

2019

Environmental indicators

2018 data



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Our environmental
Management System

We stand tall for the environment!

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) are fully committed to implementing the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These efforts are perfectly in line with a European scenario where citizens become progressively more aware of environmental topics and feel the urgency for real action. Every year at the Committees, we strive to set the bar higher for ourselves. It means working towards more sustainable management of the institutions and having the least possible impact on the environment, and this is exactly what we have achieved thanks to our environmental management system (EMAS).

Our thanks to both our Members and staff for their continuous efforts!

June 2019



Gianluca Brunetti
EESC Secretary-General



Jiří Buriánek
CoR Secretary-General

2018 Main Results



Electricity

↘ **3%** in 2018 ↘ **30%** since 2009



Gas

↗ **5%** in 2018 ↘ **49%** since 2009



Water

↗ **10%** in 2018 ↘ **29%** since 2009



Paper

↘ **17%** in 2018 ↘ **54%** since 2009



Office Waste

↗ **3%** in 2018 ↘ **55%** since 2010













Carbon footprint

15.076 tonnes of CO₂ equivalent

= emissions of **1700** EU citizens

Highlights of 2018

-  Energy metres installed in energy-intensive spots to better monitor their consumption
-  New heating system in TRE (gas replaces electricity)
-  Important paper savings made during the CoR plenary sessions and major meetings by using electronic supporting documents
-  Progressive replacement of personal printers with shared printers
-  Service bikes available in the BvS and TRE buildings
-  Food donation is possible for any type of food leftovers (and not only for sandwiches)
-  Community gardens installed on the JDE and B68 terraces
-  Reusable cups and jugs replaced single-use plastics at the end-of-year staff party
-  European week for waste reduction organised in November with the theme: “Let’s detox!”
-  Staff conference in June on “Plastics and micro-plastics”



Energy

Heating and cooling more than 110 000 m² of office including 11 conference rooms, 3 reception halls, training rooms, canteens and IT server rooms in a sustainable way is a big challenge. The outstanding results recorded in the past are showing signs of slow down slightly. Big investments are needed to further improve the energy performance of the buildings. Engineers have the double challenge of fine-tuning energy efficiency measures while maintaining the comfort level for occupants in every season.



Electricity

↘ **3%** in 2018

↘ **30%** since 2009



Gas

↗ **5%** in 2018

↘ **49%** since 2009

New in 2018

- Energy metres were installed in energy-intensive spots to better monitor their consumption
- The electric heating system in the TRE building was replaced with a new gas system, which explains the increase in gas consumption and the savings in electricity consumption
- “Comfort timeslots” in offices and conference rooms were fine-tuned in order to offer heating or cooling services only when they are occupied

To come

- A feasibility study into extra photovoltaic panels on the JDE rooftop
- The JDE green roofs will be renovated for improved insulation and waterproofing

Clean energy supply

- Purchase of 100 % green electricity
- Photovoltaic panels produce 12 MWh annually (150 m² on the JDE and B68 rooftops)



Water



Water is used mainly in kitchens, toilets, cleaning, humidifying air and watering indoor plants and outside gardens. The challenge is not only to continuously reduce our consumption but also to guarantee that the quality is checked regularly in order to enable safe drinking and offer a good alternative to plastic bottles.



Water consumption

↗ **10%** in 2018 ↘ **29%** since 2009

What happened in 2018?

- Renovation works in the JDE entrance hall generated significant water needs
- Water metres were installed in specific spots to monitor water consumption
- High visibility and usage of the three fountains offering cold filtered tap water. The increase in water consumption is largely compensated for by the waste reduction linked to plastic bottles.



Additional water fountains will be installed to offer an alternative to bottled water for visitors and staff

To come

- The current JDE green roofs are to be replaced with similar ones that don't require irrigation
- Rainwater collection for indoor plants

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

6 CLEAN WATER
AND SANITATION





Paper

In administrative organisations like ours, paper is an essential tool used by staff and members. Producing and printing paper, managing its waste... it all requires the use of many natural resources and has a significant impact on the environment. With the desire to act as modern and eco-friendly institutions, the EESC and CoR are gradually moving towards an ever-more rational use of paper.



Paper for office printing

↓ **17%** in 2018 ↓ **54%** since 2009

14 sheets/day/person in 2018 (30 in 2009)

Our achievements in reducing paper consumption

- Progressive replacement of personal printers with shared printers
- Electronic versions of the documents are available during CoR plenary sessions and important members' meetings
- Digitalisation of numerous paper workflows. For example forms related to Human Resources operations or reimbursement of Members expenses

To come

- Electronic invoicing will be possible for contractors

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



15 LIFE
ON LAND



100%

The A4 paper purchased is “100 % recycled and eco-labelled”

Green Public Procurement



By using their purchasing power to choose environmentally friendly goods, services and works, public authorities can make an important contribution in terms of greener consumption and production and in terms of health protection.

