

# WASTE MINIMISATION IN LARGE EVENTS

23 Success Stories



**GOOD  
PRACTICE**

magazine





# What is MINEV?



# Introduction to the project

The impact of large events on resource consumption is beyond any doubt. Their number and footprint make it essential to introduce sustainability as a criterion in their organisation.

Although there are several factors that come together to make an event more sustainable, in practice one of the most relevant is the generation of waste and its management.

There is an increasing concern and commitment on the part of regional and local administrations to make the large events organised in their territories greener; private stakeholders are also increasingly committed to sustainability; the participants in the events as well. However, the many aspects involved makes the challenge is often beyond the capabilities and resources.

**MINEV (Waste MINimization in Large EVents) aims at being an accelerator for regional and local administrations to address and develop waste minimisation in large events through their policies for circular economy, waste management and climate neutrality.** With that objective, during the MINEV project, **five local and regional administrations from across Europe** (Málaga, Kraków, Klaipėda, the Region of Central Macedonia, and the Metropolitan City of



Bologna) are exchanging good practices and policy measures that enable waste minimisation in large events, supported by the advisory partner ACR+, which helps optimise the experience-sharing process.

From the point of view of communication, large events are an exceptional opportunity to **involve organisers, participants and the overall society in the culture of sustainability**, given the projection capacity of these events.

**Did you know that?** Differently from previous projects that provided experience in the field, MINEV is the only one entirely dedicated to policy improvements related to waste minimisation in large events; also, it is also the only one that pays attention to the particularities of the different types of events when it comes to waste production and minimisation.

Interreg Europe Co-funded by the European Union

MINEV

## The MINEV partners are:



**LIMASAM**

Cleaning Service of Málaga Ltd. (ES) - MINEV's lead partner



**ACR+**

Association of Cities and Regions for sustainable Resource management (BE)



**Region of Central Macedonia**

(GR)



**KRWMC**

Klaipėda Regional Waste Management Center (LT)



**Metropolitan City of Bologna**

(IT)



**Municipality of Krakow**

(PL)

# How to identify good practices



**The MINEV project followed a structured process to identify and analyse good practices aimed at minimising the impact of events.**

Project partners and their stakeholders met in the participating cities and regions for workshops on experience exchange and study visits. During a dedicated “Exchange of Good Practices” session, led by ACR+, participants shared their own experiences while experts from various institutions presented initiatives and projects addressing both challenges and opportunities in event management. Particular attention was given to different types of events, with the objective of identifying policy solutions that are both inspiring and tested.

**In line with the Interreg Europe criteria, each good practice was assessed for:**

- **Replicability** – potential to be adapted and implemented in other contexts.
- **Proven success** – demonstrated effectiveness in achieving objectives.
- **Tangible results** – measurable and verifiable outcomes.

The project’s web administrator and policy officer validated a total of 22 good practices. From these, thematic experts selected the most inspiring and transferable examples for inclusion in the Interreg Europe Good Practices database. Ultimately, nine MINEV good practices were chosen to represent the project’s most impactful and scalable solutions.

# Stories that inspire



## Categories



Regulatory framework and green public procurement



Big sports, religious, and traveling events



Waste minimisation in cultural events



Waste minimisation in business, scientific, outdoor, and awareness events

Category	Good Practice Name	Country / City / Region
Regulatory framework and green public procurement	#moNOuse EVENTS: organizing events without disposable materials	Italy Emilia-Romagna Region
	Green Public Procurement Handbook	Poland Małopolskie region
	Protocol of Carbon Footprint calculation for sustainable events	Spain - Andalusia region
	Sustainable event seal as a part of "Malaga, how I love you!"	Spain – Malaga
	Turismo Bikaina Turismo de 10	Spain – Navarra region
	Waste prevention with Eco Certified Events	Italy, Metropolitan City of Bologna



Category	Good Practice Name	Country / City / Region
Big sports, religious, and traveling events	Sustainability management at King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels	Belgium - Brussels
	Marathon in a good climate	Poland - Krakow
	Comprehensive waste management for the Davis Cup in Málaga	Spain - Malaga
	Waste prevention at the Franciscan Festival	Italy Emilia-Romagna region
	Reusable cups in large events	Ireland - Dublin
	World Youth Day 2023	Portugal - Lisbon



Category	Good Practice Name	Country / City / Region
Waste minimisation in cultural events	Artisti in Piazza – Pennabilli: sustainability with Go Green	Italy - Emilia-Romagna region
	Sustainability Team of ROBOT Festival	Italy Emilia-Romagna region
	Making a Film Festival Greener	Greece Central Macedonia region
	G'scheit feiern – Reduce waste of events and festivals	Austria - Steiermark region
	Reuse and repair of dragon's figures used during the Great Dragons Parade in Kraków	Poland - Krakow



Category	Good Practice Name	Country / City / Region
Waste minimisation in business, scientific, outdoor, and awareness events	Waste minimization in Greencities & S-Moving Urban intelligence and smart mobility meeting in Málaga	Spain - Malaga
	Waste management in participatory events in coastal areas that obtain the sustainability seal	Spain - Malaga
	Waste Management in Anatolia College events	Greece Central Macedonia region
	Exibo -method of exhibition design to be used in large events with a limited environmental footprint	Greece Central Macedonia region
	Solid waste management for large-scale events in Thermi Environmental Park	Greece Central Macedonia region
	Waste prevention at SANA Food and Slow Wine	Italy, Metropolitan City of Bologna





# Regulatory framework and green public procurement



**Even before an event takes place, each event normally undergoes a planning phase which, depending on its size and type, can cover an array of process and operations, such as mobility, waste management, energy supply, ticketing, food and drink catering, accommodation, among others.**

Regulatory frameworks imposed by local and regional authorities can significantly influence the way events are organised – both by private event organisers and public alike.

Such frameworks can mainstream important and strategic waste prevention policies and relevant practices and objectives targeting single-use plastic elimination, less packaging, separate waste collection, rethinking food supplies, and similar. A collaboration between public authorities and private event organisers should ensure an appropriate application of such frameworks for them to make a difference.

One such framework is certainly green procurement, which can eliminate unsustainable practices and waste intensive processes and service providers.



# 1 #moNOuse EVENTS: organizing events without disposable materials

**Location:** Italy

**Owner:** ANCI-ER and ATERSIR

**Website:**



Scan the QR code  
to learn more



## About this good practice

Reducing the environmental impacts associated with events has long been the focus of many municipalities in the Emilia-Romagna Region as well as an integral part of the regional planning goals regarding waste management and prevention. Despite the growing interest on the issue, the majority of initiatives aimed at “greening” the event industry is still focused downstream on the improvement of separate collection, and on material substitution (e.g. from single-use fossil-based plastic to single-use bio-based or biodegradable plastic, lined-cellulose, aluminium or “tetrapack” for packaged water), instead of systemic change.



The guidelines and, more broadly, the overarching initiative promoted by ANCI-ER (Manifesto #moNOuse), contributes to a “narrative change”, in line with the European regulatory framework, where, when it comes to single-use products, elimination of unnecessary products and implementation of reuse models, should always be the primary goal.

**The main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the initiative are therefore both Municipalities and event organisers, by providing both a “new lens” to deals with “green events” and the tools needed to trigger the transition (e.g. samples of technical specification, practical resolutions, etc). To foster shifting from intentions to actions, regional fundings are made available to municipalities through public tenders designed in collaboration between ANCI-ER and ATERSIR.**



## Expert opinion

On average, every European citizen produces nearly half a tonne of municipal waste and the annual waste generation in the EU amounts to 2.5 billion tonnes. To reverse this trend, the EU supports a waste hierarchy featuring waste prevention as the number one priority and clearly the most efficient way to save resources and lower the environmental impact of waste. Waste prevention and replacing single-use with reuse models is encouraged in many EU policies, including the Waste Framework Directive and the Circular Economy Action Plan. The European Green Deal encourages public authorities to “lead by example and ensure that their procurement is green”. Purchasing power of public authorities represents around 14% of EU’s gross domestic product and can serve as a powerful driver in waste prevention and circular public procurement. Public events are one of the areas where this approach can be demonstrated. The guidelines and measures introduced by the Emilia Romagna region serve as a great examples of how public authorities can boost waste prevention and can be easily transferred to other regions in Italy and Europe.

**Magda Michaliková**

Works at Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform



## Resources needed

Tools were drafted by the circular economy manager with the supervision of a senior manager. Graphics and small editing were handled by the communication unit. In total around 100 hours of work were required, both for the guidelines and the “Manifesto”, at an estimated cost of around €6,000.



## Evidence of success

The event guidelines were developed as part of a broader initiative to tackle single-use, aimed at “changing the narrative” and encouraging the uptake and consolidation of reuse models. The #monouso Manifesto is the “political” pivot of the initiative that is gaining traction within and outside the ER Region. To date, 14 municipalities in 3 Italian Regions, formally approved the Manifesto and committed to its implementation.



## Potential for learning or transfer

This initiative has a high potential of transferability. In every country, municipalities can play an important role in fostering the transition toward a new economic model that give priority to upstream innovative practices. The 5 principles of the #moNOuse Manifesto and the related Council Resolution Model (CRM) can be easily translated in other languages and used to build an international network of municipalities committed to foster reuse models and reducing waste from single-use products in the event industry and in other sectors. The CRM is a very valuable tool: it contextualises the 5 principles within the overarching international and European framework that call for bold ambitions in transforming the current unsustainable production and consumption models with specific emphasis on the urgency to overcome the current throw-away culture and business practices. Note that all the municipalities that have formally adopted the Manifesto in Italy, used the CRM provided by ANCI-ER.



## 2 Green Public Procurement Handbook

**Location:** Poland, Małopolskie region

**Owner:** Malopolska Region

**Website:**



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### About this good practice

According to the statistics for 2021, only 1 percent of all implemented public procurements were GPPs. The know-how in using GPPs is very little. It was a real problem and the creation of the Green Public Procurement Handbook could be a solution. The Handbook is a consequence of the adoption of the declaration in 2019 'Małopolska free without plastic'. The manual was created for the needs of the Marshal Office. The execution of the document was outsourced to the external legal office. The Marshal Office delivered the public procurement plan to the Contractor.



