

Climate Charter Targets for Caritas Europa

The targets were set in February 2024.

Progress Report

The progress was measured in September 2026.

Commitment 2: Maximize the environmental sustainability of our work and rapidly reduce our greenhouse gas emissions
Target 1: We review and update our Ecological Charter on a yearly basis. Planned action 1: Review and update the Ecological Charter every January and whenever relevant.
Progress report: The Ecological Charter was updated in May 2024. It was reviewed in January 2025. It was not reviewed in 2026 a review has been scheduled in January 2027.
Target 2: All staff and volunteers are aware of our Ecological Charter and how they can reduce their carbon footprint in their organisational work. Planned action 2: Orient all new staff and volunteers on the Ecological Charter. Organise refreshers every other year on the Ecological Charter during team meetings or team retreats.
Progress report: The Ecological Charter was presented to all staff during a team meeting in 2024 and has been regularly brought up in various other team meetings and retreats. It is part of the induction package of new staff and interns. A refresher will be organised in 2027.
Target 3: By 2024, we systematically record all travel-related emissions ¹ of all staff and volunteers ² . Planned action 3: Staff and volunteers fill out the Carbon Contribution Calculation tool for all travels.
Progress report: All travel-related emissions of all staff and volunteers have been systematically recorded since 2024 in Caritas Europa's Carbon Contribution Calculation Tool.
Target 4: By 2025, we will reduce our average emissions related to plane travel as a secretariat by 25% with the emissions of 2024 as a baseline. Planned action 4: Evaluate the necessity of each travel by plane and consider alternative modes of transportation.
Progress report: The evolution of the plane travel related carbon emissions has been monitored since 2024. We failed to reduce our emissions in 2025, and even saw an increase by 29% compared to 2024. One of the reasons is a higher number of traveling staff. The need to do better was raised several times in early 2026 and more efforts have been taken since to reduce travel, and to substitute travel by plane by other means of transportation whenever possible. At the same time, in line with the subsidiarity principle and local leadership of Caritas, some positive developments took place since 2024 on creating more close relations with other regions of Caritas, which lead to a couple of international travels and cross-region events which inevitably increased the carbon emissions. A balance needs to be found where we can reduce travel and honour our commitment to reduce emissions, whilst living our mission of a culture of encounter and solidarity and closeness within the Caritas network.
Target 5: We will off-set at least 50% of our travel-related emissions by 2025. Planned action 5: Identify and contribute to a project in line with our values that offsets at least 50% of our travel-related emissions.
Progress report: CE decided to offset part of its travel-related carbon emissions by establishing a monetary <i>Sustainability Award</i> , recognising outstanding achievements in ecological sustainability, climate adaptation, or climate justice during its annual Innovation Festival. CE calculated its air travel-related carbon footprint at €10,399 in 2024 and €12,869.20 in 2025. The Sustainability Award amounted to €7,500 in both years, thereby offsetting approximately 72% and 58% of the corresponding air travel-related emissions, respectively.
Commitment 3: Embrace the leadership of local actors and communities
Target 6: By 2024, all our advocacy efforts will be informed by local voices and priorities, using appropriate methods and taking concerted action to ensure equal and equitable representation. Planned action 6: Local voices and priorities brought to Caritas Europa through its members inform all our advocacy efforts.

¹ Travel-related emissions: emissions cause by travelling by plane, train, bus or car

² including Executive Board members and consultants

Progress report: All advocacy efforts have been informed by local voices in 2024 and 2025. In 2026, Caritas Europa is working on formal guidelines on how to incorporate the voice of people with lived experience in all of its advocacy work in Europe; for its advocacy work on humanitarian action and international cooperation, Caritas Europa is working with its Caritas Internationalis member organisations from around the world, including the “Global South”.
Commitment 4: By 2025, all relevant staff and partners will be trained on the integration of climate and environmental risks in our programs.
Target 7: By 2025, 65% of our member organisations have participated in trainings or information sessions on the integration of climate and environmental risks in their programmes. Planned action 7: Roll out the Environmental Stewardship Tool (EST) with member organisations.
Progress report: In the past years, several trainings were organised by the global Caritas Internationalis secretariat on the Environmental Stewardship Tool (EST). For this reason, there was no need yet to organise such a training specifically for the European member organisations. We had included a webinar for our member organisation on the Climate Charter in our work plans in 2025 and in 2026. However, due to our poor performance in reducing our own travel-related emissions, we estimated not to have sufficient credibility yet to organise such a webinar. It has again been included in the work plan 2027.
Commitment 6: Use our influence to mobilize urgent and more ambitious climate action and environmental protection
Target 8: We will systematically encourage our member organisations working on humanitarian action to sign the Climate Charter. Planned action 8: Organise at least one information session on the Climate Charter for CE member organisations by 2024. Inform relevant CE working structures about CE’s signing of the Charter.
Progress report: The Climate Charter was presented twice during meetings of the Humanitarian Working Group, bringing together 19 of Caritas Europa’s 49 member organisations. In 2027, we plan to promote it further in the webinar on the Climate Charter to which all member organisations as well as well as Caritas Internationalis will be invited.

Brussels, 24 September 2026