Carbon-neutral Helsinki 2035

Summary
Making Helsinki carbon-neutral

The goal of Helsinki City Strategy 2017–2021 is to create a carbon-neutral Helsinki by 2035. When this goal is reached, operations taking place in Helsinki will no longer warm up the climate. The Carbon-neutral Helsinki 2035 action plan describes how Helsinki can get on the right track in terms of reducing emissions.

Becoming carbon-neutral requires that greenhouse gas emissions are reduced by at least 80% from the levels of 1990. The remaining 20% will be compensated for by Helsinki taking care of implementing emission reductions outside the city or, for example, increasing the number of carbon sinks. The City’s emission calculations take emissions generated inside the city limits into account. The calculations do not include emissions generated outside Helsinki, such as those from air travel, food produced elsewhere or goods and services purchased outside the city.

Significant progress has already been made with continuous climate work. In 2017, Helsinki’s emissions were 24% smaller than those in 1990, even though the number of residents had increased by 150,000. Per resident, the emissions were calculated to be approximately 42% smaller. However, in order to make Helsinki carbon-neutral, the emissions have to be reduced even more and faster than before. A carbon-neutral Helsinki is being created in collaboration between the residents, the City, businesses and organisations.
The bus traffic ordered by HSL will switch to renewable fuels only by 2020.

More than half of all traffic emissions come from cars.

Sustainable traffic solutions

One fifth of Helsinki’s emissions comes from traffic. The City’s ambitious goal is to reduce traffic emissions by 69% from the 2005 level by 2035. Finland’s national goal is 50%.

One key requirement for reaching this goal is that people reduce their kilometres travelled by car and choose low-emission methods of transport. Becoming carbon-neutral also requires further development in vehicle technology.

Among the procedures are:

- Promoting the use of electric cars by means such as extending the charging network
- Reducing emissions from heavy traffic with equipment choices and environmental criteria
- Reducing emissions from port operations
- Taking part in creating follow-up surveys regarding the pricing system for vehicle traffic
- Raising parking fees and extending parking fee zones
- Promoting walking, cycling and the use of public transport
- Implementing new mobility services
- Reducing distances with dense urban and traffic planning
More energy-efficient buildings

The heating of buildings causes more than half of Helsinki’s emissions. The greatest emission reduction potential lies in energy renovations: for example, when a building is renovated, it can be made significantly more energy-efficient than before. Emissions from buildings can be reduced by **80%**.

Because only a small percentage of all buildings located in Helsinki are owned by the City, it is important to encourage residents and organisations to take part in reducing emissions. The buildings owned by the City hold **11%** of the emission reduction potential of the entire building stock of Helsinki. The majority of the measures to reduce emissions are financially attractive to building owners in the long term. They often improve liveability as well.

**Among the procedures are:**

- Providing advisory services to support Helsinki residents’ energy renovations and increased use of renewable energy
- Steering district planning more towards carbon neutrality than before
- Steering people towards energy-efficient solutions and renewable energy through Building Control Services
- Improving energy efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy in the City’s service and residential buildings
- Taking the entire carbon footprint of construction into account and promoting wooden construction
- Replacing outdoor lights with more energy-efficient alternatives
- Making provisions for emission-free thermal and wind energy

By 2035, approximately **14 million** floor square metres’ worth of new buildings will have been completed in Helsinki. This is equal to almost **600 Parliament Houses**.
The value of the City’s annual procurements is €2 billion, half of which comes from construction.

- The procurements form more than 40% of the City’s expenses. Helsinki’s goal is to reduce emissions from its own procurements with environmental criteria regarding aspects such as construction materials, food services and ICT equipment. Furthermore, the City creates platforms and opportunities for developing Smart & Clean business activities.

Among the procedures are:

- Making the development of climate-friendly products and services in Helsinki as easy as possible
- Developing climate-friendly solutions together with businesses and residents
- Daring to try new things and create pilots, and sharing what we have learned from them
- Developing the City’s procurement criteria so that they encourage operators to provide climate-friendly products and services
- Taking the entire lifecycle of the products and services we procure into account
- Promoting a sharing and circular economy in terms of the use of the City’s facilities, libraries, food management, etc.
- Monitoring our procurements and reporting them in a more methodical manner
- Reinforcing residents’, City employees’ and politicians’ know-how in matters related to climate change and circular economy

The development programme of Helen Oy, the energy company owned by the City, is responsible for emission reductions in energy production. Helen Oy’s procedures will reduce Helsinki residents’ district heating emissions by 74% by 2035.

Reducing the emissions from electricity production affects the emissions of the entire nation. The goal is to stop using coal entirely in the 2030s at the latest. The Hanasaari coal plant will be closed in 2024.

Among the procedures are:

- Replacing fossil fuels by building heating plants that run on renewable energy
- Utilising waste heat
- Implementing heat pumps
- Utilising the demand response for heat and electricity
- Switching to wind and solar energy in electricity production
- Using electricity storage facilities
- Applying energy solutions of the future
Open policy practice guides implementation

The action plan has been prepared in collaboration with hundreds of experts, Helsinki residents and corporate representatives. Everyone has been allowed to follow and take part in the creation of the programme on the Stadinilmasto.fi website and at several workshops. People have been able to comment on unfinished documents and write together with other people.

The same principle of openness will continue in the implementation phase. The practical implementation of the procedures may vary as conditions change, knowledge increases and technology develops. Following the principles of the open policy practice in the implementation phase as well will facilitate the accumulation of new perspectives and information. The Stadinilmasto website will help different parties to find each other and work to reach common goals. The progress of the action plan will be monitored on a regular basis. The City will establish a climate steering group to take charge of utilising the monitoring information, feedback and ideas in updating the action plan.

Image: Julia Kivelä, City of Helsinki Material Bank
A carbon-neutral Helsinki is created together!

www.stadinilmasto.fi/en

#carbonneutralhelsinki

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