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Microsoft announces intent to build a new datacenter region in Finland, accelerating sustainable digital transformation and enabling large scale carbon-free district heating

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The datacenters are designed to operate with 100 percent emission-free energy and will supply heat for the cities of Espoo and Kauniainen, and the municipality of Kirkkonummi, in a unique collaboration with Fortum.

**HELSINKI — 17 March, 2022** — Microsoft today announced it intends to build a new datacenter region in Southern Finland. To support customer needs for high availability and resilience, the new datacenter region will feature Azure Availability Zones, unique physical locations equipped with independent power, networking, and cooling for additional tolerance to datacenter failures. It will join Microsoft's worldwide network of cloud computing infrastructure of more than 60 regions, over 280,000 kilometers of terrestrial and subsea fiber, and over 190 edge sites.

The investment is in response to Finland's growing demand for high performance, sustainable computing, and fast and reliable access to Microsoft services. The new datacenter region announced today will play a pivotal role in accelerating the digital transformation of the government, businesses, customers, and partners across Finland.

[According to a recent IDC study](#)

[\(https://news.microsoft.com/wp-content/uploads/prod/sites/442/2022/03/Microsoft\\_ISP\\_Finland\\_L2.pdf\)](https://news.microsoft.com/wp-content/uploads/prod/sites/442/2022/03/Microsoft_ISP_Finland_L2.pdf)\*, over the next four years, Microsoft, its ecosystem, and cloud customers together could generate more than €EUR17.2 billion in new revenue and will add over 11,000 skilled IT jobs to the Finnish economy. Once live, public sector institutions, enterprises, small businesses, and individuals will be able to benefit from Microsoft's world-class enterprise-grade security, privacy and compliance services with ultra-low data latency and the ability to store data in Finland.

Microsoft has more than 45,000 customers and 2,000 partner companies in Finland. Leading customers, including Nokia, Elisa, Fortum, S-Bank, Tietoevry, HUS, Vero and Valtori have all expressed their excitement about the potential of what this new Azure Region will bring to the Finnish people.

"The decision to invest in a datacenter region that also provides surplus heat to our cities and homes is a win-win. It will accelerate Finland's digital growth while making our energy system greener. I also hope that this collaboration can serve as a model to other countries and cities looking to achieve the double transformation of climate neutrality and digital competitiveness," says Sanna Marin, Prime Minister of Finland.

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"Developing solutions for global challenges together with partners is a strategic priority for Fortum, and we are proud to embark on this exceptional journey together with Microsoft. By tapping into waste heat from datacenters, we can provide clean heat for homes, businesses and public buildings in the capital area of Finland and reduce up to 400,000 tons of CO2 emissions annually. This is a significant and practical step for a cleaner world," says Markus Rauramo, President and CEO of Fortum.

"As one of Nokia's strategic partners, we are excited to see Microsoft make this investment in Finland. Microsoft's global datacenter network leverages Nokia's high-performance datacenter switching portfolio, while Nokia benefits from Microsoft's global network of cloud services to drive digital transformation across multiple industries. With this creative, energy-efficient solution we look forward to benefit from reduced latency and increased throughput while further enabling the green transition," says Alan Triggs, Chief Digital Officer, Nokia.

"In Finland, we strive for human-centered and safe digital public services that genuinely make people's lives and work easier. Microsoft's new environmentally friendly cloud computing facilities in Finland, combined with the previously announced Microsoft EU Data boundary solution, facilitate public administration organizations' efforts to make better use of cloud technologies," says Jarkko Levasma, Finnish Government CIO.

"Fingrid is responsible for secure electricity transmission across the grid in Finland. We are proud to be working with Microsoft to create opportunities for such a huge industrial project. In this demanding project, we have found a solution for our customers that guarantees a reliable supply of electricity to the datacenter," said Jukka Ruusunen, President and CEO of Fingrid.

In a unique collaboration with Fortum Corporation, the waste heat produced in the datacenters will be converted to district heating, serving Finland's second largest city Espoo and neighboring Kauniainen, and the municipality of Kirkkonummi, in what to date will be the world's largest scheme to recycle waste heat from data centers. District heating is a system for distributing heat generated either in a centralized location with fossil fuels, or as in Fortum's case, from increasingly emission-free, distributed heat sources. Heat is transferred to customers through a system of insulated pipes for residential and commercial heating requirements such as space and water heating. The waste heat recycled for district heating, along with other measures, will help the City of Espoo and the neighboring communities to reach their ambitious CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction targets, leading among other things to decommissioning of Fortum's last coal-fired heat unit in Espoo.

As one of the largest purchasers of renewable energy in the world, Microsoft will add to its portfolio with new renewable energy supply in Finland. The company is committed to executing power purchase agreements equivalent to 100% of its energy needs by 2025.

"Finland is at the forefront of digitalization and innovation, and the nation's world-class companies and forward-looking public sector organizations are leading in the digital transformation of their sectors," said Cindy Rose, President of Microsoft Western Europe. "We are incredibly proud of the novel way this datacenter will sustainably power Finnish digital transformation, while also heating Finnish homes and businesses and helping cities achieve their emissions targets. In this unique collaboration, Microsoft and Fortum combine their world leading expertise in cloud computing and sustainable energy solutions, transforming the design thinking of datacenters of the future."

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*\*IDC Info Snapshot, sponsored by Microsoft, The Microsoft Cloud Dividend Snapshot: Finland, Doc. #US48318521, October 2021*

