

Environmental statement update



Abbreviations

CoR: European Committee of the Regions
EESC: European Economic and Social Committee
EMAS: Eco-Management and Audit Scheme
EMS: environmental management system
FTE: full-time equivalent
GHG: greenhouse gas
PMC: plastic, metal and drink cartons

Buildings

B100: Belliard 100
BvS: Bertha von Suttner
JDE: Jacques Delors
REM: Remorqueur
VMA: Van Maerlant

The Committees' NACE code is NACE 99 (activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies)

This document has been translated into French. Only the English version has been validated and is authentic.

European Economic and Social Committee and European Committee of the Regions
Directorate for Logistics
Infrastructure Unit
EMAS Service

Contact: environment@eesc.europa.eu | environment@cor.europa.eu

Rue Belliard 99-101
1040 Brussels
Belgium
Tel. +32 (0)2 546 90 72

www.eesc.europa.eu | www.cor.europa.eu

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2026 Environmental Statement confirms that the Committee's environmental management system (EMS) remains robust and effective, with the successful achievement of all environmental objectives for the 2022-2025 period.

In 2025, environmental performance continued to improve despite a clear increase in on-site activity, meetings and visitors. Electricity, gas, waste, paper use and CO₂ emissions from administrative activities all show sustained reductions compared to the 2019 baseline.

Gas consumption increased compared to 2024, mainly due to colder weather conditions at the beginning and end of the year. When adjusted for heating degree days, gas consumption nevertheless remains 5% below the 2019 baseline, meeting the Committees' objective and confirming the effectiveness of the energy-saving measures that have been introduced.

Carbon emissions from administrative activities decreased by 20.2% compared to 2019, representing twice the reduction targeted for 2030. When considering the Committees' full carbon footprint, total greenhouse gas emissions fell by 16.1% compared to 2024 and remain below 2019 levels.

In conclusion, the Committees' EMS continues to improve environmental performance, making the Committees more sustainable.

Table 1: Main objectives and performance, 2022 to 2025

	Objective	Indicator	Target	Performance since 2019	Change since 2024
	Electricity	Reduction between 2019 and 2025	-5%	-20%	-2.4%
	Gas	Reduction between 2019 and 2025	-5%	-5%	+8.5%
	Water	Reduction between 2019 and 2025	-5%	-38%	-1.1%
	Waste	Reduction between 2019 and 2025	-5%	-66%	-5%
	Paper	Reduction between 2019 and 2025	-10%	-55%	-1.6%
	Carbon footprint ¹	Reduction between 2019 and 2030	-10%	-20%	-1.2%

¹ The carbon footprint objective only relates to the emissions from the administration, it does not include members' travel.

1. THE COMMITTEES

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) are two consultative bodies of the European Union.

European Economic and Social Committee

Established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome, the **EESC** is an advisory body that represents organisations of employers, workers and other parties representing civil society at the European level. It comprises 329 members nominated by the Member States and appointed for five years by the Council.

The EESC's remit is to help the EU institutions by playing a consultative role in relation to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission. It is mandatory for the EESC to be consulted in all the cases stipulated in the Treaties and in all cases where the institutions deem this appropriate, in fields such as the economy, energy, transport, employment, the environment, sustainable development, education and culture. The EESC can also be consulted on an exploratory basis, or it can draw up own-initiative opinions on issues to which it wishes to draw the attention of the institutions. The EESC thus enables representatives of organised civil society to participate in EU policy- and decision-making.

The EESC also has the task of helping to bring the European Union closer to its citizens, promoting values that underpin the European project and enhancing the role played by civil society organisations and participatory democracy.

The European Committee of the Regions

Established in 1994, the **CoR** is the EU's political assembly of regional and local representatives. Its remit is to involve regional and local authorities and the communities they represent in the EU's decision-making process and to inform them about EU policies. The CoR comprises 329 members from the 27 Member States and an equal number of alternates. All of them are nominated by the Member States and appointed for five years by the Council.

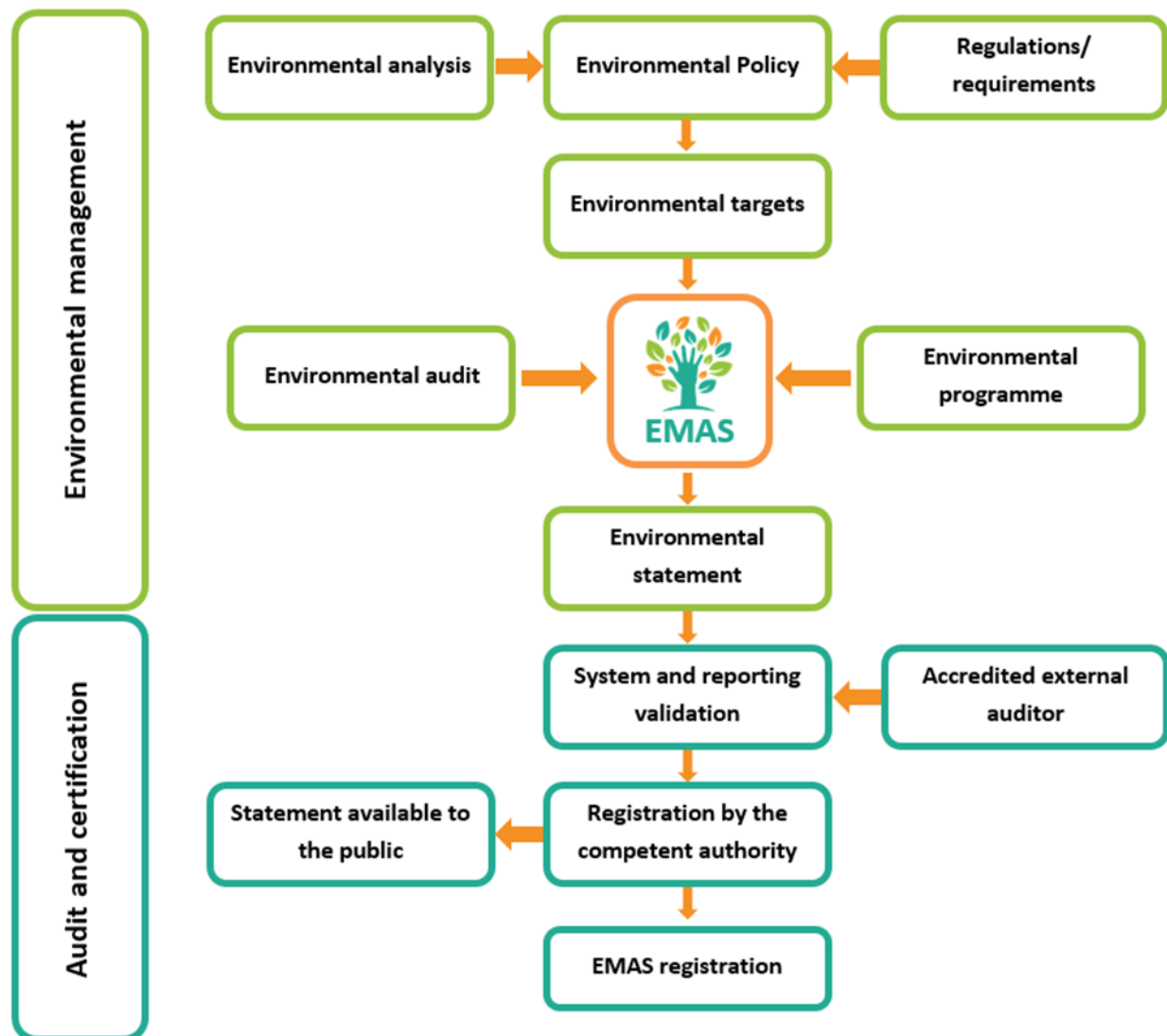
In accordance with the Treaties, the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission must consult the CoR on any proposal of relevance to regions, towns or cities. The CoR can also draw up own-initiative opinions, which enables it to put issues on the agenda of the EU institutions. The CoR can also appeal to the EU Court of Justice if its rights are infringed or if it believes that an EU law violates the subsidiarity principle or fails to respect regional or local powers.

