



Climate City Contract

Commitment (September 10th, 2024)

2030 Climate Neutrality Action Plan of the Cities of Eindhoven and Helmond





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1.1 Introduction

Transition is no longer a choice

By participating in this climate mission, Eindhoven and Helmond acknowledge that climate change must be addressed faster and better. It requires a drastic and structural change, and it has consequences for the way we design and arrange our inner cities, neighbourhoods and industries. It affects how we build, generate and use heat and electricity, how we move, reuse materials and train our (future) workforce in this region.

For Helmond and Eindhoven this mission has a broader focus on the long term to realize the necessary transition: a Climate Delta Plan Eindhoven-Helmond that sets the course for gradually working towards fossil-free, circular and climate-proof cities by 2050 at the latest. An important milestone on the road to this is the 55% CO₂ reduction target in 2030 and the ambition to achieve 80% reduction on our way to climate neutrality by 2035.

This Climate City Contract is created with the input and involvement of a large group of stakeholders from the two cities and its region. Stakeholders whose contribution is crucial to realize the ambition of fossil-free, circular and climate-resilient cities. A lot of support and commitment has been shown and input is provided. This contract is the result of this jointly completed process. At the same time, such a major change leads, inevitably, to uncertainties and questions because there is no such thing as a fixed transition.

The baseline is clear, projects and plans are already formulated, commitment is set, but a more detailed elaboration of the actions and investments is needed. At this moment the parties are going to work together in several collaborative coalitions to achieve this. With this effort the cities and its region focusses on the energy transition, making cities more sustainable and adapting the environment to the consequences of climate change.

But local authorities and parties can't do this alone! The needed system change will only produce the desired results if these are implemented at all levels of government, including the national and EU level. The support from Europe, as well as the national government is crucial in reaching this target. Long-term involvement of the government and the EU is necessary to make the systemic changes needed to achieve climate neutrality. It requires new forms of cooperation, new investment programs and new financing models. Even if the necessary legislation is not yet in place. We therefore ask the National Government and Europe, on the basis of this first version of the contract, to express clarity about their role and concrete contribution in the implementation of the climate mission in Eindhoven and Helmond.

In support of the Dutch mission cities, the national government has set up a National Support Structure (NSS). The Ministry of Housing and Spatial Planning, the Ministry of Climate and Green Growth, and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management support the cities of Eindhoven and Helmond in their application for the 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission Label. Their letter of support is included in the annex.



1.2 Goal: Climate neutrality by 2030

A Climate Deltaplan Eindhoven-Helmond

Eindhoven and Helmond are ambitious: the cities are growing rapidly, but at the same time they also want to become greener, more sustainable and healthier. To ensure that the cities are pleasant and healthy places to live, work and recreate now as well as in the future. Eindhoven and Helmond must continue at full speed with the energy transition that has been set in motion, making the cities more sustainable and absorbing the consequences of climate change.

Because we need space to realize long-term plans and transitions takes time, we are focusing on a 'Climate Deltaplan¹' for the two cities. We must treat this issue as the crisis it is, so that laws and regulations can also be amended and modified where necessary.

The current commitment of the municipality of Eindhoven aims to reduce greenhouse gases by at least 55% in 2030 and at least 95% in 2050. The current commitment of the municipality of Helmond is to be a climate-neutral city by 2035. In recent years, a number of external challenges have arisen that significantly hinder the execution of our policies and reaching our ambition. As a result, our updated estimates forecast that the 80% reduction on our way to climate neutrality will be achieved later than previously anticipated. Through the European climate mission, the two cities want to achieve a significant acceleration which has become necessary to reach the 55% reduction target in 2030. The 80% reduction on our way to climate neutrality will inevitably be postponed, and therefore we are now aiming for 2035. At the same time, the cities focus on circularity and climate resilience.

This mission should lead to the necessary breakthroughs needed to achieve the climate goals for both cities. We scale up existing projects and start new projects. We also focus on awareness, behavioural change and the necessary system changes.

