

Fact sheet for planning levels

Planning level

Type of plan

Regional level

Planning level	Planning instrument	Content of plan	Legal basis	Policy maker	Legal impact	Scale
National	Areas of national interest (<i>rikssintresse av nationellt betydelsefulla områden</i>)	Areas of national interests are identified on the grounds that they contain nationally important assets and qualities. These are larger areas of natural and cultural value or those that represent other national interests (e.g. for defence or reindeer herding).	Environmental Code (<i>miljöbalken</i>)	12 national public authorities (e.g. Swedish National Heritage Board, Swedish Environmental Protection Agency, Swedish Transport Administration)	The comprehensive plan must indicate how the municipality intends to safeguard the specified national interests and adhere to applicable environmental quality standards (chapter 3, section 5, PBL, Planning and Building Act).	Not defined, varies in practice.
Regional	Regional plan (<i>regionplan</i>)	A regional plan must specify the basic features for the use of land and water areas and the guidelines for the location of buildings and structures that are significant for the region. The plan must provide guidance for decisions on general plans, detailed plans, and area regulations. It should also stimulate intermunicipal cooperation.	Planning and Building Act (<i>plan- och bygglag</i>)	regional council (<i>regionfullmäktige</i>) and regional board (<i>regionstyrelsen</i>)	The Regional plan is non-binding and indicative, and thus only of guiding character for various policies relevant for spatial planning.	Not defined, varies in practice.
Municipal	Comprehensive plan (<i>översiktsplan</i>)	Defines the long-term development of the physical environment. The plan must provide guidance for decisions on how the land and water areas are to be used and how the built environment is to be used, developed, and protected.	Planning and Building Act (<i>plan- och bygglag</i>)	municipal council (<i>kommunfullmäktige</i>) and the municipal board (<i>kommunstyrelsen</i>)	Non-legally binding.	Not defined, varies in practice.
Municipal	Detailed plan (<i>detaljplan</i>)	Provides detailed regulations for the use of land and water areas.	Planning and Building Act (<i>plan- och bygglag</i>)	municipal council (<i>kommunfullmäktige</i>) and the municipal board (<i>kommunstyrelsen</i>)	Legally binding for authorities and individuals.	Not defined, varies in practice.

Regional plan

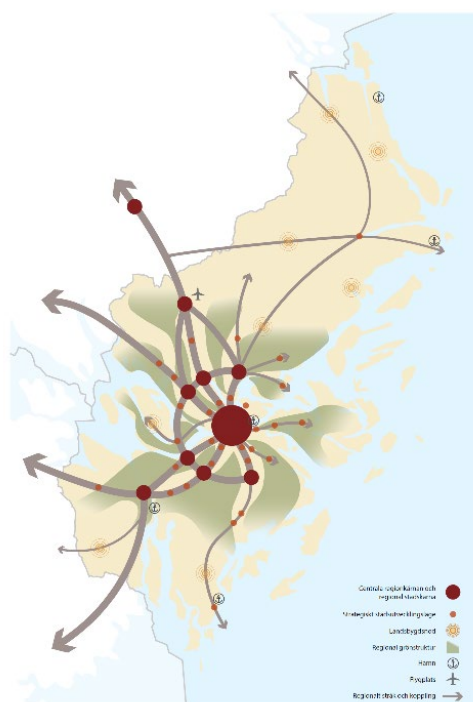


Figure 1: Spatial orientation for the Stockholm region in 2050 Source: © Region Stockholm

Facts: RUFs 2050 – Regional Development Plan for the Stockholm Region

Legal basis

- Planning and Building Act, Chapter 7

Competences

- The Stockholm region is responsible for regional planning (chapter 7, section 1, Planning and Building Act).

Binding force

- The regional plan is non-legally binding (chapter 7, section 2, Planning and Building Act).

Main purpose and content of regional plans in Sweden (here according to chapter 7, sections 2 and 3, Planning and Building Act)

- The regional plan shall specify the basic features for the use of land and water areas and the guidelines for the location of buildings and structures that are significant for the region. The plan must provide guidance for decisions on comprehensive municipal plans, detailed plans, and area regulations.
- The regional plan shall illustrate how consideration has been given to public interests, how national interests according to the Environmental Code have been taken into account, and how the environmental quality standards according to the Environmental Code have been followed.
- The regional plan shall explain how the plan has considered and been coordinated with the regional development strategy, the regional plan for transport infrastructure, the traffic programme, and municipal guidelines for housing supply as well as national and other regional and municipal goals, plans, and programmes of importance for sustainable development in the region.
- The regional plan shall clarify how the plan is to be implemented.