2. THE COMMITTEES' ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

2.1 Description of the environmental management system – EMAS

EMAS (eco-management and audit scheme) was established by EU regulation 1221/2009² to allow voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme by implementing an EMS. The purpose of the EMS is to improve an organisation's environmental performance.

Figure 1: Structure of the EMS established by the Committees:



² Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2009 on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS), as amended by Commission Regulation (EU) 2017/1505 of 28 August 2017 amending Annexes I, II and III and by Commission Regulation (EU) 2018/2026 of 19 December 2018 amending Annex IV.

1. Environmental management review

The environmental management review involves a detailed analysis of the Committees' activities, taking account of all stages in the life cycle, in order to identify aspects that have a significant environmental impact.

The identified aspects are regularly updated and monitored annually in line with changes to the Committees' activities or building management.

2. Environmental policy

The Committees have drawn up an environmental policy formalising their environmental commitment. This is signed by the presidents and secretaries-general of the EESC and the CoR and published on their respective websites. The environmental policy is communicated to all stakeholders, including contractors who are obliged to comply with the EMS implemented by the Committees.

3. Environmental objectives and indicators

Based on the environmental policy and the results of the environmental management review, environmental objectives in the form of indicators and actions are set, which take into account legal and other requirements applicable to the Committees. The objectives are translated into performance requirements and consolidated in an environmental programme. Chapter 3 sets out the Committees' environmental objectives and indicators.

4. Environmental programme

The environmental programme sets out the deadlines, responsibilities and means for achieving the environmental objectives. It is approved by the EMAS Steering Committee and then implemented through the defined actions. At this stage, all members of the organisation need to work together to meet these objectives. This stage includes information and awareness-raising activities. At the same time, environmental practices (e.g. waste sorting procedures) are formalised and communicated to those concerned.

5. Internal audits

As part of the EMS, internal and external audits are carried out annually in order to identify possible non-compliance and take the necessary corrective action. Cases of non-compliance with environmental requirements (irregularities) are recorded in audit reports, which are used as a basis for improvement measures. The EMS is therefore developing in the spirit of continuous improvement.

6. Environmental statement

The environmental statement (this document) is intended to inform the public of the existence of an EMAS-compliant EMS while enabling them to follow changes in the environmental performance of the Committees. The statement is updated and a new version published each year after verification and validation by an accredited body.

The EESC and the CoR share the same buildings and have assigned the management of EMAS to the Directorate for Logistics, one of the Committees' joint services. The environmental statement concerns the environmental performance of both Committees, without distinction.

7. External audit/verification

The EMS is assessed by an independent verifier. If all requirements of the EMAS Regulation are met, the competent body in the Brussels Capital Region, Bruxelles Environnement, grants the EMAS registration. The environmental auditor, Vinçotte, assessed the EESC and the CoR and on 27 December 2011 declared for the first time that they were in full compliance with the provisions of the EMAS III Regulation. The Committees have been declared compliant with that regulation every year since then.

2.2 Scope

The EMS applies to all staff in the non-political aspects of their daily activities. The Committees' activities have both direct and indirect impacts on the environment, including energy consumption in office buildings, waste production, paper consumption and the environmental impact of transporting people and goods.

Political activities performed by Committee members within the framework of their mandate are excluded from the EMS unless stated otherwise. Consequently, restrictive measures are not imposed on members, allowing them to remain independent in their consultative activities. However, while members' travel is not specifically covered by an environmental objective or indicator, it is considered part of the Committees' overall carbon footprint.

More precisely, the scope of the EMS at the Committees includes:

- The 671 people working at the EESC and 497 people working at the CoR as of 31 December 2025, as well as trainees and interim staff, and the staff of external contractors who work in the premises.
- Five buildings utilised by the Committees, all located in Brussels, Belgium.

Table 2: Buildings

Building	Gross surface — m² —	Occupants 2025	Construction year	Environmental permit — N° —	Permit valid until
Jacques Delors (JDE) Rue Belliard 99-101	51 663	546	1983	381908	30/4/2028
Bertha von Suttner (BvS) Rue Montoyer 92-102	30 491	485	1989	671199	24/10/2033
Remorqueur (REM) Rue Belliard 93	2 696	70	2006	399668	2/10/2033
B100 Rue Belliard 100	7 438	208	1964	664294	18/4/2034
Van Maerlant (VMA) Rue Van Maerlant 2	12 386	316	1985	676713	18/4/2034
TOTAL	104 674	1 625			

2.3 EMAS organisational structure

EMAS Steering Committee

The EMAS Steering Committee is a body representing the services of the EESC and CoR. Its members are responsible for supervising the EMS and ensuring that it operates properly. In this context, they take decisions on the allocation of resources and set a good example in the implementation of best practices.

Table 3: Composition of the EMAS Steering Committee

EESC	CoR
Secretary-General	Secretary-General
Head of the Secretary-General's Private Office	Head of the Secretary-General's Private Office
Director of Legislative Work responsible for environmental matters	Director of Legislative Work responsible for environmental matters
Director of Human Resources and Finance	Director of Human Resources and Finance
Director of Statutory Bodies and Members' Working Conditions	Director of the Directorate for Members, Plenaries and Strategy
Director for Logistics	Director for Translation
Staff Committee representative	Staff Committee representative

The EMAS Service

The EMAS Service is responsible for implementing the EMS in accordance with the EMAS regulation. Its responsibilities include documenting procedures, work instructions and records, coordinating activities, raising environmental awareness, proposing and monitoring environmental objectives, organising audits and drafting the environmental statement.

The EMAS network

The EMAS Service is supported by a network of 80 EMAS contact persons across all directorates of the two Committees and the joint services. These contact persons play a crucial role in communication and awareness raising, relaying messages to colleagues, gathering feedback and suggestions, participating in awareness campaigns and supporting specific EMAS measures within their directorate or unit.

Staff involvement

The active participation and contribution of all staff in improving environmental performance is a cornerstone of EMAS. To facilitate this, the EMAS Service and its network engage with staff, members, contractors, trainees and visitors through various methods. The approach is outlined in the EMAS communication strategy, which details the information and communication methods used for each target group.

New staff members are introduced to EMAS during their introductory training. Following this introduction, they can further expand their knowledge by participating in regular training sessions and events.

In a collaborative effort to strengthen the Committees' EMS, staff are also encouraged to attend events and activities such as lunchtime seminars, visits and workshops on a wide range of current topics. These activities provide opportunities to collectively expand EMS knowledge and interact with experts from various fields.

In 2025, a variety of awareness-raising activities, presentations and workshops were organised to promote environmental consciousness and sustainable practices:

- **Lunchtime conference on sustainable mobility:** *How to start cycling to work?* An informative session to encourage staff to commute by bike;
- **Staff visit to the Toiture L[ag]UM rooftop garden:** Awareness-raising session to promote urban agriculture;
- **2025 European Week for Waste Reduction:** Electrical and electronic waste collection and donation for a good cause.



Cooperation and collaboration

Collaboration extends beyond the two Committees to include other EU institutions. Representatives of EMAS-certified EU bodies meet in various forums, actively addressing common challenges, exchanging information and sharing best practices.

Internal communication and engagement

EMAS CORNER



CIRCULARITY

Circularity is key to EU policy goals. The Committees reflect this at various levels.

- Together with the EC, the EESC created the **European Circular Economy Platform**.
- The CoR has adopted the opinion on the **New Circular Economy Action Plan**.
- **VMA building renovation** focused on circularity.
- One of the CoR EMAS contact persons provide a **Reuse corner** for parents.

More info on the **EMAS Intranet**

[Za tímto adresou můžete najít | en:emascorner.eu](#)



Internally, the EMAS intranet serves as the primary platform for sharing information on the Committees' environmental objectives and indicators, the latest environmental results and eco-tips for reducing environmental impact in the workplace.

Specific information, such as instructions for waste sorting, details on environmental audits and guidelines for sustainable public procurement, is also available on the intranet.

The monthly EESC and CoR newsletters feature an EMAS corner that promotes good environmental practices among staff. Additionally, the EMAS service publishes its own newsletter, informing staff about various EMAS activities and other environmental topics.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

The Committees have established 12 environmental objectives aligned with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals:

Table 4: Environmental objectives and Sustainable Development Goals

										
Electricity										
Gas										
Water										
Waste										
Paper										
Sustainable procurement										
Catering										
Events										
Staff commuting										
Biodiversity										
CO ₂ emissions										

To monitor environmental performance and ensure these objectives are met, the Committees utilise 35 indicators. These indicators are expressed in both absolute and relative terms to account for the evolving nature of the Committees' activities over time.

