

# The implementation of **Green Transition** within the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps National Agencies: a state of play



**A SALTO  
ON GREEN  
TRANSITION  
AND SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
PUBLICATION**









# Background

**In march 2023, the SALTO Resource Centre on green transition and sustainable development<sup>1</sup> has been launched. It covers all fields of the Erasmus+ Programme & European Solidarity Corps and contributes to tackling the challenges of climate change through our programmes, addressing climate and environmental-related topics throughout the actions.**

This SALTO is supporting the implementation of the priority on environmental protection, sustainability and fight against climate change in the 2021-2027 programmes in line with the European Green Deal and the Climate Pact, supporting the actions of the European Education Area in terms of education for climate and sustainability, and contributing directly to the achievement of one of the 11 European Youth Goals (Sustainable Green Europe) included in the EU Youth Strategy<sup>2</sup>.

Key responsibilities of SALTO on green transition and sustainable development are:

- › **Raise the quality and impact of projects and activities** of Erasmus+, focusing on sustainability and fight against climate change.
- › **Help to optimize the implementation**, monitoring and follow-up of the priority on environmental protection, sustainability and fight against climate change, as defined in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.
- › **Play a key role in guiding the National Agencies** on analysis and impact evaluation of projects focusing on the environmental protection, sustainability, and fight against climate change priority of the programmes.

In order to build a first state of play of what is already done in Erasmus+ and European

Solidarity Corps National Agencies regarding the implementation of the green Transition and to assess a different level of ownership, the SALTO Green had to start with a first survey.

This survey has been sent to National Agencies directors in April 2023. The aim was to gather detailed answers from different units related with each field of the survey and to gather one answer per National Agency. There are 55 Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps National Agencies across the 33 countries of the programmes.

The survey is built on 6 different topics linked with green transition in public administrations.

- Procurements
- Staff transport
- Digital practices
- Training practices
- Premises and Energy
- Events

The topic “Events” is about the organization of sustainable events by National Agency. It is difficult to assess as it is translated into very different realities. For example, catering provided and energy used, often depends on the location renter. The location of the event is also unequal as some agencies have a central location in Europe and other don't. Therefore, this topic is covered by other areas such as procurements or staff transport in the survey.

→ <sup>1</sup> Referred as “SALTO Green” in this publication  
<sup>2</sup> 2023 Erasmus+ Programme Guide

# General

The survey starts with general questions to gather more details on respondents' profile. These statistics will remain internal for GDPR reasons. Expectations on the SALTO Green from respondents were also asked in order to better understand the needs of agency towards the SALTO Green. The information gathered through the first part will only be used by the SALTO Green itself, in order to aim at the right targets when a need is identified. These statistics are related with the country and the field covered by the respondent agency.

The first need of the SALTO Green was to assess how many agencies had a strategy on green transition. 33 National Agencies (67%) have answered "Yes" to the question "Is there a Green strategy in your Agency?".

It was also asked to rank the priority areas of a green strategy. The respondents had to sort from 1 to 6 each of the different areas.

The survey has been sent to the **55** National Agencies' directors

**49** out of **55** NAs answered, that represents **89%** of participation

All of the **33** countries of the Erasmus+ and ESC programmes are represented.

The three most important priorities in the NAs' Green Strategy are:

- 1 / Green Transport**
- 2 / Events**
- 3 / Digital practices**

**Chart 1** Answers to "What are the priority areas for your Agency in terms of green transition, both in your organization and in your activities related to the E+ and ESC Programmes?"

|  | Rank 1 | Rank 2 | Rank 3 | Rank 4 | Rank 5 | Rank 6 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| GREEN TRANSPORT                          | 15     | 13     | 3      | 6      | 6      | 5      |
| ECO-RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT              | 3      | 10     | 10     | 11     | 5      | 10     |
| DIGITAL PRACTICES (3R)                   | 11     | 5      | 9      | 6      | 4      | 12     |
| EVENTS (SUSTAINABLE)                     | 12     | 13     | 11     | 9      | 2      | 2      |
| ENERGY / PREMISES (SUFFICIENCY/SOBRIETY) | 2      | 5      | 7      | 8      | 15     | 9      |
| TRAINING PRACTICES (ESD <sup>4</sup> )   | 6      | 2      | 8      | 9      | 15     | 8      |
| OTHER                                    | 0      | 1      | 1      | 0      | 2      | 3      |