Our achievements in green public procurement

100% of the key contracts contain strict environmental requirements.

Most significant contracts



Every year, more than 10 public procurement procedures are revised to include environmental requirements such as a choice of eco-friendly materials, respect for the rules on waste management and the storage of dangerous products and reduced energy consumption of devices, etc.

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION





Sustainable Food

Good Food Label

The Committees' canteen is a pioneer in terms of sustainable food. With its practices related to food waste, food donation and sustainable products, the canteen has been awarded the Good Food label since 2017. Since May 2019 it has been the first plastic-free canteen at the EU institutions.

In 2018



78%
of the products
on the menu are
seasonal



9%
of the food sold
is organic



25%
of the main dishes
and sandwiches sold
are vegetarian



6%
of the food sold is
from fair trade



26%
of fish on the menu
is certified MSC
(sustainable fisheries)



Thursday Veggie Days
have been organised
since 2014

To come

- Upgrading the level of our “Good food” label to 3 forks (we currently have 2 forks)



Many vegetarian options are offered at the canteen: a vegetarian warm dish, a vegetarian sandwich, the salad bar, etc. and even more options every “Thursday Veggie Day”.

Sustainable Food



Food waste is very limited in the canteen but is a major issue during events, due to many unpredictable circumstances. However, some measures can be taken to reduce food waste and avoid over-production.

Food Waste

Amount of food waste compared to food produced



< 3% in the canteen



15-20% during events

This rate is high and difficult to reduce. For this reason, food leftovers are donated to charities.

How do we reduce food waste?

- Preserving products that have not been consumed under strict conditions and reusing them
- Purchasing and managing stocks more efficiently
- Monitoring waste to assess developments more effectively
- Ensuring better communication between organisers and caterers



Food Donation in 2018

2.200 sandwiches

780 kg of food

Food Donation

Combating food waste has social, environmental and economic dimensions. The Committees are proud to be pioneers with their innovative system of food donation to charities since 2016. The beneficiaries are people living in Brussels who endure extreme poverty (homeless people and migrants). Originally the project was restricted to sandwiches only, however in 2018 other kinds of food (780 kg) were donated. Cargo-bike riders deliver the food donation to the charity.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

2 ZERO HUNGER



3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



14 LIFE BELOW WATER



15 LIFE ON LAND





Green Events

Every year, the Committees organise conferences and events hosting more than 20 000 visitors. Many of these events focus on sustainability-related issues in Europe and worldwide. It is therefore of tremendous importance to “walk the talk” by reducing any type of waste and offering sustainable food.

Our achievements in improving green events

- Food leftovers are donated to a charity
- Vegetarian or organic food can be ordered at buffets
- Promotional gadgets are limited and made with eco-friendly materials
- No overconsumption of paper brochures
- Plastic badges are taken back after conferences



Food donation delivered by bike to a charity

To come

- A new “Green events guide” will be prepared in 2019 to help event organisers

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



Reducing single-use plastics during events:

- By using porcelain cups and glasses, 40 000 plastic cups are saved per year
- Progressive elimination of plastic water bottles, replaced by water jugs and water fountains
- In 2018, the end-of-year staff party was organised with reusable eco-cups and water jugs

Mobility



1 500 members of staff commute to Brussels and 700 Committee members regularly travel to Brussels from all over Europe. Mobility is the biggest challenge in terms of CO₂ emissions, air quality and quality of life. The EESC and CoR have an active policy to encourage staff to use more environmentally friendly means of transport: public transport, biking, walking and car-pooling.



Staff using eco-friendly forms of transport

79% (CoR)

69% (EESC)

Our achievement in promoting soft mobility

- Promotional events such as Friday Bike/Walk Day or the Step Challenge
- A financial contribution to the cost of public transport season tickets
- Teleworking and flexible working hours to reduce traffic congestion at peak times
- More parking places for car-pooling and motorbikes
- Charging facilities for e-bikes and e-cars
- Increased possibilities for organising videoconferences and webstreaming events

To come

- Awareness-raising campaign on the impact of flights on CO₂ emissions.



Service bikes are available in the BvS and B68 car parks. 10 service bikes with cloakrooms, showers and lockers for cyclists

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES





Waste

With 217 tons of waste produced in 2018, the first challenge is to find ways to reduce it. The second is to implement a suitable sorting system and manage the different types of waste in line with complex but necessary legislation. From old IT devices, products used in the print shop, and medical products to organic waste from the kitchen, there are a lot of different types of waste!



