



# Sustainability report 2024

University of Jyväskylä

Public

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## Responsibility report 2024

## 1 Sustainability and responsibility at the University of Jyväskylä

The University of Jyväskylä implements its strategy *Wisdom and wellbeing for us all* through three development programmes. The development programme “university with societal impact” outlines JYU as a sustainable and responsible university. Accordingly, the programme states that the University promotes social, cultural and economic sustainability as well as carbon negativity and nature positivity aiming at planetary well-being. In addition, the University develops its campus, respecting its cultural heritage and nature values, to serve as a cooperation platform for academic, business and civic activities.

The working culture of the JYU community is based on openness, trust, quality and integrity.

The University of Jyväskylä is committed to promote the theses of sustainable development and responsibility set out by the Council of Rectors of Finnish Universities (UNIFI)<sup>1</sup> as well as the UN’s objectives for sustainable development. In 2024, the University was involved in drafting, and subsequently signing, a declaration of the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters on cooperation<sup>2</sup> to speed up the sustainability transition.

Internally, the University’s responsible practices are developed and steered by JYU development groups. In 2024, active operators in the field of responsibility included the Development Group for Equality, Non-discrimination and Accessibility, the Development Group for Sustainable and Responsible University as well as the Steering Group of Planetary Well-being for JYU, which served also as the University’s Green Office team. The University of Jyväskylä has the Green Office certificate<sup>3</sup> granted by the WWF as well as the status of a Fairtrade university<sup>4</sup>.

Sustainability and responsibility are also strongly visible in research and teaching at JYU. The University has three multidisciplinary pillars of research: the [JYU.Well](#) community for well-being research, the [JYU.Wisdom](#) community for the research of planetary well-being, and the [JYU.Edu](#) community for the research and development of teacher education.

In addition, the University of Jyväskylä has invested in cooperation to promote sustainability and responsibility in the higher education sector and society in general. In 2024, JYU chaired the Sustainability and Responsibility Working Group of UNIFI and also the Sustainable Development and Responsibility Group of Finn-ARMA, a broad-based cooperation network established by higher education institutions. Furthermore, our experts have active roles in society, for example, as members of science panels.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://unifi.fi/viestit/kestavan-kehityksen-ja-vastuullisuuden-teesit/>

<sup>2</sup> [Joint declaration – Finnish Academy of Science and Letters](#)

<sup>3</sup> [WWF Green Office – environmental management system for workplaces](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Fairtrade universities](#)

## 2 JYU's Environmental programme: Roadmap to Planetary Well-being

The environmental programme that the University Board approved on 10 June 2022, Roadmap to Planetary Well-being,<sup>5</sup> defines the vision, goal and objectives for the University's environmental work. The roadmap is implemented through an action plan approved by the Rector<sup>6</sup>. The roadmap guides the University to implement the UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs) 12 (Responsible consumption and production), 13 (Climate action), 14 (Life below water), and 15 (Life on land).

The achievement of the roadmap objectives is assessed by using various indicators; the University's carbon footprint and the biodiversity footprint of its procurements are calculated annually (section 2.1.). Staff and students' consumption habits are measured by means of the WWF consumption habit indicator (section 2.2.). JYU also participates in the Times Higher Education Impact Ranking, which evaluates universities' responsibility in the framework of UN sustainable development goals (SDGs). We use JYU's ranking in the environmental SDG objectives as one of the roadmap indicators (section 2.3.). In addition, various measures to improve biodiversity are being taken on the University's campuses (section 2.4.).

### 2.1 JYU's carbon and biodiversity footprint in 2024

#### 2.1.1 Methodology

The University of Jyväskylä has calculated its carbon footprint and also the biodiversity footprint of its procurements since 2019. The year 2019 also serves as a benchmark for setting the goals of the University's environmental programme. The calculation methodology is described in the 2019<sup>7</sup> and 2020<sup>8</sup> reports. The method has also been updated to take into account not only terrestrial ecosystems but also freshwater and marine ecosystems, and also by replacing the environmental damage unit of *potentially disappeared fraction of species* (PDF) with the nano-biodiversity equivalent (nBDe)<sup>9</sup> unit. With the exception of investments<sup>10</sup>, indicators have also been calculated retrospectively for the reference year 2019 in order to maintain comparability when updating the method. Calculation methods are continuously developed as part of the research work of JYU's Biodiversity Footprint Team<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> [Roadmap to planetary well-being](#)

<sup>6</sup> [JYU Roadmap to planetary well-being – Environmental Programme of the University of Jyväskylä 2022-2030](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Sustainability for JYU: Jyväskylän yliopiston ilmasto- ja luontohaitat :: JYX](#)

<sup>8</sup> [Sustainability for JYU: Jyväskylän yliopiston ilmasto- ja luontohaitat 2020 :: JYX](#)

<sup>9</sup> Geneidy et al. (2025) [2309.14186](#)

<sup>10</sup> The carbon footprint of investments is obtained directly from asset managers, so retrospective calculation is not possible.