Achieving the goals offers opportunities for our residents, our cities and the region. Tackling climate change contributes to a green, pleasant and healthy city to live in. Insulating and making our homes more sustainable ensures lower energy bills. In addition, the knowledge and innovation ecosystem of the Brainport region can contribute like no other to smart solutions that play a global role in combating climate change. Greater independence from other countries with regard to energy and materials increases our resilience to the consequences of geopolitical developments.

Deviation of original Expression of Interest

Due to recent developments related to the energy transition in The Netherlands, particularly (1) the net congestion, (2) heating companies are putting a halt on the construction on district heating networks and the lack of viable business cases, (3) the stagnation of solar panel due to due to the upcoming abolition of the net metering scheme and the reduction of feed-in tariffs, (4) the sale of electric vehicles (EV's) is under pressure due to lower subsidies. These are all factors that were not at play two years ago (when we submitted our Expression of Interest), but now have a significant impact on our ability to actually reduce greenhouse gases.

As we approach 2030, the municipalities of Eindhoven and Helmond request, an exemption from the net zero emissions target by 2030, as initially stated in the Expression of Interest. The challenges prompting this request are thoroughly outlined in the Climate Action Plan.

¹ A few weeks after the flood disaster of 1953 in the southwest of The Netherlands a Deltaplan was launched to prevent parts of the Netherlands from being flooded and guarantee the safety of the inhabitants of those vulnerable areas.



- Proposal for a revised local target of achieving net zero emissions by 2035, still aligned with the Mission 2030: 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities. This revised target remains highly ambitious and relevant, yet more feasible given the current circumstances.
- Based on recent developments in the local context, the target has been updated. Both Eindhoven and Helmond pledge to reduce GHG emissions by at least 55% by 2030 and aim for at least 80% by 2035 with a maximum of 20% compensation.

Declaration:

The Municipalities of Eindhoven and Helmond, commits to the following climate mitigation goals as part of the Mission '2030: 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities':

- Through a committed partnership with the European Commission, these cities aim to establish a Climate City Contract that not only targets an 80% reduction in CO₂ emissions but also fosters long-term sustainability and resilience.
- However, recognizing the challenges in meeting this ambition by 2030 due to recent developments in local context, Helmond and Eindhoven have set an interim target of reducing CO₂ emissions by 55% by 2030 and are now aiming to achieve the 80% reduction goal by 2035 with a maximum of 20% compensation.
- Mitigating climate change while ensuring that the transition to a zero-emission society enhances the well-being of all inhabitants, is inclusive and affordable, especially for vulnerable groups, is connected to climate adaptation, and contributes to a sustainable economic system.
- Basing our policies and actions on real-world data and realistic modelling, and communicating clear and realistic expectations to our stakeholders, especially our inhabitants.
- Engaging and incentivizing all stakeholders at the local, regional, national, and European levels to join our efforts and commitments towards achieving climate neutrality.

These commitments cover the entire administrative area of the Municipalities of Eindhoven and Helmond.

Comment:

The municipalities of Helmond and Eindhoven are uncertain whether a 55% reduction in emissions by 2030 will be sufficient for the European Commission to grant the mission label. With the Action Plan being assessed by the JRC and the Investment Plan by the EIB, please note that both cities are willing to engage in discussions with the evaluating bodies to verbally explain their ambitions and the feasibility of these goals for 2030 and 2035 during the assessment phase. Both institutions are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.



1.3 Key priorities and strategic interventions

Three spearheads: fossil free, circular and climate resilient

Eindhoven and Helmond are committing to a broad approach with three spearheads: fossil free, circular and climate resilient. An approach that goes further than just reducing CO₂. It is a widely supported climate contract in which organizations, companies and residents from both cities are involved. Because innovation and acceleration is not possible if it is not embraced by the inhabitants and entrepreneurs of both cities and the region. We ensure that everyone can participate in the transition. Accelerating existing projects or scaling them up is not enough to realize the required acceleration. It requires connecting social challenges, cross-domain collaboration, system innovations and creative solutions and the removal of barriers in order to achieve the necessary breakthroughs together. It is the start of a journey that stops at a fossil-free, circular and climate-proof Eindhoven and Helmond