One of the major actions of the SALTO Green is to reduce the per capita carbon footprint. The first step was to know if the "agency calculate its annual carbon footprint excluding activities and mobility funded by the programme?" This question was linked with an open question asking for the tools used by the NAs<sup>3</sup>.

Only 22% of the agencies are actually calculating their carbon footprint. Some best practices were shared through the open answers such as:

- Travel providers calculating the carbon footprint
- External suppliers to calculate carbon footprint
- Factsheets on green travel
- Mandatory calculation of the carbon footprint (asked by the government through their Ministry)

→ <sup>3</sup>National Agencies  
<sup>4</sup>ESD = Education for Sustainable Development

For 2023, the SALTO Green will build a compendium of Green project. The question “Has your agency already identified best practices in projects on green transition?” has been answered with “Yes” by 27 National Agencies (about 55%). It shows that SALTO Green have to define and share a common vision on how to identify a good project on green transition. Indeed, criteria need to be the same for both the agencies that already have identified best practices projects and those who haven't. A specification is being built up by the SALTO Green during the summer in order to gather projects that meet the same expectations in terms of inspiring and valuable practices.

**On an overall vision, the SALTO Green is going to help all of the National Agencies to implement green transition. A question was asked to understand “What are the barriers to taking action into the 6 areas?”**

- Procurements
- Staff transport
- Events
- Digital practices
- Training practices
- Premises and Energy

The propositions were “Cost”, “Human resources”, “Lack of suppliers”, “Lack of knowledge”, “Other” and “I don't see a point in changing”.

**In each area, the biggest occurrences were:**

- Green transport: Lack of Suppliers & Cost
- Energy: Other (depending on bigger organization/shared buildings) & Cost
- Training practices: Lack of knowledge & Lack of Human Resources
- Events: Lack of suppliers, Knowledge & Cost
- Procurements: Cost and Lack of Knowledge
- Digital Practices: Lack of Knowledge & Other (Depending on providers)



|                           | Cost | HR | Suppliers | Knowledge | Other | Don't see a point in changing |
|---------------------------|------|----|-----------|-----------|-------|-------------------------------|
| <b>GREEN TRANSPORT</b>    | 19   | 9  | 22        | 4         | 18    | 2                             |
| <b>ENERGY / PREMISES</b>  | 20   | 2  | 8         | 11        | 22    | 3                             |
| <b>EVENTS</b>             | 15   | 10 | 24        | 15        | 4     | 2                             |
| <b>PROCUREMENTS</b>       | 19   | 7  | 17        | 18        | 9     | 2                             |
| <b>TRAINING PRACTICES</b> | 6    | 23 | 3         | 25        | 9     | 2                             |
| <b>DIGITAL PRACTICES</b>  | 4    | 10 | 4         | 22        | 16    | 4                             |

# Procurements

Responsible procurements within National Agencies can be an important lever to implement green transition. It is also linked with different important areas such as events (suppliers, goodies...) or IT (Hardware and software).

## To the question


“Does your agency have a sustainable and environmentally responsible procurement policy?”