<sup>11</sup> [Biodiversity Footprint Team | University of Jyväskylä](#)

### 2.1.2 JYU's carbon footprint 2024

The carbon footprint of the University of Jyväskylä is compared to the benchmark level in 2019, which the University aims to reduce by at least 60% by 2030. JYU's carbon footprint in 2024 was 20,687 tCO<sub>2</sub>. The footprint has decreased by 42% since 2019. The biggest category was investments (8,854 tCO<sub>2</sub>), followed by procurement (7,341 tCO<sub>2</sub>) and facilities and energy (2,918 tCO<sub>2</sub>).

Table 1. JYU's carbon footprint 2024 by category and change from 2019.

| Category              | Emissions (t CO <sub>2</sub> e) | Change from 2019 (%) |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| Vehicles              | 24                              | -41%                 |
| Work trips            | 1,551                           | -23%                 |
| Procurement           | 7,341                           | -10%                 |
| Facilities and energy | 2,918                           | -50%                 |
| Investments           | 8,854                           | -50%                 |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>20,687</b>                   | <b>-42%</b>          |

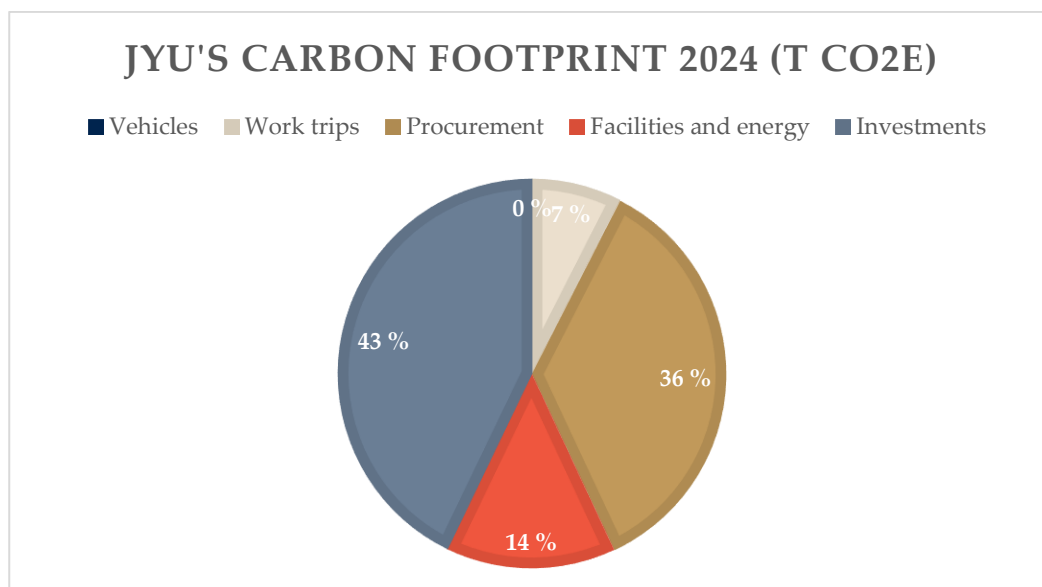


Figure 1. JYU's carbon footprint 2024.

### 2.1.3 Biodiversity footprint of procurements 2024

The biodiversity footprint of JYU procurements decreased after a growing trend of a few years. The biggest category within procurements was IT supplies, licences and services, where the biodiversity footprint grew in comparison to 2019. There was also an increase in food products, fuels and chemicals, for example. The biodiversity footprint diminished especially in maintenance and construction, paper products as well as in health, insurance and banking services.

When interpreting the results of the biodiversity footprint calculations, it is important to note that the calculations are based on euro amounts and therefore do not take into account environmentally certified products separately, for example. In order to refine the calculations in the future, purchases must be recorded in more detail in bookkeeping.

