



# Joensuu: the Forest Capital of Europe

J • ENSUU



Forest Joensuu



# Contents

1 Joensuu: the Forest Capital of Europe – Solution. Forest.....	2
2 Competitive Advantages .....	4
3 Our Goal: Joensuu is the Forest Capital of Europe 2030 .....	6
4 Measures and Priorities for Achieving the Goal .....	8
5 The Forest Capital’s ecosystem .....	10
6 Contact information .....	11

## 1 Joensuu: the Forest Capital of Europe – Solution. Forest.

The importance of the forest has always been great for Joensuu. An internationally unique hub of forestry expertise has been born out of decades of work, and it has much to contribute to the future of humanity as a whole. Forests and forest use are more current issues globally than ever before.

In Joensuu’s strategy, “Joensuu, the Forest Capital” has been identified as one of the distinguishing factors. The aim is to support education, research, business and international visibility related to the forests of Joensuu. The goal and measures for the next few years are aligned in this Forest Capital Joensuu Programme.

### **In Joensuu, we work together, equally, boldly and sustainably**

Joensuu is the same as its people. There are many ways to be a Joensuu resident.

We respect each other and allow everyone to live the way they want to live. We treat everyone fairly. We welcome everyone.

We listen to each other in Joensuu. We build our city and our services to serve the residents as well as possible. We are approachable and co-operate. Our decision-making is open and transparent.

By working together, we have the courage to try and create something new. All of our activities are characterized by the principle of continuous improvement, and we lead the way in issues that are important to us.

We ensure the wellbeing of our residents and the future of our city by upholding economical, social and ecological sustainability. Joensuu is a safe place to live. We live surrounded by amazing nature and we take care of it for the coming generations, too.







## 2 Competitive Advantages

### Education and research covering the entire forest sector

Joensuu hosts a unique research and training hub in forest bioeconomy. All the way from professional degrees to doctoral degrees, there are dozens of different degree titles available, such as forest machine fitter, forestry engineer and Doctor of Agriculture and Forestry Sciences. A large number of international students are also interested in the competence Joensuu has to offer.

The training in the field of technical science, starting in autumn 2023, will support the labour needs of the industry in the region and enhance cooperation with VTT. In Joensuu, everyday forestry practices are managed with international knowledge and research and promoted by educational institutions such as University of Eastern Finland (UEF), University of Applied Sciences (Karelia) and Vocational School Riveria, as well as other actors such as the Natural Resources Institute, the European Forest Institute (EFI) and the Finnish Environment Institute.

### Vibrant forests and versatile businesses

Joensuu is surrounded by vibrant forests. The city of Joensuu owns almost 9000 hectares of forest. Knowledge in climate-sustainable forest management serves as a starting point for forestry renewal and for all forest-based business activities. For private forest owners in Joensuu, forests are a source of income, and are actively utilized to bring well-being and health for people living in the city.

Joensuu is an ideal place for forest companies to be founded, develop and grow. The region boasts top-level knowledge in manufacturing, technology and forest raw material processing. There is also a strong knowledge of forestry and wood-based materials in the region. Several production facilities make renewable products from wood to support the green transition. The versatility of the field enables synergies

between companies and attracts both domestic and international experts.

### Smart forestry

Joensuu is among the world-leaders in the digitalization of forestry. The collection and analysis of forest and environmental data is key, for example, in adapting to climate change and controlling nature loss.

There is strong digital expertise in spatial information, foresight and photonics in the region. Joensuu has been at the top of the development and interpretation of remote sensing data for decades. Different areas of expertise turn into practical measures in the responsible management of forests and smart development of forestry globally.

Forestry expertise developed over decades has been exported to the world already for a long time.

” *Joensuu is among the world-leaders in the digitalization of forestry.*

### Working together and networks

Forest has always been an important source of wellbeing for Finland, and Joensuu has been one of the drivers.

Having the Forest Capital status has not been created by chance, but is something that has been built for decades.

The networks that have been formed from working together for a long time are extensive, multi-layered and international. Many of the top international figures in the forest sector have built their expertise in Joensuu.

Working together with different actors enables a completely new type of competence to be created. The sector is growing and developing, and new people and businesses are always welcomed.



## Clear competitive advantages

### Education and research covering the entire forest sector

Diverse, top-level practical and academic education and an international scientific community attract future experts.

### Vibrant forests and versatile businesses

Forests support the well-being and health of people living in the city. There are top-level businesses from various sectors of the forest bioeconomy: forest industry, machine and equipment manufacturing, ICT, photonics.

### Smart forestry

Forestry know-how developed over decades: utilization of mechanization, digitalization, and automation in forestry. A pioneer in the sustainable management and responsible use of forests.

### Working together and in networks

Networks and know-how formed over decades in Joensuu create a true desire and ability to work together and with a low hierarchy.