Then it was needed to select most common procurements carrying out in the Office: orders for paper, equipment, catering, promotional materials. The draft of the Handbook was consulted with the public procurement team. Representatives of the team participated in talks with the contractor. The draft was sent also to all the Marshal Office departments to acceptance.

**As part of the contract, the contractor prepared the Handbook and carried out online training for all the Marshal Office's employees, which took one month. They managed to train 180 people (director, executive and employee from each department). Later on, the Handbook was posted on the intranet. The link to the Handbook was also sent to all municipalities in the voivodship with encouragement to use it.**



### Expert opinion

By using their purchasing power to choose goods, services and works with a reduced environmental impact, governments can make an important contribution towards sustainability goals. The high-impact sectors for local and regional governments are construction, food and catering, mobility and energy-using products. The European Commission defines Green Public Procurement (GPP) as "a process whereby public authorities seek to procure goods, services and works with a reduced environmental impact throughout their life cycle when compared to goods, services and works with the same primary function that would otherwise be procured." Green public procurement can have many benefits. It can be a major driver for innovation, incentivising the industry to develop more sustainable products and services. It may provide financial savings for public authorities and help them to become an example in a transition to a low-carbon and circular economy. The Green Public Procurement handbook developed by the Małopolska region can serve as an excellent example in Poland, as well as in other EU Member States.

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### Resources needed

The execution of the GPPs Handbook was outsourced to an external company - the legal office, which has experience in that topic. The Handbook, including carrying out 5 trainings for the Marshal Office workers, costed 20 000 euro. The funding came from the internal funds of the Marshal Office.



### Evidence of success

The Handbook was the first document that type, which was developed by the Marshal Office in Poland. The fastest evidence of success of the Handbook was elimination of using single-use plastic products during the event's catering, replacing them with e.g. glass bottles and reusable trays. It was also sent to all the 182 municipalities from the whole Małopolska voivodship. It is brand new document and preparation of the public procedures takes time, so further successes are expected in the future.



### Potential for learning or transfer

The Green Public Procurement Handbook provides guidelines for GPPs from different sectors, different types. They can be useful during the preparation of the public procurements. The Handbook consist examples of paragraphs which can be copied to the contracts. They are universal to all the companies/offices. Unfortunately, the Handbook is in Polish but it can be easily translated to all languages. The Handbook can be also an inspiration to create more advanced document or even more narrowed down one, dedicated to specific public procurements carrying out by a single company.



## 3 Protocol of Carbon Footprint calculation for sustainable events

**Location:** Andalusia region, Spain

**Owner:** Ministry of Sustainability and Environment of the Regional Government of Andalusia

**Website:**



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### About this good practice

The idea of developing the protocol arose in the Climate Change Office of the Andalusian Government due to growing concern about the high environmental impact of large events.

The absence of a regulatory framework for measuring the “sustainability” of events created an opportunity to develop this voluntary protocol, based on standard methodologies, to promote sustainable events and their contribution to climate action.

After several years developing tools, the protocol, and an official registry to measure, control, reduce, and finally offset CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for organisations and companies, the aim was to extend its scope and apply it to events.

The documents provide recommendations for designing sustainable events, focusing on the different sources of emissions and the various stages of events (set-up, execution, and dismantling). In addition, the protocol proposes a carbon footprint calculation procedure based on the following steps:

1. Selecting the carbon footprint (CF) calculation methodology
2. Designing the process map of the event
3. Defining the system boundaries
4. Compiling information (activity data and emission factors)
5. Calculating the carbon footprint
6. Reporting and minimisation (including CO<sub>2</sub> emissions compensation)

**Technical information about emissions from various activities is also provided to help event organisers make calculations more efficiently and accurately.**



### Resources needed

Specialised professionals prepared and tested the protocol, but the only financial resources required were those related to human resources.



### Evidence of success

The protocol has been applied to several events, including:

- **Presentation of the Carbon Footprint App for Andalusian Municipalities** Seville, 26 October 2022 (2-hour event in the morning)
- **Copa del Rey football finals** 23 April 2022 and 6 May 2023
- **Manuel Carrasco music concert** 2–3 June 2023



### Potential for learning or transfer

This protocol is potentially useful for other regions because it is easily transferable to any location and enables the measurement and comparison of the environmental impacts of events anywhere.



### Results achieved

As a result of the 2022 Copa del Rey Final, **2,225 tCO<sub>2</sub>e** were generated, equivalent to **436 cars** driving for an entire year (an average vehicle emits 5.1 tCO<sub>2</sub>/year). Based on this analysis, several measures were proposed to reduce the event’s carbon footprint, including:

- reducing the use of private vehicles
- decreasing energy consumption by contracting renewable electricity suppliers or installing photovoltaic panels
- improving waste segregation, given the significant impact of the organic fraction



## 4 Sustainable event seal as a part of “Malaga, how I love you!”

**Location:** Spain, Malaga city  
**Owner:** City Council of Malaga  
**Website:**



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### About this good practice

The idea to develop the seal arised in the Environmental and Sustainability department of Malaga Municipality due to growing concern about the high impact of big events in the city, and as an opportunity to raise environmental awareness among event’s organizer and participants.

Specialised professionals of sustainability department of municipality of Malaga collect information during planning phase of an event, analyse activities and give event’s organiser specific recommendations to reduce waste generation and make event more sustainable. Advisory offered is



personalised and a free municipal service for event planners. In addition, events organiser, who are committed to this initiative, receive some resource (waste containers, cleaning services, educational program..) free of charge to promote their participation and sustainability

Therefore, “Sustainable Event” allows to certify events that take on their environmental commitment as they carry out their activity.

This seal provides a clear added value to the events and empathizes with the growing public awareness regarding environmental matters and contribute to a most sustainable city.

**The main difficulty was (and it is still a challenge) to engage events’ organizers during the event planning stage, prior to the request. Moreover, it is challenging to adapt indicators and measures to the different event in order to control and monitor improvement in successive editions.**



### Resources needed

External planning and environmental awareness service

169,100 €/year which includes Coordination, awareness workshops, management of sustainable seal events, materials

Personnel:800 hours environmental monitors (2-6 monitors,1-4 hours/workshop) and attention to sustainable events (max. 15 monitors)



### Expert opinion

Events, in all their forms, can have a considerable impact on the environment, with waste generation and management being a key challenge. The EU Waste Framework Directive prioritises waste prevention as the most effective strategy for reducing environmental impacts and improving resource efficiency. This good practice offers a holistic approach to reduce waste and increase the sustainability of events in line with EU objectives. The key to its success lies in the combined offering of tailored advice, practical resources and services and the certification label. The label is especially effective as it makes the actions more visible, helping to educate attendees and incentivise organisers. The practice could easily be replicated in other regions, with its transfer to other sectors already evidencing its versatility.

James Ling

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### Potential for learning or transfer

This sustainability seal is being potentially interesting for other regions because it is transferable to any location and allow to measure and compare environmental impacts of events anywhere

As evidence and example of the transfer of Good Practice to other areas:

“Sustainable Production Málaga” protocol. In this way, this protocol is developed in order to achieve a synergy between the environmental effects associated with audiovisual productions and the adoption of solutions to nullify or at least minimize these consequences.

Manual of good practices to organize more sustainable MICE events (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions) in the destination. The manual highlights Malaga’s commitment to sustainability and involves all actors.



### Evidence of success

As evidence of the success of this practice, it is worth highlighting the increase in the number of sustainable events developed in recent years:

2019 → 79

2020 → 13 (Covid 19 pandemic effect)

2021 → 19 (Covid 19 pandemic effect)

2022 → 129

2023 (first quarter) → 36

Example of good practice is Malaga-Open – Official ATP Challenger Tour Tournament in Malaga, A reference competition at the national level in the promotion of sustainability criteria associated with sporting events and in line with the ODS.



# 5 Turismo Bikaina Turismo de 10

**Location:** Spain, Navarra region  
**Owner:** General Directorate of Tourism of the Government of Navarra  
**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more

## About this good practice

The problem addressed in this initiative is the sustainability of touristic activities in Navarra, establishing a methodology to provide advisory support to the tourism sector to implement specific sustainability measures. The aim is that events organised by local entities in Navarre, tourist consortium and tourist associations improve their sustainability. In 2022, 85 events signed the initiative's sustainability agreement. To reach its objectives, the practice involves representatives of the entities committed to



the initiative receiving training, in order to establish a sustainability action plan for each one of the events. Within the action plan there are some specific measures and its matching indicators. Each event has its own particularities, its own action plan with different measures for each event's edition depending on the human and economic possibilities of the coordinators.

A basic guideline is provided to the event coordinators, which aims to minimise the negative impacts of events and maximise the positive ones based on a review of the event from the beginning of its planning process through to its realisation, monitoring and evaluation.

**The evaluation plays a key role in analysing the effectiveness of measures that add value and quality to events and help overcome any identified deficiencies. In 2023 the sustainability training has its second edition.**

## Expert opinion

The travel and tourism industry, which accounts for 10% of EU GDP and employs millions of people, is at risk owing to increasing numbers and severity of fires, floods, drought and super storms, as well as high heat and sea level rise. The industry must mitigate its impact on the climate to reduce its emissions and support its economic survival. Greening European tourism is part of the EU sustainable tourism strategy. This good practice from Navarra is in line with the aforementioned EU strategy, as it aims to improve the sustainability of local tourism organisations and their events. A basic guideline is provided to the event coordinators, which aims to minimise the negative impacts of events. This approach is easy to transfer and can inspire other European regions.

Magda Michalíková

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## Resources needed

The team optimised roles and redistributed tasks. External experts, funded by NextGeneration EU, were crucial for training. Training hours: 18 for 3 editions. Tutorial hours: 605 for 3 editions. Financial support by EU's RRF. Budget for 3 editions and compliance evaluation: €50,892.60 (VAT included)

## Evidence of success

A structured methodology has empowered stakeholders to implement good practices and conduct comprehensive environmental assessments of tourism activities, enhancing control over their impact.

Action plans focus on five areas: work processes, infrastructure, supplies, mobility and resource management.