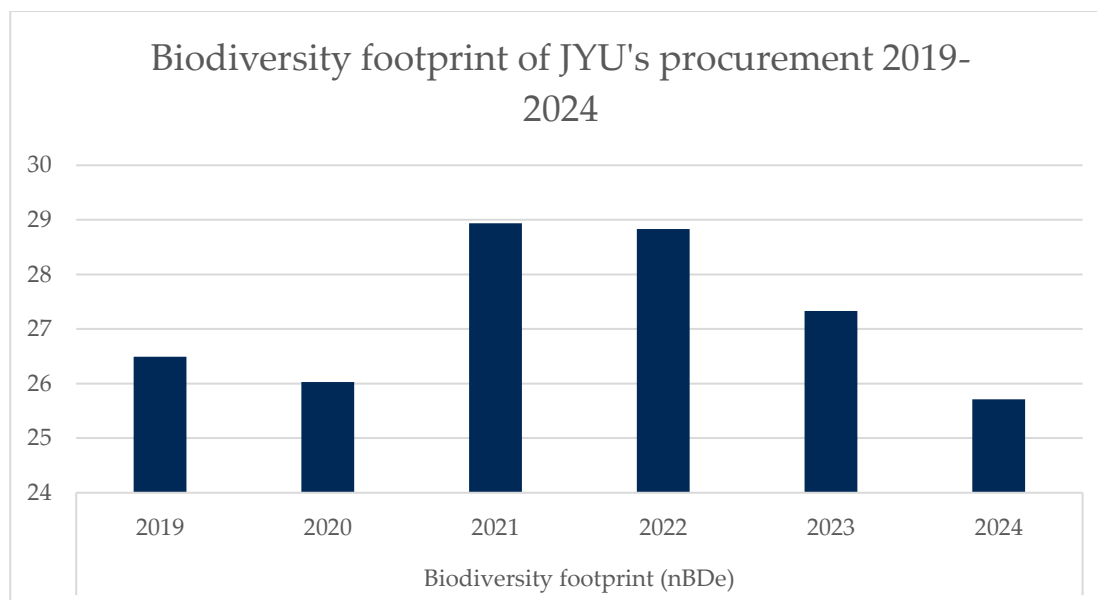


Figure 2. Biodiversity footprint of JYU's procurement 2019–2024.

