard to environmental impacts, the plan as a whole is assessed as posing a risk of negative consequences for most aspects, with the exception of water, where the plan is assessed as being likely to have positive consequences.

With regard to social impacts, the Regional Development Plan is assessed as generally contributing towards good objective achievement. Assessment criteria relating to everyday life, vibrant communities, mobility, accessibility, inclusion, safety and security, and social cohesion correspond well with the plan's objectives and focuses. With regard to economic impacts, the Regional Development Plan is assessed as generally contributing towards good objective achievement. The assessment criteria for the business sector's conditions and the effective use of the built environment largely correspond with the plan's spatial priorities for development in locations with good accessibility, as well as the plan's objectives regarding enhanced attractiveness and international accessibility. These intentions also contribute to a certain extent towards achieving the objective of long-term balance in public finances. However, the absence of an approach for balancing and prioritising economic commitments in the Plan may jeopardise the objective of maintaining a long-term balance in public finances.

→ Find out more about the sustainability assessment in the appendix *Sustainability assessment with strategic environmental assessment of the Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm Region*



Terms and concepts

Public interests

Public interests are described in Chapter 2 of the Swedish Planning and Building Act (2010:900), and include natural and cultural aspects, the design of built-up areas and certain provisions in the Swedish Environmental Code. The municipalities must take public interests into account in planning and legislation, as must the regional planning authority in regional planning. Some of these public interests have also been designated as national interests.

Land-based industries

Land-based industries include businesses within agriculture, forestry, horticulture and fisheries.

Blue structure

The term "blue structure" is used to highlight, value and take into account the functions and values of aquatic environments within the landscape. This includes watercourses, lakes, the sea and other water-related elements of the green structure, such as wetlands, ditches, ponds and stormwater systems.

Housing shortage

Housing shortage is a complex concept that cannot be described in a single way. Every year, the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning assesses the housing shortage in both regions and municipalities. This assessment is based on several metrics that show how many households lack a home that meets the criteria and standards set by the Board.

GRP – gross regional product

Gross regional product (GRP) is the regional equivalent of the national metric gross domestic product (GDP). GRP is the total value of all goods and services produced in a region over the course of a year, and indicates the scale of production in monetary terms. (Source: Regionfakta.com)

Ecological compensation

Ecological compensation means that negative impacts on nature resulting from human activity must be offset by measures that create, restore or improve ecosystems elsewhere.

Ecosystem services

Ecosystem services are products and services that are created by nature and used by humans. They are usually divided up into four main categories: provisioning (food and raw materials, etc.), cultural (e.g. nature experiences), regulating (water purification, pollination, etc.) and supporting (biodiversity and the hydrological cycle, etc.).

Public health

Public health describes the overall health status of the population, which includes both good health and ill health. Good public health means that both physical and mental health are high and equally distributed across the population, regardless of factors such as gender, age, living conditions, level of education and income.

Projections (population and employment)

A population projection is a calculation of how the population may develop on average up until a certain year, based on assumptions regarding births, deaths and net migration. It differs from a population forecast, which shows the population's development year by year and may also take into account factors such as housing construction and economic cycles. Projections can also be produced for economic development and for employment within various sectors.

Civil emergencies

A civil emergency crisis is a serious event that threatens the functioning of society during peacetime. It causes or risks causing serious disruption to key societal functions, and requires urgent and coordinated action from multiple stakeholders.

Green infrastructure

Green infrastructure consists of both vegetation and water, and involves nature being interconnected via ecological processes throughout the entire landscape. Green infrastructure forms the basis for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Green structure

Green structure is an ecologically functional network of habitats and structures, and consists of both natural areas and landscaped green spaces. Green infrastructure is a key element of physical planning in accordance with the Swedish Planning and Building Act.

Sustainable growth

Sustainable growth refers to growth that creates the right conditions for economic, ecological and social sustainability. Not least, it involves combating unemployment and reducing social exclusion.

Health promotion work and initiatives

Health promotion work involves strengthening and preserving people's physical, mental and social health. It includes both providing individuals with better opportunities, for example through participation and confidence in their own abilities, and working at group and society levels to create safe and supportive environments. This work is based on knowledge about factors that protect and strengthen health.

Health-promoting living environments

Health-promoting living environments are places where we live and move that are clean, safe, secure and free from harmful influences, and which make it easy to feel good, be active and lead a healthy life.