**22** Agencies have answered **“Yes”**

To get an overall vision of a responsible procurement policy, respondents were asked to assess “what a responsible procurement policy should include”: (assessing with a scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree 1 to 5)

**82%** strongly agree with purchasing Eco responsible supplies 

**78%** strongly agree with purchasing sustainable goodies 

**63%** strongly agree with purchasing recycled supplies 


**15** agencies are «Neutral» or «don't know» about being part of a purchasing network. 

Chart 2 Assessment of what should be included in a procurement policy

|                   | Recycled supplies | Sustainable goodies | Purchase of ecoresponsible supplies | Purchasing from local suppliers | Eco-responsible suppliers | Purchasing Network |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|
| STRONGLY AGREE    | 31                | 38                  | 40                                  | 27                              | 30                        | 14                 |
| AGREE             | 14                | 9                   | 6                                   | 13                              | 16                        | 10                 |
| NEUTRAL           | 3                 | 1                   | 0                                   | 8                               | 3                         | 14                 |
| DISAGREE          | 0                 | 0                   | 1                                   | 0                               | 0                         | 1                  |
| STRONGLY DISAGREE | 1                 | 1                   | 1                                   | 0                               | 0                         | 0                  |

## What is a sustainable purchasing network?

To help organizations that are subject to the Public Procurement Code to implement responsible purchasing. A few objectives to achieve this aim:

- ▶ To arouse the interest of buyers, elected representatives, management teams, technical and administrative departments and those in charge of responsibility initiatives, as well as suppliers, and to create a dynamic around responsible purchasing.

- ▶ Support and facilitate the technical, legal and organizational aspects of the purchasing process.
- ▶ Promote feedback and assess progress made.
- ▶ Encourage exchanges between members and other stakeholders who can contribute to responsible purchasing

→ Source : 3ar-na.fr -association for sustainable procurements in Nouvelle Aquitaine



# Staff Transport

Transport of the staff is one of the most challenging issues for implementing green transition. Indeed, in the 33 countries involved in the programmes, there are different realities such as the location of the country in Europe; islands; overseas territories; national development for soft mobilities; accessibility of the agencies and so forth. The SALTO Green needed to know how many countries already have started to implement policies on Green transport and policies on air travel for the staff.

**22 Agencies** have answered that they do have a policy considering the green transition for staff's transport / mission of the «ecosystem» staff.



**14 countries** have already implemented a restrictive policy on air travel. This question could be answered with the option "not relevant" for countries located on an island (Cyprus, Iceland, Ireland, Malta).



This question had an open text answer possibility to let respondents explain their policy on air travel.

### Here is a collection of the best practices shared by the National Agencies:

- Flights are not allowed under 500km or for trips that can be done in less than 8h by train
- List of the cities where the train-offer permits not taking the plane
- Specific guidelines on the use of plane
- More of a discussion on the added value when questioned to attend physical meetings that require air travel, hence a change in mindset and activity
- Checking if the meeting can be attended online
- Raise staff awareness on train vs planes CO2 emissions

### Other practices:

- Compensation of CO2 emissions

It is also important to consider transport of the staff from home to work in order to know more about the agencies' staff behaviors. Respondents had to answer if some actions could be implemented or not, within the NAs.

**Chart 3** Actions for home to work staff transport

|   | Financial compensation for soft mobility | Provision of bicycle for staff | Electric vehicle provided by the NA | Access Agency by public transport | Carpool network within the Agency |
|---|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ACTIONS BEING IMPLEMENTED                             | 10                                       | 11                             | 4                                   | 39                                | 8                                 |
| ACTIONS NOT IMPLEMENTED YET BUT SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED | 18                                       | 10                             | 12                                  | 2                                 | 14                                |
| ACTIONS THAT WILL NOT BE IMPLEMENTED                  | 21                                       | 28                             | 33                                  | 8                                 | 27                                |

