



“How to Make your Event more Sustainable”

**Preparatory meeting of European Day
Representation of the European Commission in
Luxembourg,
25.02.26**



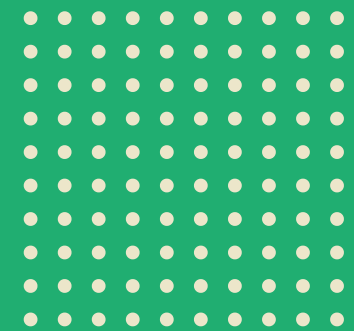
***Key previews from the “Allez L’Éco” Project by Tiziana
Tamborrini
Gaialux and EU Climate Pact Ambassador***

***30th anniversary of Europe Day celebrations in Luxembourg, Wiltz
Castle 10 May, Luxembourg***



**Co-funded by
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**Erasmus+ KA210 youth
project**





SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

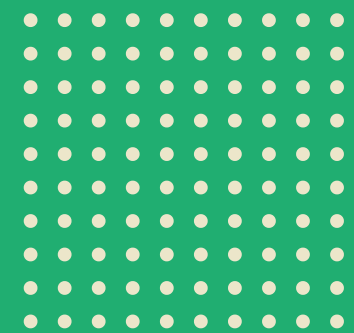
Allez L'Éco Project

Allez l'Éco aims to create innovative training pathways and tangible opportunities for young people and youth workers, enhancing skills related to environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and digital transition.



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WHY SHOULD EVENTS BE MORE SUSTAINABLE ?



- Used for minutes. Harmful for years.
- Events compress days of consumption into just a few hours, generating large amounts of waste. What is thrown away or left unused becomes an environmental cost – often invisible.
- A sustainable event must consider these hidden impacts.

THE HIDDEN COSTS OF EVENTS



- Average conference participant: generates about 1.89 kg of waste per day, much of it food and packaging.
- A medium-sized event with 1,000 people can produce about 1,900 kg of waste in a single day.
- Waste is only one part of an event's impact — travel (especially air travel) is widely recognised to contribute a large share of greenhouse gas emissions for international events.



PLANNING SUSTAINABLE EVENTS

PLAN

- Sustainability goals from the start (waste, energy, travel, inclusion)
- Effective communication on the sustainability goals.


VENUE & SUPPLIERS

- Accessible venues, public transport
- Energy-efficient systems & recycling
- Responsible suppliers & caterers

TRAVEL & CATERING

- Hybrid/online options
- Public transport, cycling, car-sharing
- Local, seasonal, plant-based food
- Tap water, accurate portions

WASTE & ENGAGEMENT

- No single-use items
 - Reusable & digital alternatives
 - Donation / composting
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WASTE MANAGEMENT TIPS

Applying the 5Rs:

Recycling helps reduce landfill and recover materials, and we've gotten better at separating waste. But it's not enough to make events truly sustainable:

✓ **Rethink: Design the event to prevent waste from the start.**

- Digital tickets and programs (QR codes)
- Smart food planning (Plan realistic portions to avoid leftovers – short chain)
- Refillable water stations
- Durable, modular materials

✓ **Refuse & Reduce: Avoid unnecessary items before they enter the system.**

- No single-use plastics
- Remove unnecessary giveaways
- Limit packaging and decorations
- Encourage attendees to bring personal items (bottles, bags, etc.).

WASTE MANAGEMENT TIPS

- ✓ **Reuse: Extend the life of materials.**
 - Reusable cups with deposit systems
 - Modular stands and décor
 - Encourage participants to bring bottles

Applying the 5Rs:

- ✓ **Repair: Fix instead of discard.**
 - Maintain furniture and equipment
 - Repair banners and installations
- ✓ **Recycle (Last Step): Recover materials properly.**
 - Clearly labeled bins
 - Composting systems
 - Volunteers guiding waste separation

WASTE

MANAGEMENT

BE INNOVATIVE



1. Interactive Waste Stations

- Gamify recycling: participants earn points for correctly sorting waste.
- Digital screens show real-time waste reduction progress.



