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Guide for Companies in Europe: How to pledge with the Covenant of Companies, decarbonise your business and earn a Seal of Approval

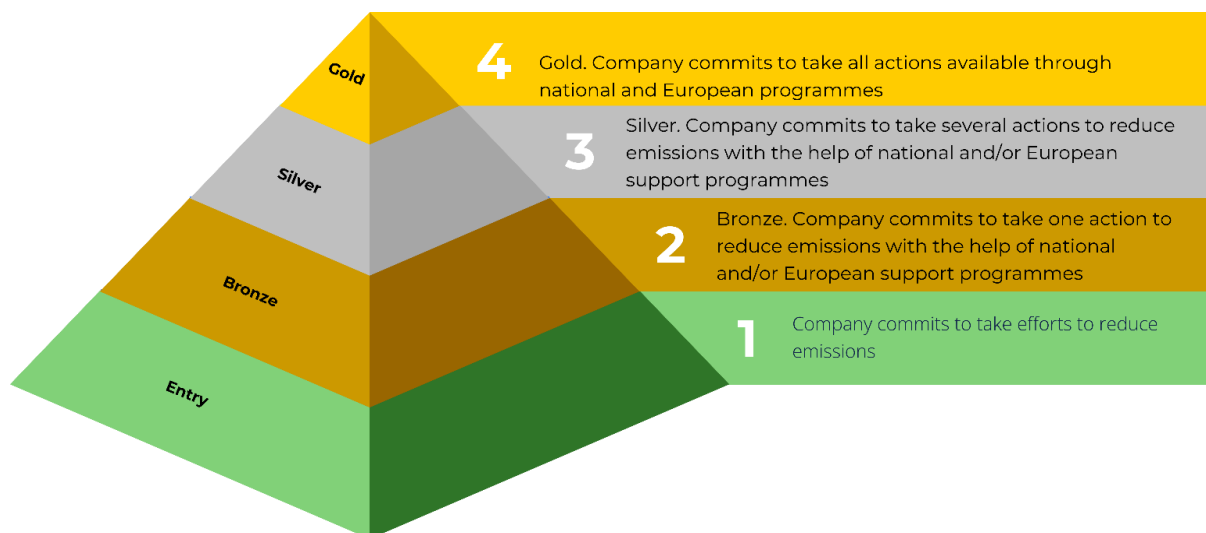
Introduction

The Covenant of Companies is a European Commission programme designed to support European companies – in particular those of a small and medium size – in reducing their energy bills by decarbonising their processes, products and services. In the long-term, we want to have significantly contributed to a climate-neutral and energy-independent Europe.

In making a pledge with our programme, you commit to taking action to decarbonise. In return, we offer you the knowledge and support you need to carry out these measures.

If you commit to finding ways to decarbonise, you automatically become a CCCE signatory and gain access to information and guidance to help decide which measure/s (if any) you wish to take.

And if you commit to take action, you will receive support in the form of online tools and one-to-one technical assistance to help achieve your target. Companies having taken one or more measures to decarbonise will be rewarded with a Bronze, Silver or Gold Seal, depending on the extent of their efforts and investment.



Who Can Pledge?

Companies of all sizes, from all sectors and from all EU member states are able to make a pledge with our programme.

Types of Pledge

There will be four different types of pledges that will lead to different types of support, different types of action and different levels of recognition.

Entry Level

Pledge:

- I/we, commit to take reasonable efforts to reduce my/our company's greenhouse gas emissions

Benefits:

- Access to guidance materials, expert courses and peer learning via the Futurium dedicated platform. The Futurium online environment will host a variety of discussion groups on topics relevant for clean energy transition.
- Guidance materials include: country overviews, public guides and e-tools analysis. In time, the materials will also include **all** practical guidance available as well as a matrix that links guidance and specific measures to national and EU support policies, programmes and actions.
- Masterclasses include: How to Prepare for an Energy Audit; the CCCE Recognition Scheme; How to get started with Solar Energy; Energy Efficiency: Low Hanging Fruit. These masterclasses will be available in English and in 7 other languages.
- Peer learning that is facilitated through moderated, on-line group discussions.
- Company name becomes a signatory of the CCCE and is featured (with logo if available) on the CCCE website.