Waste generated (in the offices + kitchen)

↗ **3%** in 2018*

↘ **55%** since 2010

* The waste increase in 2018 is mainly due to the renovation works in the JDE building

Our achievements in reducing waste

- Digitalisation has led to a significant reduction in paper waste
- Obsolete IT equipment and furniture are donated to a charity
- Some of the organic waste from the canteen is converted into biogas (14 tons in 2018)

Our achievements in waste sorting

- Strict management of hazardous waste by the relevant departments and contractors
- Regular tests of sorting quality to identify possible improvements
- Raising staff awareness by organising a conference on built-in obsolescence

For the future

- Improve waste sorting signage for visitors
- Install “Recycling corners” in every building, offering treatment solutions for used batteries, pens and markers, corks, old posters, etc.
- Waste sorting rules are properly applied in office areas occupied by staff. However, improvements are necessary in areas with lots of visitors coming from all over Europe, who are used to different sorting rules



Less Plastic in the future

The EU plastic strategy is already a reality in our buildings.

- Plastic-free canteen and cafeterias: by the end of 2019, all single-use plastic will be banned in favour of reusable supplies (porcelain) or eco-friendly material (paper, cardboard bio-plastics)
- Buffets during events: water is served in jugs and reusable glasses



Plastic-free canteen offering alternative solutions to all single-use plastics (Inauguration, May 2019)

Incentive

A EUR 0.05 reduction is offered if you bring your own cup to the cafeteria

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION





Biodiversity

The dramatic loss of biodiversity and degradation of ecosystems is occurring everywhere in the world. The Committees offer various areas with improved biodiversity protection.



The Committees
occupy a surface area of

13.500 m²

nearly **28%**
is made up of green
roofs and gardens

Our achievements in supporting biodiversity

- Two beehives have been installed on the JDE roof since 2012
- Green areas are maintained without chemical pesticides or fertilisers
- 1 800 m² of green roofs: these improve thermal and sound insulation while reducing air pollution and CO₂ emissions. They limit the urban heat island effect. They also filter and regulate the flow of rainwater.
- Honey-yielding plants were selected to grow on the green roofs
- Organic food is available at the canteen and cafeterias



A community garden was created in 2018: five raised garden beds were installed on the terraces of the JDE and B68 canteens. Aromatics, vegetables, fruits and flowers are grown without pesticides and chemical fertilisers. A nice way to promote and support urban farming.

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS

15
LIFE
ON LAND



Carbon Inventory

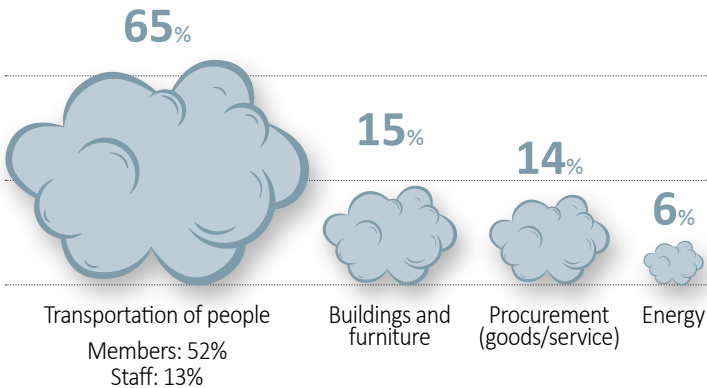


The carbon inventory is a tool for calculating an organisation's environmental impact in terms of CO₂ emission equivalent. It gives a clear picture of the activities that contribute most to the Committees' CO₂ emissions. Unsurprisingly, transport of people ranks at the top. The challenge is now to find measures to reduce CO₂ emissions while maintaining the quality of the services offered to staff and members.



2018
15.076 tonnes
of CO₂ equivalent

= emissions
of **1700** EU
citizens



For the future

- Discussion with the other EU institutions about offsetting CO₂ emissions.

SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS



Our Environmental Management System

The EESC and CoR have been EMAS- and ISO 14 001-registered since 2011. These certifications guarantee that we assess, manage and continuously improve on our environmental performance.

The committees

110.000 m²
of buildings
(total surface area including
grounds and basement)

700 Committee
members
350 at the EESC
and 350 at the CoR

1.500 Staff
members

20.000
Visitors per year



The Environmental Management System

1	EMAS team in the Infrastructure unit – Directorate for Logistics
12	Members of the EMAS Steering Committee (secretaries-general, directors, staff representatives)
1	Annual environmental audit (Vincotte)
2	Environmental certifications: EMAS and ISO 14001



The network of 80 EMAS contact people (representing a directorate or a unit) helps with disseminating EMAS information and collecting suggestions from staff.



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