## Potential for learning or transfer

This practice could be potentially easy to transfer to other regions, even with private organising entities of events. By specific procurement conditions or public subsidies that drive to organisers the integration of environmental measures to the design and organisation of the events.

"Turismo Bikaina-Turismo de 10" has already implemented the same methodology to improve accessibility and inclusion measures in the organisation of the events, providing a specific guide, training and mentoring.

Program data:		
2022:	2023:	2022:
85 events	69 events	80 events
21 entities	17 entities	23 entities
75 action plans	51 action plans	50 action plans



## 6 Waste prevention with Eco Certified Events

**Location:** Italy, Metropolitan City of Bologna

**Owner:** Ambiente e Salute and Legambiente

**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more

### About this good practice

Ecoevents, created by Ambiente e Salute and Legambiente, one of Italy's leading environmental organizations, is designed to guide waste minimization in the organization and management of events. It supports event organizers from the planning stage to ensure improved sustainability.



Ecoevents offers three certification types:

- **Ecoactions:** it follows a lighter protocol, making it suitable for organizers who want to take their first steps toward waste management. Ecoactions encourages commitment to sustainability, addressing the cost barrier of ISO certifications by offering simplified protocols.
- **Eco Certified Events:** it does not only educate the organizer on how to reduce impact but also tracks and verifies concrete results, through a training and quantitative monitoring process, ensuring tangible improvements over time.
- **Ecoevents offers the possibility to undertake a pathway to ISO Certification for events with significant sustainable actions.**

Ecoactions and Eco Certified Events empower organizers to design events sustainably from the beginning, rather than providing a sustainability label at the end. Organizers complete trainings before the event, addressing waste management at every stage.

**Once standards are met and training is completed, the certification is granted before the event, in trust. This allows even small companies and associations, to promote their event in advance. For Eco Certified Events, a final audit verifies compliance during the event.**



### Resources needed

Ambiente e Salute relies on a team of sustainability experts who support event organizers in training their staff to implement sustainable practices and on the partnership with Legambiente, that ensures national coverage.

### Evidence of success

In 2024, 61 events were certified Eco Certified Events and Ecoactions, such as the Future Film Festival in Bologna with 4,000 people in 2023. The festival implemented practices like reusable merchandising, free water points, and minimal plastic use. Since measurements are relative to the event's initial conditions, even small improvements in a small event hold great value. The goal is to create a progressive shift towards sustainability, making every effort count.

### Potential for learning or transfer

The Ecoevents-Legambiente certification offers significant potential for learning and adaptation in other countries aiming to promote sustainable event planning. By reducing resource use and waste, it demonstrates how events can minimize their environmental impact. The certification enhances visibility and reputation, making it easier to attract sustainability-conscious sponsors and participants. Also, it is designed to be accessible even to smaller organizations, such as associations and less structured groups, ensuring inclusivity and broader adoption. Furthermore, this certification process integrates sustainable practices across all stages of event planning—design, execution, and monitoring—showcasing how sustainability can become a core principle rather than a secondary consideration.

# Big sports, religious, and traveling events



**One could wonder what sport and religious events could have in common.**

Whether a one-day event or spanning over several days, such events gather large audiences and followers, sometimes on a regular basis – to a stadium, an arena, a shrine, a pilgrimage site or elsewhere. After all, a sport club can be someone's religion, in some cases. Whatever the case is, participants of such events are often used to and acquainted with the venue where the event is taking place and thus it makes easier the transition towards more sustainable and waste-free events and the participation of the visitors in that transition.

Such large events are taking place on a recurring basis – could be annually or as often as weekly, which should make the implementation of waste prevention measures easier to monitor, evaluate, finetune, adapt and improve on a regular basis. Collaborative processes and consultations with visitors of such events can significantly improve the acceptance of those

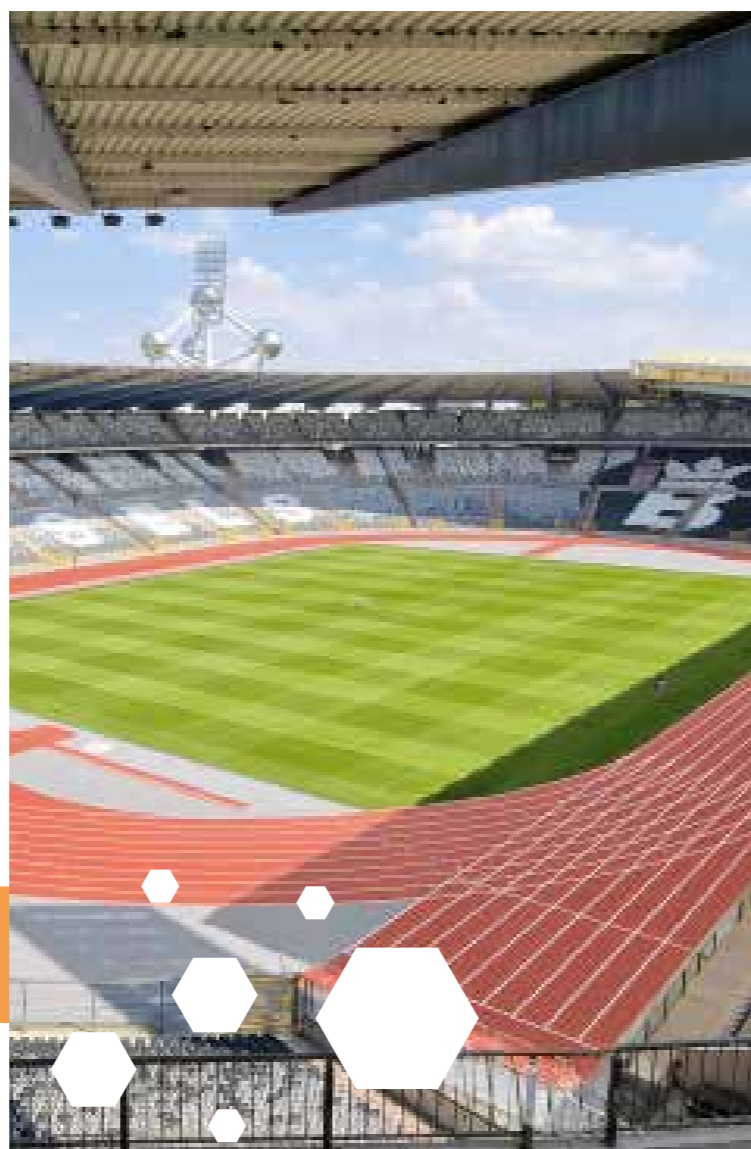


# 1 Sustainability management at King Baudouin Stadium in Brussels

**Location:** Belgium, Brussels city  
**Owner:** Prosport Bruxelles

## About this good practice

The implementation of the good practice began in 2020 with a waste sampling. The objective was to identify hotspots and prevalent waste streams in different areas through sampling and observations. Packaging and packaging material were of special concern to assess quantities of metal, PET and other materials. It was found that out of all the collected metal cans in the three areas 64% come from public trash bins outside the stadium's perimeter, while PET bottles and cups were prevailing inside the stadium's perimeter (76%). Based on the results of this analysis the pilot test was further defined and it was decided to set up temporary selective collection infra-



structure for the first time. It was decided to introduce only one additional bin for packaging and packaging material (PMC).

The stadium also signed a contract with a company which installs ashtrays and recuperates and recycle the cigarette butts. At the same time, meetings were held with the organisers of major events to suggest them solutions to improve sorting inside and outside the stadium what was reflected in adapted contracts.

**In 2022, the stadium launched a communication campaign to raise public awareness of good sorting practices.**

## Expert opinion

Better management of municipal solid waste is addressed by the revised EU Waste Framework directive. From 2030 onward, all materials suitable for recycling will be restricted from ending up in a landfill. To reach the target of less than 10% of municipal solid waste reaching landfills prevention, reuse and recycling. By 2025, municipal waste re-use and recycling shall be increased to a minimum of 55 %, 60% and 65% of weight by 2025, 2030 and 2035, respectively. In line with the Circular Economy Action Plan, materials should be sorted as much as possible. As shown in this good practice proper sorting of waste needs to happen at all places, including public event spaces such as stadiums. This is an important first step to even wider collection of materials, waste prevention (for example in form of reusable cups and plates) and other measures to be implemented at the stadium.

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## Resources needed

### Employees :

- 1 Prosport employee
- 1 Fost Plus
- 1 Brussels-Clean
- 1 Brussels-Environment
- 6 workers to install the equipment

### Financial costs :

- Sorting bins : 43.219,69€ HTVA
- Ashtrays : 9.700€ HTVA + 1.440€/year emptying and recycling
- Communication campaign : 200.000€ HTVA

## Evidence of success

The results were satisfactory, as the new sampling showed a redirection of 120kg of PMC from the residual waste. This basically meant that the capture rate of PMC was 83.2%, since 120 kg out of 144.21 kg of PMC was captured. It also reflected in the total amount of residual waste inside the stadium's premises dropped to 1120 kg from 1375.17 kg.

A larger scale project followed, installing permanent infrastructure, added value concerts and different athletic competitions at the stadium.

## Potential for learning or transfer

The positive aspects in the project included good collaboration with local and regional partners , good collaboration with experts, funding received to complete the project , the organisers played they part properly and finally, the change in people's behaviour.

The stadium is still working on new projects to do even better than today, as they want to create a waste sorting in the stadium to organize better the collect of waste, organic waste sorting, reusable tableware.

The replicability potential increases if baseline data is known in advance, which avoids the need of a waste composition analysis. In case of cities and regions where the environmental awareness is high, it wouldn't take much for the visitors the get used to selective collection in stadiums and would adhere to the new practice quickly. Introduction of separate collection needs to be accompanied by communication campaigns, activities and visuals.



## 2 Marathon in a good climate

**Location:** Poland, Krakow  
**Owner:** Municipality of Krakow  
**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more

### About this good practice

The Sports Infrastructure Board in Kraków organizes prestigious running events in the capital of Małopolska Region since 2002. The most important are the Cracovia Marathon, the Cracovia Royal Half Marathon and the Three Mounds' Run. The races are characterized by a large number of people, who create large amounts of waste. During Royal Running Triad there are 31,000 participants who produce waste every year.