1. Fossil free

Both cities aim for a fossil-free urban environment. The cities intend to address all Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) and sectors/sources of emissions to reach climate neutrality as defined by the Cities Mission. Emissions from the various sectors/sources such as the built environment, industry and mobility must then be reduced by at least 80%. Any residual emissions must be stored or offset. Initially, the focus is on direct emissions (scope 1 and 2): the emissions caused on the territory of Eindhoven and Helmond and the emissions elsewhere due to the production of electricity for use in Eindhoven and Helmond. The cities also cause indirect emissions, outside their own territory (scope 3), such as through movements to and from the city and the production of goods and food outside the cities. The reduction of these 'scope 3' emissions is also a responsibility of the cities, which means that the challenge is even more complex. Mapping the indirect emissions requires further elaboration, such as a thorough monitoring method.

2. Circular

Both cities strive for a more circular production and consumption society. Circularity is about value retention and the reuse of materials and products. This is done by stimulating sustainable consumption behaviour and by making circular chains the norm. The so-called R-ladder indicates the degree of circularity. The R-ladder has six steps (rethink, refuse, reduce, reuse, repair, recycle) that represent different strategies of circularity. Strategies higher up the ladder save more resources. The higher a strategy is on the R-Ladder, the more circular the strategy is.

3. Climate resilient

Both cities are constantly working on the design of the city, the public space, the urban green and the water management. They are faced with the question of how to include the aspect of climate resilience in this. Both cities strive for a climate proof public space in which green and water are the base to make the cities safer, more pleasant and healthier.

Implementation of this urban climate contract will ensure that we accelerate our work towards a fossil-free, circular and climate-resilient society. For each mission the impact is indicated on the three spearheads fossil-free, circular and climate-proof (see example below). This qualitative assessment will be quantified and supplemented with information regarding emission reduction and investments.



Strategic investment priorities

In the Climate Investment Plan (CIP), existing and accelerated policies and projects have been classified according to three sectors:

- Built Environment
- Mobility
- Industry

Subsequently these sectors have been further subdivided into twelve investment actions. In the CIP an overview of the sectors and investment actions, including project descriptions which give some more specific indications of the type of projects and actions foreseen. The three sectors and twelve investment actions represent the structural “umbrella” of this Climate Investment Action. The three sectors and twelve investment actions outline focus on triggering investment for specific projects on the ground.

To achieve these goals, it is necessary for all involved parties to be informed and engaged. To do so, the municipalities of Eindhoven and Helmond have defined the following 4 city themes:

These themes are:

1. Vital City Center
2. Liveable Neighbourhoods
3. Sustainable Businesses
4. Robust Region

The 4 city themes consist of 22 missions that aim to engage stakeholders, encouraging them to adopt climate-friendly behaviours and partake in climate neutrality investments. Thus, the underlying 22 missions primarily serve as supportive actions to realise investments and actions (i.e. acceleration) by the municipalities, homeowners, companies, citizens. Investments within each of the investment actions defined should not be financed solely by the municipalities. In fact, the largest investments need to be made by other stakeholders. The missions support this by providing information, networks and platforms to increase engagement and willingness to invest. This joint effort (public and private) aims to achieve the intended goals, ensuring that the cities are vital, liveable, economically future-proof, and strong. Eindhoven and Helmond will be attractive to both residents and businesses if the intended actions are conducted within the set timeframes.



Barriers and opportunities

In the current situation there are several barriers that need to be broken to realize the ambitions. The preconditions for sustainability constraints in various areas and that means that the requested pace can't be achieved.

Grid congestion

A crucial barrier is the capacity of the electricity network in our region. The capacity of the electricity network is insufficient to maintain the speed of the energy transition. And this while the demand for and supply of sustainable electricity will only increase. Network capacity is not the only problem regarding the sustainability task, also the housing construction and the transition of our industrial areas will have to deal with this.

Execution capacity

Sufficient (implementation) capacity will be needed to be able to implement the ambitions in this Climate Contract. In addition, the capacity of our labour potential will not be sufficient to be able to implement all necessary measures. The question is how we can prevent those shortages in labour capacity leads to delays in implementation. This does not apply, by the way only for the workforce, but also for the necessary materials.