### A few interesting statistics coming from the answers:

**80%** of the agencies are accessible by public transport

**43%** will not compensate their staff for soft mobilities

**22%** provide bicycles for their staff

**45%** of agencies can implement a carpool network yet

**4** agencies provide electric vehicles

**55%** of agencies will not implement it

# Digital Practices

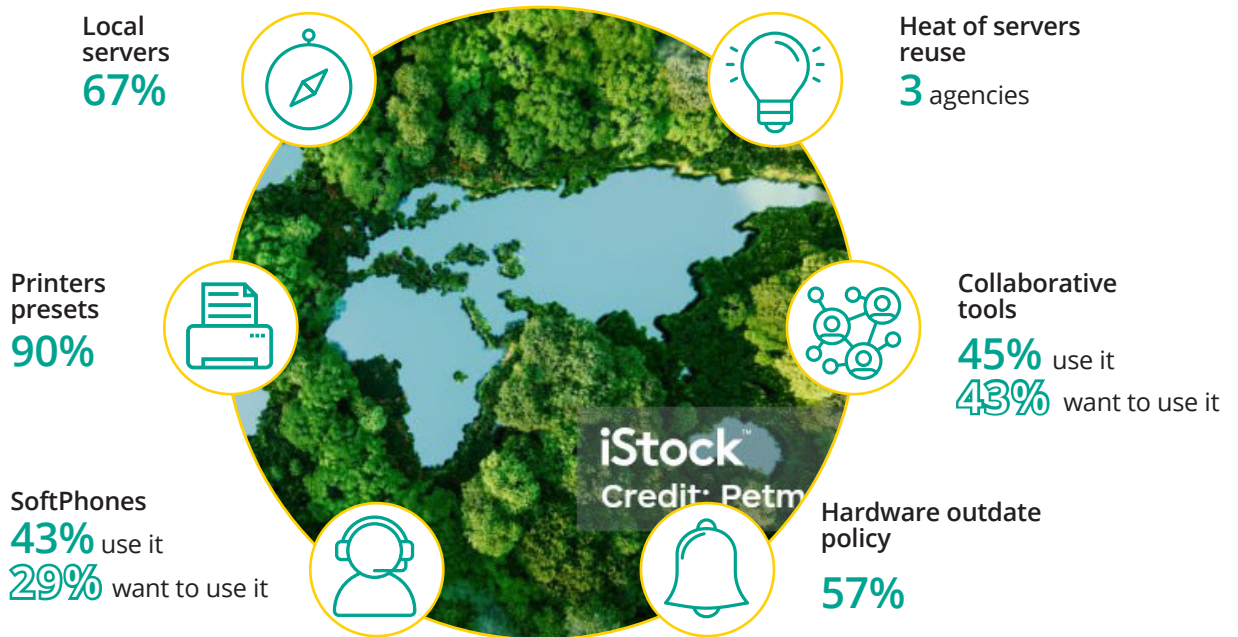
**In 2022 digital sector represented 4% of the global emissions in terms of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent.**

In 2025 it will be above the air transport sector<sup>6</sup>.

Digital sector can also be an important lever in implementing green transition as it represents an important part of the NAs' work (working on digital platforms and hardware on a daily basis).

The question was about the implementation of practices concerning the digital surrounding of the agency. Seven actions were identified:

- Using local servers, near or in the agency
- Reuse of heat emitted by the servers
- Pre-setting the printers (black & white, double-sided, badge to print, etc.)
- Limiting data transfer and storage (collaborative tools, fewer stored emails...)
- Replacement of office telephones by software (softphone)
- Digital magazine subscription rather than paper format
- Hardware purchases, keep/update policy