To facilitate year-on-year performance comparison, indicators are calculated based on full-time equivalents (FTE). One FTE represents one person working full-time in the Committees' buildings for 220 working days per year. In 2025, the total FTEs amounted to 1 522³.

³ Calculation of FTEs:

Staff: Each person is considered one FTE, weighted by their working hours.

Trainees: Each trainee is considered one FTE, weighted by the number of working days.

Contractors: Calculated similarly to trainees.

Members: Given that most Committee members do not have individual offices and taking into account their working schedules, the FTE is set at 0.43 for an EESC member and 0.13 for a CoR member.



3.2 Electricity

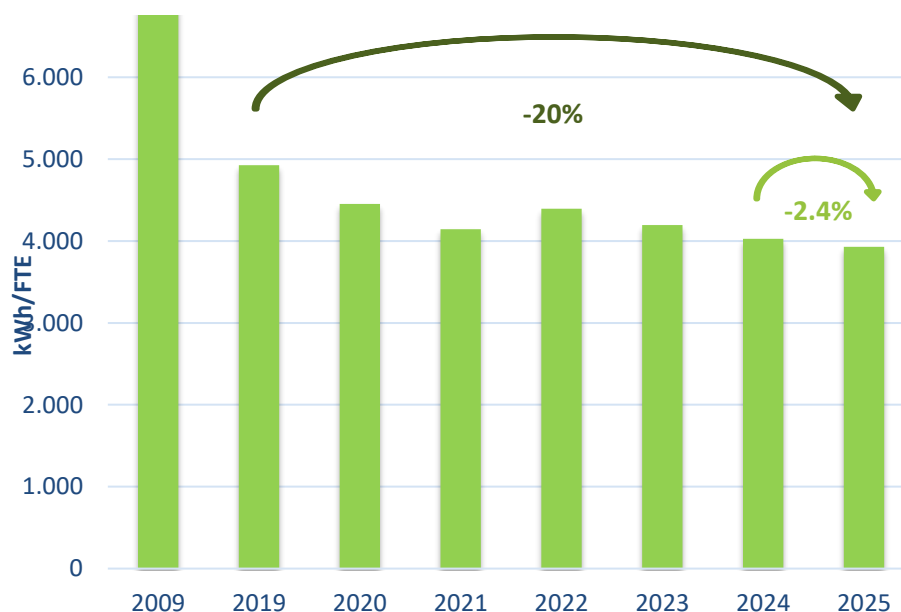


Activity	Electricity needs are primarily associated with lighting, air-conditioning and ventilation in the buildings, IT infrastructure (computers, printers, servers) and the operation of lifts and other electrical equipment.
Objective	🌱 5% reduction between 2019 and 2025
Indicator	🌱 Total annual quantity of electricity consumed per employee, expressed in kWh/FTE

Results	2019	2023	2024	2025	since 2024
Total electricity consumption (kWh)	7 498 751	6 406 123	6 135 392	5 984 951	-2.5%
per/FTE (kWh/FTE)	4 924	4 195	4 026	3 931	-2.4%

In 2025, the total electricity consumption was 5 984 951kWh. Electricity consumption per FTE for 2025 decreased by 2.5% compared to 2024 and by 20% compared to 2019, remaining well beyond the Committees' electricity objective.

Figure 1: Trend in electricity consumption, 2009-2025



In addition to purchasing green electricity generated from renewable energy sources, the Committees also produce part of their own energy from solar panels. In 2025, 52m² of solar panels generated 5 986 kWh of electricity.

Actions taken

The gradual increase in activities since 2022 has been largely counterbalanced by the introduction of energy-saving measures. The geopolitical situation led to rising and volatile energy prices in the second half of 2022, prompting the Committees to implement various measures to minimise electricity consumption across all buildings, achieving significant savings.

Immediate measures implemented:

- increasing summer ‘comfort’ temperatures to 27°C;
- adjusting the comfort-mode time range from 7:00-19:00 to 8:00-18:00, reducing the operating time of energy-consuming technical equipment and installations (ventilation units, cooling units, etc.);
- adapting the cooling mode for conference rooms;
- adjusting the light schedule per building zone, reducing the time delay for presence detectors and optimising system configurations;
- placing the B100 and REM buildings in hibernation mode during summer and end-of-year vacations;
- encouraging staff to contribute by distributing an updated guide on efficient use of cooling and lighting systems.

Medium and long-term energy efficiency projects:

Energy audits are conducted as a first step, followed by technical studies. If feasible, building infrastructure upgrades are carried out. Subject to technical feasibility and budgetary availability, the following actions will be implemented provided that the technical studies are conclusive:

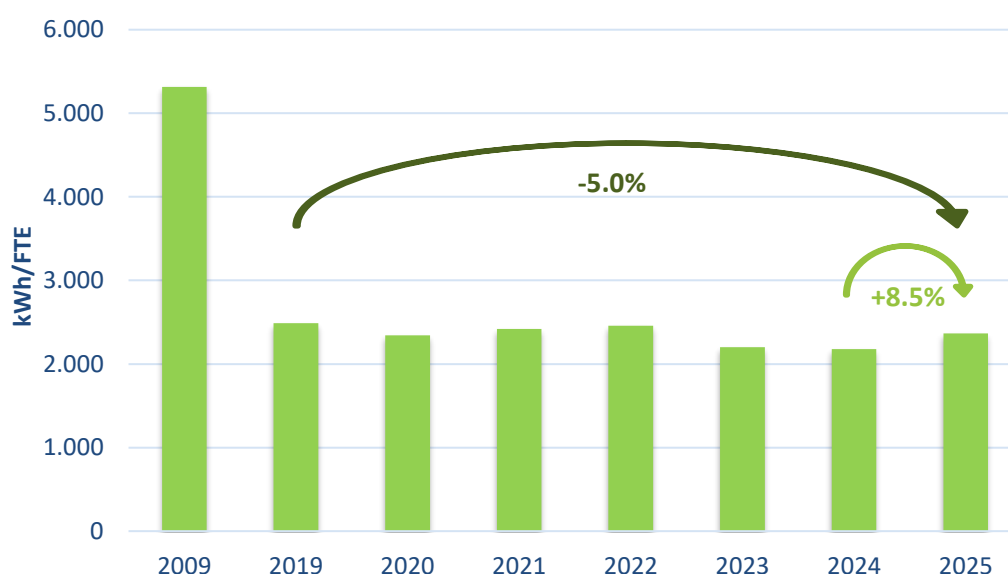
- Replacing existing conventional lighting with LED lighting;
- Optimising the operation of lighting by installing presence/absence sensors in areas such as corridors, technical rooms, stairs, car parks, etc.

Activity	Natural gas is used to heat the buildings and produce hot water in the JDE building.
Objective	🌱 5% reduction between 2019 and 2025
Indicator	🌱 Total annual quantity of gas consumed per employee expressed in kWh/heating degree days 15°C/FTE

Results	2019	2023	2024	2025	since 2024
Total gas consumption (kWh PCS)	3 791 138	3 083 480	3 041 905	3 441 987	+13.2%
Gas consumption HDD 15 (kWh)	3 791 138	3 360 057	3 320 864	3 600 030	+8.4
kWh/HDD 15/FTE	2 490	2 201	2 179	2 365	+8.5

In 2025, total gas consumption was 3 600 030 kWh per heating degree days (kWh/HDD 15). Gas consumption per FTE for 2025 increased by 8.5% compared to 2024 and decreased by 5.0% compared to 2019, meeting the Committees' gas consumption objective. Gas consumption is adjusted according to the 'heating degree days 15°C' method, which helps accurately track performance year-to-year despite weather variations.

Figure 3: Gas consumption weighted by HDD 15 (kWh/FTE), 2009-2025



Despite being slightly temperature adjusted, the metric did not fully compensate for the unusually cold beginning and end of the year, hence the increase in energy consumption despite the continuous improvements in energy management.