## A hub that is truly unique



## Solution. Forest.

Cooperation between different actors opens up new opportunities for innovative know-how that can help solve climate change, nature loss and other global challenges.

# 3 Our Goal: Joensuu is the Forest Capital of Europe 2030

*“Joensuu is an internationally recognized and well-known forestry hub, where forests create world-changing innovations.”*

Joensuu is internationally known as the Forest Capital of Europe, where top-level research, all levels of education, practical processes and world-class companies meet. The distinguished forestry hub offers channels for international success and attracts new experts and actors to the area both from Finland and internationally.

In Joensuu, forests are valued and their multidimensional significance and potential are recognized. New forest-related innovations, which are able to respond to a wide range of global challenges and produce practical solutions for the green transition, are constantly being created in the region. These innovations focus on the opportunities brought by the forest as a whole – not just wood as a raw material. The forest cluster is the largest employer in the region and the most significant source of export income.

In Joensuu, the forests serve as an inspiration for cooperation. Extensive expertise combined with low hierarchies and agile collaboration ensures that the region is constantly on the cutting edge of the latest information. People living in the city are proud of local know-how, nature and forests, valuing them as a key part of the area’s economy and their own well-being. In Joensuu, the economic, social and natural sustainability perspectives related to forests are understood.

Joensuu is a growing international hub of the forestry sector, to which we now invite you. Our network always needs new experts and views – Welcome to the Forest Capital of Europe!





*” The only place in the world where all levels of forest education, top level research, practical processes and world-class companies meet.*

# 4 Measures and Priorities for Achieving the Goal

## Internal networks and business in the forestry sector

- The Forest Joensuu network will be established and resourced under Business Joensuu's leadership.
- A network-like cooperation model for the Forest Joensuu network will be created.
- Agreements with key players to promote the objectives of the Forest Capital will be drawn up.
- Forest Joensuu's activities will be made known and attractive for new forest operators through concrete events and projects.
- New forest economy business activities will be attracted to the region and included in the field's RTD network.
- The development, manufacturing and value chain growth of forest-related high-processing products in Joensuu will be enabled.
- Even small business ideas related to forest bioeconomy are taken into account in the industry network.
- The creation and introduction of innovations in the field of forest economy will be systematically encouraged.
- Innovation-driven dialogue related to forests will be increased across different industries.
- Ambitious and interdisciplinary forest research both in domestic and international networks will be carried out in the city's forests.
- The amount of international development finance, investments and international students will be increased.

## Increasing awareness of the Forest Capital

- Joensuu's overall recognition as the Forest Capital of Europe and a hub of forestry expertise will be enhanced through active communication.
- Increasing awareness is easier, when everyone communicates the same messages and uses the same terms. Joensuu is called the Forest Capital of Europe and the active network piloted by Business Joensuu is called Forest Joensuu.
- The Joensuu Forest network is communicated both domestically and internationally, together with Business Joensuu.
- Models are created for settling international forest students and experts in Joensuu.
- An international forest bioeconomy event is held regularly together with Business Joensuu.
- New collaboration possibilities will be launched for the alumni of Joensuu educational institutions working around the world.
- The role of Joensuu's expertise will be strengthened in international collaboration networks.



