



# Environmental sustainability policy

The environmental 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. Guidelines concerning travel primarily apply to the AYY Board and employees.

The policy is updated annually, and its implementation is monitored by the sustainable development sector. The document was previously updated in 12/2025.

## I. Food and beverages

- Vegan 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.
- Recycling opportunities at AYY's event facilities are improved.
- When usable items are no longer needed, they should be directed primarily to reuse, for example to the community or to a recycling centre.

## 3. Travel

- When travelling, public transport is prioritised. Rail transport is utilised whenever possible.
- If public transport is not utilised, 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.
- 30% of the travel costs of air or ship travel are donated to environmental activities, and the annual donation recipient is decided by the AYY Board.

## 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 environmental 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)
  - Chemicals minimised (e.g. detergents)
  - Purchased in the correct amount (e.g. overall badges)
  - Ecolabelled products (see the attachment)
  - Waste minimised: Made from recyclable and renewable materials, not individually packaged

## Appendix: Certificates and standards 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

### Vegan certificates



**The Vegan Society Label** is an internationally recognised vegan product certification. The label guarantees that no animal ingredients or ingredients tested on animals have been used at any stage of the manufacturing process.



**The V-Label** is an internationally recognised seal for labelling vegan and vegetarian products, administered by the European Vegetarian Union (EVU). Products labelled with V-Label Vegan do not contain any ingredients of animal origin, and no ingredients of animal origin or ingredients tested on animals are used in the manufacturing process.

## Environmental certificates



**The Nordic Swan** is a Nordic ecolabel indicating the eco-friendliness of products and services, while also ensuring the safety and quality of the product. The label guides responsible and environmentally friendly procurement.



**The EU Ecolabel** is the official ecolabel of the European Union, indicating the eco-friendliness and quality of products and services.



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

## Domestic certifications



**The Key Flag Symbol** indicates that the product has been manufactured in Finland or that the service is produced by a Finnish-owned company. To qualify for the label, a minimum of 50% domestic content is required.



**The Design from Finland** label indicates the domestic origin of a product or service design and shows that the company has invested in Finnish design.

## 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.

## Other certificates of sustainability



**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 donated in accordance with its mission. The label 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.