Reporting:

- Within 12 months you will need to inform the CCCE of the measure/s you have decided to take. Depending on the ambition of your effort, you can move up a level and pledge to work towards the bronze, silver or gold seal. You also commit to provide feedback on your experience of the CCCE.
- Or, you decide not to take action, in which case you no longer have access to the peer learning, expert courses, or online group, and will be removed from the signatory register

Recognition:

- You will become an official signatory of the CCCE, and your name and logo will be listed on the CCCE website.

Bronze Level

Pledge:

I/we commit to taking at least one measure to reduce my/our company's greenhouse gas emissions (scope 1 and 2).

The measure is specified if it is already known;

The measure is considered valid if it **directly** contributes to a reduction in GHG emissions;

The measure is part of a local, regional, national or European scheme/support programme. The measure features on our menu of support available to businesses as part of the Fit for 55 policy implementation.

Benefits:

- Access to guidance materials
- Masterclasses (How to Prepare for an Energy Audit; the CCCE Recognition Scheme; How to get started with Solar Energy). These masterclasses will be available in English and in 7 other languages.
- Peer learning that is facilitated through moderated, on-line group discussions.
- Access to 1-2-1 technical assistance (in English and focus languages).
- Your name/logo on website.

Reporting:

- When working towards the Bronze Seal (one measure), you must have taken action within 12 months after pledging. However, reminders on status/progress every 6 months after 1-2-1 technical assistance has been concluded will be automatically sent by the helpdesk.
- Reporting will be carried out by submitting evidence of having implemented a measure. The proof of successful use of a support scheme is provided either by the beneficiary (you) or directly by the compliance organisation associated with the support scheme. In the case of the former, the measure is considered implemented when you can reasonably start reducing emissions. Proof includes: successful subsidy request; Invoice for work/installation delivered and Statement of completion of works
- To facilitate reporting, we will work with national/European support programmes to ensure that information on applicants' progress towards the Seals can be shared with the CCCE, so that the burden of reporting for SMEs is reduced.

Recognition:

- You will be awarded the Bronze Seal when you can show that you have taken one measure with support from a national/European programme and/or own investment.
- You will receive the seals in the form of certificates and social media assets and will be promoted by the CCCE using all available channels (social and traditional).

Silver Level

Pledge:

- I/we commit to taking several measures to reduce my/our company's greenhouse gas emissions (scope 1 and 2).

The measures are specified if they are already known;
The measures are considered valid if they **directly** contribute to a reduction in GHG emissions;
The measures are part of a local, regional, national or European scheme/support programme.
The measures feature on our menu of support available to businesses as part of the Fit for 55 policy implementation.

Benefits:

- Access to guidance materials.
- Masterclasses: 'How to monitor your GHG emissions continuously' and 'How to develop an action plan to reduce GHG emissions'
- Access to 1-2-1 technical assistance

- Peer learning that is facilitated through moderated, on-line group discussions.
- Company name/logo on website.

Reporting:

- When working towards the Silver Seal you must have implemented several measures within 24 months after pledging. However, reminders on status/progress every 6 months after 1-2-1 technical assistance has been concluded will be automatically sent by the helpdesk.
- Reporting will be carried out by submitting evidence of having implemented several measures. The proof of successful use of a support scheme is provided either by the beneficiary (you) or directly by the compliance organisation associated with the support scheme. In the case of the former, the measures are considered implemented when the company can reasonably start reducing emissions as a result of said measures. Proof includes: successful subsidy request; Invoice for work/installation delivered and Statement of completion of works
- Reporting will be carried out by submitting evidence of having taken measures. To facilitate reporting, we will work with national/European support programmes to see if information on applicants' progress towards the Seals can be shared with the CCCE, so that the burden of reporting for SMEs is reduced.

Recognition:

- You will be awarded the Silver Seal when you can show that you have taken several measures with support from a national/European programme and/or own investment.
- You will receive the seals in the form of certificates and social media assets and will be promoted by the CCCE using all available channels (social and traditional).

