

SUSTAINABILITY REPORT 2021



UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

Towards planetary well-being



UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

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JYU's path towards planetary well-being

At the University of Jyväskylä (JYU), sustainability is incorporated into research, teaching, societal interaction and campus management. We are committed to promoting [UNIFI's theses on sustainable development and responsibility](#). The UNIFI theses are based on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, the Finnish Society's Commitment to Sustainability (Sitoumus 2050), the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Paris Climate Accords.

Universities lead change in society. Research provides new solutions and innovations to sustainability challenges. Sustainability in our curricula provides the necessary skill for future specialists. Our experts participate and lead scientific panels that give advice to decision makers. The university itself needs to provide an example of a sustainable organization, of how to be a resource-smart, inclusive, and safe workspace for all.

JYU has established a development group called Sustainable and Responsible JYU. The group is developing an action model for evaluating, developing and reporting on the sustainability and responsibility of JYU, which encompasses economic, social, cultural and ecological responsibility. The group proposes developmental objectives and measures that support the coordination and strategic steering of JYU's activities.

A significant cooperation partner of the group is the multidisciplinary community [JYU.Wisdom](#), whose special expertise addresses issues of planetary well-being. Wisdom organizes regular lunch colloquiums and publishes the [Wisdom Letters](#) publication series, while JYU.Wisdom researchers supervise multidisciplinary graduate theses and projects.

In 2021, Wisdom developed a new course on planetary well-being that is open for every citizen for free. The course [Introduction to Planetary Well-being](#) is available in Finnish and in English. The [vice rector's decision](#) on 17 September 2021 on the curriculum policies of the University of Jyväskylä for 2024–2027 requires the Introduction to Planetary Well-being course to be included in all bachelor's degree programmes. The decision also requires the themes of sustainability and responsibility to be included in the learning outcomes of all degree programmes.

The concept of *planetary well-being* was defined by Wisdom while developing sustainability education for JYU. In November 2021, Wisdom scholars published [a scientific article](#) about planetary well-being, the first jointly published peer-reviewed research article of the community. Different disciplines across human and natural sciences were represented, including sociology, psychology and ecology.

In 2021, another multidisciplinary community was created at JYU. The [School of Well-being – JYU.Well](#) is an interdisciplinary community of human well-being researchers at the University of Jyväskylä. JYU.Well advances the current research agendas of multifaceted well-being research by ambitiously integrating diverse disciplinary insights into a holistic understanding of phenomena associated with well-being, thereby making a significant contribution to research, policy, and practice.

A resource- and climate-smart university

UNIFI's theses on sustainable development and responsibility:

6. Universities' management, administration and campus activities are in line with the sustainable development goals.

7. Universities follow the principles of a carbon neutral circular economy in their activities and take concrete measures to foster biodiversity.

Strategy and principles

JYU has set a target to reach carbon neutrality by 2030. In June 2021 the University Board also added No Net Loss of biodiversity to that target.

In 2021 JYU also renewed its [code of conduct](#): “When planning and making purchases and investments, we make responsible choices and promote ecological, social and cultural sustainability. We do not accept the use of forced or child labour, bribery, corruption or any kind of inappropriate activity. We assess the necessity of our purchases systematically and promote the circular economy.”

JYU has held the WWF Green Office Certificate since 2013. During 2021 we have been updating and renewing our environmental programme.

Consumer habits

JYU uses the WWF Green Office consumer habits questionnaire to monitor the change in the consumer culture of the JYU community. Previously the questionnaire has been directed to staff only and the response rate has been low. In 2021 WWF started the updating process of the questionnaire. JYU has been working with WWF to update the questionnaire and to also include JYU students starting in spring 2022. Then the questionnaire results will serve as a university-wide indicator of consumer habit change.

Biodiversity and carbon footprint

JYU has assessed its total carbon footprint and biodiversity footprint of heating and acquisitions since 2019. The methodology has been developed by [Wisdom](#). The methodology has been refined and the results from previous years have also been updated.

The biggest sources of CO₂ emissions in 2021 were investments (53%), acquisitions (25%) and properties and energy (21%). The total carbon footprint in 2021 was 26 786 tonnes of CO₂. Compared to 2019, JYU's total carbon footprint decreased by 19 %. However, the carbon and biodiversity footprints of acquisitions as well as the biodiversity footprint of heating had risen.

