

EASPD's Green Manifesto



European Association of
Service providers for
Persons with Disabilities

Introduction

Across Europe, and the rest of the world, the wide-ranging effects of climate change are becoming an ever more pressing threat to our societies, environments and economies. These threats are not the same for all of us, with the impacts of climate change differing from region to region.¹

It is now widely understood that human activities are increasingly influencing the climate and the earth's temperature via the emission of greenhouse gases.² According to the European Environment Agency, the EU is the world's **third biggest greenhouse gases emitter** after China and the US.³ As average global temperature is rising, scientists have warned that an increase of **2°C compared to pre-industrialised levels** could trigger further dangerous and catastrophic consequences for the climate, environment and our current way of life.⁴

These impacts will be felt by all of us, however recent studies show that **disadvantaged groups will be amongst the most impacted** by the consequences of climate change, with these groups being more likely to be affected by climate hazards and also less capable of coping with their consequences.⁵ Most recently, the impact of climate change on persons with disabilities was directly addressed by the United Nations Human Rights Council in July 2019, when they adopted a [historical resolution on climate change](#) and the rights of people with disabilities.

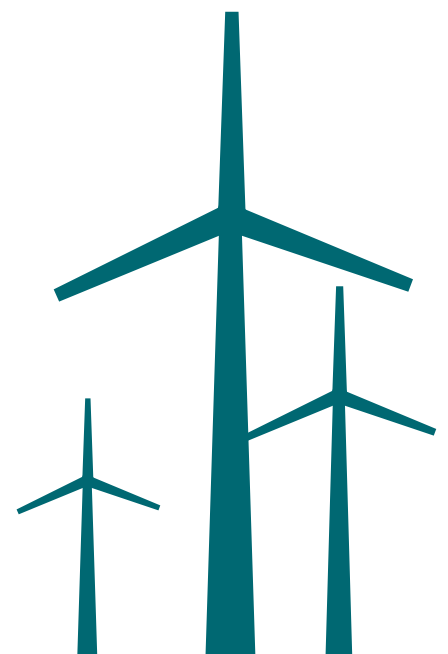
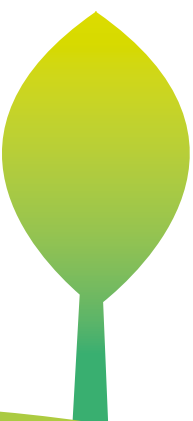
The current European Commission's new European Green Deal has outlined the EU's most ambitious plans yet, to facilitate a sustainable green transition, to achieve zero net emissions of greenhouse gases by 2050.⁶ While the will of policy makers, to develop and implement more environmentally friendly policies, is crucial for the occurrence of systematic change towards more sustainable societies, the impact of individual action should not be underestimated. **We all have a role to play** to contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by taking steps to reduce our own carbon footprint and become more sustainable.

Why become a more sustainable organisation?

For many, the motivation to live and work more sustainably is driven by the pressing need to address the growing threats posed by climate change and increased greenhouse gas emissions. While becoming more sustainable can have crucial benefits for our climate and environment **there are also a number of economic, health and social benefits** that can also be gained. For example:

- ▶ Eco-friendly alternatives may be more costly in the short term, but buying less, reusing more, buying second-hand, and saving energy will have beneficial effects in the long-term.⁷
- ▶ Consuming fewer chemicals, eating more fresh, local or when possible, organic food and less animal products, walking, cycling, and getting more fresh air, all reduce the risk of heart and respiratory disease, diabetes, cancer, asthma, and allergies.⁸
- ▶ By working alongside the environmental sector, the social sector has the opportunity to unlock new opportunities for the social inclusion of persons with disabilities.

With this manifesto EASPD hopes, that by committing to becoming a more environmental friendly organisation and lead the way for the sector, it can help to empower its members to take full advantage of our societies' transition to create more inclusive, sustainable organisations that promote the well-being and human rights of their staff and users.





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As the voice of over 17,000 support and care services at a European level, the European Association of Service providers for Persons with Disabilities (EASPD) wants to take the lead in increasing the sustainability of the sector and contribute to lower greenhouse gas emissions while also encouraging its members to strive for the same goal in their work.

In working to becoming a more environmentally sustainable organisation, EASPD commits to finding ways to carry out its activities in a way that is respectful to the environment, to protect the world we live in for future generations.



To do this, EASPD's Green Manifesto has identified three key areas, through which EASPD believes that it and its members can have the most impact:

- › The Office Environment
- › Travel and Transport
- › Events and Catering

Over the 2021-2022 period EASPD commits to implementing a number of actions across these 3 areas to support its move towards a more environmentally sustainable, member-led organisation. EASPD hopes that its members can join us in this transition so that we can together foster a more forward-looking, innovative sector.

EASPD's Commitments

EASPD initiatives

- › Development projects in cooperation with the environment sector to support eco-innovation in the support services sector. (Minimum of 1 application per year).
- › Create an 'Eco Handbook' with eco guidelines, recommendations and promising practices of EASPD members.
- › Regularly disseminate 'green tips' in EASPD's newsletters (Minimum of 8 over 1 year).
- › Incorporate EASPD's commitment to becoming more sustainable into the organisation's next multiannual strategy
- › Address how EASPD and its member organisations can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and creating more sustainable local communities

The Office Environment

- › Development of a more comprehensive waste reduction and management scheme within the EASPD Office in Brussels
 - › To include the implementation of a food waste disposal scheme (compost)
 - › To include implementation of a recycling team.
 - › Survey of our current office supply management.
- › Develop and implement an Electricity management strategy (Overview of the equipment that we buy, electricity consumption, promotion of good practices on an organisational and personal level).
- › To hold 1 internal staff training to support the EASPD secretariat to understand and implement sustainable practices in their everyday work.





Travel and Transport

- Reduce the use of airplane travel by the EASPD Secretariat by using alternative forms of public transport when possible.
- When possible pay the carbon costs on flights that are taken as a result of EASPD activities.
- Invest in video conferencing technology, to reduce the need for additional travel for conferences of events.
- Build on the experience of the Paris Conference
- Explore opportunities of hosting online Board meetings when possible.
- Explore opportunities of hosting online Ex-com meetings when possible.

Events and Catering

- Host future events as much as possible in locations that can be easily accessed via public transport, group travel arrangements or by foot.
- Work with local, sustainable caterer in all EASPD events.
- Provide more plant-based food options at events.
- Reduce the use of single use plastic and disposable plates and cutlery.
- Form a cooperation with a Brussels based charity to donate unused food from EASPD events.

Endnotes

- 1 EU Commission, Infographic: how climate change is affecting Europe, Available here <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20180905STO11945/infographic-how-climate-change-is-affecting-europe>
- 2 NASA, The Causes of Climate Change, Available here; <https://climate.nasa.gov/causes/>
- 3 European Commission, EU responses to climate change, Available here: <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20180703STO07129/eu-responses-to-climate-change>
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Islam, S.N. & Winkel, J. (2017) Climate Change and Social Inequality. DESA Working Paper No. 152 ST/ESA/2017/DWP/152, United Nations. Available here: https://www.un.org/esa/desa/papers/2017/wp152_2017.pdf.
- 6 European Commission, Communication on The European Green Deal, (11th December 2019) Available here; https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/european-green-deal-communication_en.pdf
- 7 International Young NatureFriends, Green Toolbox, (2012)
- 8 International Young NatureFriends, Green Toolbox, (2012)



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