Preconditions from the National Government and the EU

Preconditions from the national government and the EU in areas such as finance, legislation and regulations, tax regime and local policy space are crucial for local implementation. Intensive lobbying, together with the other mission cities, is necessary for this. In the context of this climate mission, this must become a priority given to the creation of necessary preconditions on the one hand and the solving bottlenecks that could delay or hinder implementation on the other hand.

On the other hand, there are opportunities. Opportunities because we have already started by existing policies and projects for all spearheads and missions. And we are developing our policies and actions further by learning from previous experiences. Opportunities also as part of the Brainport region where companies and organizations work on social and technical innovations in the field of climate and energy.



1.4 Principles and process

Guiding principles

Think different, act different

The focus on the spearheads therefore raises various questions and challenges. A first impulse is: 'it has to be faster; we have to do more.' In this way, we also attach our current growth thinking to the sustainability issue. However, this issue requires thinking and acting differently. It is about stimulating a paradigm shift: from investing in 'economic growth' to a circular and sustainable economic model. An economy that focuses on achieving sustainability objectives, and that responds to the economic opportunities that innovation and scaling up 'climate and energy technology' can offer the region. And moves away from the path of solely economic growth and focuses on organizing raw material extraction, production, distribution, consumption and how we deal with our waste in a different way. Where levels of well-being remain high, and we remain within the regenerative limits of the earth's ecosystem.

The approach in Eindhoven-Helmond is based on six guiding principles that apply to all three spearheads (fossil free, circular and climate resilient) and that are necessary to achieve the broad objective of 'climate neutral in 2030'. It concerns the following principles:

1. Leadership

Major social challenges such as these require leadership. Parties, organizations and residents who do not wait for national politics or policy but take the lead in the change themselves. There are already a large number of front runners in Eindhoven and Helmond: residents and entrepreneurs who invest a lot of time in making the city more sustainable and encouraging others. These frontrunners are crucial for driving and accelerating change. They pioneer new solutions, share their knowledge and experiences and inspire others to get started as well. Especially when there are collective initiatives, frontrunners can have a lot of impact. Important choices call for choosing the long term on the basis of a clear vision and for that reason to choose sometimes for more difficult paths for the short term.

2. Ownership

A successful transition benefits from local ownership and feeling and taking responsibility. This leads to initiatives for change. This means giving space to residents who are making their homes, streets, neighbourhoods or districts more sustainable. This means for instance stimulating local ownership in energy supply and sustainable mobility solutions. For example, solar panels, collective heat networks, or shared electric vehicles. To be able to scale up, new forms of ownership, financing, cooperation and a different role for the government are needed. The municipalities can help initiatives in the city to grow. But perhaps just as important, it also requires ownership at administrative and management level. So that difficult choices are made, and responsibility is also taken for this. After all, we are now taking decisions that we can only test in the long term whether they will lead to visible solutions.

3. Behaviour

Behaviour is complex and if you want to change it, you need to understand what moves people. The transition requires behavioural change. It is necessary to think in the interests of residents and entrepreneurs. This can be done for instance by making the transition concrete for people by making clear how they can contribute themselves. For behavioural change it is not only necessary to inform, but also to inspire, stimulate and make visible what we can do now.

4. Impact

This concerns the impact of sectors or activities on, for example, greenhouse gas emissions. Based on insight into the state of affairs, priorities can be determined, and efforts can be directed where the impact is greatest.



