

# Green Deal Going Local Forum 2025



21.10.2025 Porvoo

22.10.2025 Espoo



## Aligning private and public agendas for stronger international impact

Industry plays a central role in the Green Deal Going Local initiative. At the Green Deal Going Local Forum the focus is on the springboard approach—concrete industrial collaboration with cities and regions to accelerate innovation. Key cases include the ABB-led H2 Springboard RDI initiative and the Fortum-led Espoo Clean Heat program, both showcasing how research and innovation can be translated into real-life implementation. The Forum is co-designed and co-implemented by a carefully selected group of invited partners with the capacity to continue the mobilization of resources for advancing the agenda of the Green Deal Going Local initiative.

### Working and learning together—towards impactful co-orchestration

Achieving the EU's ambitious climate neutrality targets depends on action on the ground—public-private collaboration in cities and regions across Europe. Investments by industry play a crucial role. The European Commission's updated Green Deal agenda places renewed emphasis on industrial, technological, and competitiveness policies. This guides EU Missions and place-based innovation strategies, while complementing environmental measures. Delivering on these priorities requires co-orchestration, joint capability building, increased investments, and closer integration between top-down policy and bottom-up action.

### Strong regional and EU-level links

There is an urgent need for action-oriented engagement by a coalition of willing stakeholders to drive joint advocacy, policy development, and local implementation pilots that can scale up the green transition across EU regions and cities. The European Committee of the Regions (CoR) leads the EU's Green Deal Going Local initiative, working in close collaboration with multiple Commission Directorates-General (DG CLIMA, DG RTD, DG REGIO, DG JRC, etc.).

### Main objectives of the Green Deal Going Local initiative

The Green Deal Going Local initiative mobilizes local and regional authorities for greater impact and supports the EU Missions on Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities and Adaptation to Climate Change to reach their targets. The initiative also strengthens the collaboration between CoR and the Local Governments for Sustainability (known as ICLEI), which is a global network working with more than 2500 local and regional governments committed to sustainable urban development. ICLEI positions the Green Deal Going Local initiative as a central pillar of cooperation when strengthening systemic transformations driving climate neutrality.

### Industry as a crucial partner

The EU urgently needs cities and regions to work more intimately with industries and universities. The Green Deal Going Local initiative will conceptualize and showcase systemic transformation in close cooperation with key partners to accelerate the green transition. Municipal and regional carbon-neutrality roadmaps and action plans are key tools, serving both as benchmarks and as platforms for peer learning, thereby improving the quality and impact of the pioneering work.

### Aligning private and public agendas for stronger EU-wide impact

The Forum will bring together professionals committed to joining the coalition of willing partners advancing the Green Deal Going Local initiative. The Forum will facilitate in-depth discussions on some of the most critical issues for the initiative to accelerate energy and climate-neutrality investments. By aligning private and public agendas, the Forum will promote a trust-based, collaborative, community-engaged, and capability-building way of working that should become the ethos of Green Deal Going Local initiative.

**Tuesday 21.10.2025, Porvoo**

Art Factory, Läntinen Aleksanterinkatu 1, Porvoo

## Accelerating the green transition—Southern Finland investments in hydrogen and regional urban planning & governance

09:00–09:30	<b>Setting the scenery</b> Opening addresses  <b>Peter Lindgren</b> , Chair, World Alliance for Low Carbon Cities <b>Jani Pitkäniemi</b> , City Mayor, City of Porvoo <b>Venla Virkamäki</b> , Innovation Manager, Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council
09:30–10:45	<b>How urban planning, land use legislation, and regional policies frame the green transition</b>  Moderator: <b>Pia Tynys</b> , Sustainability Manager, Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council  <b>Antti Kaikkonen</b> , Managing Director, Blastr Green Steel <b>Ilona Mansikka</b> , Regional Planning Manager, Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council <b>Elina Duréault Suomalainen</b> , Economic Development Director, City of Porvoo <b>Jarkko Lyytinen</b> , Head of Urban Planning, City of Porvoo
10:45–11:15	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:15–12:30	<b>Hydrogen pioneers—sharing the experiences</b>  Moderator: <b>Johan Wallin</b> , Managing Partner, Synocus  <b>Jarkko Toropainen</b> , Senior Business Developer, Fortum <b>Heli Virkki</b> , Head of Hydrogen Valley Development, Gasgrid <b>Fredrick von Schoultz</b> , Deputy Mayor, City of Porvoo <b>Ari Tolonen</b> , Deputy Mayor, City of Jyväskylä
12:30–13:30	<b>Lunch</b> During the lunch break the CPMR BSC working group on Energy and Climate will have its meeting
13:30–14:45	<b>How H2 Springboard accelerates scaling of breakthrough innovations</b>  Moderator: <b>Simo Säynevirta</b> , Head of H2 Springboard Ecosystem, ABB  <b>Petri Tervasmäki</b> , CTO, Solar Foods <b>Pasi Keinänen</b> , CEO, Liquid Sun <b>Hannu Kämäri</b> , Vice President, CGI <b>Zhang Wenzhong</b> , P2X Research and Development Manager, Fortum
14:45–15:15	<b>Coffee break</b>
15:15–16:30	<b>Accelerating the European hydrogen transformation &amp; strengthening of energy grids</b>  Moderator: <b>Pontus Lindberg</b> , Member of the Regional Council, Skåne  <b>Silvia Assalini</b> , ICLEI-Europe, Sustainable Energy Systems team <b>Andres Jaadla</b> , Member of the European Committee of the Regions, Member of the Rakvere City Council <b>Markku Markkula</b> , Chair, EU Green Deal Going Local initiative <b>Taina Tukiainen</b> , Board member, EU Climate Adaptation Mission Board
16:30–16:45	<b>The EU Green Deal Going Local initiative as enabler of multi-level international collaboration in the hydrogen sector</b>  <b>Markku Markkula</b> , Chair, EU Green Deal Going Local initiative & <b>Taina Tukiainen</b> , Board member, EU Climate Adaptation Mission Board

