

2021

Environmental Results 2020 data



Table of Contents

3

Let's take on the European Green Deal challenge together

4

2020 Main results



5

Energy



6

Water



7

Paper



8

Green public procurement



9

Food



10

Organisation of events



11

Mobility



12

Waste



13

Biodiversity



14

Carbon emissions

15

The Committees' environmental management system



Let's take on the European Green Deal challenge together

Due to the coronavirus health crisis, 2020 was an exceptional year. For most of 2020, almost all of the EESC's and CoR's work was carried out remotely rather than on-site in the Committees' buildings.

The environmental impact of the EESC and the CoR has been reduced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the main environmental indicators being down from 2019. Gas, electricity, water and paper consumption were significantly lower than in the previous year. The same applies with regard to the amount of waste.

2020 also shows a sharp decrease in the Committees' carbon balance compared to 2019, mainly due to the decrease in travel.

Therefore 2020 cannot be regarded as a representative year. However, the results do suggest some options for further consideration. Some measures, such as remote working or organising meetings in hybrid mode, have proven to be effective. They could be continued, at least in part, beyond 2020 and could therefore help with achieving the goal set at the interinstitutional level of climate neutrality by 2030.

The EESC and the CoR are already committed to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, and have fully subscribed to the **European Green Deal**¹. With the help of key environmental management tools such as EMAS and the carbon balance, let's take on the Green Deal challenge together!

September 2021



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Secretary-General of the CoR

¹ European Green Deal (COM/2019/640 final).

2020 Main Results



Electricity

↓ **13,5%** in 2020 ↓ **40,8%** since 2009



Gas

↓ **17,5%** in 2020 ↓ **64,8%** since 2009



Water

↓ **25,7%** in 2020 ↓ **51,4%** since 2009



Paper

↓ **52%** in 2020 ↓ **87%** since 2009



Waste²

↓ **70%** in 2020 ↓ **82%** since 2009



Carbon footprint

7.918 tonnes

of CO₂ equivalent

= emissions of **943³** EU citizens

² Office and kitchen waste.

³ Source: Eurostat, greenhouse gas emissions per capita based on 2019 data (2020 data not yet available).

Energy



Heating and cooling around 68 800 m² of offices sustainably is a huge challenge. It entails improving the energy efficiency of buildings while maintaining a level of comfort for occupants in every season. In 2020, consumption of electricity and gas in the Committees significantly decreased compared to previous years. This is mainly explained by the exceptional situation resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Indicator: electricity consumption per person per year.

2020 results: 4 000.26 kWh/person



Electricity

↓13,5% in 2020 ↓40,8% since 2009

Indicator: gas consumption per person per year

2020 results: 2 304.74 kWh/person



Gas

↓17,5% in 2020 ↓64,8% since 2009

Current or future actions

- Energy-intensive lighting systems have been replaced with LED lights and movement sensors;
- Continuous improvement of the energy performance of buildings in line with the regulations in force.

Ongoing actions

- Since 2009, the Committees have used only green electricity⁴;
- The Committees produce renewable energy through solar panels on the roof. In 2020, the 150 m² of panels produced around 13.28 MWh, or 0.22 % of the total consumption;
- Since 2018, cutting off the gas supply in the BvS and B68 buildings during June, July and August.

⁴ Source: 86 % hydropower and 14 % wind energy; Geographical origin: mainly France and Norway, but also Belgium and Italy to a lesser extent.

**OBJECTIFS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE**

7 ÉNERGIE PROPRE
ET D'UN CÔTÉ
ABORDABLE



12 CONSOMMATION
ET PRODUCTION
RESPONSABLES



13 MESURES RELATIVES
À LA LUTTE CONTRE
LES CHANGEMENTS
CLIMATIQUES





Water

Water is mainly used for catering and cleaning activities, toilets, humidifying air, and watering indoor plants and outdoor gardens. Water consumption per person fell very sharply in 2020. This was mainly due to the COVID-19 situation and the fact that the Committees' buildings were not occupied and saw very few visitors for most of the year.

