

# Ecological sustainability policy

The ecological sustainability policy provides guidance for all AYY's activities, including events, meetings, procurement, and travel. The policy applies to all AYY's operators and collaborators.

The policy is updated annually. The document was most recently updated in November 2024.

## 1. Food and beverages

- Plant-based food and beverages are served at AYY's events, meetings, and occasions.
  - The policy may be adjusted if needed to accommodate allergies and special diets.
- Fair Trade coffee and tea are provided at events, meetings, and occasions.
- All alcohol served at events must be purchased within Finland.
- Food waste must be minimised by planning the amount of food based on the number of participants. A plan for managing potential food waste must be prepared before the event.

## 2. Recycling

- AYY's central office provides adequate sorting facilities for at least mixed waste, biowaste, plastic waste, paper, cardboard, metal, glass, and refundable bottles and cans. Recycling of more complex items, such as electronics, is always handled appropriately.
- When usable items are no longer needed, they must be directed primarily to recycling, the community, or a recycling centre, for example.

## 3. Travel

- When travelling, public transportation is prioritised. Rail transport is utilised whenever possible.
- If public transportation cannot be used, carpooling or shared transport is preferred.
- Air and ship travel are avoided. Flying to destinations reachable by land or water within 16 hours is prohibited.
- Air or ship travel is compensated by donating 30% of the travel costs to environmental activities.

## 4. Purchases

- For each purchase, first evaluate whether there is a genuine need for the item. Items should primarily be borrowed, rented, or purchased second-hand.
- For decorations, recycled materials, self-made items, and reuse are preferred.
- Textiles should mainly be purchased second-hand. If new textiles are purchased, sustainability and ethical aspects must be taken into account.
- The purchase of disposable tableware is to be avoided whenever possible. If disposable tableware must be used, it must be recycled properly.
- AYY's communications do not use visual material generated by artificial intelligence.
- For all purchases, priority must be given to the ecological sustainability of the entire life cycle. When possible, purchased products must meet the following criteria:
  - Made in Finland or as close to Finland as possible
  - Long-lasting and of high quality
  - Repairable
  - Energy-efficient (e.g. household appliances and electronic equipment)
  - Minimising chemicals (e.g. detergents)
  - Purchased in the correct amount (e.g. overall badges)
  - Include ecolabels (see the attachment)
  - Minimised waste: Made from recyclable and renewable materials, not individually packaged

## Appendix: Standards and certificates guiding purchases

### Food production certificates



Sustainability and fairness of food production: Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, and Fair Trade



Domestic vegetables and products: Hyvää Suomesta and Puhtaasti kotimainen labels

### Environmental certificates



**The Nordic Swan** is a Nordic ecolabel telling about eco-friendliness of products and services – not forgetting the safety and quality of the product. The label guides you to responsible and environmentally friendly procurement.



**EU Ecolabel** is the common ecolabel of the European Union. Like the Swan label, it tells about the eco-friendliness and quality of products and services.



**FSC Certification, Sustainable Forest Management Certification**, promotes eco-friendly, socially and economically sustainable forestry. FSC certifies wood, paper, and natural rubber products.

## Energy standards



The **European Union Energy Label** is a uniform energy label used in the EU countries that provides reliable and comparable information on the energy consumption of appliances.



**EKOenergy** is an eco-label awarded to energy produced from renewable energy sources.



**Energy Star** is an international standard for energy efficient consumer products.

## Domestic certifications



The **Key Flag Symbol** is used for products manufactured in Finland or services produced in Finland with minimum domestic content of at least 50 per cent.



**Design from Finland** mark indicates a Finnish company that has invested in the Finnish design of its products or services.

## Other certifications of responsibility



**The Finnish Social Enterprise Mark** communicates that the company has been established to promote a social goal and at least half of its profits are channelled to the development of its own operations or donating the profits in accordance with its mission. The mark can be rewarded to a company that has been established to solve social or environmental problems.

## Environmental management systems



**ISO 14001 and EMAS environmental management systems**



**The EcoCompass and Green Office environmental management systems;** the EcoCompass is a lighter environmental management system for small and medium-sized enterprises, based on both comparable Nordic environmental management systems and international environmental management standards. The Green Office is an environmental management system for offices.