**Wednesday 22.10.2025, Espoo**

Espoo Museum of Modern Art EMMA, Ahertajantie 5, Espoo

## Springboards as innovation accelerators—the case of data centers with Espoo as an EU pioneer

09:00–09:30	<b>Setting the scenery</b> Opening addresses  <b>Mervi Katainen</b> , Chair, Espoo City Board <b>Davide Magagna</b> , Researcher, European Commission, Joint Research Center (Virtual input) <b>Tomi Erho</b> , Head of Innovation Ecosystem Services, Aalto University
09:30–10:15	<b>The EU frame for multi-level, cross-sectoral, and international collaboration</b>  Moderator: <b>Markku Markkula</b> , Chair, EU Green Deal Going Local initiative  <b>Kai Mykkänen</b> , Mayor, the City of Espoo <b>Lauri Inna</b> , Mayor, City of Pori <b>Tuuli Kaskinen</b> , CEO, Climate Leadership Coalition
10:15–11:00	<b>What we have learned about public-private collaboration—the Espoo Clean Heat experience</b>  Moderator: <b>Johan Wallin</b> , Synocus  <b>Mika Lehtonen</b> , Vice President, Heating & Cooling Nordics Forum <b>Teemu Vidgren</b> , Managing Director, Microsoft Finland <b>Jukka Ihamäki</b> , Business Line Director, Caruna <b>Jussi Jyrinsalo</b> , Senior Vice President, Customers and Grid Planning, Fingrid
11:00–11:15	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:15–12:15	<b>The Espoo data center as an innovation springboard</b>  Moderator: <b>Taina Tukiainen</b> , Research Director, University of Vaasa  <b>Henna Partanen</b> , Vice Chair, Espoo City Council <b>Antti Arasto</b> , Vice President, Energy, VTT <b>Kari Mäenpää</b> , Branch Director, Omnia <b>Jari Innanen</b> , Director, Data Centers, Granlund
12:15–13:00	<b>Lunch</b>
13:00–13:15	<b>Greetings from the Government</b>  <b>Joakim Strand</b> , Minister for European Affairs and Ownership Steering
13:15–14:15	<b>Building national synergies</b>  Moderator: <b>Tiina Davidsainen</b> , Board Member, Finnish Data Center Association  <b>Mari Walls</b> , Director, CSC <b>Heidi Nystedt</b> , Director of Governmental Affairs, Microsoft <b>Kimmo Siira</b> , Director, Project Development, LADEC
14:15–14:45	<b>Coffee break</b>
14:45–15:45	<b>Mobilizing international engagement around co-orchestrated springboards</b>  Moderator: <b>Mikko Kosonen</b> , Chair, Alfred Kordelin Foundation  <b>Gohar Sargsyan</b> , Head of Sustainability Business Europe, Tata Consultancy <b>Iryna Bakhcheva</b> , ICLEI-Europe Green Digital Transformation <b>Jouni Salonen</b> , Senior Advisor, Business Finland, Invest in Finland—Data Centers <b>Joško Klisović</b> , Member of the European Committee of the Regions, Member of the Assembly of the City of Zagreb
15:45–16:00	<b>Conclusions EU Green Deal Going Local supporting the activities described during the Forum</b>  <b>Markku Markkula</b> and <b>Heini Hirvonen</b> , Head of Sustainability, WSP

# The Green Deal Going Local Forum—Accelerating the Green Transition

During the first day of the Green Deal Going Local Forum, the perspective is inside-out, looking for how an individual city like Porvoo and a region such as the Helsinki-Uusimaa Region can establish conditions for significant investments supporting the green transition. These efforts are exemplified by showing how companies actively collaborate with the public sector to accelerate the hydrogen economy. The five-year H2 Springboard program orchestrated by ABB has a key role in proving the viability of the hydrogen economy and capturing its full business potential.

The second day of the Green Deal Going Local Forum will take the outside-in perspective. Here, the Forum will present the Espoo Clean Heat initiative. In collaboration with Fortum, Espoo will drive sustainability and innovation in the energy sector. This initiative also engages Microsoft as Fortum and Microsoft will, together, develop a data center heat recovery solution that will provide 250,000 citizens with district heating using the waste heat from Microsoft's data centers. This waste heat recycling solution will be the largest of its kind in the world.

Building on the insights from these breakthrough innovations, the participants of the Forum will jointly define how to enter a collaboration that will ensure that the Green Deal Going Local initiative will reach its full potential.

## The Locations:

We are meeting at two of Helsinki-Uusimaa region's many Art venues. While we are discussing the Green Deal Going Local Initiative's potential for decarbonization transformation we should not forget the transformational effect art can have on individuals and communities. In a spare moment enjoy some of the exhibitions at:

### The Porvoo Art Factory

Painter Harri Monni is exploring architecture as an intermediate space in his paintings and will exhibit in the Art Hall at the Art Factory in Porvoo.



### The Espoo Museum of Modern Art EMMA

Visual artist Antti Laitinen has transformed a gallery at EMMA into a multisensory Chiming Forest created from wood collected of logging areas and storm-damaged trees.



The Forum is organized in cooperation with European Committee of the Regions, Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, ICLEI, Joint Research Centre of the European Commission, CPMR Baltic Sea Commission, Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, Cities of Porvoo and Espoo, Climate Leadership Coalition, and World Alliance of Low Carbon Cities.

PORVOO  BORGÅ



CLC CLIMATE LEADERSHIP COALITION



WALCC World Alliance for Low Carbon Cities