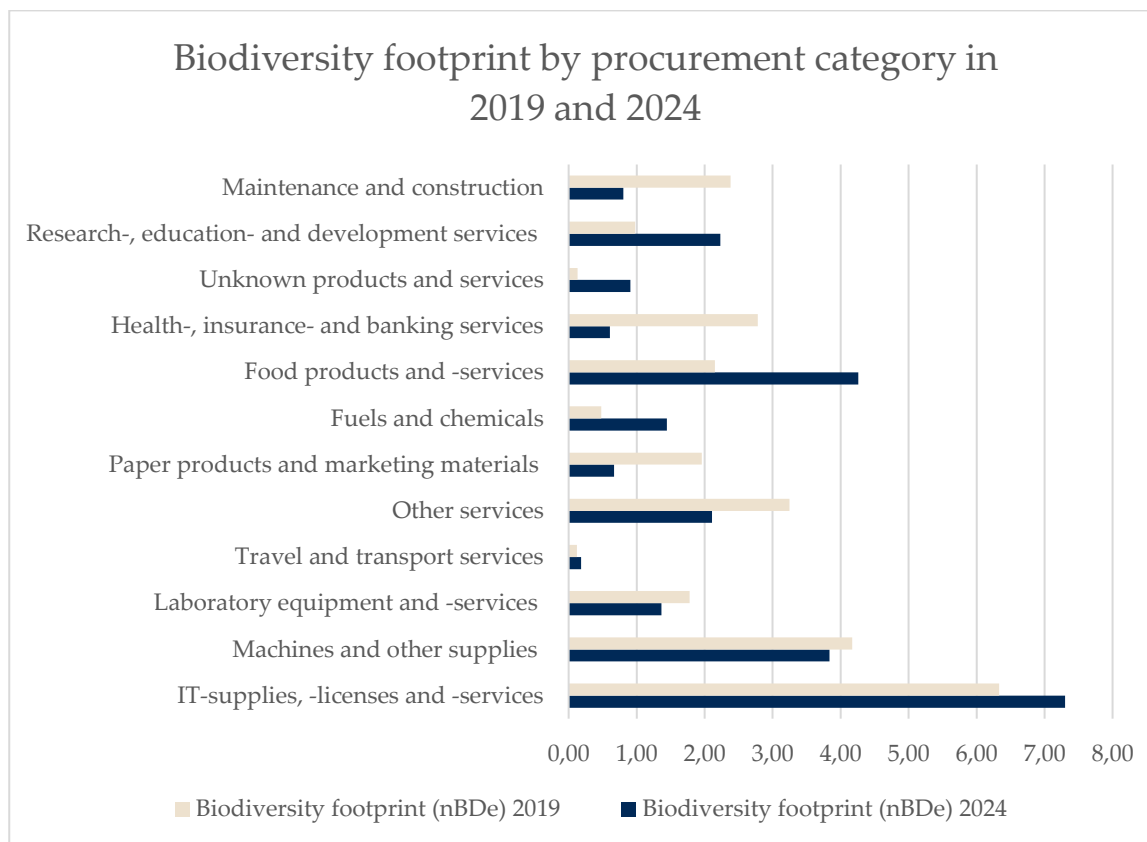


Figure 3. Biodiversity footprint of JYU's procurements in 2019 and 2024 by category.

## 2.2 Results of the WWF Green Office Consumption Habit questionnaire

The University of Jyväskylä assesses both its staff's and students' consumption habits by means of an indicator included in the WWF Green Office concept<sup>12</sup>. It involves an annual survey. At JYU, the response rate in February 2025 was 14.85%. In 2024, the percentage was just slightly lower. In 2024, the number of responses received was 398 (271 from staff and 127 from students). Because the survey is conducted at the beginning of the year, we include the results from the 2025 survey in the 2024 responsibility report.

JYU's score point average was slightly higher than in the previous years. Improvement was found particularly in procurement ("When making purchases, I choose environmentally responsible services, products and suppliers."), environmentally friendly mobility, and food ("I eat plant-based food for lunch during the work week"). Like in previous years, JYU scored lowest in encouragement. There was no decline in any of the survey categories.

<sup>12</sup> [WWF Green Office – Consumer Habit Questionnaire](#)



In comparison to the average scores of the Green Office network and the peer group, the University of Jyväskylä performed well. The peer group consists of organisations in the same industry segment.

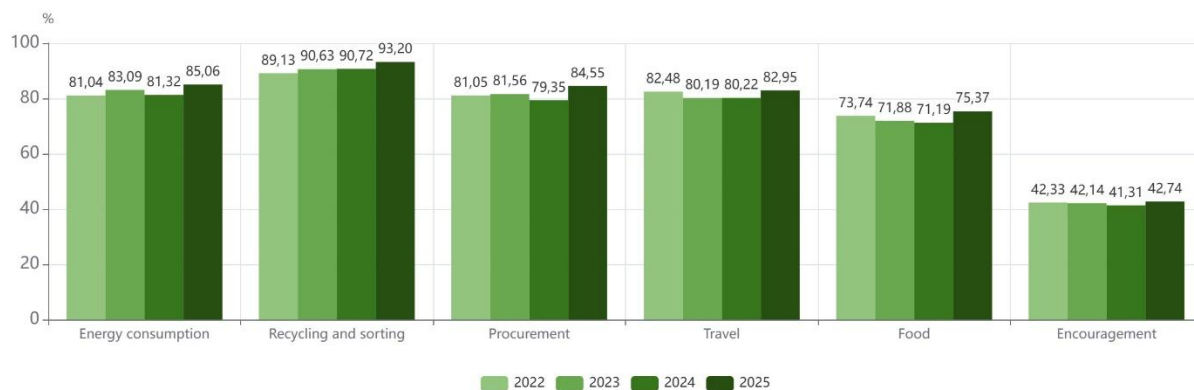


Figure 4. Percentages of the maximum scores for each theme 2022–2025. (Themes: Energy consumption, Recycling and sorting, Procurements, Mobility, Food, Encouragement).



Figure 5. Results for JYU (2025) compared to average scores of the Green Office network and the peer group. The peer group consists of organisations of the same industrial segment.