JYU uses district heating provided by Alva-yhtiöt, a company owned by the City of Jyväskylä. Heating is produced by burning peat and wood. Peat produces more CO₂ but burning wood has a higher impact on biodiversity. Since more wood is being burned, JYU's biodiversity footprint has grown. The biodiversity footprint of acquisitions is measured by Potentially Disappeared Fraction (PDF). PDF accounts for a fraction of species richness that may be potentially lost due to environmental pressure.

Table 1. JYU 2021 carbon and biodiversity footprints by category and comparison to 2019

Category	Emissions (tCO ₂ e)	Comparison to 2019 (%)
Vehicles	24.8	-62
Properties and energy	5456.6	-6
Student exchange	37.4	-571
Acquisitions	6775.8	+8
Work travel	267.8	-655
Investments	14223.4	-25
Total	26786	-19
Biodiversity footprint of heating (ltha)		
Forest habitat types	4.07	+29
Mire habitat types	0.49	-31
Biodiversity footprint of acquisitions (PDF)		
	9.63E-05	+10

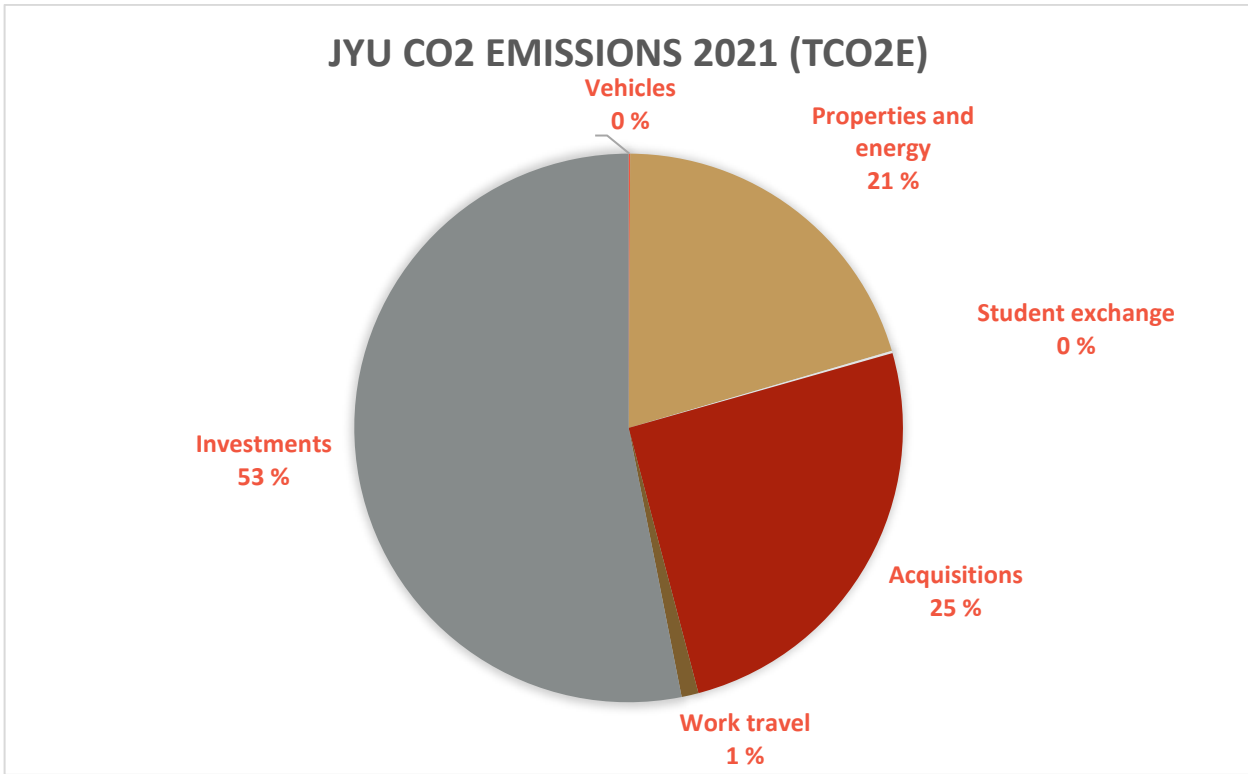


Figure 1. Pie chart of the JYU CO2-emissions 2021

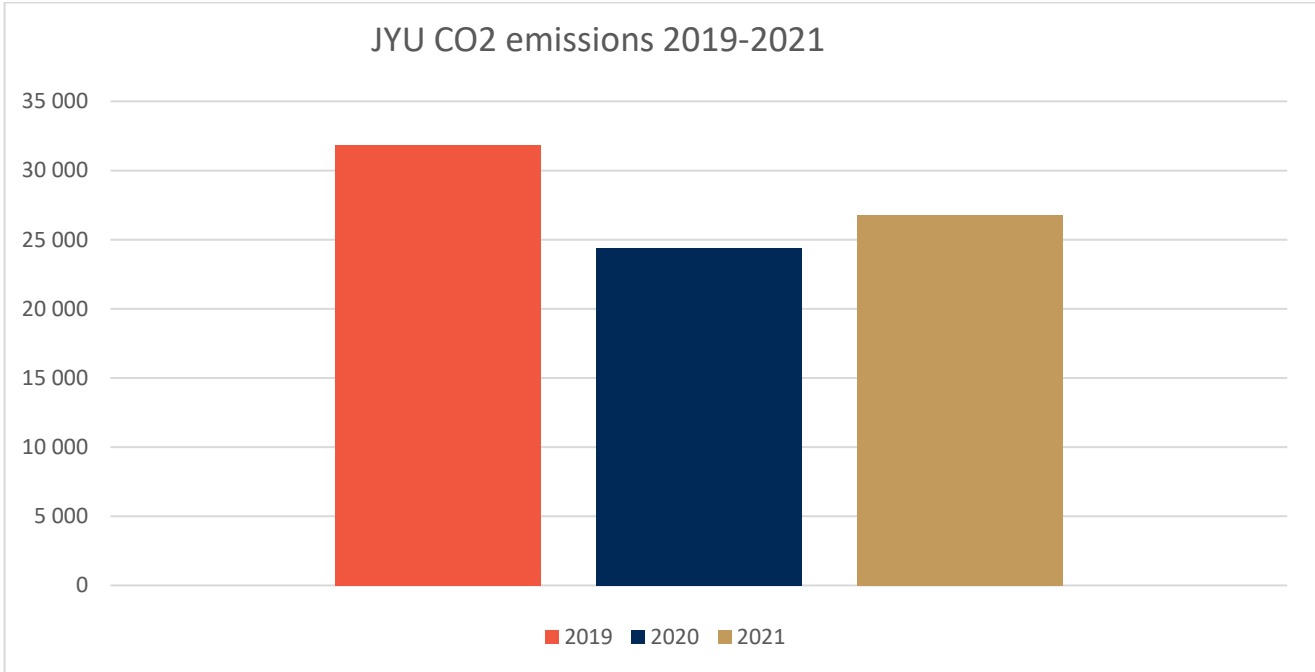


Figure 2. JYU total CO2 emissions, 2019-2021

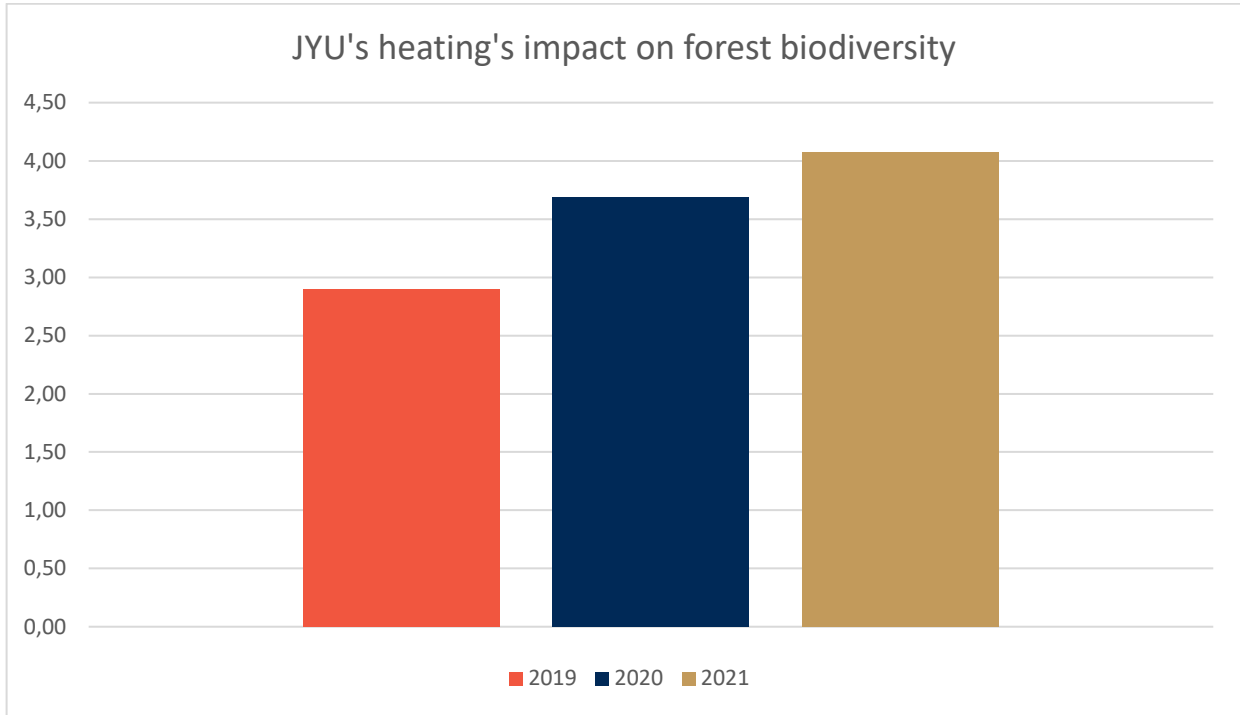


Figure 3. Impact of the central heating JYU has consumed in 2019–2021 measured in forest habitat type hectares

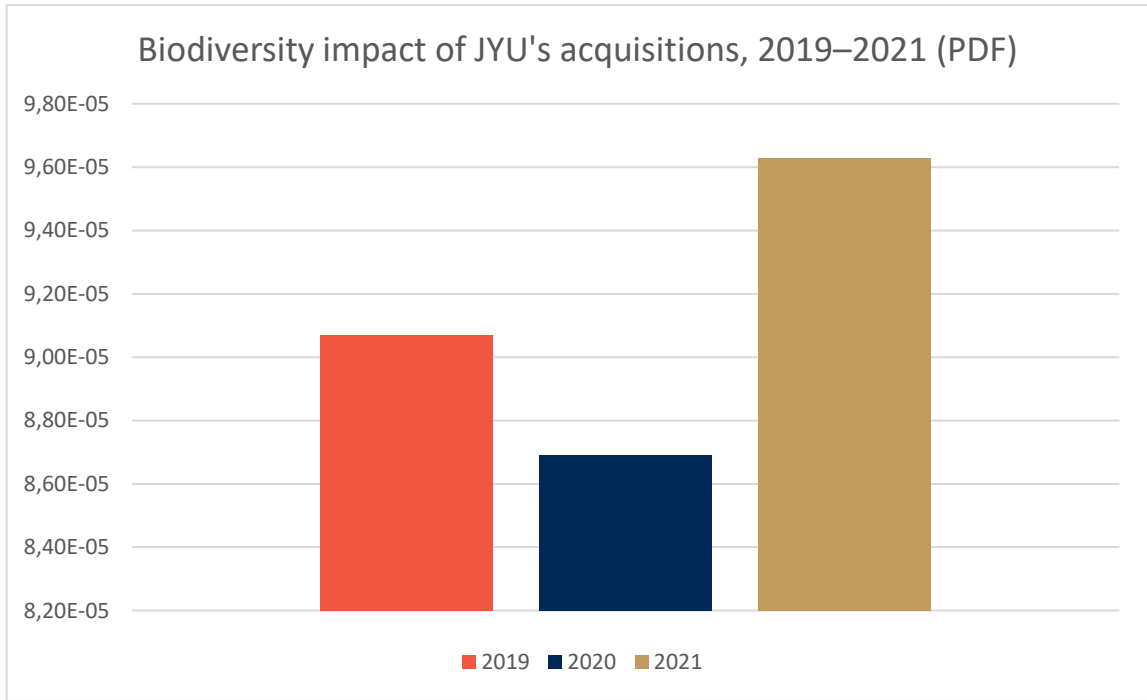


Figure 4 Biodiversity impacts of JYU's acquisitions measured in PDF (potentially disappeared fraction of species)