2. Eco-friendly Event Materials

- Use augmented reality (AR) for programs instead of printed booklets.
- QR codes on badges linking to session materials.
- Reusing and upcycling combined with social inclusion and innovation ((e.g., wooden items crafted by local associations working with vulnerable people).



3. Green Transportation Incentives

- Offer discounts or perks for attendees who use public transport, bikes, or car-sharing.
- Use a “carbon calculator” app for participants to track travel impact.

WASTE

MANAGEMENT

BE INNOVATIVE

- ✓ **4. Low-impact Catering**
 - Zero-waste menus with local, seasonal ingredients.
 - “Surprise box” portions to reduce leftovers.
 - Partner with local charities for leftover food donations.



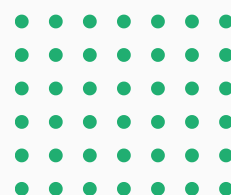
5. Eco-design Challenges

- Invite participants to co-create sustainable solutions during the event (e.g., packaging redesign, low-energy prototypes).
- Display results in an “innovation gallery” at the venue.



6. Green Engagement & Storytelling

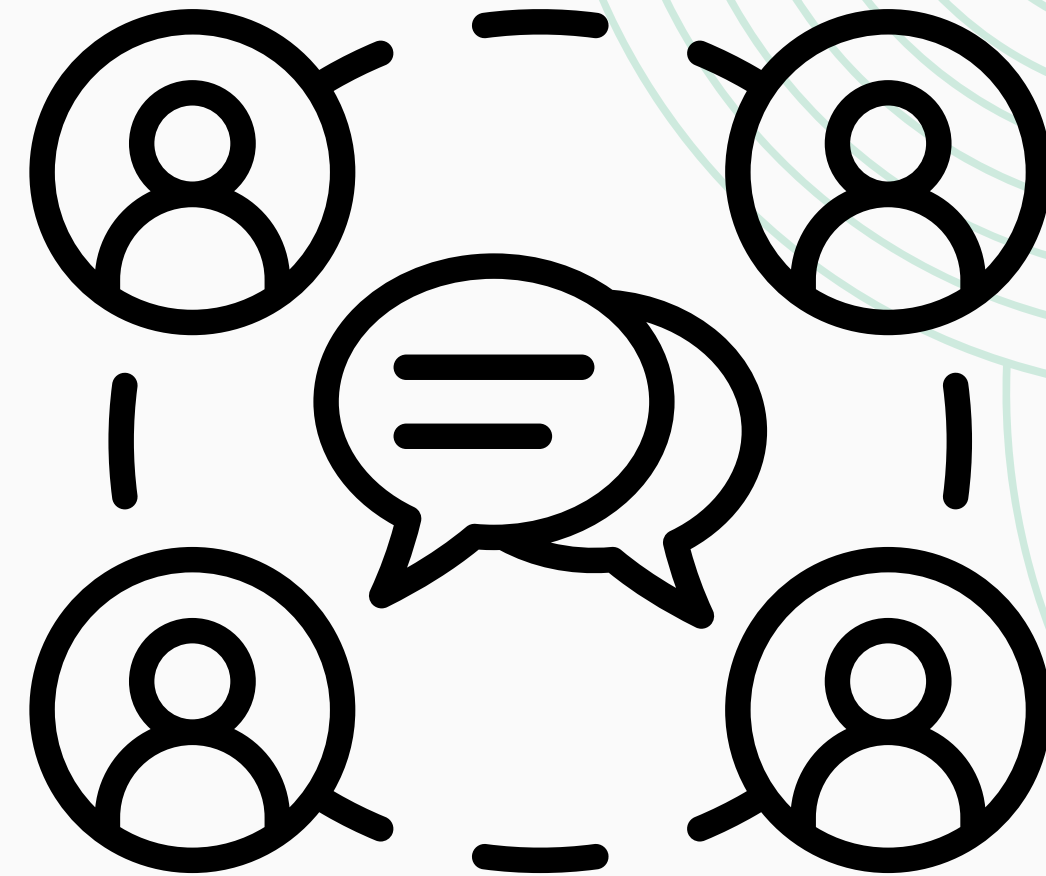
- Sustainability “pledge wall” where participants commit to green actions.
- Live dashboards showing event energy, water, and waste savings.
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COMMUNICATIONS

Communication makes sustainability visible and credible.