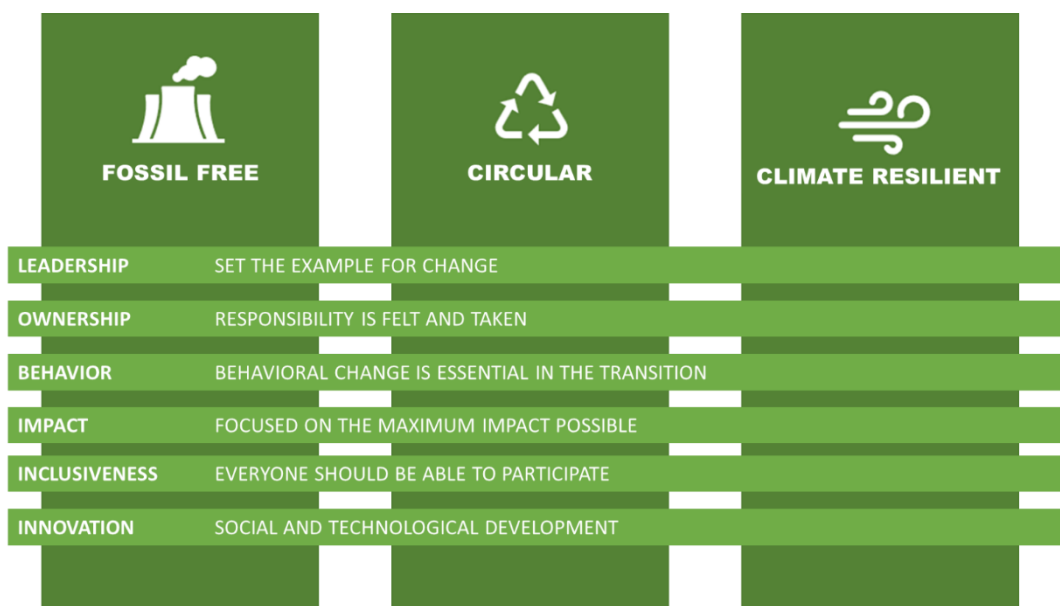


5. Inclusiveness

The energy transition and the necessary actions directly affect the daily lives of the inhabitants. Everyone must be able to participate in the transition to a climate-neutral 2030. The consequences of the transition to fossil free, circular and climate resilient cities are not the same for everyone. Some residents or neighbourhoods are more vulnerable or benefit less from the opportunities offered by the transition. Extra attention is needed for residents with low and middle incomes to ensure that there is a fair distribution of benefits and burdens. It is important that all residents can talk, think and act in the transition. Additional effort is required for this. The diversity of the cities must be visible in the followed approach.

6. Innovation

Tackling climate problems requires new knowledge and the upscaling of innovative processes, both technically and socially. This should be further encouraged and facilitated.



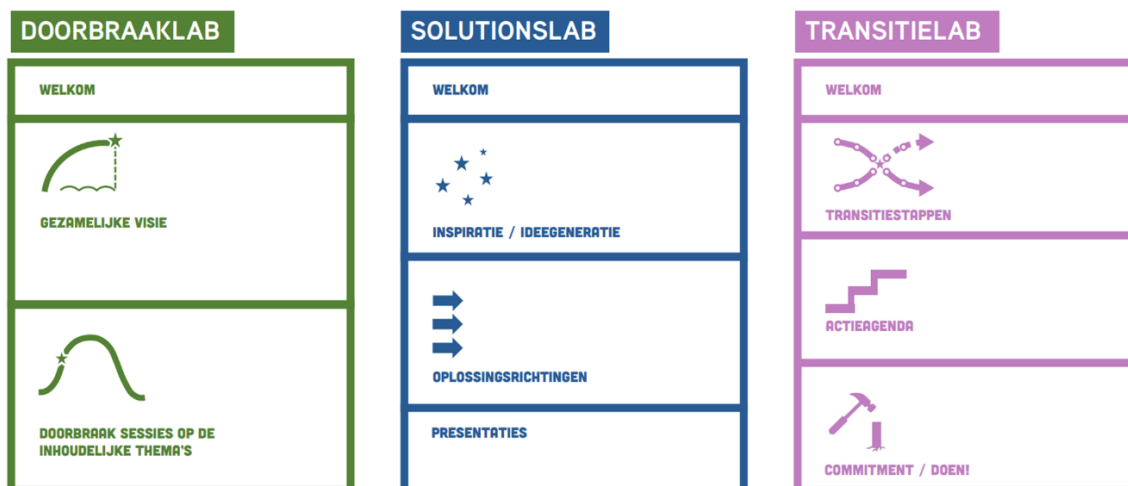


Process: dialogue with the cities

A Climate City Contract can only succeed if it is supported by society. That is why cooperation and co-creation is needed between residents, governments, companies, educational and knowledge institutions and other organizations in our two cities and in the region. A dialogue has been set up with the two cities for this purpose.