Intra-regional differences

Intra-regional differences in the Stockholm region concern how living conditions and opportunities vary between different parts of the region, different residential areas and different groups. These differences may relate to aspects such as income, employment, education, health, housing conditions, safety and security, and access to workplaces, services, culture, green spaces and public transport. They affect both the individuals' and different groups' opportunities to lead a good life, as well as the region's social cohesion, trust and long-term development.

Innovation ecosystem

An innovation ecosystem consists of many interconnected stakeholders, such as the public sector, civil society, the business sector, academia and entrepreneurs. It functions at its best when these stakeholders work together. Each group of collaborating actors forms its own ecosystem. In Sweden, there are local, regional and national innovation ecosystems, which are also linked to global contexts. The innovation ecosystem includes stakeholders, relationships and resources that together make it possible to develop ideas into solutions that have a significant impact. The individual parts of the ecosystem are dependent on each other. For example, entrepreneurs need access to funding. When something changes in one part of the ecosystem, the other parts are also affected.

Cultural heritage

Cultural heritage is traces of people's lives and activities, both tangible and intangible, such as traditions, knowledge and customs. This can include buildings, landscapes, objects, names, narratives and ways of working. The term can also be used to describe specific aspects of social development, such as biological, industrial or modern cultural heritage.

Cultural environment

A cultural environment is an environment that has been shaped by people and that reflects how places have been used and developed over time. This can range from a single building or a relic to entire landscapes, communities or regions. The cultural environment is part of cultural heritage, and includes both physical traces and intangible elements, such as place names and narratives linked to a location.

Life sciences

Life sciences are a broad and interdisciplinary field within research and academia that studies health and disease by integrating various disciplines within medicine, biology and technology. Life sciences can include medicine, biomedicine, pharmaceuticals, molecular technology, genetics and environmental medicine.

Food system

The food chain describes, in simple terms, how food goes from farm to fork. The food system is broader and more complex. It includes the entire process of how food is produced, processed, distributed and consumed, including farming methods, value chains, industrial processes and changing eating habits. The food system can vary in scale, from local systems at farm level to global trading systems. It can also be divided up according to different types of food, such as meat, dairy products or vegetables.

Living conditions

Living conditions describe people's ability to lead fulfilling lives. The term is used in many different contexts, including in relation to public health, determinants of health and social sustainability. It often includes factors such as work, education and housing. In Region Stockholm's living conditions index, living conditions are defined as "the resources, relationships and circumstances that influence individuals' (and groups') ability to fully develop their capabilities (capacities)".

Inter-municipal coordination

When a position regarding an issue in one municipality may affect one or more other municipalities, it becomes an inter-municipal matter. Inter-municipal matters require coordination, and here the region, the municipalities and the County Administrative Board all have a responsibility in accordance with the Swedish Planning and Building Act. The region investigates matters of significance to the county's physical environment, and the Regional Development Plan supports the coordination of inter-municipal matters of regional significance. In their planning processes, the municipalities must give other affected municipalities the opportunity to provide input on the consequences for their municipality, and they must be given the opportunity to comment during consultation and review. The County Administrative Board, in turn, is responsible for ensuring that issues concerning the use of land and water areas that affect two or more municipalities are coordinated in an appropriate manner during the planning process. This applies to regional plans, comprehensive plans and detailed plans.

Environmental quality standards (EQSs)

EQSs are a legal instrument under the Swedish Environmental Code in order to achieve a good aquatic environment, guide decision-making and ensure the sustainable use of water resources. EQSs for water are legally binding and function as absolute requirements, aiming to protect natural flora and fauna in aquatic environments and to ensure water quality and access to drinking water. In practice, EQSs define the quality or the condition that a water body must achieve by a specific point in time. They regulate the planning and use of the blue structure, i.e. all water bodies – surface water (lakes, watercourses, coastal waters and offshore waters) and groundwater – as well as functional water and land areas that are important for maintaining good water status.

Conflicting objectives

Objectives may sometimes be perceived as coming into conflict with each other. For example, objectives relating to increased housing supply, preserved natural and cultural values, reduced climate impact and economic development often need to be achieved simultaneously and in the same locations. Such conflicts of objectives and interests are part of spatial planning. Transparency is essential when it comes to where and why conflicts of objectives and interests arise, and it is important that the relevant stakeholders highlight these, take responsibility for agreeing on trade-offs and choose solutions which, given the circumstances, can help to reduce these conflicts. The Regional Development Plan provides strategic support in this work, while impact assessments and other in-depth analyses provide supplementary data for the trade-offs that need to be made in subsequent planning.