- Reusable cup systems, local food, and other initiatives remain invisible without messaging
- Builds shared understanding of why choices matter
- Guides participants through the entire event lifecycle: planning → execution → post-event
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WHY IS THIS?

Attendees adopt sustainable behaviors when they **understand the "why" behind actions** like waste sorting. Events must build this understanding through honest, specific messaging rather than vague "eco-friendly" claims.

COMMUNICATING ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY - TIPS



Authentic Green Messaging

- Use evidence-based communication
- Avoid greenwashing
- Organisers are encouraged to explicitly highlight concrete actions in event invitations and promotional materials, such as offering a vegetarian menu or using reusable materials.



Reporting

- Reporting transforms sustainability data into credibility and continuous improvement.
- Rather than relying on narrative claims, structured reporting provides evidence of performance, reduces reputational risk, and meets institutional expectations.

SUPPLY CHAIN

Understand supply chain and practice local inclusive sourcing



Understanding the supply

Understanding the supply chain behind an event shows the necessary steps and highlights which ones are crucial for planning a sustainable event and switch to local sourcing



Local sourcing

Local sourcing helps make events more sustainable by reducing travel, cutting pollution, supporting nearby businesses, and using resources that are closer to home



Local sourcing in event planning

Map all the local producers for the different items: make sure to consider those who are responsible both for green solutions but also social responsibility.

FROM DATA TO ACTION

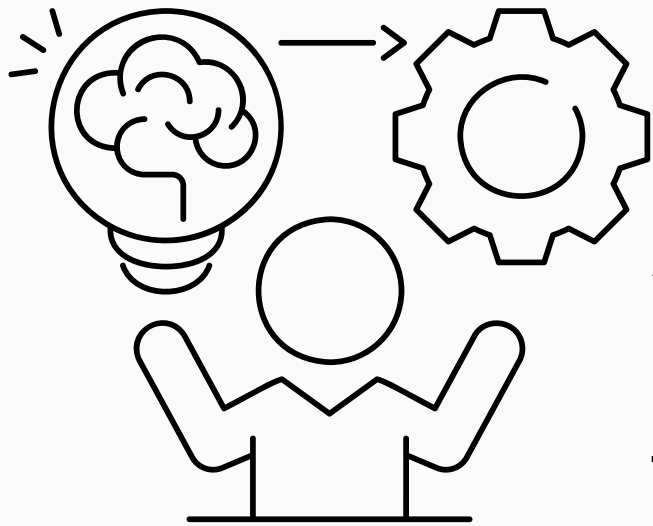
WASTE AUDIT



A waste audit allows you to identify potential waste streams, hotspots, measure results setting baselines, improve for future events.



LEARN FROM GOOD PRACTICES



At Allez l'Éco, we bring together expertise, good practices, and inspiring experiences from Luxembourg, across Europe, and around the world.

Our goal is to empower young people to design and run their own sustainable events, learning through both training sessions and real event experience.

Share your best sustainable event examples with us. Support us in building an effective training programme and impactful events. Contribute your knowledge and innovative tips that can truly make a difference.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

- EMAS — Eco-Management and Audit Scheme
- Green Events Checklist — Ministry of the Environment (Luxembourg)
- EU Guidelines for Sustainable Meetings & Events (Commission / EMAS-linked)
- More references and interviews to expert and practitioners in <https://gaidalux.lu/activities/allezleco/>

CONCLUSION

EVERY EVENT LEAVES BEHIND MORE THAN MEMORIES — IT LEAVES A VISIBLE TRAIL OF FOOD, PACKAGING, TEXTILES, AND MATERIALS WE BARELY USE.

WASTE IS NOT ACCIDENTAL

**WITH GOOD PLANNING AND COMMITMENT,
WE CAN DO IT RIGHT.**

JOIN AND SUPPORT ALLEZ L'ECO

WWW.ALLEZLECO.EU

