

MEASURES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EVENTS



ORGANISING SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

This concept was created as part of the “Unlocking the Power of Data Initiative”¹. The measures and recommendations are based on various existing federal regulations and recommendations.

The paper was prepared together with various stakeholders within and outside the federal administration.

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1. CO₂-REDUCTION

Reducing CO₂ has a direct impact on the following goal:



For each event firstly consider how it would be possible to reduce the carbon footprint. How can elements be replaced, for instance? Can some parts be omitted completely? This applies in particular to gadgets, giveaways and single-use exhibits.

MEASURES

- M.1** We reduce emissions with specific targets in the project plan and focus on this when planning the event.
- M.2** We commission a company to evaluate the event's CO₂ emissions as well as additional energy saving opportunities.
- M.3** After the event, we calculate and then financially compensate for the CO₂ emissions.
- M.4** We actively communicate the name of the company and the projects financed by the compensation payment before, during and after the event.⁷

⁶ Further information on this topic can be found at the following link:
www.bafu.admin.ch/bafu/en/home/topics/climate/info-specialists/reduction-measures/compensation.html

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2. MOBILITY

Mobility has a direct impact on the following SDGs:



Many means of transport generate high quantities of CO₂ emissions. This is a major issue which we intend to tackle with the following actions and recommendations:

MEASURES

- M.5** When looking for a suitable conference venue, we highly prioritise good access to public transport, short distances to transport infrastructure (railway stations, etc.) and important transport hubs.
- M.6** We will check whether public transport can be used free of charge for participants. This is possible in some cities in Switzerland.
- M.7** We organise partnerships with a national or local transport company so that participants can use public transport cheaply even outside the locality. The Swiss Travel Pass for participants travelling from abroad can support this measure.
- M.8** We proactively communicate how public transport can be used (free of charge). This will be done as part of the preparations by email and/or via the event page.
- M.9** We do not use private buses when changing locations and rely on public transport.
- M.10** We encourage the use of bicycles available at the venue.
- M.11** As the organiser, we offset the participants' CO₂ emissions incurred by travel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R.1** We recommend that participants travel by train where possible.⁹ Those arriving by plane should continue their journey by public transport after arriving in Switzerland.
- R.2** We recommend that participants offset their CO₂ emissions.
- R.3** We recommend that participants use public transport during their stay.
- R.4** We encourage participants to choose a hotel or accommodation that is either close to the venue or located within the public transport network. Labels such as Swisstainable¹⁰ from Switzerland Tourism can be used for guidance.

⁸ www.sbb.ch/en/leisure-holidays/inspiration/international-guests/swiss-travel-pass.html

⁹ As regards participants from the Swiss administration, for any destination that can be reached in less than six hours (door-to-door), the journey must be made by train. Further information can be found here: www.admin.ch/gov/de/start/dokumentation/medienmitteilung-gen.msg-id-79417.html (in German, French and Italian only)

¹⁰ www.myswitzerland.com/en-ch/planning/about-switzerland/sustainability

3. CATERING

Catering has a direct impact on the following goals:



MEASURES

- M.12** We only offer vegetarian buffets.
- M.13** Plant products are sustainable, seasonal and of organic and/or regional origin. In general, organically produced food always has a smaller carbon footprint.
- M.14** We label animal products (eggs, milk, etc.) and these are produced regionally and organically.
- M.15** We label the origin of the food.
- M.16** We only use fair trade food and drinks.
- M.17** We provide tap water.
- M.18** We provide water fountains.
- M.19** We only provide regional drinks, especially beer and wine.