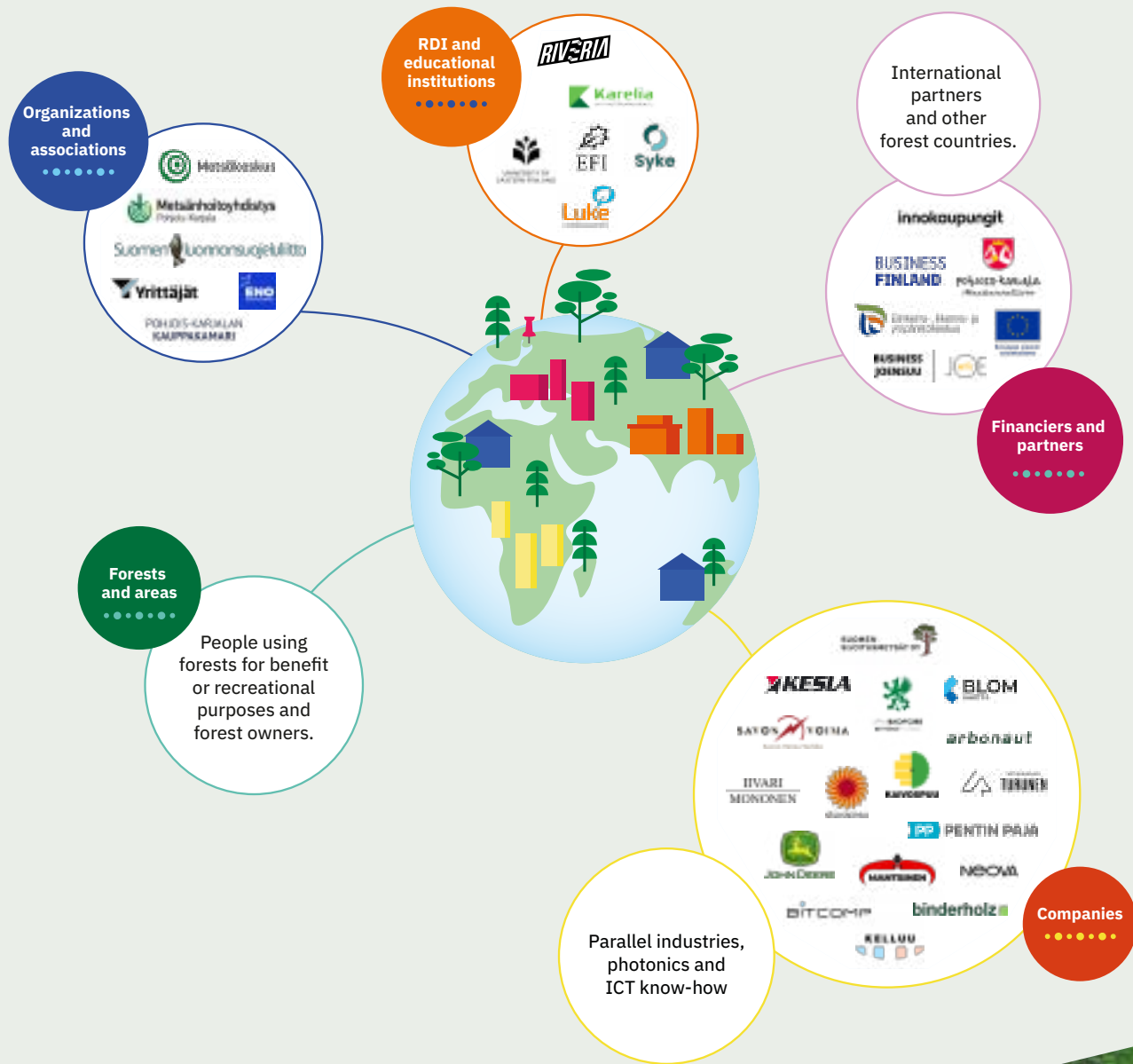
## Local residents, forest and city image

- The importance of recreational forests for the wellbeing of local residents and tourists is recognized and taken into account in town planning.
- Private forest owners and forestry in general are taken into account in the decision-making of the city.
- New ways to inspire local residents to join responsible forest actions will be looked into.
- A landmark of Forest Capital Joensuu, such as a work of art, is placed in the city. The hallmarks, buildings and works of art associated with the forest are displayed.
- The main traffic routes to Joensuu communicate to visitors that they have arrived to Forest Capital Joensuu.
- The urban environment of Joensuu is offered as a platform for various forest and wood-related development projects and business ideas.
- Local expertise in forest bioeconomy is taken into account in public procurement, such as in construction and energy solutions. Resource-intensive urban construction is promoted.
- Communications increase the awareness of the city's carbon neutrality goals and forest diversity goals and strengthen the appreciation towards forests.
- The amount of protected forest area owned by the city is increased to at least 7% by 2028. This, among other things, helps the reduction of nature loss in Joensuu.
- Counters are developed together with experts to monitor tree growth rates in real time, for example.
- The implementation of forest management and biodiversity policies in city-owned forests will continue.
- The preservation of biodiversity and opportunities for increasing diversity are taken into account in urban planning and construction.





# 5 The Forest Capital's ecosystem





# 6 Contact information

## We invite you to Joensuu, the Forest Capital of Europe!

The expertise of both us and our networks is available to you when you consider your company's placement, research cooperation, studies or job opportunities in the Joensuu region. Contact us!

### Business Joensuu

Business Joensuu's Business hotline:

**+358 110 419 8011**

Mon–Fri, from 9 AM to 5 PM.

Pauliina Pikkujämäsa, Director of Services,  
Investments and Investment Services

**[pauliina.pikkujamsa@businessjoensuu.fi](mailto:pauliina.pikkujamsa@businessjoensuu.fi)**

tel. **+358 40 743 4362**

### The City of Joensuu

Sami Laakkonen, Chief Strategy Officer

**[sami.laakkonen@joensuu.fi](mailto:sami.laakkonen@joensuu.fi)**

tel. **+358 50 443 1661**





# J•ENSUU

[joensuu.fi/forestcapital](https://joensuu.fi/forestcapital)



**Forest Joensuu**

[businessjoensuu.fi/en/forestjoensuu](https://businessjoensuu.fi/en/forestjoensuu)



Co-funded by  
the European Union



**innocities**  
JOENSUU

This material was produced as part of the activities of the City of Joensuu Innovation Ecosystem Agreement (ERDF), co-funded by the European Union and the city of Joensuu.