Nature-based solutions

Nature-based solutions are measures that are based on nature's own processes and capacity to address societal challenges, rather than relying solely on technical solutions. Emissions reductions, climate adaptation and work to promote human health are examples of areas where nature-based solutions can contribute towards a more sustainable society. Nature-based solutions are multifunctional and cost-effective measures that are based on the functions provided by ecosystems, known as ecosystem services, while also promoting biodiversity and human wellbeing.

Predictable energy production

Predictable energy production refers to energy sources where it is possible to determine when and how much energy should be produced. Examples include nuclear power, hydropower and district heating plants/combined heat and power plants (district heating plants that can also generate electricity).

Reserve water

Reserve water is water that is held in reserve for use in extraordinary situations, such as when the regular water supply is insufficient or when water quality is temporarily inadequate. It is intended to ensure the supply of drinking water in the event of drought, disruption to the distribution network or other crisis situations.

National interest

Areas of national interest are matters of national importance, and come under the supervisory responsibility of the County Administrative Board in accordance with the Swedish Planning and Building Act (2010:900).

RUFS 2050

The Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm Region with a target year of 2050, which was in force from October 2018 to October 2026, and was abbreviated to RUFS 2050.

RUS – regional development strategy

RUS is set out in the Swedish Ordinance (2017:583) on Regional Development Work. According to Section 8, the regional development strategy shall be a comprehensive and cross-sectoral strategy for the regional growth work in one or more counties, and shall contain objectives and long-term priorities for this.

Scale-up

A scale-up company is a business that has had an average profit of 20 percent over the last three years with at least ten employees, according to the OECD. Another description is that a scale-up company is in a growth phase.

Smart specialisation

A strategy and method within regional development that aims to identify and focus on areas where a region has specific strengths and competitive advantages. This is a method for increasing the Stockholm region's innovation capacity and economic growth by concentrating resources and efforts on areas where the Stockholm region has the potential to be a leader and remain competitive.

SMEs

SMEs, or small and medium-sized enterprises, are companies with fewer than 250 employees.

Stable grids for energy production

Stable grids are achieved when electricity production and consumption are equal at any given time. Excessively high or low production threatens stability and, in the worst case, can cause a blackout with major damage to the infrastructure. In those cases where there is an imbalance in the system, various support systems need to be developed to manage the imbalance. Another aspect of stability involves ensuring that the power lines can transport electricity to where it will be consumed.

The Stockholm region's stakeholders

The Stockholm region's stakeholders are all parties that contribute towards the region's development, such as municipalities, the business sector, civil society and authorities.

Areas of strength

A sector or a specialisation area in which an organisation, a region or a nation has specific strengths, competencies or advantages compared to others. Identifying and developing areas of strength is often part of strategic planning and economic development in order to create competitive advantages and promote sustainable growth.

Sweden's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

Sweden's Exclusive Economic Zone is a maritime area outside Sweden's territorial waters where Sweden has special rights to exploit natural resources, such as fisheries, minerals and energy, but where other countries still have freedom of passage.

Vulnerable groups

Vulnerable groups are people who, due to their living conditions or the way society is structured, are at greater risk of ill health, discrimination or reduced access to services and influence. These can be people in socioeconomically disadvantaged situations, for example, or groups with specific rights. Vulnerability is context-dependent, and can vary between different situations. It arises in interaction between an individual's circumstances and the design, norms and demands of their environment. The needs of vulnerable groups must therefore be taken into account in planning and implementation in order to create equal living conditions and good health for all.

Accessibility

Accessibility describes people's ability to participate in society on equal terms. It concerns how society is designed so that as many people as possible can use and benefit from the physical environment, information, communication, products and services, as well as how transport and travel times affect the ability to reach work and services.

Unicorn

A start-up company with market capitalisation of more than one billion US dollars. Examples of Swedish unicorn companies include Skype, Klarna, Spotify, Mojang, Truecaller, Instabox, Kry and Einride.

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Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm Region

Europe's most attractive and sustainable metropolitan region to live, work and thrive in

The Regional Development Plan establishes a long-term direction for the Stockholm region's development. The plan has been drawn up in cooperation with the county's municipalities and stakeholders, and is based on knowledge bases and analyses of long-term societal changes and needs. The Plan serves as a framework and a tool to enable the county's municipalities, authorities, business sector, civil society and academia to jointly meet the challenges of the future and capitalise on the strengths and opportunities that exist in Stockholm County.

The Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm Region was adopted on 5 May 2026 as Region Stockholm's Regional Development Strategy (RUS) in accordance with the Swedish Regional Development Responsibility Act (2010:630) and as a regional plan in accordance with the Swedish Planning and Building Act (2010:900).

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