Indicator: water consumption per person per year.

2020 results:

9.06 m³/person



Water consumption

↓25,7% in 2020 ↓51,4% since 2009

Current or future actions

- Rainwater recovery system to water the bamboo plants in the JDE building. Following a delay in the tender procedure, the works will be ordered in 2022 and carried out in the course of 2023. Environmental benefit: recovery of rainwater with a direct impact on water consumption;
- All buildings: installation of water meters in strategic locations to ensure better water management;
- Awareness-raising: the Committees regularly organise campaigns to raise staff awareness about water, particularly in conjunction with World Water Day.

OBJECTIFS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE

6 EAU PROPRE ET
ASSAINISSEMENT



Paper



Producing and printing paper and managing paper waste consume many natural resources and have a significant impact on the environment. The EESC and the CoR are committed to using paper more responsibly. Paper is used in two different ways at the Committees: in offices (printed paper) and for publications and meeting documents. Paper consumption decreased sharply in 2020 as almost all staff were working remotely for most of the year and meetings with members took place online or in hybrid mode.

Office paper indicator: number of sheets printed per person per working day.

2020 results:

3.8 sheets/person/working day



Paper consumption

↓52% in 2020 ↓87% since 2009

Current or future actions

- Ongoing digitalisation of administrative, financial and human resources procedures;
- EESC: implementation of a “paper-poor meetings” strategy;
- CoR: implementation of a “paper-free meetings” strategy and a digital communications strategy.

Ongoing actions

- The A4 paper used for printing (office paper) is “100% recycled”⁵;
- Staff awareness-raising: campaigns to raise staff awareness are regularly organised.

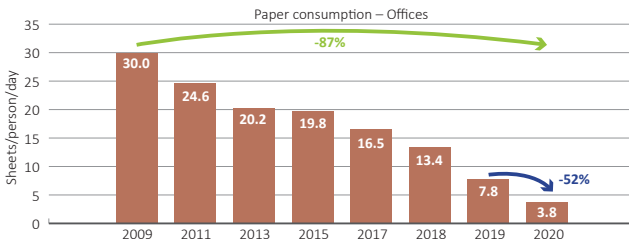


Figure 1: Number of sheets printed per employee per working day

⁵ Since 2019, FSC-certified paper has been used, as the plant that supplied the Committees with recycled paper had closed.

OBJECTIFS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE

12
CONSOMMATION
ET PRODUCTION
RESPONSABLES



15
VIE
TERRESTRE





Green public procurement

By introducing environmental requirements in tender procedures (contracts for goods, services and works), the EESC and the CoR have chosen to select their service providers in accordance with their environmental policy. Where the subject of the contract allows, the Committees opt for goods and services with the least environmental impact. In this way, they hope to adopt more sustainable consumption practices, while protecting everyone's health.

Indicator: inclusion of environmental clauses in contracts with a value equal to or greater than EUR 60 000.

Results 2020

100 % of the contract documents submitted for consultation contained environmental clauses.

Standardised environmental clauses

include a reference to the Committees' environmental policy, the obligation to comply with the rules on waste (sorting and traceability) and storage of dangerous products.

Specific environmental clauses

are tailor-made according to the applicable categories of goods and services. Where possible, products and services must meet the requirements of recognised environmental labels (e.g. the European Ecolabel, Blauer Engel, etc.) and energy labels.

2020 actions

- 26 public procurement procedures were analysed;
- One call for tender with a high environmental impact was identified: finishing works, structural works and installation of equipment in office buildings;
- Specific environmental criteria have been added for this tender.

Ongoing actions (multiannual contracts)

- Electricity is 100% green;
- Cleaning products are ecolabelled⁶;
- Paints and varnishes are ecolabelled;
- Any wood used in works is FSC- or PEFC-certified;
- Office paper is 100% recycled and ecolabelled⁷;
- Office supplies meet environmental criteria;
- No chemical pesticides or fertilisers are used for green space maintenance.