### 2.3 JYU's position in Times Higher Education Impact Ranking 2024 (SDGs 12–15)

The University of Jyväskylä has participated in Times Higher Education Impact Ranking, which evaluates universities' responsibility in the framework of UN's sustainable development goals (SDGs). JYU's ranking in environmental goals (SDGs 12–15) is used as one of the indicators in JYU's environmental programme. However, the position in the ranking is not directly comparable between years because the number of higher education institutes involved in the ranking has grown year by year. In 2024 the ranking covered 2,526 higher education institutions from 130 countries.



From the previous year, JYU's ranking rose in the Climate action category, where JYU was ranked among the top 100 universities. JYU's ranking stayed unchanged in the Life on land category and declined in the Responsible consumption and production, and Life below water categories.

*Table 2. JYU's position in Times Higher Education Impact Ranking, SDGs 12–15.*

| Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)         | JYU's ranking in 2024 | JYU's ranking in 2023 |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 12: Responsible Consumption and Production | 201-300               | 101–200               |
| 13: Climate Action                         | 78                    | 101–200               |
| 14: Life below Water                       | 201-300               | 101–200               |
| 15: Life on Land                           | 101–200               | 101–200               |

## 2.4 Nature actions on JYU campuses

In 2024, 350 square metres of new meadow was established on JYU's campuses (100 m<sup>2</sup> in Mattilanniemi and 250 m<sup>2</sup> in Seminaarinmäki). In addition, meadow plant seeds were sown on an area of about 100 m<sup>2</sup> to replace the invasive species that had been removed in Mattilanniemi. Also decaying wood was added in these areas. Some of the meadows were created by volunteers including students and city residents during the Jyväskylä Festival.



*Figure 6. Meadow-making voluntary work during the Jyväskylä Festival / Photo: Viivi Kuusiahho 2024.*

On 16 June 2024, the University of Jyväskylä, in collaboration with the Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE), organised the first survey of pollinators in Seminaarinmäki. The participants in the plant survey also included a local plant club Jyväskylän Kasvikerho and JYUniors.





*Figure 7. Pollinator survey in Seminaarinmäki / Photo: Hanna Keljo 2024.*

During the Amazing Race student event in spring, one of the checkpoints involved assembling parts for insect hotels to be placed on the Seminaarinmäki campus, in collaboration with Villa Rana. At the same time, the students were informed about the biodiversity efforts made in the Botanical Garden. The frames of the insect hotels were mainly built from recycled material collected from the 2023 Seminary Park jubilee exhibition.

### **3 Equality, non-discrimination and accessibility**

Equality, non-discrimination and accessibility are fundamental premises of the University's teaching, research and social responsibility.

In 2024, JYU had a Development Group for Equality, Non-discrimination and Accessibility. In addition to this development group, the University features the Equity Team (an initiative by the Language Campus), gender researchers' network Kantti, and the Sign Language Centre.



The University of Jyväskylä takes part in the Responsible Employer campaign, which is based on the principles of non-discrimination, working life balance and well-being, investing in supervisory work, meaningfulness of work and development at work, fair compensation based on job requirements, and a positive applicant experience.

The Development Group for Equality, Non-discrimination and Accessibility integrated the Equality Plan and the Accessibility Plan into a new Equality, Non-discrimination and Accessibility Plan. The new plan is in force for the years 2025–2026. The plan integration work was assisted by a higher education trainee, and the preparations included an equality survey and workshops. The University decided to add human resources for equality efforts by recruiting an equality, non-discrimination and accessibility expert in 2025.

JYU participated in the Pride Week in Jyväskylä together with the local Student Union (JYY). The week included flying the Pride flag, participation in the Pride procession and the park event that followed. JYU also contributed by offering a chance for a wedding ceremony in the Old Forge on campus as well as by making and sharing pins with Pride-related themes. During the Pride week, a podcast series by JYU.Well ("Hyvinvoinnin välittäjät" – Welfare mediators) published a section dealing with the position of sexual and gender minorities in the world of sports.









Figure 8: JYU participated in the Pride Week in Jyväskylä together with the Student Union (JYY). / Photo: Minna Karhunen.





The updating of the Vice Rector's decision on accessible studies began, and the development of the process for individualised arrangements was launched (completed in the first half of 2025). Like in previous years, Student Life welfare activities supported students' ability to study.