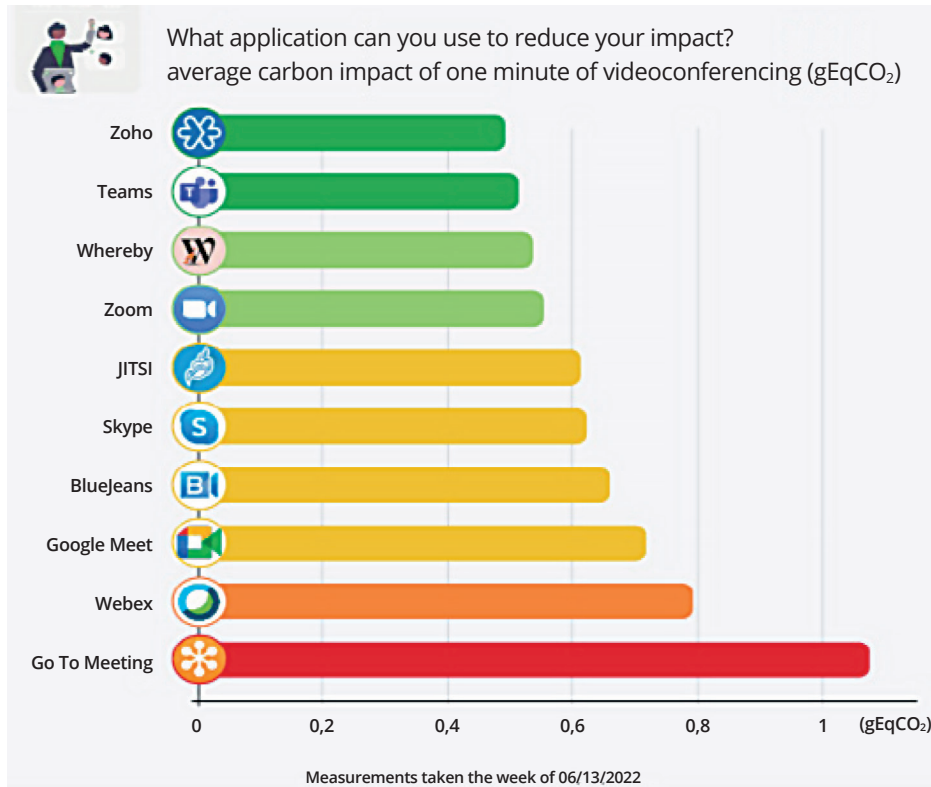


**Chart 4 Sustainable digital practices in the NAs**

|  | Local servers | Heat of servers | Printers presets | Collaborative tools | Softphone | Digital magazines | Hardware/computer |
|--|---------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>ACTIONS BEING IMPLEMENTED</b>                             | 33            | 3               | 44               | 22                  | 21        | 38                | 28                |
| <b>ACTIONS NOT IMPLEMENTED YET BUT SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED</b> | 10            | 12              | 3                | 21                  | 14        | 8                 | 16                |
| <b>ACTIONS NOT IMPLEMENTED YET BUT SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED</b> | 6             | 34              | 2                | 6                   | 14        | 3                 | 5                 |



## Focus on videoconferencing impact: how to choose your software?<sup>7</sup>



## What are the most common working practices in your agency?

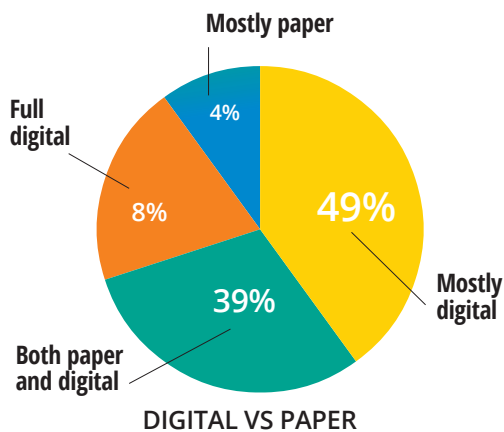


Chart 5 Agencies working with paper vs digital

| Digital vs Paper       |    |
|------------------------|----|
| Full paper             | 0  |
| Mostly paper           | 2  |
| Both paper and digital | 19 |
| Mostly digital         | 24 |
| Full digital           | 4  |

## Focus on electronic recycling<sup>8</sup>



<sup>7</sup> <https://greenspector.com/fr/impact-applications-visioconferences-2022/>

<sup>8</sup> Source: UNITAR SCYCLE –United Nations Institute for training and research

# Training Practices

One of the three priorities of the SALTO is to ensure education to sustainable development. The SALTO Green will gather, promote and create pedagogical resources for the NAs' staff, starting with Green contact points. Then, these resources will be adapted and shared with NAs' ecosystem. In order to create appropriate resources, the SALTO Green needed to identify the needs of the staff in terms of training on green transition and what will be done by the NAs in the next few months concerning training.



**16 agencies**

have a guide on green transition for the public / applicants / other public. Guide being shared with the SALTO Green will be soon shared on the SALTO Green website.