Table 2. Carbon and biodiversity footprint of acquisitions and carbon footprint of work travel by unit

Unit	Acquisitions (kg CO2e)	Acquisitions (PDF)	Work travel (kg CO2e)
Teacher training school	350 510,75	3,96E-06	11 517,50
University services	1 121 052,54	2,23E-05	29 818,98
Joint acquisitions	1 924 364,69	3,62E-05	0
Sport and health sciences	248 016,26	2,89E-06	24 592,15
School of business and economics	175 854,15	1,64E-06	15 386,48
Independent institutes	823 091,05	8,57E-06	27 892,76
Education and psychology	424 869,27	3,89E-06	21 811,01
Information technology	214 983,17	1,93E-06	20 632,51
Humanities and social sciences	263 653,49	2,85E-06	42 565,93
Mathematics and science	1 229 432,56	1,21E-05	73 608,66

An inclusive and accessible university

UNIFI's theses on sustainable development and responsibility:

5. Universities promote the accessibility of higher education and a safe research and teaching environment.

8. Universities work actively to promote equality, equity and well-being.

The 2021 renewed university [code of conduct](#) states: “Our university is a socially and culturally safe environment in which harassment, inappropriate treatment, discrimination, bullying, hate speech or other inappropriate conduct is not tolerated in any encounter. As a community, we dismantle discriminating and restricting structures and standards.”

JYU promotes equality and non-discrimination in our university community in accordance with the strategy and legislation as well as the aims set jointly with the university community. The aims and development measures are described in strategy development programmes and the Equality Plan for 2022–2023 developed by the Equality Committee during 2021.

JYU does constant work to improve the accessibility of the university, recognizing the added challenges of the cultural heritage environment. The work is in progress, but some achievements from 2021 include:

- A student survey was used to improve accessibility and individual study arrangements.
- The Navi map and the JYU website were updated according to accessibility requirements.
- Staff and tutors have been educated on accessibility issues.

A fair and responsible university

A Fair Trade university

JYU, Student Union JYY, and the student restaurants on campus are committed to promoting Fair Trade practices and using Fair Trade products. JYU was awarded the Fair Trade University label for the first time in 2014 and has retained it through the most recent checkpoint in 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic meant that more events occurred online than on campus during 2021. JYU promoted Fair Trade in its social media channels, with a focus on practical Fair Trade actions that all university community member can perform in their daily lives. Campus restaurants use Fair Trade products (fruit, juice, sugar, honey, coffee, tea and chocolate).

The university as an investor

JYU aims to act responsibly in its investment activities, respecting international norms and human rights. According to the JYU code of conduct (2021): “When making investments, we comply with the UN’s Principles for Responsible Investment (UN PRI), and we take into consideration the environmental, social and governance criteria (ESG). Our investments address our university’s carbon neutrality goals.”

In 2021 the JYU Board approved sustainability principles for JYU’s investments. JYU’s target is to achieve a carbon neutral investment portfolio by 2035. An intermediate target is to reduce CO2 emissions of JYU’s investments by 30% before 2025 and by 70% before 2030. The property portfolio should be carbon neutral by 2030. Since investments result in approximately half of JYU’s carbon footprint, the impact on the whole footprint is significant.

JYU has a financing company, Unifund Jyväskylä, to support the start-up of research-based businesses. The operations of new businesses may be based on the utilization of intellectual rights created at JYU or on services originating from research results. In 2021, responsibility was added to the Unifund investment criteria: “The company meets the University of Jyväskylä’s valid investment targets of responsibility and has defined its own responsibility targets.”