The University has designed operational models to create better opportunities in terms of non-discrimination. JYU.INTEGRA is a free-of-charge Finnish language training programme meant for immigrants with a higher education degree or eligibility for studies in higher education. The programme supports studying in academic fields in Finland. ACRES assesses academic skills and language proficiency, and SIMHE develops guidance and support services for immigrants. Both work in the forefront of developing student admissions.





## 4 Research and teaching to promote the Sustainable Development Goals


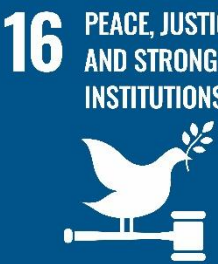

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|  | <p>At the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy, the <b><u>Working poor in a post-industrial welfare state</u></b> project, completed in 2024, examined the labour market situation, social security and daily life of the working poor. The project aimed at creating an up-to-date, comprehensive and critical overview on the situation of the working poor in a post-industrial welfare state like Finland, and to provide policy recommendations to support decision making. The project yielded five publications, two of which were published in 2024.</p>   |
|  | <p>A project entitled <b><u>JUST-FOOD</u></b> examines the ecological, economic and social impacts of the transformation of the food system. It also develops ways to enable a just, sustainable, and socially and politically acceptable transition towards a healthy and climate-neutral food system. The project conceptualises and operationalises the idea of a fair food transition and provides policymakers not only information on its prerequisites but also tools and knowledge for its promotion. This multidisciplinary project connects research on the theory of justice with environmental, social, economic, and nutrition science research. The project published five articles in 2024.</p> |

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| <p><b>3</b> GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING</p>    | <p>JYU hosts <a href="#"><u>the HYTTI welfare and health researcher network</u></a>, which explores conceptions, practices and structures related to health, health problems, well-being and ill-being as well as their connections to social and cultural processes. The research network has adopted a multidisciplinary and multimethodological approach to health and welfare research in people's daily life and life in general. In 2024, the network organised 12 events related to the network's research themes.</p>   |
| <p><b>4</b> QUALITY EDUCATION</p>             | <p>In 2024, the project <a href="#"><u>Antiracism in Finnish Teacher Education (ANTO)</u></a>, conducted by JYU in cooperation with the University of Helsinki, University of Oulu, and Åbo Akademi, explored the role of anti-racist pedagogy and work practices in teacher education. A small-scale action research was conducted during the course "Antiracism in Education", which was organised jointly by the Universities of Helsinki and Jyväskylä and piloted in spring 2023. The course was repeated in spring 2024 as part of the research project. Anti-racist work practices play a significant role in reaching the goals of sustainable development. Teachers and children are often left alone without means to deal with the escalating social and global situation. Failing to recognise racism, in turn, increases the risk of exclusion, ill-being and social polarisation.</p> |
| <p><b>5</b> GENDER EQUALITY</p>             | <p>In 2024, a joint research project, <a href="#"><u>Naiset valmentajina</u></a> (Women coaches), conducted by JYU and the Finnish Coaches Association was completed. The project investigated women's experiences of equality between genders in sport coaching. The project looked at factors that promote or hinder women's participation in coaching activities. The purpose was to develop future sport coaching and improve female coaches' status in sports.</p>   |
| <p><b>6</b> CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION</p>  | <p>At the <a href="#"><u>JYU Center of Expertise for Circular Economy</u></a>, the Clean Water theme group works on technological development needed for water purification that allows the elements and compounds removed from water to be processed or used as such as valuable raw materials. This is made possible through scavenger technology where, by means of chemistry, case-specific catcher molecules can be designed. These molecules can selectively remove substances from water, for example, harmful arsenic or, in case of valuable materials, gold or palladium.</p>   |

