

# Communicating Sustainable Development

Social, ecological and economic sustainable development is an overarching goal in the Interreg Aurora Programme - this is a requirement from the European Commission.

All Interreg Aurora projects contribute to sustainable development, you can also make impact in the way you implement the project.

Implementing of the UN:s sustainable development goals in the project plan and project implementation adds value to a project in terms of credibility and it can also increase effectiveness and reduce costs. Win-win!



## Interreg Aurora Requirements

The project staff in a regular Interreg Aurora projects **MUST** perform a mandatory workshop to concretize the work with sustainable development in the project and define which of the UN Sustainable Development goals the project will contribute to. Your project specific goals will be highlighted in the project bank on the Interreg Aurora Programme website.

When you write the progress reports to Interreg Aurora you also **MUST** describe how the sustainable thinking has been considered in your project management and activities.

**With this checklist, we hope to give you some guidance and inspiration!**

# Sustainable Interreg Aurora Projects

The Interreg Aurora Programme wants to challenge and inspire project partners to discuss, think and implement sustainable measures. It takes time to change mind-sets and habits, but every little change makes a difference.

Which level does your project reach?

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## Level 1 - MANDATORY FOR ALL PROJECTS!

### Doing the basics

- You have organised the project specific workshop regarding sustainable development and the UN Sustainable Development goals.
- You describe in your progress reports how sustainable development has been considered in connection to the project management and activities.
- You use the symbols of the UN Sustainable development goals when you communicate your project. You can highlight the symbols that your project contributes to on your website, social media channels, in your reports and videos. The Interreg Aurora Programme highlights the specific goals in the project bank on our official website.

## Level 2

### Going further

- You have made sustainable development and the Interreg Aurora Programme horizontal criteria's a recurring item on your meeting agendas (in example Project Management Group meetings, Work package activities, Steering Group meetings).
- Sustainability is considered for all decisions taken during the project time – and is also considered when planning for the project exit and afterlife.
- All project personnel are to be made aware of the purpose, benefits and the importance of communicating social, ecological and economic sustainability, both internal and external.
- All project members have been made aware of this document and have participated in the workshop about the UN Sustainable development goals.

## Level 3

### Frontrunner

- You give tangible examples on how you are working with sustainable development and you highlight all the specific activities that you are doing to contribute to the goals, both in internal and external communication.
- You have invited experts and arranged activities to highlight and raise awareness of sustainable development.

## Interreg Aurora made you a checklist!

We want to strengthen your project organisation with a practical checklist.

# Checklist

## Ecological Sustainability

Projects should strive to reduce consumption and the impact on the earth's ecosystems. It is important to make more efficient use of resources for all daily activities through electronic management, paperless communication, more on-line trainings and events and use of in-house equipment.

What else can your project do in order to limit the negative environmental effects and reduce climate impact?

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### Guidelines and management systems

- ☐ Find out if your organisations have environmental guidelines or an environmental management system you can implement in your project.

### Meetings and travel

- ☐ Discuss your approach to meetings and travels with your project partners early on in the project to minimize your environmental impact and at the same time safeguard a sustainable working life for the project personnel. It is always important to plan travels that feels safe for the project personnel, long distance driving, late flights and transports from accommodations far from event sites can be stressful.

### Reflect before booking a meeting:

- ☐ Can the possibility of travel-free meetings be considered as a first alternative? Can we have an online meeting?

### Reflect when you get a meeting request:

- ☐ Do I need to participate physically or can I participate digitally?

- ☐ Maybe you need to participate physically, but do you need to fly? Can you fly one way? Can you take public transportation? Can you share car with another participant? If you are many participants could it be better to rent a bus?

- ☐ Solutions with online meetings are practical, timesaving, gives the possibility for more people to join the meeting and can reduce your projects environmental impact. It is important to agree about a tool for online meetings that works for all project partners.

### Equipment

- ☐ Do you need specific equipment in the project? Before you order new equipment consider if you can:
  - Re-use?
  - Rent?
  - Lend?
  - Swap? Rather than looking to buy a specific product, investigate what kind of function you are looking for.
- ☐ Maybe your organisations have in-house equipment you can use.

### Dissemination of projects results

- ☐ Your project results will have a better chance of a sustainable long-term effect after the project closure if the public is aware of your projects accomplishments. It is important that you have a clear plan for how and where you will make your results public.