## Do you plan to set up training courses on any of these three themes?

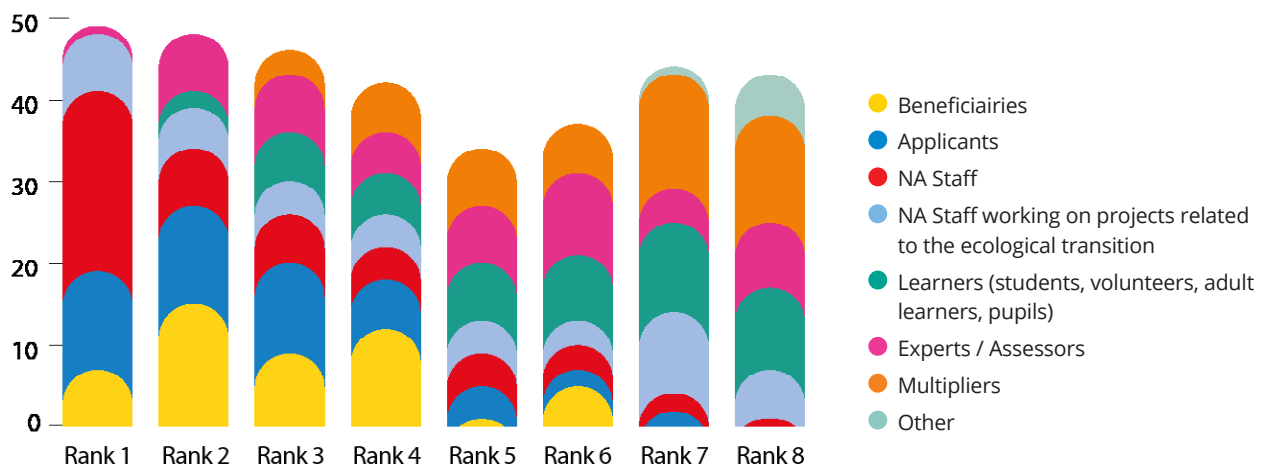
- Education for sustainable development: 29 agencies
- Eco responsible practices: 6 agencies
- New jobs and new skills linked with the ecological transition: 11 agencies

## Do you include the theme of green transition in the training of people from outside the agency?

- Meetings of beneficiaries: 39 agencies
- Experts: 40 agencies
- Multipliers: 32 agencies

## In your opinion, which target groups need training on green transition in a priority?

- 35 agencies ranked the NA staff as the three most important targets (22 times in 1st position)
- 35 agencies ranked the applicants as the three most important targets
- 31 agencies ranked beneficiaries as the three most important targets







**Chart 6** Priority targets for training on green transition

|   | Rank 1 | Rank 2 | Rank 3 | Rank 4 | Rank 5 | Rank 6 | Rank 7 | Rank 8 |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| BENEFICIARIES   | 7      | 15     | 9      | 12     | 1      | 5      | 0      | 0      |
| APPLICANTS  | 12     | 12     | 11     | 6      | 4      | 2      | 2      | 0      |
| NA STAFF  | 22     | 7      | 6      | 4      | 4      | 3      | 2      | 1      |
| NA STAFF WORKING ON PROJECTS RELATED TO THE ECOLOGICAL TRANSITION | 7      | 5      | 4      | 4      | 4      | 3      | 10     | 6      |
| LEARNERS (STUDENTS, VOLUNTEERS, ADULT LEARNERS, PUPILS)           | 0      | 2      | 6      | 5      | 7      | 8      | 11     | 10     |
| EXPERTS / ASSESSORS   | 1      | 7      | 7      | 5      | 7      | 10     | 4      | 8      |
| MULTIPLIERS   | 0      | 0      | 3      | 6      | 7      | 6      | 14     | 13     |
| OTHER   | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 0      | 1      | 5      |

### To the question



Do you plan to set up training courses on any of these three themes?"