Actions Taken

The geopolitical situation in the second half of 2022 led to rising and volatile energy prices, prompting the Committees to implement various measures to minimise gas consumption across all buildings and achieve significant savings. The challenge was to enhance energy efficiency while maintaining occupant comfort in all seasons. A series of actions aimed at optimising the start-up, operation and shutdown of heating systems based on algorithms incorporating various parameters were introduced to better align indoor temperatures with actual needs and climatic conditions.

Immediate measures implemented:

- decreasing winter 'comfort' temperatures to 19°C;
- adjusting the comfort-mode time range from 7:00-19:00 to 8:00-18:00, reducing the operating time of energy-consuming equipment and installations (ventilation units, boilers, etc.);
- placing the B100 and REM buildings in hibernation mode during summer and end-of-year vacations;
- optimising system parameters for heating and hot water production;
- encouraging staff to contribute by distributing an updated guide on efficient use of heating systems.

Medium and long-term energy efficiency projects:

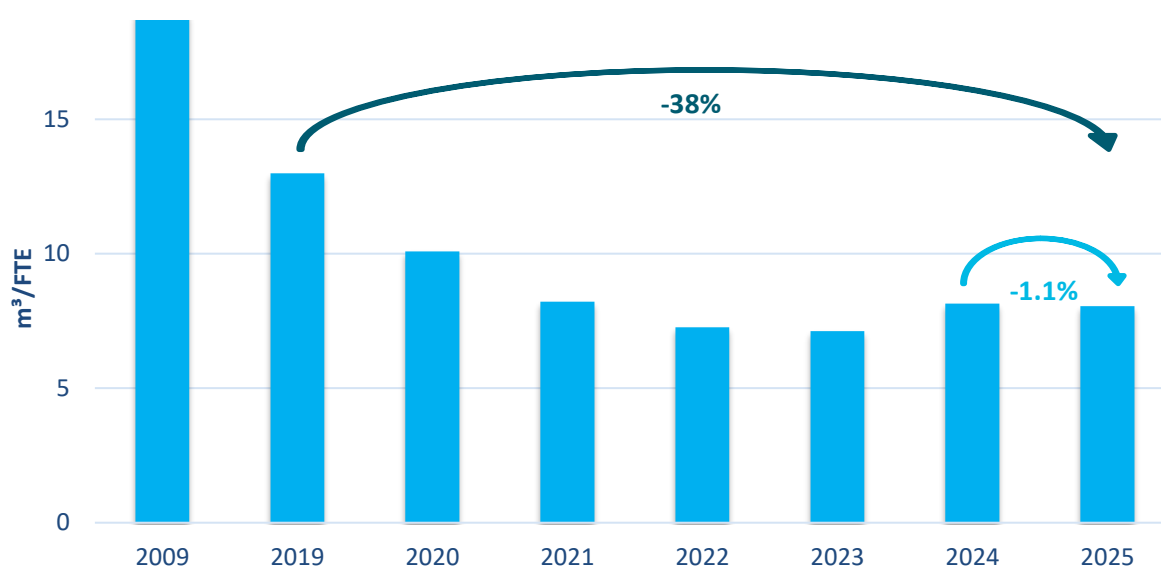
Energy audits were conducted as a first step, followed by technical studies. If feasible, building infrastructure upgrades were carried out. Subject to technical feasibility and budgetary availability, selected actions will be implemented based on the technical study results.

Activity	Water is mainly used for catering, cleaning, restrooms and watering gardens.
Objective	🌿 5% reduction between 2019 and 2025
Indicator	🌿 Total annual quantity of water consumed per employee, expressed in m ³ /FTE

Results	2019	2023	2024	2025	since 2024
Total water consumption (m ³)	19 778	10 879	12 406	12 259	-1.2%
per/FTE (m ³ /FTE)	13.0	7.1	8.1	8.1	-1.1%

The total water consumption in 2025 was 12 259 m³. The water consumption per FTE for 2025 was down 1.1% on 2024 and down 38% on 2019, surpassing the Committees' objective.

Figure 4: Water consumption (m³/FTE), 2009-2025



In general terms, there has been a gradual reduction in water consumption per FTE since 2009. The rapid decrease seen in recent years is partially due to water-saving measures and partially due to increased teleworking and reduced frequency of events and visitors due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Actions taken

To achieve these reductions, the Committees have enacted several measures to diminish their water footprint:

- **Toilet flush adjustments:** Reducing flush volumes from nine litres to six litres, substantially lowering water use in restrooms;
- **Enhanced monitoring systems:** Implementing robust monitoring techniques to swiftly identify and address any anomalies like leaks or spikes in consumption;
- **Efficient fixtures:** Installing water-saving devices such as diffuser taps and low-flow showerheads to reduce water usage in handwashing and shower facilities;
- **Automated taps:** Upgrading from manual taps to sensor-based taps to minimise unnecessary water flow and improve hygiene.

Activity	The Committees' daily operations generate a variety of waste types, including office waste, leftovers from catering activities and waste from building maintenance and construction projects.
Objective	5% reduction in waste from office and catering activities between 2019 and 2025 - To recycle on average 50% of office and catering waste over the 2019-2025 period
Indicators	- Annual quantity of office and catering waste produced per employee (kg/FTE/year) - Percentage of office and catering waste that is recycled (%)

Results	2019	2023	2024	2025	since 2024
Office and catering waste (kg/FTE)	194.2	86.8	99.5	69.0	-31%
Recycling (%)	68%	56%	45%	64%	41%

In 2025, the production of office and catering waste decreased by 6% from 2024 and by 66% compared to 2019, achieving the reduction target. Waste recycling reached 64% for 2025 and a total of 60% for the period 2019 to 2025.

Figure 5: Office and catering waste (kg/FTE), 2010-2025

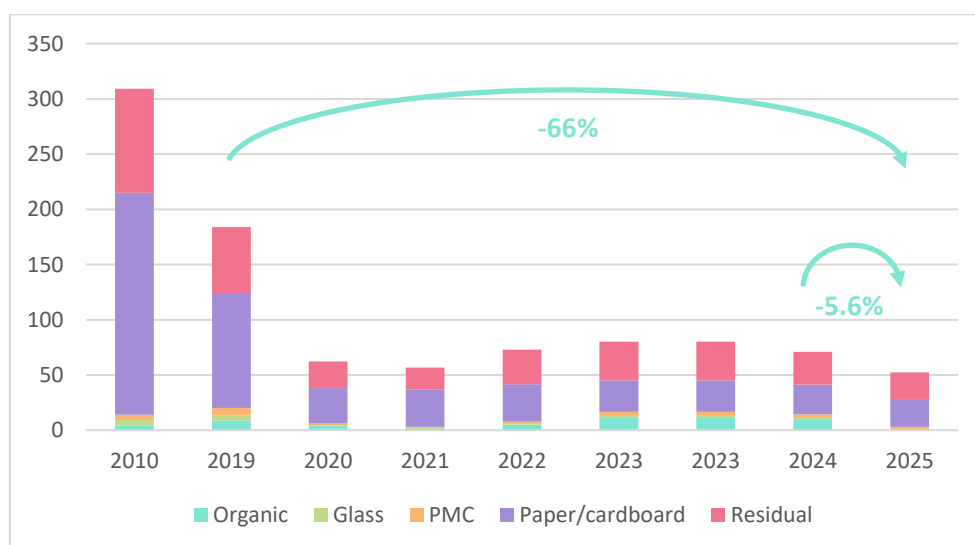


Table 5: Office and kitchen waste (kg/FTE), 2010-2025

Type (kg/FTE)	2010	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	since 2024
Organic	4.4	9.0	4.2	1.2	5.2	11.9	9.5	12.1	27%
Glass	4.9	4.5	0.3	0.9	1.4	1.9	1.8	2.2	24%
PMC	4.8	6.8	1.8	0.9	1.0	3.0	3.2	3.0	-8%
Paper/cardboard	200.8	104.0	32.0	34.0	34.1	28.4	26.8	24.6	-8%
Residual	94.2	59.5	23.9	19.7	31.2	35.1	29.5	24.9	-16%
Total	306.1	184.6	62.2	56.7	72.9	80.4	70.8	66.8	-5.6%

Total waste

In 2025, the total waste production was 123 532 kg, representing a decrease from 2024 of 23%. In addition to office and catering waste, total waste also includes building maintenance and construction waste in addition to hazardous waste.

