Messeforum Oy
Carbon neutral exhibition stand

Carbon footprint management report 2025

1. The carbon neutral exhibition stand concept

Messeforum Oy is a Finnish exhibition services expert and stand builder operating internationally which launched its carbon neutral stand in 2020. All stands designed and built by Messeforum have been carbon neutral since autumn 2021.

The carbon neutral exhibition stand concept is based on the definition of carbon neutrality in the ISO 14068 standard and complies with the carbon neutrality requirements set by the standard. Messeforum has prepared a carbon neutrality management plan as required by ISO 14068 and operates in accordance with this plan.

The carbon footprint of each exhibition stand we have built have been calculated using an automated calculator that utilizes up-to-date emission factors from the OpenCO2 emissions database via an API. OpenCO2net Oy has verified the operating principle of the calculator and the emission calculations for the exhibition stands. The calculation is based on the ISO 14067 standard for the carbon footprint of products.

We reduce the emissions of our stands in numerous ways ourselves and where we are unable to mitigate emissions alone without jeopardising our business, we use CO2esto's emissions cutting service to offset the remaining emissions reliably, with additionality.

2. Emissions

In 2025, Messeforum produced a total of 101 carbon neutral exhibition stands. Following our own emission reduction measures, their

- remaining verified total emissions were 232.10 tonnes CO2e.
  (in 2024 the total emissions were 257.24 tonnes CO2e)

➢ Our total emissions in 2025 were 25.10 tonnes lower than in the previous year.

- average emissions per built m2 of stand were 0.053 tonnes CO2e.
  - in 2024, the equivalent emissions / m2 were 0.045 tonnes CO2e.
  - at the start of our carbon neutral journey in 2021, the corresponding emissions figure was 0.073 tonnes of CO2e.

- The increase in emissions per square metre compared to the previous year is primarily due to the fact that the average stand size—and consequently the total number of square metres we built—was more than 1,300 square metres lower in 2025 than in the previous year. More limited customer budgets have been a significant contributing factor.

- However, the number of projects did not decrease at the same rate. As a result, emissions from travel and accommodation—which remain largely the same on a per-project basis regardless of stand size—are allocated across a smaller total exhibition area, leading to higher emissions per square metre.

The emissions calculation incorporates all sources of emissions in building our stands, including construction materials, furniture and equipment and their transport. The calculation also includes the electricity used on the stand, the travel and accommodation of Messeforum employees and subcontractors when building the stand, and the transport and processing of waste arising when dismantling stands.

3. What we are doing ourselves to reduce emissions

During 2025, we reduced emissions from our exhibition stand projects through a range of initiatives, including selecting low-emission materials wherever possible, optimizing material usage, and embracing circular economy practices. We have also engaged in ongoing discussions with our subcontractors to identify further opportunities for reducing emissions.

In addition, we increased recycling efforts, developed a lower-emission exhibition stand concept, introduced a new materials library, and automated our emissions calculation process. These improvements have further enhanced the accuracy of our emissions monitoring and enabled us to identify and implement emission reduction opportunities more effectively.

3.1 Materials Library

During the year, we introduced a highly detailed and comprehensive materials library that helps optimize the use of materials and furniture while identifying the most suitable and lowest-emission elements and furnishings for each project. The materials library has further improved the accuracy of our emissions calculations, as they are now based on more detailed information about the materials used and their respective weights. The library also provided a strong foundation for automating our emissions calculation process.

3.2 Automation of Emissions Calculations

In 2025, we completed a major emissions calculation automation project in collaboration with OpenCO2net Oy. The carbon footprint calculations for our exhibition stands now utilize the detailed data from our materials library, our design software based on modeling systems, and an automated calculation tool that accesses up-to-date emission factors from the OpenCO2 database via an API.

OpenCO2net Oy has reviewed both the operating principles of the calculator and the methodology used for our exhibition stand emissions calculations. The calculations are based on the ISO 14067 standard for carbon footprint assessment of products.

Thanks to automation, we are able to achieve even more accurate calculation results and gain deeper insight into how different choices affect emissions. This has also made it easier for us to make lower-emission decisions in our projects.

3.3 Engaging Our Subcontractors

We have continued to engage our subcontractors in our emissions reduction efforts. Throughout the year, dialogue and training on low-emission practices have taken place in connection with project work, and regular discussions and idea-sharing continue on an ongoing basis.

A major step forward was achieved in 2025 when one of our key subcontractors entered into a local agreement to recycle all wood-based waste generated from the construction of our exhibition stands that can no longer be reused in future stand-building projects. This includes materials such as timber, particle board, plywood, and wood laminates.

The waste wood is collected by Timber Pak, a partner of the Austrian company Fritz Egger GmbH. The collected material is then supplied to Egger for reuse in its manufacturing processes.

3.4 A New Lower-Emission Exhibition Stand Concept

For our shared exhibition pavilions, we have further developed the lower-emission pavilion concept that was introduced in 2024. The reuse of modular elements has become even more versatile and efficient.