Gold Level

Pledge:

- I/we commit to taking ALL POSSIBLE measures that are available (in my sector, at European and national level) to reduce my/our company's GHG emissions (scope 1, 2 and scope 3 if scope 3 is more than 40% of combined emissions).

Benefits:

- Access to guidance materials.
- Masterclasses - these masterclasses will particularly focus on participants' individual cases, with a didactic model that mixes inputs from CCCE experts with mutual peer assists of participants. Each masterclass group exclusively consists of Gold seal candidates. They would include 'Your Action Plan to become Net Zero' and "How to evaluate suppliers on GHG emissions" for example.
- Peer learning that is facilitated through moderated, on-line group discussions.
- Access to 1-2-1 technical assistance (this would include developing a detailed Action Plan and would be available in English and in the focus languages).
- Company name/logo on website.

Reporting:

- If working towards the Gold Seal, you must have implemented **all** the possible measures within 36 months. However, reminders on status/progress every 6 months after 1-2-1 technical assistance has been concluded will be automatically sent by the helpdesk.
- Reporting will be carried out by submitting evidence of having taken measures and submitting proof that all possible measures have been implemented.

- Proof includes: successful subsidy request; Invoice for work/installation delivered and Statement of completion of works

Recognition:

- You will be awarded the Gold Seal if you can prove that you have taken all possible measures available to you via national and European support schemes for which you are eligible (for their sector).
- You will receive the seals in the form of certificates and social media assets and will be promoted by the CCCE using all available channels (social and traditional).

Special recognition will be awarded to **net zero companies**. Whilst the gold seal includes both 'maximum support' users as well **as net zero companies**, the latter would be referred to the SBTi and receive a platinum seal or a NET ZERO BUSINESS seal/kitemark.

We are looking for companies from across the EU but with a specific focus on Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Romania and Spain.

You can pledge at any stage of your decarbonisation journey – so should you already fulfil the criteria for one or more of the seals, we can award these to you before you pledge to go further.

How to Pledge

1. The process of submitting a Pledge starts on the official CCCE website via the page: https://covenant-of-companies.ec.europa.eu/get-involved/make-pledge_en. The page explains the possible levels of Pledging and the potential benefits/recognition associated with each. The button (“Submit your Pledge here!” or “Click and Commit!”) will take you to an external form.
2. The form allows you to select which level of Pledging you are committing to and will ask you to provide your business’ general information (name of person in charge/function/e-mail/company name/VAT or registration number/size/sector/country/website/social media handles). The form is available in multiple languages. You will be able to add a short text to describe your Pledge. This can be submitted in any language. You will also be able to submit your company’s logo, but this is not compulsory.
3. Once, submitted, you will receive an automatic response e-mail saying that your pledge is being evaluated and that you will hear back from us soon:
 - Non-approved Pledgers will receive an e-mail from the CCCE Helpdesk explaining the decision.
 - Approved pledgers will receive an e-mail from the CCCE Helpdesk confirming acceptance of their pledge. Their details will be published on the “Our Community” page of the CCCE: https://covenant-of-companies.ec.europa.eu/our-community_en. They will be identified with the label “committed”.
4. As a Pledger, you will then be invited to join the CCCE Futurium group and the CCCE Newsletter mailing list. In Futurium, pledgers can interact with each other, with the Steering Committee and with the Secretariat. You will also be given access to the full guidance documents, masterclasses and Technical Assistance depending on your level of ambition. Futurium will also become the place where you can deliver upon the reporting requirements associated with your pledges. An EUsurvey form will be accessible from Futurium for reporting purposes.

EUROPEAN
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FOR CLIMATE AND ENERGY

If the reporting shows your ability to achieve your pledge, you will be invited by the CCCE Helpdesk to submit a new pledge or will be granted a Bronze/Silver/Gold Seal depending on the level of your achievement. Your entry on the website will be updated accordingly.



You are free to opt-out from the Covenant any time.

The diagram below presents a high-level overview of the steps that you, a potential CCCE pledger, can follow.