As the budget unit of Kraków City Hall we are obliged to comply with regulations and policy on ecology, waste segregation and pollution reduction.



In cooperation with sponsors and partners it was necessary to adapt to the company's eco-policy, which can be also used in other cities during running events. Also, in 2023, we started cooperation with Krakow University of Sport and Physical Education to conduct market research among Cracovia Marathon competitors to see if they accept our eco-way. The good practices implemented during the Cracovia Marathon are following:

- The official t-shirts for the participants of the run is made of 100% recycled materials.
- On the route of the Marathon there are 8 points with drinking water from the hydrants, which replace drinks in plastic bottles. The water is pouring to paper cups directly from the hydrant via special machine.
- Registration of competitors for runs takes place electronically by using the QR Codes. Also, we gave up paper leaflets as a form of promotion for our partners in favor of advertising on digital screens.

### Expert opinion

Waste generation in Europe is on the rise. On average, every European citizen produces nearly half a tonne of municipal waste and the annual waste generation in the EU amounts to 2.5 billion tonnes. To reverse this trend, the EU supports a waste hierarchy featuring waste prevention as the number one priority and clearly the most efficient way to save resources and lower the environmental impact of waste. Any organisation, event and initiative can adopt measures to minimise their waste. In this good practice, a marathon organiser took steps to avoid unnecessary waste products, by switching to materials with lower impact (t-shirts made from 100% recycled materials), giving up certain products (plastic bottles, leaflets), and preventing waste by made-to-order T-shirts so that there are no leftovers. These ideas can easily be adopted by other organisers of similar events.

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### Resources needed

All changes are made on the basis of current employment. The solutions were implemented had to be implemented with sponsors' involvement. The cooperation with technical sponsors, waterworks company and the company responsible for the service system is crucial to achieve good effects.



### Evidence of success

- 11,000 t-shirts ordered and purchased by runners instead of ordering 28,000 t-shirts for every participant. Over 86% of runners evaluate the new distribution method positively.
- Water for participants on the route of run is poured from special taps system (40% reduction of plastic bottles)
- 100% reduction of using paper.
- Reducing expenses on the purchase of T-shirts – € 111.000 per year
- Limiting expenses on the purchase of bottled water – € 8.900 per year



### Potential for learning or transfer

Actually, We share good practice with other race organizers in Poland and abroad. Our solutions will be presented at the conference of the Polish Running Association this year. A new T-shirt sales system has been implemented by Poznań Marathon. We are currently planning to exchange experiences with our Italian Partner - Maratona di Ravenna. It shows that the good practice is possible to share easily and has a huge potential in minimizing waste generated during running events.



## 3 Comprehensive waste management for the Davis Cup in Málaga

**Location:** Spain, Malaga  
**Owner:** LIMASAM Cleaning Service of Málaga Ltd.

### About this good practice

The context in which this good practice is developed is characterized by being a large event that lasts several days, that waste is generated in its different phases of development, that is, assembly, celebration and disassembly, and that a very diverse typology of waste is generated. waste.

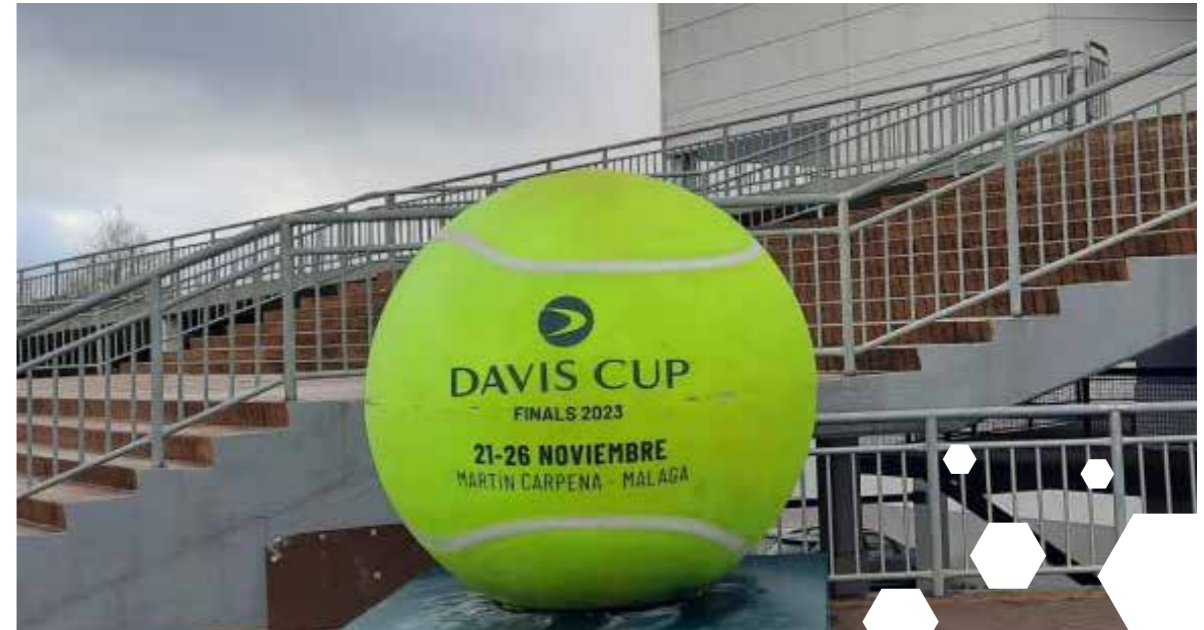


SECOND PHASE: (it is carried out before the assembly of the event) and includes an identification of the waste that will be generated in all phases of the event, a quantification and characterization of it, in order to determine what different fractions of waste we find. and determine their level of segregation.

In this phase, it is also necessary to search and assign the authorized managers for the management of each of the waste generated and an analysis of the best options for containers to be used and the most efficient waste collection system.

The main actors and beneficiaries of this practice are:

- Authorized Managers of paper/cardboard, packaging
- City Council and Limasam for compliance with one of the objectives of law 7/2022
- Event Organizer-Promoter
- Viewer



### Resources needed

The resources used came from both Limasam and specific waste managers. The cost of managing additional waste associated with the event is passed on to the organizer, achieving greater involvement on their part.

### Evidence of success

Taking into account the number of spectators, the total selective fractions collected has increased by 44% compared to 2022: in particular, the selective fractions of packaging, glass, paper and organic products increased by 3%, 18%, 103% and 95% respectively in relation to the previous year, 2022.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the amount of reusable waste collected has improved considerably compared to 2022 with all the actions carried out.

### Potential for learning or transfer

This action is transferable to other events with similar characteristics and organizational models.

When work is done as a team and with a clear objective on the part of everyone, the results obtained are better. The coordination of all the parties involved in a large event is essential to be able to develop effective actions that show positive results. All of this implies coordination in all phases of the event, without forgetting any since all of them are interrelated. Raising awareness among the different stakeholders is also a fundamental fact that contributes to the achievement of the expected objectives. Likewise, the provision of means and resources, both material and human, that facilitate the integration of all and facilitate the objective of good practice, that is, the recovery of materials, has a very important role in obtaining good results.



## 4 Waste prevention at the Franciscan Festival

**Location:** Italy, Metropolitan City of Bologna  
**Owner:** Metropolitan City of Bologna  
**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more

### About this good practice

The Franciscan Festival was born in 2009 to concretise the values of Francis of Assisi. It is organised by the Franciscan Movement of Emilia-Romagna. It was decided to rely on the 'festival formula', creating an event that allows people to go out into the squares among the people. The event is attentive to sustainability and circularity both in con-



tent and in organisational/practical aspects. The programme includes free conferences, workshops and shows to raise awareness of environmental issues; the educational offer for schools and teacher training is particularly attentive. The plastic, paper and undifferentiated waste collection bins are placed outside each stand grouping, near the main stage in Piazza Maggiore and then inside the "courtyard of honour". So, in all the strategic places where the various activities take place, so that the bins are available to the users of the Franciscan Festival. Near the coffee stand, the organic waste bins are also added, since it is mainly in that area that this type of waste is produced.

**There is a volunteer appointed by the festival organisers who checks during the day that the bins are never too full and changes the bags regularly: this, as far as possible, avoids mixing different waste. Over the years there are many actions to try and enforce good practice and there is an awareness that we can always do better.**



### Resources needed

The realisation is developed by the existing staff, no new resources had to be added.

Financially speaking, there was an initial investment for the purchase of the OSB panels and connectors used to make up the various furnishings. This material is reused every year without any waste.

### Potential for learning or transfer

This initiative has a high potential for transferability. Municipalities can play an important role in facilitating the transition to a new economic model that prioritises innovative practices upstream. The strengths of this practice are the network and documentation that the municipality has created with other organisations.

### Evidence of success

- Environmentally friendly reusable furniture made of OSB wood panels
- High separate waste collection rate (between 80% and 90%)
- Totally plastic-free event (from 2019)
- Provision of bins for each stand, and the installation of a free drinking water dispenser
- Involvement of volunteers
- Attention to the environment (online promotion)
- Agreements with existing commercial businesses, thus reducing the use of disposable tableware
- Location is easily accessible via public transport



## 5 Reusable cups in large events

**Location:** Ireland, Dublin

**Owner:** AVIVA stadium

**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more



### About this good practice

This general practice has the overall objective of contributing to less plastic waste produced in large events and thus easing the pressure of the event on the environment. Not only less waste is produced (what decreases the time of cleaning the venue, collecting waste and treating it) but it also decreases single use plastic production and thus the use of raw materials, and also encourages visitors to adopt eco-friendly behaviours. The principle sounds simple – with a purchase of a drink, the buyer leaves the bar with the drink and a reusable cup which should be returned upon finishing the drink or before getting a new one. However, for implementing a



practice, we need to look at 3 key aspects: design, financial construction, and logistics – all of them define the success of the practice and determine some key monitoring requirements such as the return rate - how many cups were returned to the venue vs how many were taken home or damaged. The latter is normally taken as the Key Performance Indicator “return rate”.