During the year, our design for a fully recyclable exhibition stand helped secure a significant contract for the construction of Finland's national exhibition pavilions. The concept will be further refined together with the client during 2026 and implemented at a mutually agreed date.

3.5 New Materials

Throughout the year, we have explored and sought out new, lower-emission materials. We have also worked to reduce emissions arising from transportation by selecting lighter construction materials.

In Finland, we have always used laminated veneer lumber (LVL), an exceptionally durable and lightweight material that enables multiple reuse cycles in exhibition stand construction. During 2025, we also worked to increase its use in projects delivered by our international subcontractors around the world.

Our objective is to replace as much particle board as possible with laminated veneer lumber wherever it is practical and technically appropriate for the intended structure.

3.5. Use of materials

Flooring materials

Instead of stand carpeting, we have sought to use low-emission laminate as the flooring material whenever our customers are happy to do so. For customers, the choice usually comes down to price, as laminate is a more expensive material. However, we seek to steer our customers towards lower-emission choices. Laminate is a sustainable material and we have reused it as much as possible. For the structure below the laminate floor, we have made use of wall materials saved from previous projects. We also reuse the metal corner pieces used with laminate flooring.

If carpet is used as flooring and if the carpet can no longer be removed neatly to be used again, it is used to protect furniture and elements that will be reused in other projects in transit. In some projects, we have also used wind barrier board underneath raised floors as this is a completely wood-based material which can be reused. As it is light, its transport emissions are lower too.

Wall materials and graphics

A major change during the year has been our decision to instruct both our designers and partners to use fabric graphics instead of vinyl prints whenever possible. Unlike vinyl prints, fabric graphics can be reused in future exhibition stands for the same client. If reuse in exhibition projects is not possible, they can be recycled as textile waste.

In many cases, clients also choose to keep the fabric graphics after an event, giving them a second life as decorative elements in meeting rooms, offices, or production facilities.

For wall structures, we use reclaimed furniture laminate that has already been utilized elsewhere whenever the surface will be covered by graphics or fabrics. We also extend the life cycle of wall materials by reusing them in non-visible applications, such as structural supports within walls or in storage furniture and fixtures.

Furniture

We have always saved and stored our customers' furnishings for next time whenever this is appropriate and makes sense in terms of reducing emissions. When examining emissions, attention must be paid to the furniture's own emissions burden and the emissions arising from its transport and storage.

Storage areas

For all our stands, we have adopted the Octanorm system for kitchens and storage areas and their furnishing. Octanorm is made from 100% reusable aluminium and can be reused a practically unlimited number of times. In visible areas of our stands, Octanorm doesn't meet the demanding level of quality required by Messeforum or our customers for areas which are on show, but it works very well in places, such as storage areas, that can't be seen.

3.6. Stand electricity and lighting

Most European trade fair and exhibition centres offer electricity from renewable energy sources. We have always purchased renewable electricity for all our exhibition stands wherever this is available.

For stand lighting, we have used LED lighting which can be kept and used again several times in different projects. LED lighting uses less energy and so helps to minimise emissions.

3.7. Travel and transport

Working with our subcontractors, we have optimised transport and accommodation routes in terms of the logistics involved in travelling and transporting stands. Due to the nature of our work and our project schedules with rapid turnaround times, we are unable to avoid flying, but we aim to take direct routes whenever we do have to fly. For short routes between fairs, we have sought to also use non-air travel and especially public transport. We offset our travel costs as part of our carbon neutral exhibition stand concept. Additionally, we are members of the Lufthansa Group's offsetting programme,

in which the business benefit points collected from our flights are used to buy Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF).

3.8. Waste

After dismantling the stand, any waste is sorted in line with the exhibition centre's recycling guidelines. All the major exhibition centres have signed up to advanced sorting and recycling systems in line with sustainable development.

4. Offsetting remaining emissions

Some of the emissions arising from building exhibition stands are impossible to avoid or reduce if we are to be able to keep operating and offer high-quality stands to our customers. We offset all the emissions remaining after our own emission mitigation measures using CO2Esto's emissions cutting service.

CO2esto acquires and invalidates emission allowances from the EU Emissions Trading System, which is an officially monitored system. Buying and invalidating emission allowances from the Emissions Trading System genuinely reduces emissions, with additionality, as it reduces the total amount of emission allowances available in the market, meaning that another actor in Europe dependent on emission allowances will have to reduce their own emissions and invest in new, lower-emission technologies, for example.

We have calculated the amount of emissions to be offset using a carbon footprint calculator developed for the purpose. OpenCO2net Oy verifies the calculations and confirms that the remaining emissions are offset. Our verified calculations are awarded the OpenCO2.net Carbon Neutral label.

For more information about Messeforum's carbon neutral exhibition stands:
https://www.carbonneutralstand.eu/

This document was updated on 31.1.2026.
It will next be updated by 31.1.2027 at the latest.