Process, duration, participation

- In 2015, a programme for a new regional development plan for the Stockholm region (RUFs 2050) was adopted which outlined important principles, goals, and means that this new regional plan is supposed to address. The programme was developed in dialogue with the region's 26 municipalities, Stockholm's county administrative board, and the Swedish transport administration. Two larger regional conferences were arranged.
- In 2016, a draft plan was put out for public consultation for a period of almost six months.
- In 2017, another draft plan was put out for public consultation for another four months. In autumn 2017, a number of other regional policy documents were adopted: a climate roadmap for the Stockholm region, a cultural strategy, a property strategy, and a rural and archipelago strategy. These policy documents have clear links with the RUFs 2050.
- In February 2018, the RUFs 2050 was submitted to the regional council's growth and regional planning committee for a decision. It was then passed by the regional board and was finally adopted by the regional council in June 2018. The Swedish government chose not to review the decision.

Duration of validity

- The regional plan, the RUFs 2050, was adopted in 2018 and is valid until autumn 2026. The growth and regional planning committee within the Stockholm region is, in consultation with the county administrative board, instructed to continuously assess the RUFs 2050 between 2019 and 2026 and to report annually to the regional council.

Details of the plan

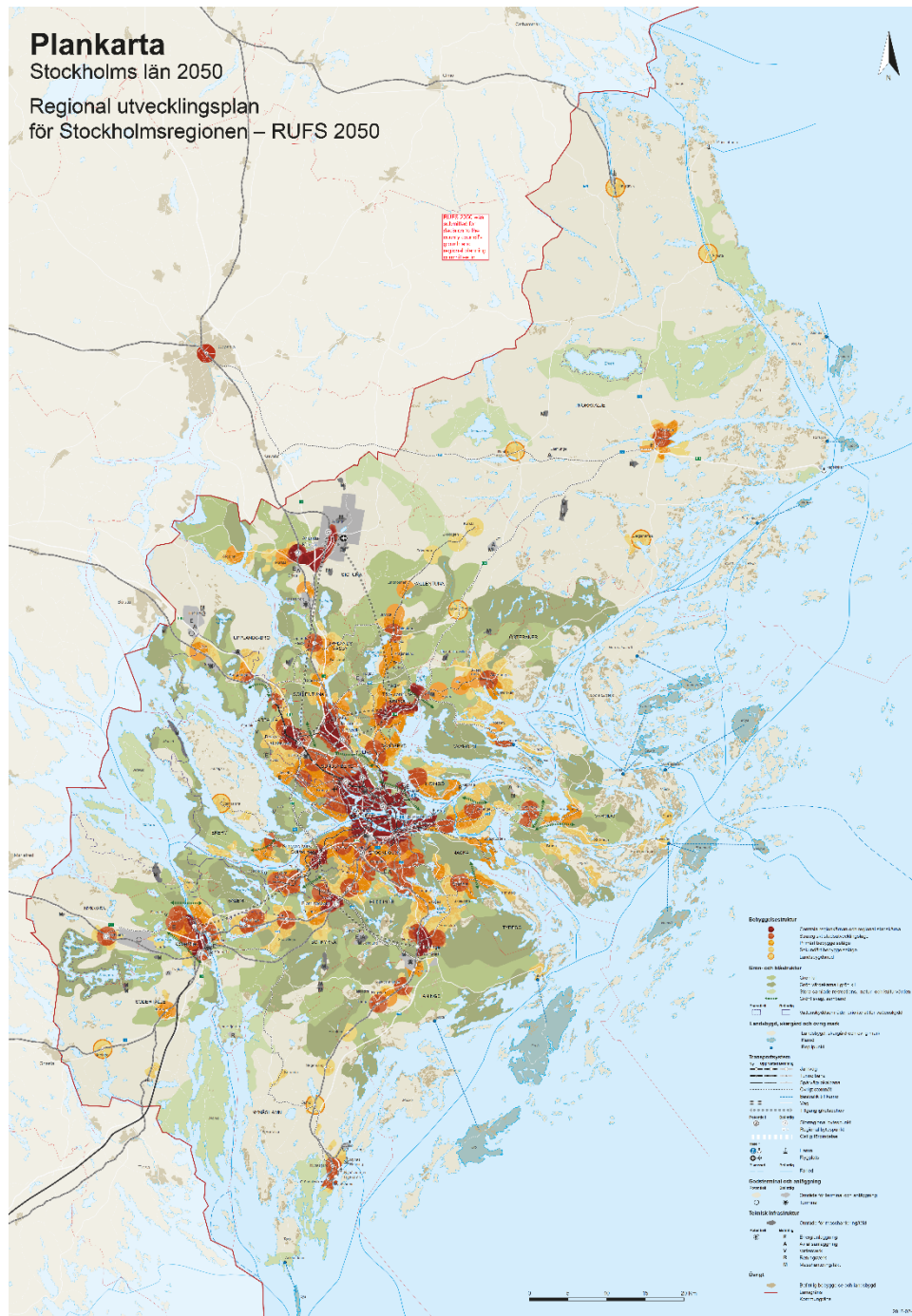


Figure 2: Land-use map for the Stockholm region in 2050
Source: © Region Stockholm

Characteristics

Location of the area

The RUF 2050 covers the entire Stockholm region, an area of 6,519,000 km² which had a population of 2,415,000 at the end of 2021. The regional administrations and political institutions are located in Stockholm city, the region's biggest municipality with almost 980,000 inhabitants. The region with its 26 municipalities can be characterised as rather monocentric, both functionally and morphologically. Regarding the latter, for instance, only three further municipalities in the Stockholm region had just over 100,000 inhabitants at the end of 2021, namely Huddinge, Nacka, and Södertälje. The region is one of the fastest-growing metropolitan areas in Europe, since it grew by almost 200,000 people in the last six years. The RUF 2050 is based upon a population growth forecast of up to 2,850,000 inhabitants in 2030 and 3,388,000 in 2050.

Initial situation

The regional plan identifies six key challenges:

1. Facilitate population growth while improving the region's environment and the health of its inhabitants.
2. Address capacity shortages while meeting growing needs (particularly in terms of education, housing, and transport).