**Many schemes in order to be properly implemented with a high return rate require a financial dimension where a deposit is paid upon the first purchase of a drink and then reimbursed upon the return of the cup. Many solutions exist which complement this principle - cashless cards, exchange of cups at the bar, at special return points to lower the pressure on the bars, tokens and more.**



### Resources needed

A successful scheme needs to look at three key resources - available space for washing and storing the cups (unless externalised), human resources (increasing pressure on the bar vs deploying more people at return points) and the cups which can be obtained and purchased through a sponsorship.



### Expert opinion

Reuse is a vital building block of circular economy and is widely supported in EU policies, namely the Circular Economy Action Plan, a key part of the European Green Deal, or the revised Waste Framework Directive. Moreover, implementation of reuse measures creates savings in municipal waste management budgets. Reusable packaging used to be the norm around the world once but has faced a serious decline due to the introduction of cheap single-use packaging options. Since reusable cups have a 4x lower environmental impact compared to their single-use counterparts, they are experiencing a comeback. Unlike single-use cups, which often end up in landfills or as litter, reusable cups can be washed and used hundreds of times, significantly cutting down on plastic and paper waste. When implemented at large-scale events or in hospitality settings, reusable cup systems - often with a deposit-return model - encourage responsible behavior and help create a more sustainable, circular approach to consumption.

**Magda Michalíková**

Works at Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform



### Evidence of success

At the end of the Ireland – Scotland rugby game in Feb 2020, 52360 cups were returned to the washing facility, preventing up to 418.88 kg of plastic waste and a saving of 2 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>eq. In the month of Feb 2020, when the stadium hosted two matches with reusable cups the amount of mixed packaging waste decreased to 3.1 tonne from 4.54 t, 3.02 t and 3.96 t in Mar, Sep, and Nov 2019 and the dry mixed recycling rate increased to 17% from 14%, 10% and 14% during those same months, respectively.



### Potential for learning or transfer

The replicability potential of reusable cups is obviously rather high as they are being deployed in more and more venues. The fact that an event is taking place in an enclosed space rather than in the countryside or the great outdoors, allows the system to have well-defined barriers. The issue certainly lies in the size of the venue and the available financial and human resources as reusable cups require attention in terms of distribution, collection and reverse charge, providing guidance and signage among others.

In terms of the environmental impact, what could determine the overall environmental impact and expected benefits are three key aspects – material the cup was made from, the number of uses, the use of water for washing, whether the venue can wash and store cups on site, and financially speaking what is the charge for unreturned cups.



## 6 World Youth Day 2023

**Location:** Portugal, Lisbon  
**Owner:** Câmara Municipal de Lisboa  
**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more

### About this good practice

- What is the problem addressed and the context which triggered the introduction of the practice? How to keep the city of Lisbon clean with a threefold population increase, inherent to the WYD event



- How does the practice reach its objectives and how it is implemented? In order to develop a solution, we had to think and elaborate a plan according to the expected present population by location and its waste typology production. We had to have a global action plan, but as well a detailed plan for each location and a detailed mapping of events and areas of greatest impact. The waste sorting was, for us, a priority. And so, we have had to make a definition of deposition equipment and collection frequency and of the necessary human resources and optimization of circuits, tasks definition, and optimization of existing equipment and elaborate a contingency plan for possible strikes.
- Who are the main stakeholders and beneficiaries of the practice? Lisbon's Municipality, Local Organizing Committee of the Catholic Church



### Resources needed

In addition to Lisbon Municipality's employees, we had to hire 300 extra workers. We also made an acquisition of extra equipment; large capacity transport and storage equipment, large deposition capacity equipment, small capacity equipment and 10 small electric vehicles.

### Evidence of success

The Lisbon Municipality Waste Management Department's team meticulously anticipated a support model for waste collection and removal, encouraging as much separation as possible. The total waste collection numbers from Parque Tejo show that the success rate in separating Urban Waste was 72%, well above the average for daily selective collection in Lisbon:

- 52% packaging
- 11% paper
- 9% biowaste

Only 28% of waste was collected in an undifferentiated manner.

### Potential for learning or transfer

The initiative to address the challenge of keeping Lisbon clean during the World Youth Day 2023 event holds significant potential for learning and transferability to other contexts. Events where large gatherings of young people occur present an opportune moment to raise awareness about behaviors aligned with environmental sustainability, particularly regarding waste generation.

Understanding the population influx and the types of waste produced is crucial for effective waste management, especially in events with sudden population increases. Developing both global and local action plans ensures comprehensive coverage of waste management strategies. By tailoring plans to specific locations and considering local factors, similar approaches can be replicated in other cities or events facing similar challenges. Prioritising waste sorting and optimising collection processes are fundamental for efficient waste management.



# Waste minimisation in cultural events



## Culture is a broad term and so is its audience.

From music festivals, individual concerts, outdoor cultural events, to exhibitions and film festivals, culture attracts diverse target groups, with diverse interests, of different ages, and often with diverse behaviour patterns. A lot of this will reflect in the expectations of different target groups, the experience they are looking for, and their lifestyles in general.

Whether audio or visual art, indoor or outdoor, solutions exist to prevent or reduce waste at the planning phase with a focus on equipment and material, as well as during the staging of the event when the efforts of the visitors can be supported by various “green teams”. Sharing such practices and experiences can lead to significant replication elsewhere, making future cultural events more sustainable by default



# 1 Artisti in Piazza Pennabilli: sustainability with Go Green

**Location:** Italy, Emilia-Romagna region  
**Owner:** Associazione Ultimo Punto  
**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more

## About this good practice

The Artisti in Piazza festival is curated by the Associazione Ultimo Punto and is held every year in June since 1997. It attracts over 50 companies and 350 shows and a total of around 20,000 people including staff and audience. Starting in 2019, from the collaboration with the Pennabilli Museum of Natural History, the Go Green working group was born: its aim is to monitor, activate, discuss and promote collective and individual sustainable actions that respect the environment and the planet, in order to raise awareness of the festival's sustainability among the public and the local community. The Go Green team consists of five full-time staff members and

around 15 eco-volunteers. Go Green has been working closely with the local waste management agency for years on proper separation. In 2023, 100 roadside dumpsters divided into 19 ecological islands were placed plus about 40 self-managed stations made of recycled materials. Waste is centralised by eco-volunteers and collected daily. Since 2016, reusable glasses have been introduced and from 2019 the festival is plastic free. Children's toys are created by recovering recyclable materials such as cans, iron, paper and glass.

**The festival is also committed to reducing consumption, not only because there are many stages with LED lights and a mix of mostly renewable energy is used. Car sharing policies are pursued and two electric cars are provided to reduce emissions for the artists' shuttle service.**

## Expert opinion

Without proper management, public (and private) events generate a significant amount of waste. From disposable cups and plates to decorations and promotional materials, the waste produced can be substantial. If not managed properly, this waste ends up in landfills, contributing to pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the depletion of natural resources. The annual waste generation in the EU amounts to 2.5 billion tonnes, which is why waste prevention and minimisation is encouraged in many EU policies, including the Waste Framework Directive and the Circular Economy Action Plan. The steps taken by the Artisti in Piazza festival focus not only on waste management, but also on waste prevention – the festival is plastic free since 2019 (water taps instead of single-use bottles, reusable glasses), and reducing emissions and energy consumption. The GoGreen model is transferrable and can be used to build a national and international network of festivals committed to promoting reuse models and reducing waste, through the exchange of ideas and actions.

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## Resources needed

An additional service is required each year, including the rental and installation of 100 roadside bins and the subsequent compaction of waste for more efficient transport. Own funds are used (11.9% of the festival's total resources) with 5 people from the Go Green Team and 15 eco-volunteers.



## Evidence of success

- 26,200 kg of waste managed in 2023 (25,015 kg in 2022)
- Expansion of the 19 street ecological islands set up for the festival in cooperation with the service company: construction of 40 new wooden recycling bins, increase of 16,000 litres of collection capacity equal to 3,000 kg of waste with the aim of reusing them for many years to come, thus reducing construction costs.
- 90,000 unsold bottles thanks to free water dispensers
- Creation of 6 composted toilets



## Potential for learning or transfer

This initiative has a high potential for transferability. The creation of an internal staff group working on issues of circular economy and care for the environment is capable of raising awareness of respect for the environment in cultural contexts.

The GoGreen model can be used to build a national and international network of festivals committed to promoting reuse models and reducing waste, through the exchange of ideas and actions.

It is clear how collaboration with local authorities and dialogue with the public administration can help implement services for waste awareness.



## 2 Sustainability Team of ROBOT Festival

**Location:** Italy, Emilia-Romagna region  
**Owner:** Shape Associazione Culturale APS  
**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more

### About this good practice

ROBOT festival is organised by Shape Associazione Culturale APS, which is committed to identifying and adopting best practices to progressively reduce the environmental impact of its events. The festival has obtained the EcoActions certificate from Legambiente, which guarantees the event's low environmental impact.

With a view to improving environmental sustainability practices, a Sustainability Team has been set up to work constantly to ensure higher standards and to spread the importance of the message during the Festival. The team is coordinated by a Sustainability Manager and is involved in



all areas of the festival, from behind-the-scenes production and logistics to direct contact with the public, from reception to administration. The team consists of 7 staff members and around 100 volunteers who receive special training each year. Each member is easily recognisable by a personalised gilet.

Waste management during the event is careful and adapted to the venue. Communication is visual and direct, and items are pasted on top of each litter basket for greater understanding. Particular attention is paid to the use of reusable hard plastic or compostable cups. In addition, water vending machines are available during events for free use.

**Finally, the festival promotes sustainable mobility through public transport or car and bike sharing services, activating conventions (partnerships with Bologna Welcome, Corrente, RideMovi and Tesla) and discounts for the public.**

### Resources needed

Human resources for the organisation and management of sustainability actions are provided by the Sustainability Team and the Social Security Team.

Each edition also sees the participation of around 100 volunteers (each with their own task), after appropriate training by the team.

### Evidence of success

In 2022 and 2023, the Festival was awarded the EcoActions certification by Legambiente. Controlled separate waste collection at all festival venues: around 30 bins at the main venue. Free water point for each venue with distribution of over 165 litres of water in 2023 (+50% from 2022). 7 members of the sustainability and security team in 2023 (3 in 2022). Continuous training before and during the festival.