Table 6: Office, construction and hazardous waste (kg), 2022-2025

Type	2022	2023	2024	2025	since 2024
Non-hazardous waste	535 168	254 376	157 003	120 148	-23%
Office and catering	117 100	132 495	108 537	105 316	-3%
Construction	401 050	107 761	27 860	9 970	-64%
Maintenance	17 018	14 120	20 606	4 862	-76%
Hazardous waste	5 249	6 608	3 861	3 384	-12%
Total	540 417	260 984	160 864	123 532	-23%

Analysis of results

The decrease in total waste volumes is linked to a reduction of all types of waste, in particular waste from building projects.

The rise in organic waste is due to higher consumption of catering services and increased use of fresh products, generating more organic waste.

The reduction in paper and cardboard waste is probably related to active promotion of a paperless and digital working environment within the Committees.

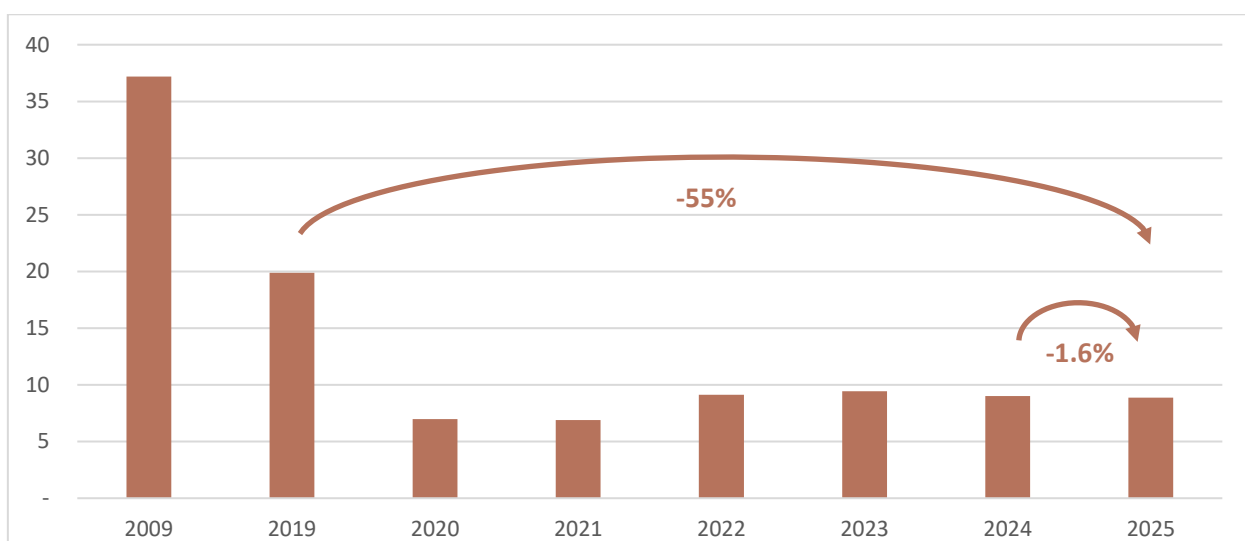
Since the introduction of the EMS, the overall amount of waste has decreased significantly (66% in 2025 compared to 2019). Despite periodic increases, the Committees' sustained efforts in waste prevention and awareness have yielded positive results. The downward trend in waste generation across all categories since 2010 is testament to compliance with environmental legislation and growing awareness of environmental impacts.

Activity	Paper is the main primary material used in the Committees' activities. Producing and printing paper as well as managing paper waste consume significant natural resources and have a considerable environmental impact.
Objective	🌱 10% reduction in quantity of office paper used between 2019 and 2025
Indicator	🌱 Pages of office paper used per employee per day

Results	2019	2023	2024	2025	since 2024
Pages of office paper (million pages)	6.665	3.171	3.021	2.971	-1.7%
Pages/FTE (pages/FTE)	19.9	9.4	9.0	8.9	-1.6%

In 2025, the amount of paper used per FTE per day decreased by 1.6% compared to 2024 and 55% compared to 2019, thereby achieving the Committees' objective of reducing paper use. The paper usage metric is measured and monitored based on the number of pages printed.

Figure 7: Pages printed per FTE per working day, 2019-2025



The political activities of both Committees are predominantly 'paper poor' or paperless. Documents for political and statutory meetings have not been printed since 2019 for the CoR and since 2020 for the EESC. Office paper used in offices is 100% recycled A4 80g paper, used by staff to print documents.

Actions taken

To further reduce paper usage, the EESC and the CoR have implemented the following measures:

- EESC: Introduced a 'paper-poor meetings' strategy;
- CoR: Adopted a 'paper-free meetings' strategy;
- CoR: Launched a digital communication strategy;
- EESC and CoR: Continued digitisation of administrative, financial and human resources procedures through various IT projects within the Committees.



3.7 Sustainable procurement



Activity	All goods, services and works required by the Committees are acquired through public procurement processes.
Objective	🌱 100% of calls for tenders with a value equal to or higher than EUR 25 000 (for the joint services) or EUR 60 000 (for the Committees' own services) include environmental and sustainable clauses.
Indicator	🌱 Percentage of tenders including environmental criteria 🌱 Percentage of tenders categorised as 'top green', 'medium green' and 'low green'

Results	2025
Percentage of tenders including environmental criteria	100%
Percentage of tenders categorised as 'top green', 'medium green' and 'low green'	80% top green 20% medium green

All contract documents submitted for consultation in 2025 contained environmental clauses. A set of standard environmental clauses is included in all EESC and CoR calls for tender, with additional specific environmental criteria added depending on the contract's subject.

100% of tenders with a high environmental impact include specific environmental criteria directly related to the subject of the contract.

Ongoing actions

- **Green electricity:** Electricity used is 100% green;
- **Eco-labelled products:** Eco-labelled products are used as much as possible for maintenance;
- **Cleaning products:** 100% of the products used by the Committees are eco-labelled, as of 2022⁴;
- **Pesticide-free:** No chemical pesticides or fertilisers are used for maintaining green spaces;
- **Certified wood:** Any wood used in works is FSC or PEFC certified;
- **Recycled paper:** Office paper is recycled or eco-labelled;
- **Eco-friendly office supplies:** Office supplies meet stringent environmental criteria.

⁴ With the exception of disinfectants and hydroalcoholic gel used in the context of sanitary measures. For catering activities, products that do not have an eco-label are used for strong degreasing, descaling and disinfection.



3.8 Service vehicles



Activity	The Committees use a limited number of service vehicles for transporting people to and from meetings.
Objective	 Reduce pollution generated by official cars between 2019 and 2025, with the aim of having a fleet of zero-emission vehicles by 2030.
Indicator	 Emissions from service vehicles are included in the Committees' carbon footprint.

The fleet includes fully electric, hybrid and combustion engine vehicles. The objective is to transition to a zero-emission fleet by 2030. The Committees aim to participate in interinstitutional calls for tender or explore other options to procure zero-emission vehicles. A margin for the use of hybrid vehicles is considered to ensure sufficient autonomy where necessary, given the current state of electric vehicle technology.

Actions taken

Environmental criteria have been included in the leasing contracts for service vehicles. This ensures that the vehicles chosen are less polluting, which contributes to a gradual reduction in the fleet's overall environmental impact. Additionally, drivers receive training in eco-driving techniques to minimise the environmental impact of vehicle use.



3.9 Catering



Activity	Catering services are provided at the canteen, restaurant, cafeterias and events organised by the Committees.
Objective	🌱 By 2030, reduce the environmental impact of catering activities by introducing sustainable food criteria and minimising food waste.
Indicators	🌱 Percentage of seasonal vegetables used in the menus and in the salad bar 🌱 Percentage of fresh fruits used in the fruit bar 🌱 Percentage of purchases from sustainable fisheries and aquaculture 🌱 Percentage of organic products 🌱 Percentage of fair-trade products 🌱 Percentage of vegetarian dishes sold 🌱 Food waste: food waste from canteen 🌱 Food donation: quantities of food donated via the food donation project (in kg)

The Committees have two cafeterias, a canteen and an à la carte restaurant, used daily by hundreds of people. Food and beverages are also provided at meetings and events.