⁶ It should be noted that in the context of health measures, non-ecolabelled disinfectants and hydroalcoholic gel were used in 2020. These are not considered to be regular cleaning products.

⁷ Since 2019: FSC-certified paper has been used occasionally, as the plant that supplied the Committees with recycled paper had closed.

**OBJECTIFS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE**

3 BONNE SANTÉ
ET BIEN-ÊTRE



12 CONSOMMATION
ET PRODUCTION
RESPONSABLES



Food



The Committees are leading the way with the sustainable management of their canteen. Thanks to the good practices put in place to fight food waste and the improved criteria for sustainable food, the EESC and CoR canteen was awarded the Good Food label in 2017. A new catering contract was signed with BaxterStorey in June 2020, however, as the catering services were suspended for most of 2020, the potential of this contract has not yet been fully realised.

Indicators: percentage of seasonal vegetables on the menu, percentage of organic products relative to total products, percentage of vegetarian dishes and sandwiches relative to total dishes and sandwiches sold, percentage of MSC-labelled fish relative to total fish purchases, percentage of fair trade-labelled products relative to total products.

These percentages are calculated for the whole year based on numbers of purchases and sales provided by the supplier.

2020 results

the exceptional nature of 2020 in terms of the “food” objective needs to be highlighted – none of the indicators could be monitored due to a lack of data.

Actions already taken

- Ban on single-use plastic bottles and supplies extended to all catering activities since June 2020.

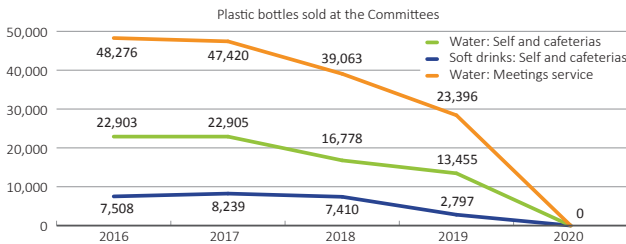


Figure 2: Number of plastic bottles sold in catering areas





Organisation of events

Each year, the EESC and the CoR host on average 20 000⁸ visitors and organise many events. It is therefore essential that the Committees put their words into action and adopt a sustainable approach to organising events. From 16 March 2020, no events were held in the Committees' buildings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result, all conferences went online and did not generate any waste materials.

Indicator: quantity of waste produced during the three biggest annual events (kg).

Ongoing actions

- Providing videoconference rooms to reduce the carbon footprint of transport; Since 2020, it has been technically possible to organise videoconferences in all conference rooms;
- Reducing the volume of printed material in favour of electronic documents;
- Raising awareness among organisers of environmentally responsible practices, particularly waste sorting, in advance of the event;
- Reducing the number of items offered to participants, with preference for reusable and green items;
- Solutions to replace plastic badges (e.g. self-adhesive paper badges). Plastic badges are collected after conferences to be reused.

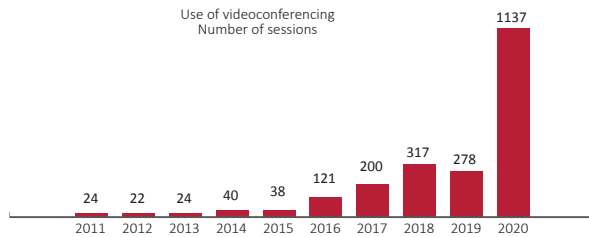


Figure 3: Use of videoconferencing between 2011 and 2020

OBJECTIFS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE

12 CONSOMMATION
ET PRODUCTION
RESPONSABLES



⁸ 2019 data (before the COVID-19 pandemic).

Mobility



Under normal circumstances, 1 247 members of staff come to work in the Committees' buildings every day and 658 members⁹ also travel here from across Europe. According to the calculation of our carbon emissions, transport of people is the largest source of CO₂ emissions at the EESC and the CoR. Mobility also has a direct impact on air quality and therefore on personal health. The majority of staff worked remotely in 2020, which had a direct impact on commuting¹⁰.