3. CATERING

FOODWASTE

Foodwaste has a direct impact on the following goals:



MEASURES

- M.20** Buffets can be provided with individually packaged food in sustainable containers. (For example: Main courses with filling side dishes already pre-packed in “Weck” glass jars).
- M.21** We check dietary requirements and allergies in advance and give participants a choice.
- M.22** We order catering for a maximum of 80% of participants registered for on-site attendance.
- M.23** We offer participants the option of taking unpacked food home in their own containers.
- M.24** After the event, we offer to pass on unpacked food to third parties. Due to hygiene regulations (HACCP) this is not possible for all dishes, but this point must be actively discussed with the catering provider to evaluate the options available (as seen by the example of the canton of Geneva).
- M.25** Our tableware and tablecloths are reusable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R.5** We replace bottled mineral water with tap water in the meeting rooms
- R.6** We encourage participants to bring their own drinking bottle as tap water is drinkable everywhere in Switzerland.
- R.7** We ensure that the caterer provides water dispensers in key areas so everyone can refill their own bottle.
- R.8** We provide organic fair-trade coffee and sustainably produced tea.
- R.9** We refrain from providing any takeaway coffee containers or cutlery.
- R.10** For hot drinks, we do not use individual portions for condiments such as cream, milk & sugar.

¹¹ Further information: www.wirtepatent.ch/de/wissen/haccp-konzept-hygienekonzept-in-der-gastronomie-127.html (in German only)

¹² www.geneve.ch/en/themes/sustainable-development/what-action-does-municipality-take/engagements-economie/feed-city-program/fostering-transition-towards-sustainable-food/reducing-food-waste

4. LOGISTICS

PAPER & DOCUMENTS

These have a direct impact on the following SDG:



MEASURES

- M.26** We have reduced the size of the printed programme to a minimum (by excluding abstracts and biographies) and provide an accessible electronic programme for persons with disabilities.
- M.27** For the programme that is still printed, we ensure that recycled paper is used.
- M.28** Prior to and during the event, we upload all documents onto the fully-accessible website for participants to download onto a portable device.
- M.29** We restrict the use of notepads and pens.
- M.30** We provide the material either in spoken format or in Braille for participants with visual impairments.

4. LOGISTICS

STANDS AND EXHIBITIONS

Stands and exhibitions have a direct impact on the following SDGs:



RECOMMENDATIONS

- R.11 We encourage exhibitors to use recycled and recyclable materials.
- R.12 We encourage exhibitors to reuse stands.
- R.13 We encourage exhibitors to avoid or at least minimise the use of promotional items such as bags (or if necessary, make them from fair-trade cotton) and other gifts.
- R.14 We encourage exhibitors to avoid packaging.
- R.15 We encourage exhibitors to bring only the required amount of printed materials.
- R.16 We encourage exhibitors to reuse packaging material for the stand.
- R.17 We encourage exhibitors to avoid stands that use a lot of energy and unnecessary lighting.
- R.18 We encourage exhibitors to take energy-saving measures.

4. LOGISTICS

WASTE MANAGEMENT

Waste management has a direct impact on the following SDGs:



MEASURES

- M.31** We avoid generating too much waste, especially single-use plastics such as cups and PET bottles.
- M.32** We do not produce any special clothing for the event.
- M.33** We collect unused lanyards at the end of the event and reuse them at another event.
- M.34** We will check whether it is necessary to produce name tags and if so whether they should be recyclable.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R.19** We encourage participants to separate waste (PET, paper, other waste) and indicate this at the venue.

ENERGY

Energy has a direct impact on the following SDGs:



MEASURES

- M.35** We use only energy from hydro or solar sources at the venues (generally only green electricity) and from local and regional suppliers where possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R.20** We encourage all participants to limit electricity consumption by turning off any unused electrical appliances. This is especially important for hybrid and virtual events.

5. SOCIAL ASPECTS

CHOICE OF PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

Employment has a direct impact on the following SDGs:



MEASURES

- M.36** When awarding contracts to partner companies, we ensure the three sustainability dimensions are taken into account and that this is of central importance when assessing the awarding of the contracts. This can be done, for example, based on sustainability reports from partner companies. This should be applied to products from home and abroad.
- M.37** Various group activities will also be offered as part of the event, e.g., yoga, jogging and guided meditations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- E.21** We encourage partner companies to apply eco-friendly procedures when implementing the contract
- E.22** We encourage partner companies to employ staff in a socially responsible manner, avoiding any discrimination e.g., on the basis of gender, origin or disability (this is in line with the Swiss Confederation's GTCs).¹³
- E.23** We recommend that subcontractors who do not have their own sustainability strategy should prepare one.

