



# European Capital of Christmas

## Sustainability Pledge

A Commitment to Climate Action through Cultural  
Christmas Events in Europe

### **Introduction**

Recognising the accelerating impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion, we affirm our shared responsibility to ensure that Christmas events and markets contribute positively to people, place, and planet.

In alignment with the Paris Agreement (2015), the EU Green Deal (2019), the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we commit to embedding sustainability and circularity across all aspects of Christmas event planning and delivery.

As agreed in Waterford City, Ireland at the City Hall on the 27th of November 2025 in collaboration with the Citizenship, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) project of the EU at the European Capital of Christmas Bright and Green Christmas Conference 2025.

### **Pledge**

We pledge to support the transition to net-zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050, consistent with international climate goals, and to pursue actions through our events that contribute to the European Green Deal targets of a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030, and 90% reduction in emissions by 2040.

In parallel, we will take active steps to protect and restore biodiversity, foster local and circular economies, and encourage positive behavioural change among suppliers, participants, and visitors.

## **1 Strategy and Climate Action Plan for Emissions Reductions**

Within 18 months of signing this Pledge, each signatory will develop and publish a Sustainable Christmas Action Plan outlining measurable steps towards emissions reductions through targeted actions across the key impact areas: energy, food and drink, materials, energy and water.

This plan will include:

- **Energy & Lighting:** Transition to renewable or low-carbon energy sources for lighting, heating, and equipment, prioritising energy-efficient systems and reduced operating hours. Implement energy monitoring to target and reduce areas of high consumption. Wildlife protection will also be prioritised for lighting.
- **Waste & Circularity:** Eliminate single-use items, prevent waste through reuse, apply circular economy principles in materials management and design and ensure waste stream separation is appropriately applied in the interim where reuse and circularity are more challenging to implement.
- **Food & Beverage:** Promote local, seasonal, and low-impact foods; reduce food waste; and prioritise reusable service ware.
- **Procurement:** Prioritise suppliers and materials with verified environmental credentials and minimal transport-related emissions. Influence suppliers towards more sustainable practices and supply.
- **Biodiversity:** Integrate nature-positive measures, such as greening urban spaces, sourcing from biodiversity-friendly producers, and supporting habitat restoration projects local to the event.
- **Residual Emissions:** Compensate unavoidable emissions through credible, verifiable offsetting mechanisms, with preference for local initiatives.

## **2 Strengthening Local and Circular Economies**

We commit to maximising the social and economic value of Christmas events by:

- Prioritising local producers, artisans, and service providers, thereby reducing emissions and supporting local livelihoods.
- Promoting short supply chains and fair working conditions across the value chain.
- Encouraging the sale and promotion of sustainable, durable, and repairable goods with a ban on single-use plastics.
- Facilitating community participation in the programming of your events.

## **3 Collaboration and Partnership**

Recognising that systemic change requires coordinated effort, we will:

- Publicly communicate our endorsement of this Pledge and invite other organisers, suppliers, and local authorities to join.
- Integrate environmental and ethical considerations into all contracts, procurement processes, and partnership agreements.
- Engage in collective initiatives to improve data sharing, sustainable infrastructure, and resource efficiency within the Christmas Events sector.
- Cooperate with local councils, environmental organisations, and national or European networks to exchange best practices and harmonise approaches.

#### **4 Awareness and Behavioural Change**

Sustainable transition depends on cultural change. To that end, we will:

- Use our events to raise awareness among visitors and participants about sustainability, circularity, and responsible consumption through programming, informational signage, communications and marketing.
- Encourage low-carbon travel choices, such as public transport, walking, and cycling through communications for audiences attending Christmas events.
- Provide clear, visible communication on waste sorting, water refill areas, wash stations, energy use, and other initiatives to educate the public on sustainability.
- Integrate educational and creative activities that inspire community-wide engagement in environmental stewardship, and align with the engagement of the local community through programming.

#### **5 Monitoring, Reporting, and Transparency**

To ensure accountability and continuous improvement, signatories will:

- Measure and report Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions in accordance with recognised international methodologies (e.g., GHG Protocol, ISO 20121).
- Track additional indicators on waste reduction, biodiversity impact, local sourcing, and stakeholder engagement where relevant and possible for impact reporting outside of carbon emissions.
- Contribute data and insights to sector-wide efforts aimed at developing consistent measurement frameworks for sustainable Christmas events.

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

MUNICIPALITY: WARSZAWA, FUNDACJA AUTOKREACJA