Indicator: percentage of staff claiming to mostly use a sustainable mode of transport in their commuting.

2020 results



Percentage of staff using an environmentally friendly mode of transport¹¹

79% (CoR)

69% (EESC)

Future actions

- Awareness-raising campaign on the environmental impact of means of transport;
- Expanding the possibilities for remote working¹² following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ongoing actions

- Financial contribution to the cost of public transport season tickets (EESC and CoR);
- Kilometre-based subsidy for cycling (EESC);
- Remote working and flexible working hours to reduce traffic congestion at peak times;
- Service bikes, bike parking and infrastructure for cyclists;
- Promotional events such as Friday Walk/Bike Day or the Step Challenge;
- Participation in the *VéloMai* interinstitutional initiative;
- Charging facilities for e-bikes and e-cars;
- Sustainable mobility workshops (e.g. on bike maintenance and repair);
- Increasing the number of parking places for carpooling and motorbikes;
- A joint forum for the EESC and the CoR to find partners for carpooling.

⁹ Since October 2020.

¹⁰ We are unable to measure this impact due to a lack of data.

¹¹ These results come from the mobility survey organised within the EESC and the CoR, which was last conducted in 2017.

¹² Remote working options were expanded before the COVID-19 crisis and may be further developed in the future.

OBJECTIFS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE

3 BONNE SANTÉ
ET BIEN-ÊTRE



11 VILLES ET
COMMUNAUTÉS
DURABLES





Waste

The EESC and CoR generate a large amount of various types of waste. Even though there was a significant decrease in the amount of waste generated in 2020 compared to 2019, the Committees face two major challenges: reducing the quantity of waste and implementing a waste sorting system in line with legislation. The fact that the majority of staff and members worked remotely for most of 2020 had a direct impact on the amount of office and kitchen waste generated.

Indicators: amount of office and kitchen waste (kg) per person per year. Other types of waste as well as waste generated during renovation works are monitored separately.

2020 results

54.7 kg of waste per person per year



Waste

↘ **70%** in 2020

↘ **82%** since 2010

European Week for Waste Reduction 2020

Using the theme of “invisible waste”, the 2020 edition aimed to raise staff awareness of the little-known impact of digital technology, from the production stage through use. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the campaign was run exclusively online.

Future actions

- Improving waste sorting signage for visitors;
- Establishing “recycling corners” in the various buildings in order to collect the most common types of small waste.

Ongoing actions

- Encouraging staff to use reusable rather than disposable crockery;
- Obsolete IT equipment and furniture are donated to a charity;
- Monitoring the quality of waste sorting;
- Strict management of hazardous waste by the relevant departments and suppliers;
- Eco-advice for event organisers.

OBJECTIFS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE

11 VILLES ET
COMMUNAUTÉS
DURABLES



12 CONSOMMATION
ET PRODUCTION
RESPONSABLES



Biodiversity



The loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystems is a particularly significant threat and could eventually lead to a high risk of food crisis. The EESC and the CoR are committed to helping protect urban biodiversity.

Indicators: land use (built/unbuilt area).

Built areas are not conducive to biodiversity, as they are sealed and plants cannot grow there.

2020 results



The EESC and CoR occupy a surface area of

13.500 m²

of which almost
28%

is made up of green roofs and gardens.

Ongoing actions for biodiversity

- Two beehives have been installed on the JDE roof since 2012. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, a new call for tenders could not be launched in 2020, leading to the temporary removal of the beehives pending the new contract;
- Green areas are maintained without chemical pesticides or fertilisers;
- The 1 800 m² of green roofs improve thermal and sound insulation of the buildings while reducing air pollution and CO₂ emissions. They are made up of melliferous plants and filter and regulate the flow of excess rainwater. Green roofs also reduce the urban heat island effect and provide protection for urban biodiversity;
- Two participatory gardens were installed on the terraces of JDE and B68 along with a worm composter. Herbs, vegetables, fruits and flowers are grown without pesticides or chemical fertilisers. This activity was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