### Potential for learning or transfer

Informing the public and guiding them toward more conscious and sustainable consumption habits is the mission of Shape and ROBOT festival.

They do this both on-site, thanks to the support of the Sustainability Team, present at all locations and recognizable by personalized bibs, and online, communicating their sustainability efforts and initiatives through social media.

Shape supports skills exchange and peer learning in the arts, music and technology with projects and workshops dedicated to children (ROBOT Kids), youth and young professionals in the field (ROBOT Learn).

To encourage the public towards a greener sustainable mobility, Shape and ROBOT festival are committed to activate several partnerships including Tesla, Bologna Welcome x Trenitalia and Italo, Corrente, RideMovi. These agreements are joined by others in the hospitality, food & beverage and culture sectors.

Awareness-raising also of the team through specific training, to admit limitations and be aware of improvement.





# 3 Making a Film Festival Greener

**Location:** Greece, Central Macedonia region  
**Owner:** Thessaloniki Film Festival  
**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more

## About this good practice

Since 2023, the Thessaloniki Film Festival (TFF) has adopted an environmental policy, endorsed by its Board, overseen by its General Director, and implemented by a Green Officer and a cross-departmental Green Team, with the support of a contracted sustainability expert.

TFF's policy focuses on: People, Buildings & Operations, Materials & Procurement, Waste Management, Travel & Hospitality, Communication & Collaboration, and Programming.

### The Thessaloniki Film Festival has:

- organized a series of seminars and workshops for employees, partners, and volunteers,
- carried out energy upgrade works at its headquarters, improving the building's energy rating from class D to B (co-funded by the Region of Central Macedonia and the European Regional Development Fund),
- commissioned a carbon footprint and energy management audit for the entire organization,
- co-signed the Green Charter for Film Festivals,
- systematized the collection and measurement of data on energy, transportation, food, waste, etc.,
- initiated the process of acquiring EN ISO 14001:2015 certification.

### Regarding waste management, TFF has taken significant steps towards:

- reducing waste by revising its procurement policy, limiting promotional materials, relying on reusable cutlery and products, and avoiding single-use plastic water bottles (water coolers have been installed across venues, encouraging guests and audiences to use reusable bottles),
- diverting several waste streams from landfill towards composting, recycling, and reuse, by collaborating with specialized contractors.

## Resources needed

- Staff members from across the organization—administrative, technical, and creative—participate in the Green Team.
- Estimated cost: approx. €50,000/year + VAT (covering personnel and partners only, not upgrading interventions).
- Main challenge: securing resources to ensure the continuation of the program.

## Evidence of success

The Thessaloniki Film Festival has commissioned annual carbon footprint reports.

According to the most recent report, the total waste generation at the 64th Thessaloniki International Film Festival (2023) was 4,098 kg, compared to 4,814 kg in the previous edition. Total emissions per person decreased from 0.016 CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2022 to 0.012 CO<sub>2</sub>eq in 2023.

The reports also confirmed that:

- the installation of water coolers significantly reduced single-use plastics, and
- training initiatives contributed to improved waste sorting at source.

## Potential for learning or transfer

### The Thessaloniki Film Festival:

- communicates its environmental policy to public and private bodies to encourage adoption of similar practices,
- is a co-signatory of the Green Charter for Film Festivals, a European initiative of the Network MIOB,
- participates in the SMART7 Festival Network, which organizes sustainability-focused training sessions (including a workshop in Iceland/2024),
- presented its initiatives and challenges at a cluster meeting organized by MEDIA at EFM/2025,
- introduced a €10 “green fee” for accredited guests, with proceeds reinvested in its sustainability action plan,
- provides its team with access to training materials, good practice guides, and case studies from the international cultural sector, along with regular updates on climate issues and sustainability innovations,
- places strong emphasis on training and compliance with the EU Green Deal and related policies.



## 4 G'scheit feiern Reduce waste of events and festivals

**Location:** Austria, Styria region

**Owner:** Waste department  
of the Province of Styria

**Website:**



Scan the QR code  
to learn more

### About this good practice

In the past, places in Styria where festivals and celebrations took place were heavily polluted by disposable plastic. This resulted in high costs for cleaning and disposal. For this reason, the waste department of the Province of Styria initiated the campaign "G'scheit feiern" (celebrate cleverly) and developed criteria for the sustainable organisation of festivals. Financial support was offered for festivals that met the criteria.

A network of 43 waste consultants from the waste management associations act as "G'scheit feiern" regional advisors, ad-



vising organisers and checking compliance with the "G'scheit feiern" criteria. They always initiate excellent showcase projects. Since 2017 "G'scheit feiern" is part of the Austria-wide "Green Events Austria" network. With the "Infothek Green Events Styria", a new web-based information portal for a sustainable event industry has been created; it is also intended to network organisers, producers and service providers.

**Within the framework of "G'scheit feiern" events, only reusable crockery and cutlery as well as glasses or reusable cups may be used. Only regionally produced drinks and food may be offered, if possible from organic farming. Furthermore, a sustainable journey to the event, e.g. car pooling or shared taxis, is supported.**

### Expert opinion

The good practice is an excellent organisational innovation on a regional level. The new approach to festival organisation involves setting of environmental criteria leading to better waste management but also to other impacts such as use of local food. The fact that many people attend these events raises the environmental awareness of the population ultimately shifting their behaviour. The benefits of the new approach are very tangible and lead to decreased costs for the organisers of the events and the waste management companies. The GP could be inspiring to regions and cities who organise a big number of festivals and who struggle with littering and high cleaning costs.

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### Resources needed

Within the framework of a stakeholder process, criteria for eligibility for funding were developed. An information campaign with logo and web portal was developed. Waste consultants were responsible for regional support. To date, the Province of Styria has spent more than EUR 1 million on promotion.



### Evidence of success

90 % of waste could be reduced per event. Since 2001 around 4.5 million visitors saved 4.000 tonnes of waste and EUR 45 million went directly to Styrian producers. G'scheit feiern influences other types of events (e.g. running races) to use reusable cups instead of single use cups. The City of Graz published guidelines for events on public areas that reusable crockery and cutlery must be used. An intensive networking of waste advisers working in the waste management associations was established.



### Potential for learning or transfer

Festival events usually lead to a large amount of waste and pollution of the festival grounds. The implementation of such sustainable events will also attract groups of participants who are not normally open-minded and environmentally aware citizens. In this way, waste prevention can be practically demonstrated and a new low-waste festival culture can be conveyed. At the same time the consumption of regionally and biologically produced beverages and products is promoted, so that the money spent remains in the region. "G'scheit feiern" is a long-standing and successfully implemented example of good practice so that other waste associations in Europe can build on this experience. This will be particularly important in the implementation of the new European directive on single-use plastics.



# 5

## Reuse and repair of dragon's figures used during the Great Dragons Parade in Kraków

**Location:** Poland, Kraków  
**Owner:** Grotoska Theatre  
**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more



### About this good practice

The Great Dragons Parade, organized annually by the Grotoska Theatre since 2000, is a hallmark cultural event in Kraków. Combining creativity and sustainability, the event showcases massive dragon figures during a spectacular interdisciplinary show on the Vistula River. Over the years, the parade has adopted practices to reduce waste and cut costs, with a particular focus on reusing and repairing dragon figures.



Initially, dragons were crafted from rubber or rented materials, which proved expensive and unsustainable. From the sixth parade onward, a lightweight and durable polyamide-polyester material was adopted. This material allowed the creation of visually stunning, reusable, and repairable dragons. Over time, approximately 30 dragons were made and rotated between events, maintaining audience interest while minimizing new production.

The reparability of the dragons is a key feature. The theatre's craftsmen can easily sew or glue small damages, rebuild dragons by adding or modifying elements, and even create new dragons by combining materials from old ones. These practices drastically reduced costs and reliance on large rental spaces.

**Additional good practices include the use of ecological, energy-saving lighting, water-based paints, and low-noise pyrotechnics. This comprehensive approach has enhanced sustainability while maintaining the event's popularity, attracting over 100,000 spectators annually and boosting Kraków's cultural tourism.**



### Resources needed

Key resources include a skilled team of craftsmen for repairs and modifications, polyamide-polyester fabric for dragon construction (costing approx. PLN 25,000 per dragon without labor), basic tools for sewing and gluing, storage space for dragon figures, and access to a workshop for maintenance.



### Evidence of success

Reusing and repairing dragon figures has reduced production costs and waste while maintaining event quality. Approximately 20 dragons were created from reused materials, saving resources. Spectator numbers have grown significantly, with over 100,000 attendees annually. Ecological practices, like low-noise pyrotechnics, enhance sustainability and public satisfaction, making the parade a recognized European cultural highlight.



### Potential for learning or transfer

This practice demonstrates how cultural events can integrate sustainability and cost-efficiency, making it a model for regions aiming to reduce waste in large events. Key success factors include skilled craftsmen, access to reusable materials, and community engagement. It is particularly relevant for regions hosting recurring events, as it balances environmental responsibility with cultural value.

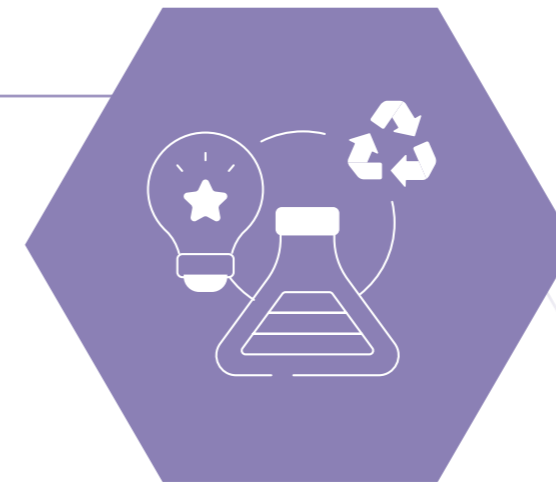
Challenges to transfer may include the need for specialized skills (e.g., repairing polyamide-polyester structures) and the availability of suitable workshops and storage facilities.

While the practice has not yet been officially transferred, it offers scalable solutions for other regions. For instance, cities aiming to enhance the sustainability of parades, festivals, or public art displays could adopt this approach. With proper training and collaboration, it can inspire eco-friendly cultural event management across Europe.