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| <p><b>7</b> AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY</p>                | <p>The <a href="#">BitKein</a> subproject is developing a method for the production of carbon electrodes for flow batteries. The project is coordinated by VTT. The project seeks large-scale solutions for regulating the electricity system and storing energy.</p>   |
| <p><b>8</b> DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</p>            | <p>The <a href="#">Sustainable Business research team</a> at the Jyväskylä University School of Business and Economics examines environmental, social and economic sustainability in business activities. The team's research topics include, for instance, organisations' sustainability transition, circular economy and bio-based economy, responsibility communication, sustainable strategies and business models as well as sustainable production and consumption. The research team includes researchers of marketing and environmental management.</p>   |
| <p><b>9</b> INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE</p>  | <p>The <a href="#">Development of research and technology services of Jyväskylä area (RDI-Docking platform)</a> project at JYU Faculty of Mathematics and Science publishes a podcast series together with Jamk University of Applied Sciences. The podcast <a href="#">Yhteistyön uusi aalto - Kestävän tulevaisuuden tekijät</a> (New wave of cooperation – Makers of sustainable future) addresses topical themes of sustainable development. The themes of the episodes include industrial corporations, resource-wise technologies, sustainable manufacturing methods, new materials, and smart solutions, which shape industry toward a carbon-neutral future. The podcast series started in 2024, with 15 episodes released during the year.</p> |
| <p><b>10</b> REDUCED INEQUALITIES</p>                    | <p>The Department of History and Ethnology hosts the <a href="#">ACACIA Project - LGBTQI+ and Street-level Bureaucrats: Assessing Motives, Violence and Possibilities for Collective Advocacy in Sub-Saharan Africa</a>. The project runs from autumn 2023 to 2026. The project looks at the everyday practices of local authorities in their interaction with LGBTQI+ individuals. The purpose is to explain how and why social control, power and violence are targeted at minorities in three countries of sub-Saharan Africa.</p>   |



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| <p><b>11</b> SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES</p>      | <p>Ten recommendations published in <a href="#">Wisdom Letters 1/2024</a> are intended for professionals and citizen activists working in the fields of culture and education. The recommendations guide into strengthening the cultural foundation for the sustainability transition of society.</p>   |
| <p><b>12</b> RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION</p>  | <p>The Department of Chemistry started a new international education programme “<b>The Master's Degree Programme in Chemistry and Analytics for Circular Economy</b>”, with the first students starting in autumn 2024. Jyväskylä University School of Business and Economics launched a two-year project <a href="#">Optimizing forest industry sustainability with value chain data (OPTIMI 1)</a>. It focuses on the responsibility data of value chains.</p>  |
| <p><b>13</b> CLIMATE ACTION</p>                        | <p>“<a href="#">Hiilijalanjälki haltuun</a>” (Get a grasp on carbon footprint) is a new open-access course offered by JYU Open University. The course deals with the content, calculation and application of carbon footprint.</p>  |
| <p><b>14</b> LIFE BELOW WATER</p>                      | <p>The <a href="#">ColdWebs: Food webs in cold freshwaters</a> research group at JYU investigates the food webs and salmonid fish populations in northern lakes and rivers in Fennoscandia. By means of stable isotope analysis and test fishing data, the team examines how a lake’s morphology, productivity, climatic conditions, biotic communities, and effects of human activity, such as invasive species and hydropower-related regulation, influence trout, arctic charr and whitefish populations as well as the structure and functioning of aquatic food webs. In addition, the team investigates environmental problems related to, for example, migratory obstacles, humpback salmon, and land use. In 2024, the research team published two publications. The <a href="#">EcoEvoAqua research team</a> explores water ecosystems from various perspectives, focusing on human impacts, protection issues, future scenarios and the sustainable use of natural resources. The team published six scientific articles in 2024.</p> |

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|    | <p>The first three-year term of the <b>BOOST project</b> ended in 2024. The project worked for the mainstreaming of biodiversity protection and created methods for a just transition by means of compensating the harms caused to nature, that is, ecological compensation.</p>   |
|    | <p>The <b>violence research team</b> at JYU examines violence as a multifaceted phenomenon, the study of which calls for multidisciplinary perspectives. Violence research conducted across different disciplines offers approaches to understanding violence as it occurs in everyday life, intimate relationships, institutions as well as in media and cultural products. The study module on violence research provides teaching based on this multidisciplinary research. The research team is involved in the projects <b>Vastapuhe</b> (2021–2024) and <b>Everyday Affective Practices Online: Producing, Experiencing and Managing Hate Speech in the Digital Era (HAFFECT)</b> (2021–2025).</p> |
|  | <p>JYU.Wisdom researchers have published nearly 1,400 scientific articles during the contract period, including an increasing number of multidisciplinary publications. In 2024 they also published the book <i>Interdisciplinary perspectives on Planetary Well-being</i> (Routledge), which was an outcome of a collaborative effort involving 81 sustainability scholars from JYU.Wisdom.</p>   |

You can read more about JYU's responsibility work on our website:

[Sustainable and responsible university](#)

[Equality, non-discrimination and accessibility at the University of Jyväskylä](#)

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