The EESC and the CoR are committed to a sustainable food policy aligned with the EU Farm to Fork Strategy, which aims to protect biodiversity and ecosystems. Key features include:

- offering vegetarian and vegan options;
- promoting fresh and local products while banning industrial products;
- prohibiting serving overfished, endangered or environmentally harmful fish and seafood⁵;
- daily monitoring of food waste and efficient food inventory management;
- implementing a zero-plastic policy, using reusable packaging and limiting single-use containers;
- prioritising local, seasonal and certified products.

In 2025 catering achieved the following results:

- level of seasonality of vegetables: 71% (2019: 62%)
- organic farming: 12% (2019: 18%)
- fair trade: 3% (2019: 8%)
- origin of fish and seafood: 100% labelled (2019: 24%)

⁵ Marked with the colour code red or orange in the WWF recommendations: <https://fr.fishguide.be>.



3.10 Organisation of events



Activity	Meetings, conferences and events organised by the Committees
Objective	 Reduce the environmental impact of events between 2019 and 2025.
Indicators	 Food waste and food donation from buffets (see 3.9 Catering)

The EESC and CoR host numerous events each year, including conferences, events organised by European civil society organisations, open days and group visits. These events can significantly impact the environment, necessitating a focused effort to reduce waste.

In 2025, the number of in-person events continued to rise. To mitigate the environmental impact of events, the Committees have implemented various best practices. The Committees' Sustainable Events Guide is regularly updated, providing comprehensive strategies for minimising environmental impact. Measures are in place to monitor and reduce food waste at events, including better planning of meal quantities and encouraging attendees to minimise waste. Ensuring that the food served at events follows sustainable practices, such as using seasonal, organic and fair-trade products, is also a priority.

The Committees have successfully transitioned to a mix of in-person and hybrid events, balancing environmental considerations with the need for physical gatherings. The guide to organising sustainable events is well consulted, with staff and organisers incorporating its recommendations into their planning processes.

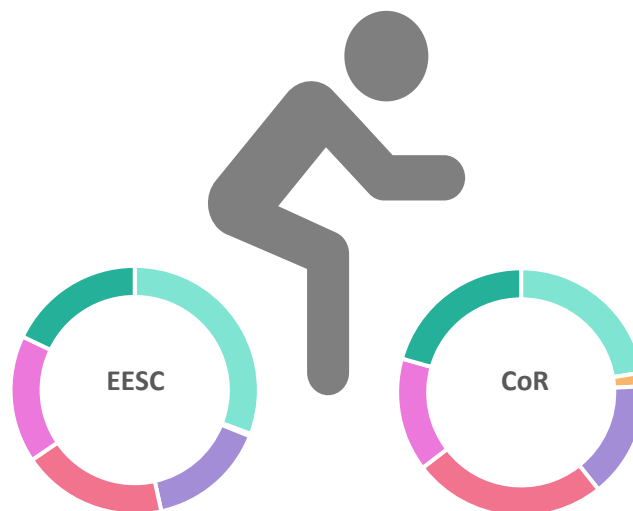


3.11 Staff commuting

Activity	Home-office commuting by staff		
Objective	 Reduce the environmental impact of staff commuting by encouraging the use of environmentally friendly forms of transport: public transport, cycling, walking and car-pooling.		
Indicators	 Percentage of staff commuting by sustainable modes of transport (public transport, walking, cycling or car-pooling)		
Results 2025		EESC	CoR
	Use of sustainable modes of transport	75%	77%

In 2024, a staff survey showed that at the EESC, 75% of staff used sustainable modes of transport, whereas at the CoR this figure was slightly higher at 77%. The survey indicated that 34% of staff engaged in active commuting, with 18% biking and 15% walking to work, and about 40% of staff used public transport.

Figure 8: EESC staff commuting, modal split, 2024



2025	Walking	Bike	Metro Tram Bus	Train	Motorbike	Car- pooling	Car
EESC	13.7%	16.7%	25.1%	18.5%	1.0%	0.8%	23.4%
CoR	16.8%	20.1%	28.2%	10.5%	1.2%	0.3%	21.6%

In an effort to reduce the environmental impact from home-office commuting and to comply with local legislation, both Committees have established a mobility plan. The expected outcome is to reduce the impact on the environment from traffic and to lower road congestion in the Brussels Capital Region. Specifically, this involves taking measures in favour of more sustainable modes of travel.

As part of the plan, staff mobility surveys are held every three years. The last survey took place in November 2024 and was used to establish a mobility plan for 2025-2027.



3.12 Biodiversity



Activity	Biodiversity comprises the diversity of species, genera and ecosystems on the premises of the Committees and their surroundings.
Objective	 Improve biodiversity on the Committees' premises and the surrounding area.
Indicators	 Total land use  Total sealed area  Total nature-oriented area on site  Total nature-oriented area off site

Results (unchanged since 2023)	2025	%
Total land use (m ²)	14 750	-
Total sealed area ⁶ (m ²)	13 384	91%
Total nature-oriented area on site ⁷ (m ²)	3 169	21%
Total nature-oriented area off site (m ²)	0	0%

The Committees' built area includes 1 803 m² of green roofs set up on the JDE and BvS buildings. Green roofs are to be considered 'nature-oriented' areas as they are directly aimed at developing biodiversity, alongside other functions such as insulation or reducing the urban heat island effect.

Ongoing actions

The study conducted in 2023 and further contacts with the gardening contractor in 2024 identified several priority areas for improving biodiversity that have now been performed, notably the JDE garden where an invasive bamboo monoculture has been replaced with a variety of plants, flowering throughout the growth season and thereby supporting pollinating insects and biodiversity.

⁶ Sealed area: area where the original soil has been covered with impermeable materials (e.g.: pavements, courtyards, etc.).

⁷ Nature-oriented area on site: includes roof, façade, water drainage or other elements that have been designed, adapted or are managed in order to promote biodiversity, i.e. any area dedicated primarily to nature preservation or restoration such as community garden, green roof, rain garden, courtyard with native plants, etc.



3.13 CO₂ emissions

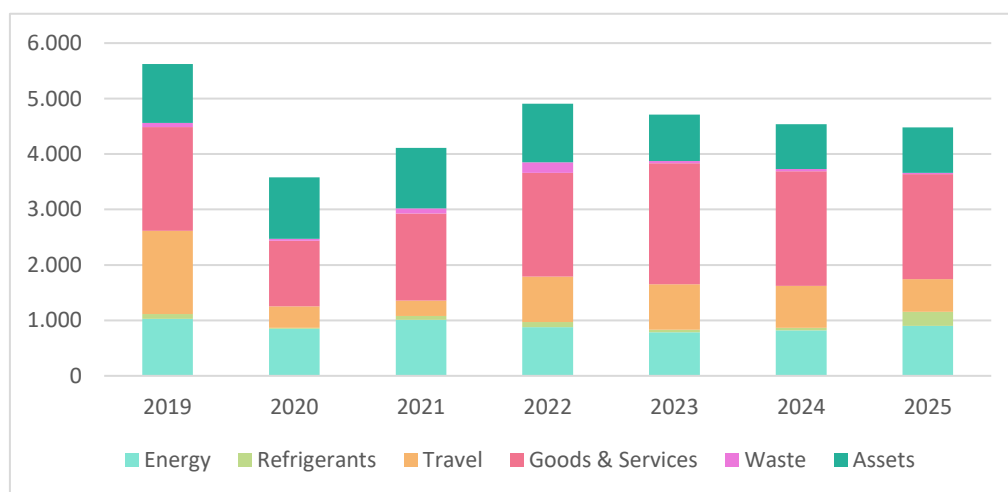


Activity	Most activities at the Committees will directly or indirectly contribute to emitting greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. To mitigate and to measure this, the carbon footprint is calculated, representing the total emissions of CO ₂ generated.
Objective	10% reduction of the administrations' CO ₂ emissions between 2019 and 2030
Indicator	Tonnes of CO ₂ equivalent per FTE (CO ₂ eq/FTE)

Results	2019	2023	2024	2025	since 2024
tonnes CO ₂ per/FTE (tCO ₂ eq/FTE)	3.69	3.09	2.98	2.94	-1.2%

Carbon emissions per FTE in 2025 decreased by 1.2% compared to 2024 and by 20.2% compared to 2019, representing twice the Committees' objective. This objective applies exclusively to the activities of the administration and therefore excludes emissions related to members' travel.