SDG highlights of JYU from 2021



SDG 3 (Good health and well-being)

JYU.Well was established in 2021 as a cross-disciplinary community of well-being researchers focusing on human well-being [JYU.Well – School of Well-being – University of Jyväskylä](#). A new international Master's Degree Programme of Responsible Management and Business of Sport (RESPO) was also launched. [Master's Degree Programme in Responsible Management and Business of Sport – University of Jyväskylä \(jyu.fi\)](#)

SDG 4 (Quality education)

In 2021, the SDG4-JYU international seminar at the Faculty of Education and Psychology focused on the special theme of the 2021 UNESCO Global Education Monitoring Report on Non-state actors. [SDG 4 seminar: Education and Sustainability*. University of Jyväskylä, 4-5 November 2021 – Faculty of Education and Psychology \(jyu.fi\)](#)

The Open University of the University of Jyväskylä launched a [free online course on planetary well-being](#).

SDG 7 (Affordable and clean energy)

JYU has increased its solar energy production on campus in 2021 by installing new solar panels on the roof of the university library. JYU also started to install an automated energy monitoring and reporting system in campus buildings.

SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth)

Wisdom's [PATH 2.0](#) project strengthens sustainability expertise in Central Finland through continuous learning. The project designs and pilots new sustainability studies for entrepreneurs, employees, job seekers and students in Central Finland.

SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure)

In 2021 JYU, together with the Natural Resources Institute Finland, launched a circular economy development [project KIRE](#), in which raw materials are produced from waste and side streams in a new way.

SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities)

The Master's Degree Programme in Development, Education and International Cooperation (DEICO) seeks to provide students with tools for functioning creatively and effectively in the world of international development cooperation, with a specific focus on development and education. [Master's Degree Programme in Development, Education and International Cooperation \(DEICO\) – University of Jyväskylä \(jyu.fi\)](#)

The INTEGRA project developed an educational model that integrates university language and content studies for immigrants who have completed or are qualified for higher education and aim to finish their interrupted degree studies or complement a prior degree in compliance with Finnish qualification requirements. [INTEGRA – Centre for Multilingual Academic Communication \(jyu.fi\)](#)

SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities)

Wisdom is coordinating the project [Lake Päijänne as a Biosphere Reserve](#). The project will prepare and produce an application for Unesco's Man and the Biosphere programme (MAB) on behalf of the Lake Päijänne area.

SDG 12 (Responsible consumption and production)

Wisdom's regional development project ['The cornerstone of sustainability'](#) mapped the challenges of sustainable development in the region, examined the perspectives provided by scientific studies and developed criteria to better take into account the pillars of sustainability (social, ecological, economic and cultural) in regional development.

SDG 13 (Climate action)

Jyväskylä University School of Business and Economics sponsored the AMBA & BGA's International Climate Change Survey to provide a unique perspective on the current state and future outlook of world-leading business schools in regard to incorporating climate change into business education and research. [AMBA-BGA-Climate-Change-Report-2020-FINAL.pdf \(associationofmbas.com\)](#)

SDG 14 (Life below water)

JYU's [Konnevesi Research Station](#) is an active field centre of multidisciplinary research that includes a large aquatic research hall. Konnevesi has served as a temporary home for endangered freshwater pearl mussel and in 2021 a six-year project called [LIFE Revives: Reviving freshwater pearl mussel populations and their habitats](#) was started.

SDG 15 (Life on land)

Three portions of lawn were transformed into meadows on the JYU campus in 2021. In addition, three deadwood fences were built to improve biodiversity on campus. The [Katoava luonto](#) (Fading nature) project, which focuses on ecological compensation through citizen actions, organized several research and art events in 2021.

SDG 17 (Partnerships for the goals)

The University of Jyväskylä hosted a sustainability seminar for the Council of Rectors of Finnish Universities: "[Sustainability and Responsibility in HEIs 2030](#)".

Wisdom organized the speech programme of the [Jyväskylän Kesä](#) festival. In 2021 Wisdom organized 31 events that reached 7,138 participants.

***More information: www.jyu.fi/sustainability
Support, comments and feedback: [ulla.t.helimo\(a\)jyu.fi](mailto:ulla.t.helimo(a)jyu.fi)***