# Waste minimisation

in business, scientific, outdoor,  
and awareness events



**Business and scientific events are often needed to be organised in a way that would allow them to meet their purpose and attract relevant audiences, which can be specific and could carry minimum standards, expectations and requirements – in terms of comfort, efficiency, or purposefulness of the event.**

Nevertheless, waste prevention and reduction should not be a part of the compromise but a mainstreamed principle which can change how such events are organised in the longer run. This can be achieved by rethinking certain setups, the equipment that is used, reinforcing more sustainable procurement processes and reusable items, and showcasing the results to the audience for potential replication elsewhere.

On the other hand, outdoor events which revolve around leisure or professional activities in nature require extraordinary efforts, as waste collection systems and infrastructure aren't always available in remote areas. Therefore, such events should consider principles such as "leave no trace" and request from visitors and participants to take care of their waste until they reach available waste collection facilities. Alternatively, temporary waste collection facilities and onsite valorisation of the produced waste could decrease the environmental impact of such events and activities.



## 1

## Waste minimisation in Greencities & S-Moving Urban intelligence and smart mobility meeting in Málaga

**Location:** Spain, Malaga

**Owner:** FYCMA

**Website:**

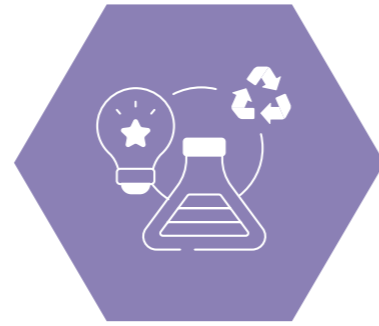


Scan the QR code to learn more



### About this good practice

FYCMA aims to reduce waste at its events and lower its carbon footprint. To achieve this, calculations are made based on operational practices, and modifications are implemented to improve results.



### Exhibition Area

- **Stands:** Manufactured by FYCMA using reusable wood.
- **Furniture:** Provided according to exhibitors' needs, either their own or rented.
- **Flooring:** High-performance artificial grass was used instead of carpet, benefiting from its 10-year durability. It is recyclable, resistant, reusable, and long-lasting.
- **Waste Management:** Waste bins and containers were installed in common areas, exhibition halls, and organizational spaces. The number of ecological islands was increased.

### Communication

- **SDGs:** All commercial proposals include the SDG logo, ensuring contractors are aware of the event's commitment to sustainability. The website features a list of good practices for participants.
- **Paper Reductio:** Communication with exhibitors and professionals is carried out electronically. Documentation, design, and accreditation are managed via a mobile app. Printed accreditations were eliminated, replaced by PDF files or QR codes. The minimal paper used is recycled.
- **Eco-design:** All materials are designed following eco-design recommendations.
- **Catering:** Cafeteria materials are reusable, and local, seasonal products are prioritized.



### Resources needed

- Carbon footprint calculation: €2,000
- CO<sub>2</sub> offsetting: €4,500
- Investment in reusable and recyclable materials: 30% of materials used
- Recyclable fair carpet (50% extra cost): €4,500
- Reusable materials (9 uses): €3,300
- Adequate storage space for furniture and equipment
- Cleaning and material collection: €750



### Evidence of success

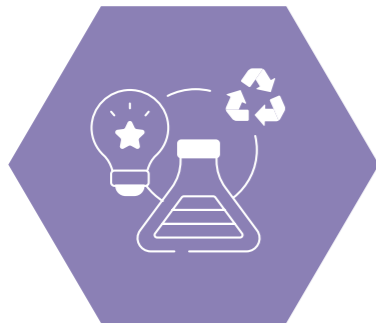
- Reduction of waste: Significant decrease in waste collected after the event (approx. €70 saved per tonne).
- Reduction of rented materials: Most are now stored and reused, saving around €100 per unit.
- Carbon footprint reduction: Decreased waste from carpets, tarps, and similar materials.
- Plastic reduction: Plastic cups, cutlery, and bottles were replaced with ceramic or aluminum alternatives in catering services.



### Potential for learning or transfer

This practice can be replicated at other events similar to Greencities-S-Moving. By identifying the specific types of waste and consumption patterns generated during an event, it becomes possible to eliminate unnecessary items and replace others with more sustainable materials and practices.





## 2

### Waste management in participatory events in coastal areas that obtain the sustainability seal

**Location:** Spain, Malaga  
**Owner:** LIMASAM Cleaning Service of Málaga Ltd.

**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more



#### About this good practice

The main problem is the large amount of waste generated. This challenge is exacerbated at events in special natural or aquatic environments, where improper management can severely impact the local ecosystem. The need for more sustainable events has driven the introduction of practices that minimise waste and reduce environmental impact from planning to execution.



The practice focuses on waste minimisation in three stages:

**1. Event planning:** reuse of infrastructure and materials, use of sustainable temporary facilities and co-operation with local stakeholders are promoted to reduce the purchase of new materials and avoid waste at the end of the event.

**2. Waste management during the event:** single-use items are eliminated, comprehensive waste collection systems are implemented and incentives are created to reward sustainable behaviour.

**3. Communication campaigns** are launched before and during the event to raise awareness among attendees about proper waste management and the importance of participating in sustainability initiatives. Visual solutions and clear signage are used to guide participants.

**The main stakeholders are the event organisers, sponsoring companies, local suppliers and public administrations that support sustainable practices. The main beneficiaries are the event attendees, who participate in a cleaner and more sustainable environment. Indirectly, the local community and the environment also benefit, as waste and ecological impact in the event area are reduced.**



#### Resources needed

The adoption of the proposed measures involves the provision of municipal waste management services. Municipal expenses derive from the differentiated collection of waste and the savings come from the unnecessary cleaning of the beaches where the event took place.



#### Evidence of success

**Waste reduction.**

All event equipment has been reused and donated. Zero purchases of support materials. Zero waste of race numbers. 95% participation in collaboration. 100% collaboration with the organization. 80% responsible purchasing (minimization of packaging and containers. Fruit from local businesses). Waste separation with less than 20% of inappropriate waste (mixture of lightweight packaging and organic waste). 100% separation and proper management of paper and cardboard packaging.



#### Potential for learning or transfer

This practice may be interesting for other regions due to its flexibility and adaptability to different contexts. Below are the key factors that facilitate the transfer of this good practice, as well as the challenges that may arise when implementing it in new environments:

##### Key success factors for transfer

1. Adaptability
2. Simplicity and replicability
3. Support from local stakeholders
4. Positive and visible impact
5. Commitment to the environment

##### Factors that may hinder transfer

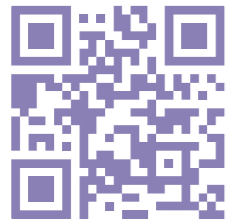
1. Limited infrastructure for waste management
2. Lack of public awareness
3. Costs and resources for adaptation
4. Regulatory context that hinders adaptation

Supply planning based on the number of attendees. Reducing the amount of packaging waste generated. Reducing the types of materials. Using these events as a marketing traction for suppliers. Adopting new habits in event planning.



### 3 Waste Management in Anatolia College events

**Location:** Greece, Central Macedonia region  
**Owner:** Anatolia College  
**Website:**

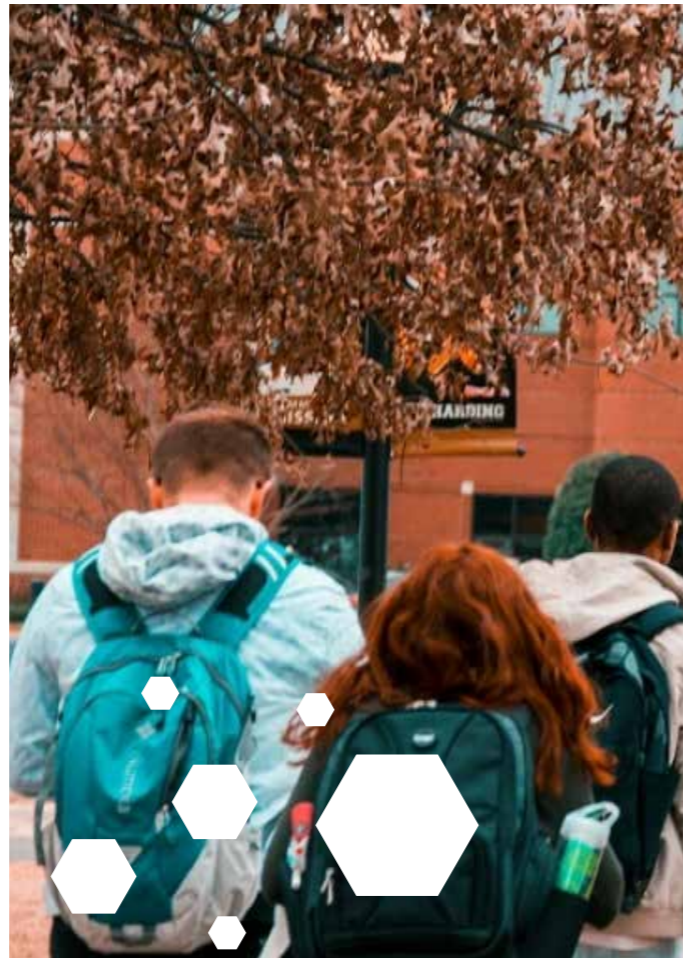


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#### About this good practice

Large-scale events often generate significant amounts of waste, contributing to environmental degradation and resource depletion. Without proper management, this waste may end up in landfills, harming ecosystems and human health.

Anatolia College has developed a comprehensive waste management strategy to minimize waste generation and promote recycling and reuse during its events. This includes collaboration with various organizations for waste collection, redistribution of surplus food, and recycling of paper and plastic. Additionally, Anatolia College has implemented measures to reduce its envi-



ronmental footprint, such as transitioning to renewable energy sources and banning the sale of plastic bottles on campus.