Breakthrough, Solutions and Transition Lab

As part of the dialogue with the city, three interactive stakeholder events, 'labs', have been organized in 2023: a Breakthrough Lab, a Solutions Lab and a Transition Lab.



The Breakthrough Lab in Helmond and Eindhoven had the goal to arrive at a joint vision on the climate challenge. Looking at where we as cities stand within the climate task and which breakthroughs can be achieved.

In the Solutionslab, more than 200 partners, residents and experts were asked to define possible solutions to realize the Climate Mission of Eindhoven and Helmond. Many new solutions have been devised, additional on what is already been done in the region in the field of climate measures. The solutions for the four city themes (vital inner city, liveable neighbourhoods, sustainable business and robust region) formed the basis for the missions (Action Plan) and necessary investments (Investment Plan) for the two cities that are explained later in this document.

The breakthroughs and solutions from the previous meetings were then taken to the Transition Lab. The missions were presented here, and the involved parties could indicate their commitment to the Climate City Contract and could sign up for one or more missions for the four urban themes. In this way, the transition to a fossil-free, circular and climate-proof Helmond and Eindhoven has been initiated together.

Climate conferences

In addition to the Labs, two Climate Conferences were organized in both cities, where input was collected from residents for the mission. During the 1st climate conference residents discussed on the future of their city with each other. Discussion took place in an 'open space' setting and residents jointly set to work with possible solutions, topics and suggestions around the various themes and questions. Together with the breakthroughs and solutions from the previous lab meetings, the suggestions of the residents have been taken to the Transition Lab. The second Climate Conference focused on how residents and experts can enforce each other in implementing initiatives, projects and ideas.



During the labs and climate conferences, a large number of parties indicated their willingness to commit to the mission. We used the input to arrive at the joint missions.

From dialogue to cooperation

This is the beginning. The start of a journey towards a fossil free, circular and climate resilient Eindhoven and Helmond. We convert the dialogue into a collaboration, in which coalitions of involved parties and residents are working on projects and actions within the city themes. Mission teams are formed for each city theme. The members of a mission team work intensively (together) on a mission. The teams include parties from governments, educational and knowledge institutions, the business community, social organizations and residents. Together, the mission teams will determine how and what needs to be done around a mission. The focus is on achieving the necessary breakthroughs and the required acceleration. In the appendix an overview is presented of the existing (what we already do) and new missions (what we will do) for the four city themes. In addition, the overview indicates who the lead partners are, what is needed, what the system changes/breakthroughs entail, what other parties we need and what the required investments are. This will be further elaborated to point out for which tasks cooperation is required with the national government and/or Europe.

The mission teams are supported and facilitated by both municipalities. This will be further elaborated. There is no blueprint or standard process for this. We know quite well what to do, but we know less better how to do it. The right approach must be found for the various missions.



1.5 Signatories

Commitments

We have gathered commitment from more than 70 organizations in the two cities. Parties have signed up to participate in one or more missions, both professional parties and social initiatives.

An overview of all missions, reactions and organizations involved can be found via the following link: <https://www.knaphe.nl/en>. As we move forward, more organizations join the missions and the number of initiatives grows along.

We refer to: <https://www.knaphe.nl/en/organisaties> for the parties which have expressed their commitment.

We, the undersigned, hereby commit to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030 and aim for at least 80% by 2035 with a maximum of 20% compensation. We agree on the joint ambition and commitments, as formulated in the Climate City Contract of Eindhoven and Helmond.

Date of signature	Name	Signature
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J.R.V.A. Dijsselbloem

Mayor of City of Eindhoven

Date of signature	Name	Signature
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P.J.M.G. Blanksma-van den Heuvel

Mayor of City of Helmond



Annex A1: Letter of support

Letter of support for the application of the cities of Eindhoven and Helmond for the 100 Climate Neutral and Smart Cities Mission Label from the Ministry of Housing and Spatial Planning, the Ministry of Climate and Green Growth, and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management.

