



# AUSTRIAN ECO-LABEL

## Green Meetings and Green Events



[www.umweltzeichen.at](http://www.umweltzeichen.at)



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The Austrian Eco-label for "Green Meetings and Green Events" is awarded to events that are organised professionally and in an environmentally sound manner. Licensees have the competence to organise and certify environmentally friendly events for their customers.

## GREEN MEETINGS: EXCELLENT AND CERTIFIED MEETINGS



Congresses, sessions, conferences - many people travel to business events regularly. These meetings do not only provide professional enrichment and social communication platforms of working life, but are also an important economic factor in Austria. However, they take up lots of resources, cause emissions and affect our environment. People acting responsibly towards nature in their private lives rarely have effect on natural resource use or social standards as conference participants or event organisers. Now there is a way how they can systematically consider environmental and climate protection, regional added value and social compatibility. A "Green Meeting" is characterised by higher **energy efficiency**, **waste avoidance** and **environmentally benign travel** of the guests to and from the event. Also aspects of **regional added value** and **social responsibility** are taken into account.

## GREEN EVENTS: EXCELLENT AND CERTIFIED EVENTS



Events of all kinds move people, create leisure-time experiences or help enterprises present their products. Furthermore, they constitute major economic activities in Austria. However, events move people not only emotionally, but also spatially: Persons, equipment and goods are transported to different places, thereby producing **CO<sub>2</sub>** and in many cases also **traffic noise** or **damage to crops**. In addition, **promotional gifts**, often in the form of cheap throw-away products, **food and drinks** are offered. So there are plenty of small wheels we could turn to reduce the ecological footprint of an event. Many good examples show that this is possible also without reducing the pleasant experience of participants or 'bending' the ideas of the organisers. With some **innovative ideas** and **creative drafts**, and with the commitment to leaving our grand-children a world worth living in, each event can be turned into a "Green Event".

## WHICH EVENTS CAN RECEIVE THE AUSTRIAN ECO-LABEL?

All sorts of meetings, congresses and conferences defined in the Austrian Statistics on Congresses and Conferences as well as many other types of events. The event must be organised by a licensee and has to be certified in specific audit software. Some sorts of events which are not sufficiently definable through the criteria of the Guidelines are presently excluded from certification, among them fairs, markets, some sports events as well as open-air concerts and music festivals with camp-site areas. For detailed information, please see the Guideline.

## WHO CAN BECOME A LICENSEE?

The Guideline addresses professional enterprises of the events industry. Planning and implementation of happenings must be the essential business purpose of the enterprise. Under certain conditions also seminar hotels, locations as well as educational institutions and universities can become licensees. For detailed information, please see the Guideline.

## HOW DOES AN EVENT GET THE AUSTRIAN ECO-LABEL?



If an enterprise organising events is interested in getting a licence, initial information is provided by the Consumer Information Association (Verein für Konsumenteninformation). A consultant trains the staff members of the enterprise and assists them on their way to licensing. Licensees must appoint a Green Meeting agent and, in the enterprise itself, have to furnish proof of their competence in sustainable office management. In the process of planning and implementing an event, criteria from the following fields are taken into account:

-  Offers of environmentally sound mobility as well as CO<sub>2</sub> reduction
-  Environmentally-friendly accommodation
-  Requirements on the conference venue, the catering and any exhibitions
-  Environmentally friendly procurement, material and waste management as well as technologies
-  Social aspects, communication

Selectable optional criteria take account of the specific situation like the size, offer, equipment or location. In this way also special priorities, for example in connection with organic food or offers for barrier-free facilities, are rewarded.

With a **pilot event** which meets all **mandatory criteria** and gets a certain number of points from the proposed **optional criteria**, the enterprise demonstrates that it is familiar with the requirements and the specific online **certification software**. This is verified by an **external expertise**. Subsequently, a contractual agreement on the use of the Eco-label for **four years** is concluded. During this utilisation period each appropriate event can be certified through the software and advertised with the Eco-label. For its commitment, the company receives an award certificate, an entry on the Eco-label website and supportive marketing.

## COSTS

For the use of the Austrian Eco-label, a one-time application fee and an annual utilisation fee have to be paid. Additional costs accrue for consulting services and for the audit. Fees are graduated according to turnover:

Turnover category	Annual turnover	Application fee one time	Utilisation fee annually
1	≤ € 200,000	€ 150	€ 380
2	> € 200,000 - € 750,000	€ 210	€ 830
3	> € 750,000 - € 2.2 million	€ 410	€ 1,650
4	> € 2.2 million - € 3.6 million	€ 500	€ 1,980
5	> € 3.6 million	€ 600	€ 2,420

## FURTHER QUESTIONS:

Information and downloads are available at [www.umweltzeichen.at](http://www.umweltzeichen.at) and [www.umweltzeichen-meetings.at](http://www.umweltzeichen-meetings.at). You can also contact us directly:

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The Austrian Eco-label is an initiative of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management. The Guideline was worked out by the Consumer Information Association, VKI, in cooperation with the congress and event industry, the relevant stakeholders and environmental experts.

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