¹³ For further information: www.bkb.admin.ch/bkb/de/home/themen/agb.html (in German, French and Italian only)

5. SOCIAL ASPECTS

ACCESSIBILITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Accessibility has a direct impact on the following SDGs:



MEASURES

- M.38** We ensure that all premises and the event's online platform are accessible for people with disabilities.
- M.39** We ensure that all catering and seating is accessible. The same applies to coffee breaks.
- M.40** We ensure that the event is subtitled live.
- M.41** We ensure that the (international) event is interpreted into international sign language.
- M.42** We ensure reserved seating with signage for persons with disabilities and their personal assistants/interpreters.
- M.43** We ensure that the measures taken are discussed in advance with the involved stakeholders (venue, partner organisations, speakers, etc.) and organisations representing people with disabilities.
- M.44** We ensure that the content is presented in a way that can be understood by all participants. This can be ensured by simultaneous interpretation into different languages.

5. SOCIAL ASPECTS

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Equal opportunities for all genders has a direct impact on the following SDGs:



MEASURES

- M.45** We ensure that there is a balance of the genders among speakers and moderators. Each gender should be represented at least 40%.¹⁴
- M.46** We take diversity into account when selecting juries as well as decision-making and planning committees.
- M.47** We take linguistic diversity into account if the event covers several language regions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- R.24** We ensure that there is a balance of the genders among the number of participants allowed on-site.
- R.25** We provide toilets that are accessible for persons with disabilities as well as single-sex and unisex toilets.

GEOGRAPHICAL DIVERSITY

Geographical diversity has a direct impact on the following goal:



MEASURES

- M.48** For international events, we ensure that all UN regions (on-site and online) are represented. The limited on-site places should also be reserved in particular for representatives of developing and least developed countries.
- M.49** For events of national importance, we ensure that the events can be accessed from all parts of the country. For recurring events, (where appropriate) different parts of the country and language regions should be considered as venues.

¹⁴ Further information can be found here: www.ebg.admin.ch/ebg/de/home/themen/recht/gleichstellungsstrategie2030/paneletparite.html (in German, French and Italian only)

6. ECONOMY

Economic aspects have a direct impact on the following SDGs:



RECOMMENDATIONS

- R.26** The event boosts the economy at the venue and in Switzerland. This way, hotels, local restaurants, museums, public transport, small businesses, service providers and shops can benefit as well.
- R.27** In the context of a tender, we give higher weighting to establishments (e.g., hotels and restaurants) with sustainability labels, (e.g., with the Swisstainable label) as an award criterion. This should already be noted in the invitation to tender.¹⁵
- R.28** If a fringe programme is organised, we will work together with local tourism organisations.
- R.29** The event creates short-term jobs for students and professionals.

¹⁵ Federal procurements must be in accordance with the Federal Act on Public Procurement (PPA) (www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/oc/2020/126/de) and the Ordinance on Public Procurement (OMP) (www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/oc/2020/127/de) (in German, French and Italian only)

7. KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

The event has a direct impact on the following SDGs:



MEASURES

- M.50** We record the entire event and it can also be followed on a time-delayed basis on the corresponding online platform. In this way we guarantee accessibility, visibility and a certain level of longevity in terms of content being available to everyone for longer.
- M.51** The recorded plenary sessions are available with translations in international sign language as well as subtitles which we provide.
- M.52** We ensure that partnerships built and developed at the event are maintained afterwards.
- M.53** We make the knowledge transfer and experience shared available to all in the form of a report, video summaries, etc.
- M.54** We will produce a final event report which will be accessible to all interested parties so that lessons can be learned from the experience.