Here are what agencies most plan on 2023 training:

**57%** have planned trainings on Eco responsible practices



**43%** have planned trainings on Education for sustainable development

**19** agencies don't know about implementing trainings on New skills and jobs linked with green transition and 23 will not.



**Chart 7** Planned trainings for 2023 on general topics

|              | Education for Sustainable Development | Eco-responsible practices | New jobs & skills on ecological transition |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| YES          | 21                                    | 28                        | 7  |
| NO           | 16                                    | 13                        | 23   |
| I DON'T KNOW | 12                                    | 8                         | 19   |

### What are the main pitfalls in training for green transition in your agency?

- **38** agencies have a **lack of time**
- **27** agencies have a **lack of knowledge** in existing offer
- **25** agencies report it's **hard to change habits**
- **18** agencies report poorly adapted training topics
- **11** think targets have a lack of interest
- **8** report unsuitable format
- **5** think the offer is not aimed at the right targets or at targets that are too narrow

13 Agencies have existing training materials on green transition. As it was an open question, all the links will be shared on the SALTO Green website.

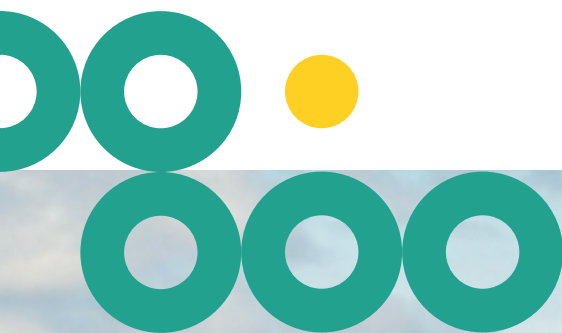
16 agencies organize ongoing training workshops for staff on the theme of green transition. (workshops, conferences)

### For the year 2023, do you plan to set up training on one of these 6 themes?

- **18** agencies have planned trainings on **Sustainable events**
- **13** agencies on **Green transports**
- **11** agencies on **Training practices**
- **11** agencies on **Digital practices**
- **10** agencies on **Procurements**
- **8** agencies on **Energy**

**Chart 8** Trainings for 2023 on specific topics

|                     | Green Transport | Energy | Events | Procurements | Training practices | Digital Practices |
|---------------------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| <b>YES</b>          | 13              | 8      | 18     | 10           | 11                 | 11                |
| <b>I DON'T KNOW</b> | 16              | 17     | 18     | 21           | 21                 | 25                |
| <b>NO</b>           | 20              | 24     | 13     | 18           | 17                 | 13                |





# Premises and Energy



The energy management and the use of premises by the agencies are important matters. As it was said at the beginning of the study, some of the NAs are depending on a bigger

organization and can't implement new rules in their building. Yet, it is important to know what is already done and what can be done in their premises.

## What is already done in general:

- **Sorting** in the office **92%**
- No **individual** printers **90%**
- **General sorting** **78%**
- **Switching off** A/C & heating during the weekends **67%**

## What can be done:

- **49%** can hire **recycling providers** or have no opinion on that
- **Electronic recycling: 41%** can implement it or have no opinion
- **Composting: 35%** can implement it or have no opinion

## What is difficult to implement or impossible:

- 32 agencies **can't move** to more efficient premises
- 27 agencies **can't implement** composting (55%)
- 16 agencies **can't pre-set/regulate** air conditioning & heating

**Chart 9** Energy and Buildings (Premises of the NA) (1)

|   | General sorting (batteries, light bulbs, glass, cardboard, cans, paper, pens) | Dishwasher (water saving) | Sorting in the office (paper, waste) | No individual printers (sharing of equipment) |
|---|---|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| YOU ALREADY DO IT                             | 38  | 29                        | 45                                   | 44  |
| YOU CAN DO / IMPLEMENT IT EASILY              | 6   | 1                         | 2                                    | 2   |
| YOU CAN DO / IMPLEMENT IT BUT WITH DIFFICULTY | 5   | 4                         | 2                                    | 3   |
| YOU CAN'T DO / IMPLEMENT IT                   | 0   | 11                        | 0                                    | 0   |
| NO OPINION                                    | 0   | 4                         | 0                                    | 0   |

