

# GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL AND MEETINGS

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The Olof Palme International Center (the Palme Center) works for democracy and human rights, peace, and social justice, in the spirit of Olof Palme. We are the Swedish labour movement's umbrella organisation for international work and advocacy.

For safety guidelines, see also *Instruction for Travel Safety, Security Assessment for Travels, IT guidelines* and *Guidelines on confidentiality management*.

Certain choices that are good from a sustainability point of view cannot always be made in all the countries in which we operate, for example due to security factors or lack of alternatives. The guidelines apply to the extent that they are possible to implement.

These guidelines apply to all Palme Center staff and cover all trips within Sweden and internationally. It also applies to travel and meetings within Sweden that the Palme Center organises and pays for for its member organisations.

**When planning and booking trips**

**Try to replace air travel with digital meetings**

- Meetings and events where participants would need to take a flight (or car) should primarily be arranged digitally.
- Prior to the annual activity plan, where project-active staff at member and partner organisations budget for travel, the programme manager should inform them that we have guidelines for travel which, among other things, mean that we must reduce our climate emissions, and encourage secure digital meetings as well as clustering of meetings.

**Plan efficiently so that the number of trips can be kept down**

- Plan trips together in the teams/departments at the beginning of the year as far as possible. Trips for the purpose of monitoring activities are planned using the [Planning tool for monitoring trips](#). Prioritize travel for tasks that cannot be done online.

- Any air travel in addition to the trips jointly planned for the year shall also be justified to and approved by the nearest manager. Use the *Approval of Travel* form.
- If you must fly, try to book multiple appointments during the same trip.
- Enter your trip into the Palme Center's Calendar for better coordination (if it is not confidential).

#### **Travel in an environmentally friendly way**

- If it is safe and accessible on the location: walk, cycle or use public transport.
- When you need to go by car, try to share a ride. When traveling by taxi or renting a car: ask for an electric car or a "green" car.
- Trains must always be the mode of transport within Sweden.
- If it is safe and there are good train communications, trains should be the first choice on routes up to 1 000 miles (e.g. from Stockholm to Brussels). If you want to travel by train also on longer distances, it is encouraged.
- In special circumstances, heads of teams or departments may decide on exceptions to the rule above.
- When flying, we choose a seat class with lower climate emissions.
- We choose airlines with lower climate emissions and fair working conditions.
- The Palme Center pays a climate investment for all flights at 3% of the ticket price. This is handled by our travel agency.

[Tranås travel agency](#) knows our guidelines and will help you find more environmentally friendly alternatives. Book your travel through them or their self-service. In this way, we also get comprehensive travel statistics. For train travel in Sweden, bookings can be made directly on SJ's company portal. Ask the organisation secretary if you need help.

### **When booking accommodation or arranging meetings**

*Note! The safety of staff and the people active in our projects is of higher priority than the aspects below. In some places, transport and accommodation need to be chosen primarily based on how safe they are.*

These guidelines apply to bookings made directly by the Palme Center. When partner organisations arrange their own events financed by the Palme Center, they are encouraged to think about the points below, but it is not a demand.

#### **Choose hotels/conference facilities/restaurants with a sustainable profile**

In Sweden: All hotels/conference facilities/restaurants booked must have collective agreements and eco-labels.

In the rest of the world:

- You are encouraged to try to book hotels/conference facilities/restaurants with eco-labels, where possible. (Tranås can assist with this.) Finding hotels with a collective bargaining agreement or similar conditions is difficult in large parts of the world and is therefore not a demand from the Palme Center's side.
- Favour locally owned accommodation or facilities, where possible. If you have to choose, you can pick a locally owned hotel over one with an eco-label. Smaller facilities with a simpler standard can seldom afford an eco certification, but they usually have a lower environmental impact than the large hotel chains.

(See Annex 1: Finding accommodation/conference facilities/restaurants with a sustainable profile).

#### **Order vegetarian food**

- Only vegetarian or vegan food may be served at events hosted by the Palme Center. If possible, organic and Fairtrade products should be chosen.
- When booking hotels where meals are included, ask for vegetarian or vegan options.

## **During your trip**

#### **Avoid alcohol and drugs during business trips**

- Representatives of the Palme Center should not drink alcohol while on duty. Alcohol consumption is only allowed in exceptional cases, such as at public dinners and similar events. Then the intake should be moderate.
- Project funds must never be used to buy alcohol. It must be paid for privately or (in exceptional cases, as public dinners) with the organisation's own funds.
- The use of other classified drugs is prohibited in Sweden and abroad.

#### **Buying sex is prohibited**

When travelling on behalf of the Palme Center, employees may not pay for sex, use escort services or visit brothels and commercial sex clubs.

#### **Protect children's rights**

- Don't give money to children who beg, or buy goods or services from children. If you suspect child labour in a hotel/restaurant, report it to a child protection hotline (see link below), a local organisation or to local police.
- Alert local police or a [hotline](#) if you see suspected sexual abuse of children. If it is a Swedish traveller who is responsible for the suspected crime, you can also [report it to the Swedish police](#).
- Do not visit orphanages.

These guidelines are based on [Think Childsafe's recommendations](#).

**Protect animals and nature**

- Do not participate in activities where animals provide entertainment or are used as a means of transport.
- Avoid eating overfished or endangered species. Be cautious so that items you buy do not contribute to trade in endangered animals and plants.

**Choose local businesses**

When booking tours and other services: Prioritise locally owned companies so that the money stays in the country.

See also our *Code of Conduct*, for general advice when representing the Palme Center.

## OWNERSHIP AND FOLLOW-UP

These guidelines are reviewed annually by the Palme Center's environmental group and adopted by the Deputy Secretary General of the Palme Center. The Secretary General's Office is responsible for ensuring that the guidelines are known to travel agents and staff, that they are complied with, and that follow-up on compliance is carried out every year. Deviations from these guidelines are addressed in the Palme Centre's deviation management system.

## ANNEX 1

Find accommodation/conference facilities/restaurants with a sustainable profile

### IN SWEDEN:

#### **Find hotels and restaurants with collective agreements:**

Check HRF's service [Fair conditions](#). (Also available as an app.)

#### **Find eco-labelled restaurants:**

Search for the [Nordic Swan](#) label. You can also find a few restaurants certified by the [Swedish Environmental Base](#).

#### **Find eco-labelled accommodation/conference facilities:**

Search the [Nordic Swan](#) or [Green Key](#). You can also find some hotels certified by the [Swedish Environmental Base](#).

#### **Hotels working against sexual exploitation:**

Hotels should be porn-free hotels and/or connected to Hotels against trafficking (info can be found on the hotel websites).

### IN THE REST OF THE WORLD:

#### **Find eco-labelled properties:**

Search [Green Key Global](#). Within Europe there are also hotels certified according to [ISO 14001](#).