



Cooperating with the private sector

Joensuu, Finland

IN A NUTSHELL

In 2015, Joensuu established the Climate Business Network to engage the private sector in the green transition and to help companies create more sustainable practices to adapt their operations to the new framework and develop carbon-neutral solutions.

Joensuu's climate commitment and the pathway to achieving it

Joensuu is committed to becoming climate neutral by 2025. To achieve this target, the city has set the goal of reducing its carbon emissions by 60% from 2007 to 2025 and using carbon capture to deal with the rest. To this end, in 2022 Joensuu updated its 2022–2025 climate programme, introducing measures for monitoring, reducing and sequestering carbon emissions, reducing energy consumption, remodelling urban mobility and promoting the circular economy and local biodiversity.

While helping citizens change their behaviour and develop sustainable practices remains key to the climate work done by the city, Joensuu knows that decarbonisation cannot be achieved without the support of private businesses and communities. Since Joensuu's main emissions come from heating, road traffic and industrial machinery, the city has created climate communication networks and projects to encourage companies to participate in local climate work. One example is the Climate Business Network, which was launched in 2015. It aims to help companies and communities create more sustainable practices to adapt their operations to the new framework and develop carbon-neutral solutions.

Boosting the climate business network

In May 2021, the City of Joensuu launched a project to promote and further develop the Climate Business Network. By summer 2021, the number of local companies and communities in the network had grown to 40. To join the network, businesses sign a [climate commitment](#) with the city that lists several individual steps and target objectives to promote the reduction of GHG emissions. These commitments contain measures such as actions to promote energy efficiency, renewable energy (mostly solar), sustainable commuting and recycling rates in the company, reducing waste production and water/electricity consumption, and developing sustainable solutions for customers. While each partner decides its own goals, staff at the Climate Business Network help customise each individual plan to adapt it to the needs of the community and the company. The network is coordinated and administered by the local authority's Climate Coordinator, who is in charge of coordinating the city's climate work to reach carbon neutrality.



Logo of Climate Business Network (c) City of Joensuu

JOENSUU

City of Joensuu (c) korpipaja

Population: 77,261	Area: 2,751 km ²
Signatory to the Covenant of Mayors since: 22/04/2014	Overall CO₂ emission reduction target: Carbon neutrality by 2025, 60% emission reduction 2007–2025

The total funding received by the project was €100,000. The City of Joensuu provided 30% of the total budget and the remaining 70% was supplied by the National Ministry of the Environment, through the [Municipal climate change solutions programme](#). This programme was created because of the national government's deep understanding of the importance of cities and regions in the decarbonisation of the country. It is therefore boosting local and regional climate work in Finland to ensure that complete climate neutrality of the entire country is achieved by 2035 in a cost-effective way.

Participation and engagement strategy

The network has strengthened the cooperation between the city organisation and local businesses and communities. Over 40 climate partners have signed the climate commitment and planned and implemented climate and energy-related measures. Through the network, the city has managed to reach local businesses that account for a large share of local GHG emissions.

When the network was first established in 2015, the city actively sought out new members and invited them to join. Staff visited local companies and communities to talk about the network and were able to attract members who were eager to adapt their operations to become more climate friendly. Since then, the network has become a visible part of the city's climate action and climate communications through the main website and social media. Consequently, in the past two years, companies and communities have started contacting the network directly and expressing an interest in joining.

To engage network members in active climate action and to promote climate collaboration between members, the network organises two face-to-face network meetings each year. In addition, the network arranges a variety of events, webinars, virtual coffee breaks, networking and training courses on sustainability themes to provide network members with useful content, tools and support for their climate actions.

Lessons learned and next steps

In cooperation with a consultant, AFRY Finland Oy, and the local university of applied sciences, Karelia UAS, Joensuu has developed an emissions calculation tool that partners can use to assess their main greenhouse gas emissions. The calculation tool is based on the international GHG Protocol, which is a global standard for measuring GHG emissions. Through these practices, Joensuu is aiming to achieve transparent reporting and assessment of emissions – from Scope 1 to Scope 3 – from operations, so that businesses can better plan the most effective emission reduction measures.

The final report of the results was published in November 2022. In the first round of calculations, 10 climate partners used the calculation tool to assess their GHG emissions, with the help of local students. The climate partners provided data on their operations, such as fuel consumption, energy and heat consumption, transport and work travel rates and waste production rates. Based on this data, the calculations provided information on each company's carbon footprint and its main emissions, and how the emissions were distributed between the company's various operations. The transparency, reliability and uncertainty of the results were assessed, and climate partners were given suggestions on measures to reduce their carbon footprint and emissions in the future.

While the project to develop the network has concluded, the Climate Business Network will continue to work on decarbonisation of the city. Climate partnership with local businesses and communities is a vital part of the City of Joensuu's climate action to engage stakeholders in climate cooperation. The city's Climate Coordinator will continue to lead the network, which will develop and implement new projects.

KEY FIGURES

May 2021 – October 2022

2015 – Climate Business Network founded

40 partners

10 partners assessing GHG emissions data

60% Joensuu's GHG emission reduction target from 2007 to 2025



FINANCING THE PROJECT

- +
- EUR 100,000:**
 - 70% supplied by the National Ministry of the Environment
 - 30% provided by the City of Joensuu

USEFUL LINKS

- » [Climate Business Network brings together sustainable businesses and communities - Local Climate Actions - Climate Joensuu English](#)
- » [Local Climate Actions - Climate Joensuu English](#)



CONTACT

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