**The objective is to significantly reduce waste generation and increase recycling rates during large events, ultimately aiming for zero waste. Targets include diverting a significant percentage of waste from landfills, raising awareness among students, faculty, and staff about waste reduction practices, and fostering a culture of sustainability within the Anatolia College community. The expectation is to create a model for sustainable event management that can be replicated by other institutions.**



#### Resources needed

The project is led by eight individuals from the Social Responsibility Office, Maintenance Department, Security & Cleaning Services, Events Planning Coordinators, and educators. In addition, 50 students from the Green Ambassadors initiative are involved in tree planting, waste management projects, and awareness campaigns.

#### Evidence of success

Anatolia collaborates with external organizations for waste management, such as ANAKEM for construction waste collection, BOROUME for surplus food redistribution, and ELDIA for recycling. Social welfare organizations like DESMOS facilitate the donation of technology equipment. These partnerships have helped Anatolia reduce its environmental impact at large events. For example, by banning the sale of plastic bottles and installing water coolers, 18,000 plastic bottles are saved each month. Since 2022, more than 600,000 bottles have been saved.

#### Potential for learning or transfer

Anatolia College's sustainability initiative offers valuable lessons for other regions or organizations seeking to adopt similar practices. Key transferable elements include:

- **Internal Collaboration:** A well-coordinated internal team is essential. Without collaboration between departments (education, administration, social responsibility), implementing sustainability practices effectively would be difficult.
- **Engagement and Education:** The involvement of students, staff, and the broader community is key. Engaging stakeholders through workshops and environmental campaigns raises awareness and drives collective action.
- **Partnerships with External Organizations:** Partnerships are crucial for handling specialized aspects such as waste collection. Similar collaborations are needed in any region aiming to replicate the initiative.

#### Obstacles and challenges

1. Initial costs and resource allocation
2. Cultural and institutional resistance
3. Infrastructure requirements



# 4

## Exibo -method of exhibition design to be used in large events with a limited environmental footprint

**Location:** Greece, Region of Central Macedonia

**Owner:** Polyptychon

**Website:**



Scan the QR code to learn more



### About this good practice

The motto of this research is “Designing for All”, aiming to develop an innovative method of exhibition design that can be applied to large events with a limited environmental footprint.

Exibo is the outcome: a design methodology for a modular exhibition system based on the archetypal production process of recording, analyzing, and reconstituting data.



It is a three-dimensional holistic exhibition system, composed of:

- Skeleton (load-bearing structure),
- Skins (covering elements),
- Add-ons (furniture).

Through repetition, expansion, and sequencing of a uniquely defined geometric element, Exibo enables the creation of spaces for presenting all types of content—ideas, values, memory, and products—generally understood as “experience spaces.”

The key innovation was to redefine the ontology of a modular exhibition system, making it easier to clearly define design goals and outcomes.

**The vision was to describe and establish the elements of a “universal language” in exhibition design with sustainable characteristics. The main structure is made of thin aluminum, ensuring lightness, durability, and reusability.**



### Resources needed

Polyptychon expanded its existing team of architects, engineers, and designers by hiring external experts, including:

- a structural engineer,
- a lighting specialist,
- a material scientist.

As Exibo was developed within a research programme, it proved financially stable, with no unforeseen costs.



### Evidence of success

- Waste produced by cuttings is only 0.2–2.0%, much of which can be reused for add-on elements or supporting structures.
- Multiple reuses of the system reduced costs of production, transport, installation, and dismantling:
  - up to 50% for the first reuse,
  - up to 70% for the second reuse.

**Organisations that have replicated the practice:**

- Polycentric Museum of Aigai
- Archaeological Museum of Kilikis
- State Theatre of Northern Greece



### Potential for learning or transfer

The Exibo system can be easily transferred to other regions and countries, as it is specifically designed to adapt to different spaces and topics.

It represents a sustainable, self-standing, and self-luminous modular exhibition system, offering unprecedented flexibility for users who wish to minimize customization in exhibition design and thereby reduce design-related waste.





## 5 Solid waste management for large-scale events in Thermi Environmental Park

**Location:** Greece, Region of Central Macedonia

**Owner:** FODSA

**Website:**

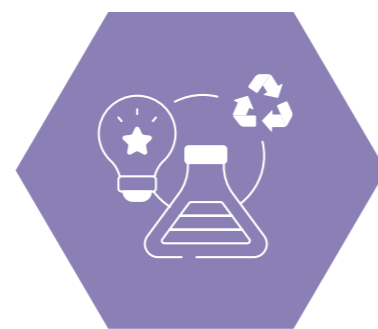


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### About this good practice

The park receives 14,837 children from school trips annually and hosts cultural and sporting events. So, an organized and planned waste management system within the park became imperative. FODSA contributes to environmental awareness and proper waste management. As a result, the park is kept clean throughout events.

Schools participate in environmental education programs and workshops organized by the solid waste management authority, focusing on recycling and environmental



protection. An increased visitation on weekends and holidays and numerous organizations hosting sports and cultural events, generates substantial amounts of waste. The following initiatives were undertaken:

1. Collaboration with neighbouring municipalities to procure green waste bins
2. Cooperation with the recycling center (blue bins)
3. On-site composting
4. Increase of bins and strategic implementation (accessible locations)
5. Staff trained in waste management and composting practices
 

For example, the park successfully hosted the Olympic Day event for two years, attracting over 2,000 attendees.
6. Leave No Trace policy: The initiative began with telephone briefings for schools scheduling visits, followed by on-site education upon arrival.

**The main stakeholders and beneficiaries of this practice are the municipalities and regions, but primarily the citizens.**

### Expert opinion

On average, every European citizen produces nearly half a tonne of municipal waste and the annual waste generation in the EU amounts to 2.5 billion tonnes. Effective waste management at large-scale events is crucial to minimizing environmental impact and promoting sustainability. It involves careful planning, clear waste separation systems, and collaboration with local waste services. Key strategies include reducing single-use plastics, providing accessible recycling and composting bins, and raising awareness among attendees. When done well, waste management not only keeps the venue clean but also sets a positive example for responsible public behavior and long-term environmental stewardship.

**Magda Michalíková**

Works at Interreg Europe Policy Learning Platform



### Resources needed

- Permanent staff (approximately 5 people), with in-depth knowledge of the park's operations and the activities conducted within it.
- Own contribution budget
- The municipalities supply the bins.



### Evidence of success

Students increased from 4,663 in 2015 to 14,837 in 2024 (220%). Source-separated collection, composting and extra bins, prevent litter accumulation. Collaboration with municipalities, schools and organizations approves the success of the practices. On-site composting from organic waste and coffee grounds produces compost used in the park itself and reduces waste sent to landfills. Education programs provided to schools and the "Leave No Trace" policy have increased environmental awareness.



### Potential for learning or transfer

The practice highlights the significance of waste management in public outdoor spaces, especially those that experience high visitation on a weekly basis. Recreational and sports areas attract large crowds. In the 24 years since its opening and after the COVID-19 pandemic, the park has an increase in visitors. So, the park's waste management guidelines constantly update. The variety of source-separation channels for common materials (plastic, paper, glass, and organic waste), along with easily accessible facilities for these channels, contribute to minimizing the environmental impact of outdoor activities. Also, they educate visitors and guide them towards to zero-waste societies. Public authorities and local governments collaborate for optimal results. The environmental education of children who visit the park is a plus (environmental briefings on recycling/school trips). Children receive information for the recycling channels, and the designated composting area in the park.



## 6 Waste prevention at SANA Food and Slow Wine

**Location:** Italy, Metropolitan City of Bologna  
**Owner:** SANA Food and Slow Wine  
**Website:**



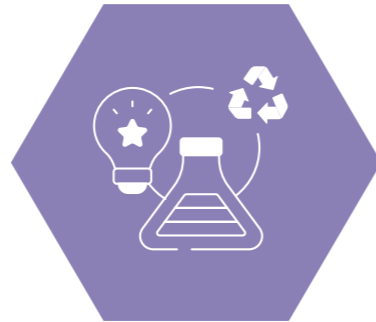
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### About this good practice

SANA Food is an exhibition that offers organic and healthy food companies the opportunity to link with national and international visitors. The Slow Wine Fair brings together wine producers from around the globe who are dedicated to sustainability, ethical production methods, and creating high-quality wines that honor biodiversity and local traditions.

SANA Food and Slow Wine in collaboration with BolognaFiere has addressed sustainability, by reducing their impact on the environment when the two events take place. SANA Food and Slow Wine missions represent a commitment to minimizing environmental impact, mainly through waste management, and ensuring that every aspect of the event aligns with sustainable and responsible approaches.

**These events exemplify sustainable event management by prioritizing waste prevention and resource recovery. These annual events integrate eco-friendly practices throughout their organization. Key measures include achieving a 99.5% waste recovery rate, transitioning to 100% plastic-free catering, and promoting sustainable transportation options to minimize carbon footprints. Innovative initiatives, such as eliminating carpeting in exhibition areas starting in 2025, further reduce waste generation. These efforts demonstrate how business events can integrate sustainability into every aspect of their operations.**



### Resources needed

- Human resources: Waste management strategies have been designed by event organizers and sustainability experts collaborate to design waste management strategies.
- Infrastructure and facilities: 20,000 square meters of exhibition space

### Evidence of success

During the SANA Food and the Slow Wine exhibitions, 99.5% of the waste was recovered. Key initiatives included plastic-free catering services, discounted sustainable transportation options, waste sorting by category - ensuring materials were reintroduced into the market as secondary raw materials, a paperless approach, and starting in 2025, the elimination of carpets from the exhibition corridors to simplify setup and teardown operations while reducing waste production.

### Potential for learning or transfer

The Carpet-Free Event Policy implemented by SANA Food and Slow Wine serves as a model for business events to reduce waste effectively. By eliminating disposable carpets in booth corridors, the event addresses a critical environmental issue, as traditional carpet recycling remains limited, with only a fraction repurposed for innovative applications and approximately 37% of carpet waste ending up in energy recovery. This policy significantly reduces the amounts of waste generated after events, considering that the elimination of 20,000 square meters of carpeting avoids the emission of 0.81 kg of CO2 per square meter. This initiative demonstrates how eliminating non-essential materials can minimize waste while simplifying event setup and dismantling operations. For countries aiming to make their exhibitions and conferences more sustainable, this approach highlights the importance of rethinking event design and prioritising materials that are essential, reusable, or recyclable.



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