**Chart 10** Energy and Buildings (Premises of the NA) (2)

|   | Compost | Electronic recycling | Trivialization of one day of teleworking to save energy for the building (winter/summer) | Hiring of recycling service provider(s) | Move to more efficient premises (HEQ) |
|---|---------|----------------------|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| YOU ALREADY DO IT                             | 10      | 26                   | 23   | 16                                      | 8                                     |
| YOU CAN DO / IMPLEMENT IT EASILY              | 4       | 8                    | 6  | 5                                       | 2                                     |
| YOU CAN DO / IMPLEMENT IT BUT WITH DIFFICULTY | 5       | 3                    | 8  | 9                                       | 10                                    |
| YOU CAN'T DO / IMPLEMENT IT                   | 22      | 4                    | 8  | 7                                       | 22                                    |
| NO OPINION                                    | 8       | 8                    | 4  | 12                                      | 7                                     |

**Chart 11** Energy and Buildings (Premises of the NA) (3)

|   | Pre-setting of air conditioning and/or heating | Computer servers that consume less energy | Switching off the heating/ air conditioning during the weekends | Switch to LED lighting in the building |
|---|--|---|---|--|
| YOU ALREADY DO IT                             | 25   | 11  | 38  | 33                                     |
| YOU CAN DO / IMPLEMENT IT EASILY              | 7  | 8   | 4   | 4                                      |
| YOU CAN DO / IMPLEMENT IT BUT WITH DIFFICULTY | 7  | 7   | 2   | 4                                      |
| YOU CAN'T DO / IMPLEMENT IT                   | 9  | 6   | 2   | 5                                      |
| NO OPINION                                    | 1  | 17  | 3   | 3                                      |

Within your agency's premises, what is the trend in terms of energy?

| Energy tendency                  |    |
|----------------------------------|----|
| TENDENCY TOWARDS ENERGY SOBRIETY | 34 |
| NO PARTICULAR TREND              | 15 |

## Focus on composting:

According to the ADEME, the **annual carbon footprint of food waste in France** is estimated at **15.5 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (gEqCO<sub>2</sub>) per year**. **Food alone** accounts for **36% of national greenhouse gas emissions**.

For **100 tons of composted bio-waste** -> **59 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions saved** -> an average of **4,6 jobs created\***

Sorting bio-waste for composting helps to:

- ▶ **Reduce** the amount of **waste** sent to landfill
- ▶ **Avoid** waste **incineration**
- ▶ **Improve** soil quality
- ▶ **Contribute** to sustainable development and **new jobs** linked with green transition



→ <sup>9</sup> Sources: ADEME (The French Agency for Ecological Transition) & Bicycompost



# Conclusion



That first publication of the results shows different level of ownership concerning the implementation of green transition within the National Agencies. It translates different realities linked with location of the NAs, their dependency toward bigger organization, cost of actions, providers, alternate possibilities...

However, the results have shown interesting and valuable practices that are already done in some agencies such as:

- Calculation of CO2 emissions
- Green travel providers for staff missions
- Raising awareness on train vs flights emissions on a short distance
- Restrictive air policy (wherever possible)
- Promote inspiring green projects
- Use of geothermic energy for premises (wherever possible)
- Hardware giveaway (IT)
- Recycling and composting
- Factsheets that can be shared with the staff
- Guidelines on green transition
- Publications shared on NAs' website to raise awareness
- Tailored tutorials for different publics (staff, project coordinators, assessors, multipliers...)

The challenge for the SALTO is to widen, share and promote best practices in order to implement it at a European level.

That survey will be reconducted in the following years in order to assess the evolution of the implementation of the green transition within the NAs.

A few questions will be adapted to match with the situations that have been reported by the green contact points during the first meeting in June.

The SALTO Green will use the results of that first survey to aim at right targets and to support agencies that need resources, information and support through their Green Contact Points.