Figure 9: CO₂ emissions of the administration, 2019-2025



The change in emissions from 2024 is related to all areas of activities and reflects the continued impact of improvement measures implemented in previous years, in particular:

- **Staff travel:** reduced emissions from air travel, driven both by reduced travel and improved emission factors for air travel;
- **Purchase of service and equipment:** reduced expenditures led to a corresponding decrease in indirect emissions associated with outsourced services and procured goods.

4. CARBON FOOTPRINT

In addition to the carbon emissions⁸ from the administration's activities monitored under the CO₂ emissions objective (see chapter 3.12), the Committees also monitor and report total greenhouse gas emissions from all activities, including those related to members' travel.

In 2025, total greenhouse gas emissions decreased by 16.1% compared to 2024 and were 6.7% lower than 2019. The significant reduction is mainly attributed to travel-related emissions and the disappearance of the temporarily elevated emission factor for air travel that had persisted into 2024.

Table 7: Total emissions, 2019-2025

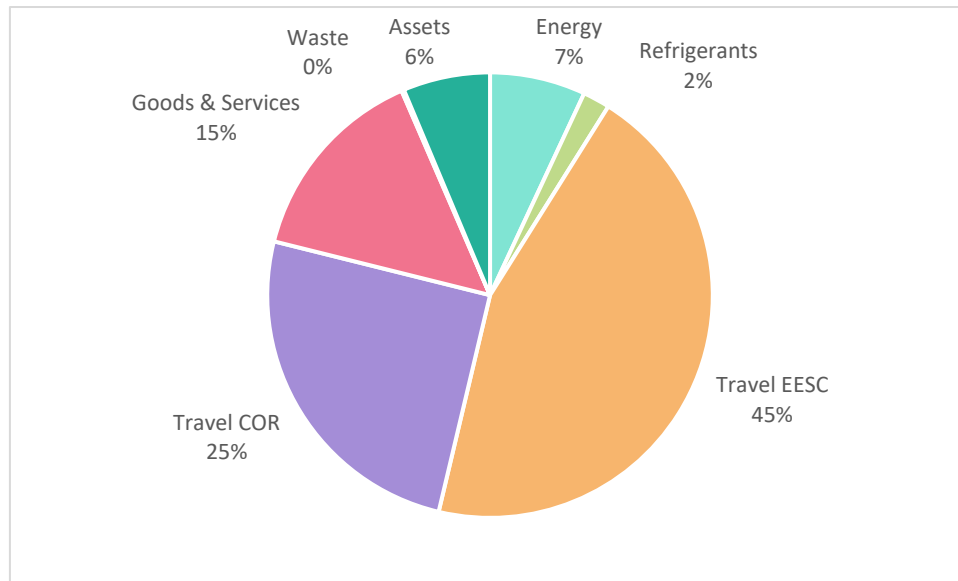
Year	Total emissions [tCO ₂ eq]	Emissions per FTE [tCO ₂ eq/FTE]
2019	13 900	9.13
2020	6 041	4.13
2021	6 649	4.46
2022	12 299	8.09
2023	15 844	10.38
2024	15 471	10.15
2025	12 962	8.51

The different emission categories are made up of:

1. **Energy:** Mainly combustion of natural gas;
2. **Refrigerants:** Minor losses of refrigerants to atmosphere from cooling installations;
3. **Freight:** Transport of goods;
4. **Travel:** Travel by members and staff including home-office commuting;
5. **Goods and services:** Indirect emissions from the production of products and services bought by the Committees such as external services (maintenance, cleaning, catering, security, IT, consultancy, external interpreting and translation), catering supplies, office furniture and IT equipment;
6. **Waste:** Incineration of non-recyclable waste;
7. **Assets:** Building lifecycle emissions.

⁸ Emission calculations follow the **Bilan Carbone® method** developed by ADEME, the French agency for ecological transition, and managed by the Institut de Formation Carbone. Its principle involves estimating GHG emissions by applying emission factors to activity data. The emission factors are taken from ADEME's *Base Carbon* database, the UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) or other specific databases if necessary.

Table 8: Total emissions, 2025



Transport of people remains the main source of CO₂ emissions, contributing 70% of the total 2025 emissions.

The differences in emissions between the EESC and the CoR are related to EESC members having more meetings and plenary sessions than CoR members (nine plenary sessions for the EESC vs six for the CoR).

5. REFERENCE TO ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

The EESC and the CoR are subject to regional, national and European legislation on the environment, namely: Bruxelles/Brussel-Déchets-Afvalstoffen-LEX (Brudalex) for waste management, the Brussels Air, Climate and Energy Management Code (COBRACE), local action plan for energy management (PLAGE), environmental permits and compulsory inspections of installations, etc. Monitoring of the various regulations is ensured by compiling a register of applicable regulations and carrying out regular regulatory compliance audits. The Committees comply with all the legislation to which they are subject.

In the event of an accident or incident entailing environmental or health and safety risks, the Committees will immediately inform Bruxelles Environnement and the relevant local authorities.

6. APPENDICES

6.1 Environmental policy



European Economic
and Social Committee



European Committee
of the Regions

Environmental policy of the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions

In view of the EU's commitment to the environment, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) have undertaken to implement an environmental management system complying with the requirements of the EMAS regulation.

The environmental management system has the support of the EMAS Steering Committee and in particular the secretaries-general, as guarantors that their strategic, organisational and management activities will take environmental aspects into account.

The environmental commitment must translate into specific measures backed by the requisite human, material and financial resources.

In general, the environmental management system must enable the following:

- compliance with environmental legislation applicable to the premises covered by the system;
- prevention of pollution;
- ongoing improvements in the environmental impact of the EESC's and CoR's activities;
- active engagement and participation of all staff.

More specifically, the Committees' environmental management system must meet the following commitments:

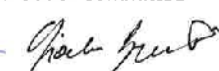
- reducing our gas, electricity and water consumption;
- encouraging reasonable and responsible use of paper;
- encouraging sustainable public procurement in our procedures;
- reducing the use of plastics in our activities;
- encouraging sustainable and seasonal food, and fighting against food waste, including by donating food;
- greening and making events more sustainable;
- reducing the amount of waste produced and sorting it more effectively;
- reducing greenhouse gas emissions resulting from administrative operations and activities;
- promoting sustainable mobility among staff in daily commuting;
- encouraging urban biodiversity;
- informing staff and members and raising their awareness; encouraging staff to participate in the implementation of the environmental management system. Awareness-raising may also take the form of participation in regional or international initiatives.

Meeting these commitments is the responsibility of all EESC and CoR management and staff members, and they are coordinated by the operational service, EMAS. EESC and CoR members, staff members, contractors and any stakeholder or third party concerned will be informed of this environmental policy.