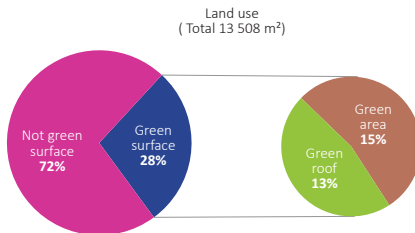


Figure 4: Use of green spaces in unbuilt areas

**OBJECTIFS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE**

15 VIE
TERRESTRE





Carbon Emissions

The Bilan Carbone® is a tool for calculating an organisation’s environmental impact in terms of CO₂ emission equivalent. It gives a clear picture of the activities that contribute most to the Committees’ CO₂ emissions. The challenge is to find measures to reduce the CO₂ emissions while maintaining the quality of the services offered to staff and Committee members. The exceptional nature of 2020 needs to be highlighted, as it cannot be regarded as a representative year in terms of the Committees’ carbon footprint.

Indicator: carbon emissions in CO₂ equivalent in tonnes per FTE (full-time equivalent).

The Bilan Carbone® (carbon emissions) method used by the Committees was developed by a French institution, the French Environment and Energy Management Agency (ADEME), and is managed by the Institut de formation carbone (Carbon Training Institute).

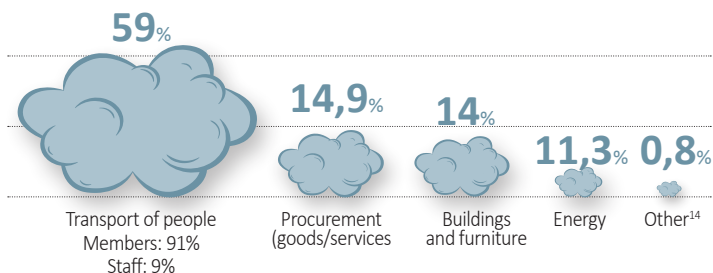
2020 results



7.918 tonnes
of CO₂ equivalent

= emissions of **943** EU residents¹³.

As in previous years, and despite a sharp fall in 2020, the main source of CO₂ emissions at the Committees is still the transport of persons.



Current or future actions

- The EMAS service commissioned a study on the Committees’ carbon neutrality. The results are expected by the end of 2021. It will propose emission reduction scenarios and a list of the main possible measures;
- By the end of 2021, the Committees will adopt a new environmental objective of reducing carbon emissions;
- Since 2020, the Committees have been participating in an interinstitutional call for tenders to offset their CO₂ emissions.

¹³ Source: Eurostat, greenhouse gas emissions per capita based on 2019 data (2020 data not yet available).

¹⁴ Waste 0.6 %, refrigerant 0.2 %, freight 0.0 %.

OBJECTIFS
DE DÉVELOPPEMENT
DURABLE

13 MESURES RELATIVES
À LA LUTTE CONTRE
LES CHANGEMENTS
CLIMATIQUES



The Committees' environmental management system

The EESC and CoR have been EMAS- and ISO 14 001-registered since 2011. These certifications guarantee that we assess, manage and continuously improve our environmental performance.

The Committees

115.000 m²
of buildings
(total surface area including
grounds and basement)

658 members
(329 EESC members
and 329 CoR
members)¹⁵

1.247 staff
members

20.000
visitors per year¹⁶

The environmental management system

1	EMAS team in the Infrastructure unit – Directorate for Logistics
80	EMAS contact persons each representing a directorate or unit
12	members of the EMAS Steering Committee (secretaries-general, directors, staff representatives)
1	annual audit by an accredited environmental auditor (Vincotte)
4	environmental certification/labels



¹⁵ Until 31 January 2020, when the United Kingdom left the European Union, the number of EESC and CoR members was 350 each and included British members. Since October 2020, each Committee has 329 members.

¹⁶ 2019 data (before the COVID-19 pandemic).



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