

# TRAVEL POLICY - ECOLOGISTAS EN ACCIÓN

## Applicability scope

This travel policy shall apply to all trips/journeys made by any person belonging to Ecologistas en Acción (employees, collaborators, activists, etc) as a representative of the organisation or to participate in activities organised by the organisation or by other entities.

## Principles behind this policy

Transport is one of the main sources of greenhouse gas emissions globally. In the European Union, transport generates [more than a quarter](#) of total greenhouse gas emissions. In the case of Spain, in 2019, mobility-related emissions accounted for [29% of the total](#), with transportation being the sector that generated the most GHGs.

In this context, the impact of air travel is particularly harmful. Apart from the contribution of air transport to global warming, which some studies found to be between [5 and 8%](#), aviation causes serious environmental problems (deforestation, destruction of ecosystems), social problems (health problems, displacement of communities, etc) and economic problems (tax privileges, hidden subsidies, etc).

On the other hand, air transport is the means of transport with the highest emissions in terms of passenger/km. As a social and environmental organisation, Ecologistas en Acción recognises the importance of the above-mentioned problems, and therefore, the need for the organisation to minimise as far as possible the impact of national and international travel resulting from its activities. To this end, we defend a mobility model in which, on the one hand, the number of trips is reduced and, on the other, priority is given to the cleanest and most sustainable means of transport.

By adopting this Travel Policy, Ecologistas en Acción aims to be proactive and transparent in its objective to reduce emissions associated with the mobility of its staff and activists. Furthermore, through the implementation of the guidelines contained in this document, we want to help create a fairer and more sustainable transport system from a social, environmental and economic point of view.

## Our commitments

By issuing this Travel Policy, Ecologistas en Acción commits itself to:

- Implementing a long-term strategy aimed at significantly and sustainably reducing emissions related to its members' trips.
- Providing the necessary tools, procedures and resources to facilitate the use of sustainable means of transport for their trips, as well as to systematically monitoring and calculating the emissions generated by such journeys.
- Using emissions records and the analysis of their evolution as a tool to raise awareness among the organisation's staff and activists about the social and environmental impact of their trips, and as a motivation tool to progressively reduce this impact.

- Playing a proactive role in raising awareness among other stakeholders — social, economic, institutional, etc — about the socio-environmental impacts of the most polluting means of transport, especially aviation.
- Actively promoting public and private sustainable transportation policies which aim to reduce the number of trips and prioritise the most sustainable means of transport.

### **Key areas of action for the implementation of the Travel Policy**

The implementation of the above commitments will revolve around the following areas of action:

#### **A. Planning and Monitoring of the Reduction of Travel Emissions.**

- Following the approval of this Travel Policy, Ecologistas en Acción will make a list of the trips made in 2019 and their associated emissions. This list will serve as a baseline against which to set corresponding emission reduction targets. Due to its reliability, Atmosfair ([www.atmosfair.de](http://www.atmosfair.de)) is recommended as a reference calculator to determine the emissions generated in each trip.
- Ecologistas en Acción will create a tool for the collection of data about emissions related to the trips made by its staff (employees and voluntary workers). This tool will be available to the whole Confederation to inform and raise awareness about the emissions generated by the organisation's trips. While doing so, Ecologistas en Acción commits to respect confidentiality criteria regarding the details of the people who make the trips.
- On an annual basis, an assessment of the previous year's emissions will be carried out and the corresponding targets for the following year(s) will be set.
- For the sake of transparency, Ecologistas en Acción will make public both this travel policy and the travel and emissions inventory of 2019, as well as the emissions generated in subsequent years.

#### **B. Adoption of routines to reduce emissions from our trips.**

- Priority will be given to protest actions and events (meetings, workshops, seminars, etc.) that can be carried out without the need for physical travel. In cases where travelling is unavoidable, activities in which it is possible to participate using land transport will be preferred.
- Land transport will be used for all trips within the peninsular territories of Spain.
- For international trips, land transport shall be prioritised for all journeys lasting up to 10 hours.
- For all international trips within the European Union, a land alternative shall always be considered, comparing at least the following parameters of the air (if necessary) and land transportation alternatives: price, emissions, duration and safety of the journey.
- For any activity involving air travel, the need to participate in it should be thoroughly assessed: whether the objectives pursued can be achieved without travel, whether online participation is possible and whether the benefit for the individual and the

organisation justifies the use of air travel (see the [Decision tree for air travel from Tyndall Centre](#)).

- In the case of having to use air transport, the least unsustainable way of flying should be chosen taking into consideration the following guidelines:
  - Prioritise direct flights, when routes are available, even if they are more expensive.
  - If direct flights are not available on the chosen date, consider new dates.
  - Always travel in economy class to avoid the high environmental impact of higher classes.
  - Select [airlines with lower emissions intensity](#) on the basis of their efficiency.
  - Avoid *creative ticketing*<sup>1</sup> even if it reduces fares, since it exponentially increases emissions per passenger-kilometre.

In the case of a trip covered by an external entity (a campaign, a host organisation, an international federation or network to which we belong...), if this entity does not agree to cover the train journey, we will negotiate with them the possibility for Ecologistas en Acción to cover the difference between the flight and train fares.

### **C. Financing**

The commitments made in this policy necessarily entail the allocation of funds to meet the expenses derived from its implementation. The organisation commits to allocating expenditure in the annual budget to deal with this foreseeable increase in transportation costs, including:

- The cost difference between the train and air journeys, in the case of a journey financed by Ecologistas en Acción.
- The cost difference between the train and air journeys, in the case of a journey partially financed by an external entity which only covers plane costs.
- The higher cost resulting from choosing a direct flight, in case it is necessary to choose air travel.

### **D. Building an organisational culture that promotes sustainable travel.**

- As an activities organiser, Ecologistas en Acción will prioritise initiatives that minimise the need for travel. Actions that necessarily require people (activists, speakers, consultants, etc) to travel will adopt in their organisation the necessary guidelines to minimise the associated emissions.
- In order to promote the use of sustainable means of transport, the principles and commitments presented in this policy will be integrated into the organisation's related operating procedures: human resources (accounting and compensation of hours

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<sup>1</sup> *Creative ticketing* is a way of obtaining cheaper fares by purchasing - in different ways - more air tickets than initially needed and only using some of them eventually. The underlying logic is that direct flights and flights with fewer overnight stays are more expensive; by adding journeys and overnight stays through the purchase of additional tickets, the price becomes considerably cheaper, even though it contributes to generating flights with hardly any passengers.

worked while travelling, coverage of expenses, etc.), project management (budgeting, participation in / organisation of activities), etc.

- Remote work will be encouraged as a tool to reduce the number of trips of the organisation. To this end, the staff from Ecologistas en Acción (employees and activists) will be accompanied throughout the process and will be trained in online communication tools and working techniques/software. The organisation will also invest as much as possible in technologies that facilitate this way of working.
- The use of specialised land travel websites and agencies will be encouraged among the organisation's staff. The organisation shall make available to its staff a database with information about such entities to facilitate the booking and purchasing of tickets with clean means of transport.
- Discussions on the importance of making progress on organisational transportation policies — which include making it easier to attend meetings using more sustainable means of transport than air travel, preferably the train — will be promoted within the organisations and networks in which we are active. People working for Ecologistas en Acción will be able to get compensation for the travelling hours of journeys made with land transport which take longer than a working day.