### Publications and dissemination products

- ☐ Publications can be disseminated mainly electronically on websites, social media and other media channels. Printing of publications should only be made if it is strictly necessary and with a clear dissemination plan.
- ☐ Publications should be printed for external communication purposes (if needed only) on both sides and on recycled paper or ecolabel paper.
- ☐ Short, clear and “to-the-point” publications should be preferred to long ones and images should be reduced to save printing space, maximizing the use of space.
- ☐ Publications should be printed where they are going to be distributed in order to minimize transportation distances. Can you use an ecofriendly labeled printing company?
- ☐ Banners and posters should be designed for reuse. Avoid tailormade banners and posters with fixed date/place/ name of event.

### Giveaways, promoting materials

- ☐ Reflect upon if you really need giveaways? Only useful products can be produced. Recycled or natural material should be preferred for the production of promotional products.

### Procurement

- ☐ The environmental effects should always be considered in the procurement procedure. Is it possible to systematically using green or circular public procurement, or applying greening principles in event organisation?

### Meetings and events

- ☐ Applying greening principles for the organisation of meetings and events provides high visibility for sustainable development. It is important to communicate effectively what kind of greening measures is applied, so that the event participants are made aware of the green efforts.

Some countries offer a green meeting certification for venues and event organization companies. Certified service providers should be preferred in the meeting.

# Interreg Aurora have prepared a green checklist for organising meetings and events.

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## Venue and Catering

- ☐ Include sustainability in your procurement.
- ☐ Accessibility-adapted premises.
- ☐ Choose a venue close to public transport.
- ☐ The start and end of meeting are adjusted to the schedule of environmentally sound transportation.
- ☐ Choose accommodation located near public transportation, preferably within walking distance from venue.
- ☐ Ask for tap water or glass bottles.
- ☐ Ask for reusable tableware, avoid disposable items.
- ☐ Limit the meat options (if possible).
- ☐ Ask for a menu with fresh, organic and local food.
- ☐ If fish, marine or aquaculture food is served, make sure it is not endangered and certified as caught or produced using sustainable methods.
- ☐ Ask how the venue tackle food waste.
- ☐ Ask how the venue works with reducing their CO<sup>2</sup> emissions and energy consumption.

## Waste Reduction

- ☐ Avoid promotional gifts.
- ☐ Choose recycled materials or reuse materials.
- ☐ Consider a paperless event, provide materials online.
- ☐ A dedicated area is provided for return of materials that can be reused, such as badges.
- ☐ Download the agenda and other documents on your phone or laptop instead of printing it.
- ☐ Bring a reusable bottle of water, coffee mug and bag.
- ☐ Eat responsibly; only take food and portions that you will eat.
- ☐ Always recycle your waste.

## Transportation

- ☐ Provide instructions to participants on appropriate public transportation and walking distances from arrival and departure points to venue, accommodation, town Centre etc.
- ☐ Walk to the venue if possible.

☐ Use low-carbon transportation options like bicycles, buses or train if possible.

☐ Carpool with other participants to get to the venue.

### Communication

☐ Use an online registration process.

☐ Use online surveys to evaluate your event.

☐ Communication about the greening efforts. Tell your participants about your green goals on the event, send them a checklist how they can contribute to your goals!

☐ Send a checklist to your participants before your event where you highlight the green efforts, that the participants also can contribute to a more sustainable event.

### Energy reduction

☐ Save water, turn off the water when brushing your teeth and take a shorter shower.

☐ Reuse your towel at the hotel.

☐ Turn off all lights and electronics when you leave your hotel room.

☐ Choose sustainable, local or organic food whenever possible.

☐ Choose the vegetarian option (if possible).

### Purchasing, use and minimize waste

☐ Buy from ethical sources.

☐ Look for fair trade products, especially important for imported products like sugar, chocolates and coffee.

☐ Minimize the waste you produce. Recycle the waste you can't avoid.

Fairtrade International  
Fairtrade Sverige  
Fairtrade Finland  
Fairtrade Norge

# Checklist

## Social Sustainability

Social sustainability means promoting a society that respects the fundamental rights of all people and fostering a fair, equal, and inclusive society.  
Your project must contribute to gender equality and non-discrimination.