Brussels, **30 NOV. 2022**

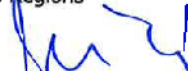
European Economic and Social Committee


Christa Schweng
President


Gianluca Brunetti
Secretary-General

European Committee of the Regions


Vasco Alves Cordeiro
President


Petr Bližkovský
Secretary-General

6.2 Environmental programme

2023-2025 environmental programme

Reference	Actions	Responsible service(s)	Deadline	Status	Follow-up / Comments
PAPER-2023-08	Electronic procedure for all expenses connected to the organisation of CoR meetings	CoR, Dir. A, A2	2025/12/31	Completed	Policy on meeting expenses updated. New digital financial workflows introduced by replacing Adonis with ARES.
PAPER-2023-10	Electronic forms for meetings with interpreters	CoR, Dir. A, A2	2025/12/31	Completed	Printing reduced to a minimum. Further reductions require changes to the framework contract for interpretation services.
CO2-2023-04	Implement new rules or recommendations (flight class limitation, transfer to train) for mobility based on distance or availability of alternatives for the staff	Dir. E	2030/12/31	Completed	A revised Mission Guide was adopted 21 January 2025, replacing the previous 2010 version.
ADM-2024-06	Provide the CoR SG information on the money and energy savings made from the VMA energy efficiency investments	DL-INFRA	2026/12/31	Completed	Provided in June 2025.
BIO-2023-03	Evaluate the community garden project and identify the conditions to relaunch it	DL-INFRA-EMAS	2023 Q3	Completed	In the absence of a sufficient number of volunteers willing to commit to relaunching the project, this has been closed.
BIO-2023-02	Green roofs: examine the potential for increased biodiversity (plant varieties) on the JDE and BvS green roofs to provide habitat and food for new species, in particular insect pollinators	DL-INFRA-GEP	2023 Q3	Completed	Studies completed in 2024. All roofs were mapped out and their potential for greening evaluated. It was concluded that the remaining non-green roofs do not have the potential to be made green at a reasonable cost.
BIO-2023-08	Creation of a new outdoor space (VMA building)	DL-INFRA-GEP	2025/12/31	Completed	Study performed. Current situation optimised based on study report. Complete makeover to be considered related to the ageing of the existing structure.
ELEC-2023-08	Install smart electricity meters in the VMA building	DL-INFRA-MIP	2024/12/31	Completed	Meters installed. Additional meters to be considered in future projects.
GAS-2023-05	Install smart energy meters in the VMA building	DL-INFRA-MIP	2024/12/31	Completed	Meters installed. Additional meters to be considered in future projects.
GAS-2023-06	Additional gas consumption optimisation based on the analysis of data collected from smart energy meters	DL-INFRA-MIP	Continuous	Completed	Optimisation made continuously during 2023-2025.
WATER-2023-02	Toilet flush reduction	DL-INFRA-MIP	2023/12/31	Completed	Flush water flows regulated in BvS.
WATER-2023-03	Install water taps with detectors (where there are none), tap aerators and economical showerheads	DL-INFRA-MIP	2025/12/31	Completed	In VMA new taps with detectors were installed during renovation. Similar installations are present in BvS, JDE and REM (mechanical flow reducers).

WATER-2023-04	Install smart water intermediate meters in all buildings	DL-INFRA-MIP	2025/12/31	Completed	Studies performed in 2024 and works ordered in 2025.
ELEC-2023-06	Perform technical studies in view of replacing conventional lighting with LED and/or lighting management system Installation of presence/absence detectors to be considered	DL-INFRA-PI	2024/12/31	Completed	Replacement is mandatory (Directive 2011/65/EU). Fluorescent tubes will no longer be produced from the end of 2023. 2025 update: Studies completed. LED lights installed in all major areas.
ELEC-2023-07	Perform technical studies in view of installing photovoltaic panels on the BvS and/or JDE buildings	DL-INFRA-PI	2024/12/31	Completed	Studies completed in 2025.
GAS-2023-03	Technical audit (multi-domain) of all buildings and environmental audit on all technical installations and building components	DL-INFRA-PI	2025/12/31	Completed	A large number of studies and audits on energy performance have been done. The results are used to establish the new building strategy and plan building renovations.
GAS-2023-04	Technical studies in view of replacing conventional heat production systems (boilers) with more energy efficient ones (heat pumps)	DL-INFRA-PI	2025/12/31	Completed	A large number of studies and audits on energy performance have been done. The results are used to establish the new building strategy and plan building renovations.
GAS-2023-07	Feasibility study on the possibility of reducing gas consumption	DL-INFRA-PI	2025/12/31	Completed	A large number of studies and audits on energy performance have been done. The results are used in the establishment of the new building strategy and planning of building renovations.
WATER-2023-01	Installation of a rainwater collection system as well as a rainwater tank in the car park of VMA	DL-INFRA-PI	2023/12/31	Completed	Works being finalised.
WATER-2023-05	Installation of a rainwater collection system as well as a rainwater tank in the car park of JDE: watering the garden	DL-INFRA-PI	2025/12/31	Completed	Study concluded that although technically feasible, the costs for installation would be too high.
PAPER-2023-04	a) Adonis tool : management of electronic workflows b) Electronic archiving of EESC documents c) Digitisation of the Historical Archives (HA) d) EESC Document Search : central electronic register e) Transparency: access to EESC documents	EESC Dir. D, ICD JS DIIT	2025/12/31	Completed	c) Digitalisation of the HA completed. a, b, d, e) Document registration tool Adonis replaced by ARES. All official documents are now registered in digital workflows.
CAR-2023-01	Participate in interinstitutional calls for tender (or launch its own), with the aim to have a fleet of zero-emission vehicles before 2030	EESC, Dir. A, A2-CIP CoR, Dir. A, A3	2025/12/31	Completed	Car fleet renewed. Considerations made to rethink the organisation of service vehicles to make further improvements.
ADM-2024-02	Increase the impact of internal EMAS communication activities; they should be coordinated together with the EMAS contact point of the Cabinets	EMAS	2024/12/31	Completed	Contact established. EMAS service has implemented a new process to closely follow the political activities.

ADM-2024-05	Prepare new objectives and propose them at the annual EMAS SC meeting in 2026	EMAS	2026/06/31	Completed	Strategy for determining new objectives proposed at the SC meeting of 2025. New objectives proposed at the 2026 SC meeting.
CO2-2024-02	Prepare a tender procedure with the aim of having a four-year offsetting framework contract in place	EMAS	2027/12/31	Completed	EMAS Steering Committee decided to focus on EU projects. Preliminary market study done. Appropriate procurement procedure determined (dynamic).
CO2-2024-03	Monitor CO ₂ emissions and identify opportunities for improvement	EMAS	2026/06/01	Completed	Emissions monitored and reported yearly. Opportunities for improvement identified and presented together with the new EMAS objectives at the 2026 SC meeting.
MOB-2023-05	Maintain facilities for cyclists; if possible, upgrade equipment and the spaces available in the car parks for cyclists	EESC & CoR Mobility coordinator	Continuous	Completed	Extension of BvS bike parking completed in 2024.
MOB-2023-08	Prepare and launch the next mobility plan (<i>PDE: plan de déplacement d'entreprise</i>) for 2024-2026	EESC & CoR Mobility coordinator	2025/12/31	Completed	Mobility Surveys completed Q4 2025.

Validation declaration

Community Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)

VINÇOTTE nv

Jan Olieslagerslaan 35, 1800 Vilvoorde, Belgium

Based on an audit of the organisation, visits of its site, interviews with its staff, and the examination of the documentation, the data and the information, documented in the verification report N° **61486860**, VINÇOTTE nv declares, in its capacity as environmental EMAS verifier with registration number BE-V-0016, accredited for the scope 1, 10, 11, 13, 16, 18, 19, 20 (excl. 20.51), 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30.2, 30.9, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 52, 53, 55, 56, 58, 59, 60, 62, 63, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 79, 80, 81, 82, , 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 90, 93, 94, 95, 96, 99 (NACE-code), to have verified whether **the sites** as indicated in the **updated environmental statement year 2025** of the organisation

**European Economic and Social Committee
European Committee of the Regions**
with registration number **BE-BXL-27**

located at

**Rue Belliard, 99 - 101
1040 BRUSSELS
Belgium**

and used for:

**All EESC and CoR staff activities carried out in the following buildings:
B100 : Belliard 100 – BvS : Bertha von Suttner – JDE : Jacques Delors –
REM : Remorqueur and VMA : Van Maerlant**

Meet all requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community eco-management and audit scheme (EMAS), as amended by Regulations (EU) 2017/1505 and (EU) 2018/2026.

By signing this declaration, I declare that:

- The verification and validation has been carried out in full compliance with the requirements of Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 amended by Regulations (EU) No 2017/1505 and (EU) 2018/2026;
- The outcome of the verification and validation confirms that there is no evidence of non-compliance with applicable legal requirements relating to the environment
- The data and information of the **updated environmental statement year 2025 of the sites** reflect a reliable, credible and correct image of **sites** activities, within the scope mentioned in the environmental statement.

This document is not equivalent to EMAS registration. EMAS registration can only be granted by a Competent Body under Regulation (EC) No 1221/2009 amended by Regulations (EU) No 2017/1505 and (EU) 2018/2026. This document shall not be used as a standalone piece of public communication.

Declaration number: **11 EA 069d/2**
Date of issue: **18 August 2025**



For the environmental verifier:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daniëlla Segers", written over a light blue circular stamp.

Daniëlla Segers
Chairman Certification Commission



The next update of the environmental statement will be published in 2027.

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