



SUSTAINABILITY IN YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS:

Guidelines on “How can youth organizations live sustainably?”



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FOOD



As an individual:

Carry your own reusables: food container, coffee mug, water bottle, and cutlery with you.

Eat more vegetables and minimize meat and dairy consumption - at least one day a week, take it step by step.

→ This is not only healthy for your health but is also good for the environment.

As an organization:

When buying food for events, camps or even every day:

- Avoid single-use plastic packaging. Carry your own reusable bags: for vegetables, fruit, bread, and nuts.
- Bring your own food containers and bottles, when buying meat or dairy.

Prioritize buying food from local farmers instead of going to the supermarket:

- eating local, seasonal food, instead of food from around the globe, that uses a lot of resources (energy, water)
- easier to avoid plastic wrapping and plastic bags,
- support local businesses.

When buying food in supermarkets:

- prioritise loose food, especially vegetables, nuts, and fruit, where you can use reusable bags or containers of over-packaged food,
- prioritize glass or aluminum containers over plastic packaging,
- buy local and organic food

Provide healthy snacks, and “real” food and avoid junk food (and also minimise waste).

Provide more vegetables and minimize meat and dairy consumption.

When eating meat, prioritize eating poultry over beef or pork. Poultry has the lowest carbon footprint than beef and pork.

Avoid creating food waste:

- plan menus and quantity of food based on the number and age of the participants,
- let the participants take the leftovers,
- make new dishes from the leftovers.

If tap water is not drinkable, invest in a water filter system.

ENERGY: HEATING, ELECTRICITY & WATER



Be conscious about (over)using different sources of energy, eg. electricity, and heating.

Beginner:

- use reminder signs,
- use LED bulbs,
- turn off the lights that are not in use,
- turn off and unplug devices from the electric current that are not in use,
- use less water when washing hands, food, showering etc.,
- close windows when heating is on,
- minimize/turn off heating when windows are opened,
- have outside meetings,
- minimise the heating and wear warmer clothing.

Advanced:

- use sensor for appliances (lights, water taps, fridge etc.),
- invest in solar panels/photovoltaic panels,
- invest in improving house insulation,
- use mirrors to reflect sunlight,
- collect rainwater for watering the plants or cleaning,
- switch to environmentally friendlier ways of heating (e.g. heat pump),
- invest in efficient housing,
- advocate for energetically efficient housing policies,
- when cooking: put the lid on and lower the temperature or even turn off the stove, use the oven for multiple dishes at the same time etc.

TRANSPORT



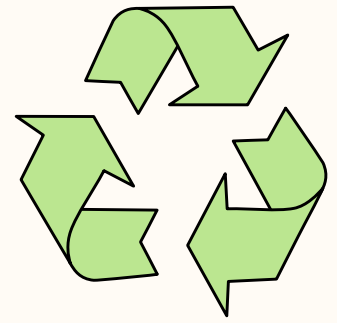
Be conscious about ways of travelling - as an individual and as a group (organization) always prioritize sustainable mobility (active mobility + public transport):

- in walking distance (less than 30 min) choose active mobility: walking, biking, rollerskating etc.
- use publicly available (e-)bikes (e.g. BicikeLJ) and (e-)scooters,
- prioritize using public transport, e.g. train, bus, tram, metro, international buses and trains (e.g. Flixbus, Interrail) instead of driving a car,
- when going on a journey, prioritize public transport (e.g. international buses and trains) over driving a car,
- when driving a car, always strive to drive passengers as well,
- invest in an electric car or a hybrid,
- when deciding between choosing to take a plane vs. driving a car, driving a car is a better option (it has lower carbon footprint) - especially when traveling up to 1000 km, and even better when car sharing.

When organizing an event (trip, daily adventure, journey, etc.):

- plan your journey ahead,
- plan your destination according to public transport possibilities,
- include walking as a part of your programme,
- use international public transport instead of flying,
- when travelling longer distances (e.g. from Europe to the US), plan one longer trip instead of multiple short visits.

WASTE



Beginner:

Be a thoughtful consumer - minimise your consumption!

→ Educate yourself about the materials, and quality of things you are buying and rethink if you really need that thing.

Avoid producing so much waste.

→ As an individual and as a member of an organization: prioritize reusable materials, do not use single-use products, and (re)use what you already have.

Buy second-hand and sell/donate/exchange what you do not need or use anymore.

Avoid fast furniture (e.g. Ikea).

Check the chapter “food” of our sustainable guidelines again!

Pick up trash when walking even though it doesn't belong to you.

Advanced:

Learn and acquire new competencies useful to avoid a purchase. Upcycle, repair, refurbish old and broken items into functional ones, instead of buying new.

Try to make your own furniture (e.g. DIY or with a help of a local fablab, for 3D printing, laser CNC cutting etc.). This way you will acquire new stuff while avoiding mass production.

Always bear in mind:

RETHINK - your choices

ROT - organic waste

REFUSE - single use products or whatever you do not need

REDUCE - consumption

REUSE - everything

REFURBISH - old stuff

REPAIR - before you replace

REPURPOSE - be creative, reinvent

(RE)GIVE - things that you got bored with, you do not need or use

RECYCLE - use it as a last option!

CLOTHING:



Be conscious about your wear:

- choose not to shop from fast fashion shops: think about what are you paying. Find the perfect balance between the price and quality. If possible, invest in fewer, handmade, durable items from the local or fairtrade markets.
- prioritize second-hand clothing: thrift stores, organized exchanges or with friends,
- sell or donate clothes that you are not using anymore but are still of good quality to wear
- think twice before buying: do not buy what you do not really need

Own less clothes and shoes: try various combinations and let your wardrobe breathe.

Learn how to sew or knit clothes, at least as a quick repair!

APPLICABLE FOR ALL TOPICS



Inform and advocate:

- organize activities, events, and workshops ... to raise awareness of the problem and provide at least some solutions: **a) amongst the members of your organization, their families, and friends b) local community,**
- communicate with the relevant media to increase the reach of your activities,
- promote the best advocacy activities as examples of good practices when addressing the local authorities and the government to make changes.