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- ☐ Do you have knowledge about equal opportunities and non-discrimination? Does everyone in the project organisation know the discrimination laws? Gender, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion etc. Many companies have discovered that diversity among the staff is an asset that gives an increased attractiveness.
  - ☐ Is the project enhancing stereotypes and norms? We all have many preconceptions.
  - ☐ How is the gender equality in your project organisation? Often the easiest way to handle the question of gender equality is to count the number of men and women. But it is also important to consider which roles the persons have. Who has power over the agenda for example?
  - ☐ Do the project activities include all gender?
  - ☐ There are female-dominated and male-dominated professions. Can your project contribute to break these stereotypes in any way? To break traditional stereotypes is one of the most important things in order to reach equality between genders.
  - ☐ If there are available statistics on men and women in the field of your project, it might be a good idea to compare the statistics and aim at arranging specific activities in order to enhance equality.
  - ☐ When arranging conferences and seminars, try to find both male and female speakers. If you don't find speakers of both genders locally, widen the search.
  - ☐ When planning conferences and such, do you make sure that everyone can participate? Are the facilities accessible? Is it possible to order special meals?
  - ☐ What kind of photos and illustrations are you using? And which language? Symbolism is really important.
  - ☐ Read about the rules that apply to your organisation regarding accessibility.
- You can find more information on:
- [www.digg.se](http://www.digg.se)  
[www.saavutettavuusvaatimukset.fi](http://www.saavutettavuusvaatimukset.fi)  
[www.digdir.no](http://www.digdir.no)

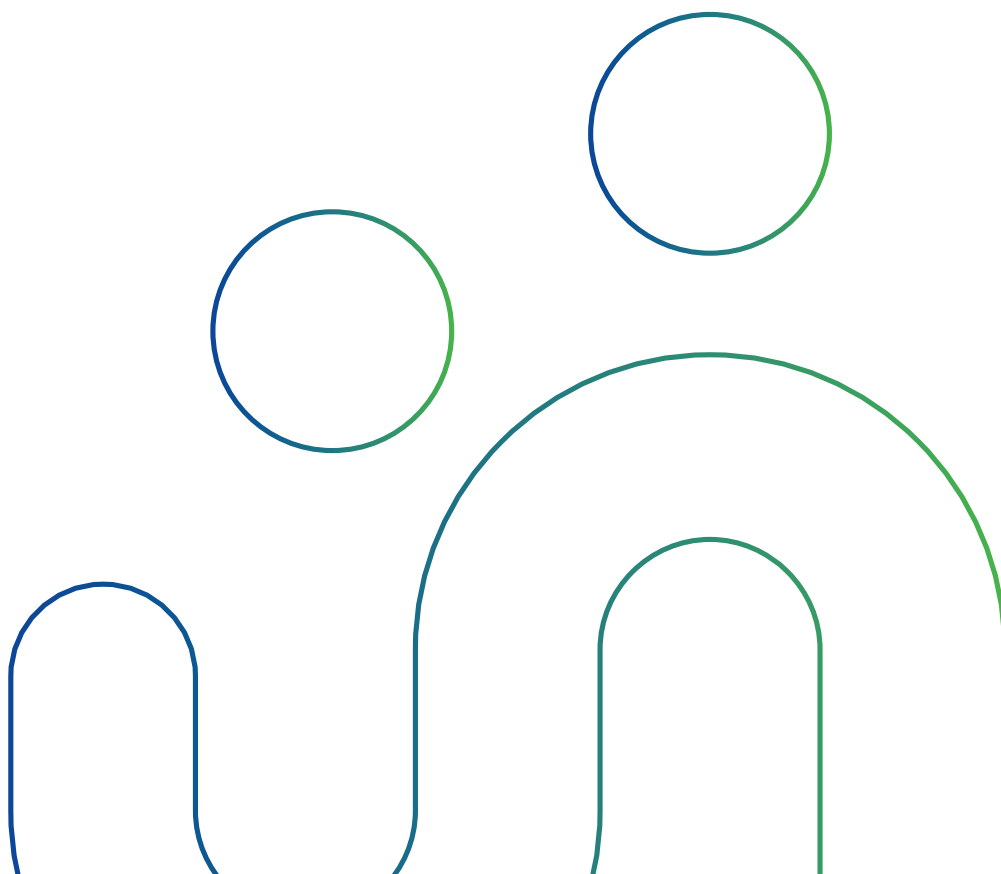
# Checklist

## Economic Sustainability

Economic sustainability means using, caring for and maintaining resources to create long-term sustainable economic value in society.

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- ☐ The project is managing and developing human and material resources and support long-term economic growth without negatively impacting social, environmental, and cultural aspects of the community.
- ☐ The project must be characterized by cost efficiency. This means that all costs must be in accordance with the principle of sound financial management. The purpose of cost-effectiveness is to increase the focus on results and to ensure the correct use of EU funds.





# Let's Exchange Experiences!

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If you have some input and more concrete practice, please don't hesitate to contact the Interreg Aurora Programme and share your ideas with us and the other projects. Let's exchange experiences and learn from each other!

Our additions to the checklist!

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<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____
<input type="checkbox"/>	_____

## Finally, the most important!

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Don't forget to communicate what kind of measures you have applied in your project so that we together can raise the awareness of the efforts to your target groups and the public.