3. Become an internationally leading metropolitan region in a growing global competitive landscape. This addresses in particular the need to be internationally accessible and to provide good living environments, an open and dynamic labour market as well as good conditions for knowledge supply, research, and development.
4. Reduce climate impact while enabling increased accessibility and economic growth.
5. Continue to be an open region by transcending spatial and cultural boundaries while reinforcing social inclusion particularly in the labour and housing market.
6. Increase trust and security in the region at a time when the world is perceived as unsafe.

Particularities of the contents

These key challenges are translated into four overarching goals, which culminates in the vision to become Europe's most attractive metropolitan region: a) an accessible region with a good quality of life; b) an open, gender-equal, equitable, and inclusive region; c) a leading growth and knowledge region; and d) a resource-efficient, resilient region with no greenhouse gas emissions. These overarching goals also indicate one unique feature of the RUF. It is not only a regional plan according to the Planning and Building Act that shall guide regional physical planning, but it also includes the regional development strategy for the Stockholm region according to the Act on Regional Development and the Regulations on Regional Growth Work. In other words, the RUF 2050 integrates a classical regional plan together with a regional development strategy (RUS), which has been mandatory for each of the 21 Swedish regions since 2017.

In regards to land-use development, the RUF 2050 follows up on two earlier regional plans by indicating a polycentric development that aims to develop seven so-called 'regional urban cores' (*regionala stadskärnor*) at a distance of 15 to 40 kilometres from the Stockholm city centre. Such 'regional urban cores' shall serve as 'territorial anchors' to concentrate land development as well as to accommodate distinct urban functions. Hence, the RUF proposes a robust polycentric structure around the central regional urban core, which covers in principle the Stockholm city centre and parts of some adjacent municipalities such as Solna in the north and Nacka in the east (see Figure 1). This polycentric structure should be developed through increased investments in the transport system as well as in dense and energy efficient settlements. In particular, these seven regional urban cores shall be locations for diversified workplaces as well as higher education and health care facilities.

Notes and links

<https://www.regionstockholm.se/verksamhet/Regional-utveckling/strategier-och-planer-inom-regional-utveckling/regionalutvecklingsplan/>