



Event Sustainability Report

IMEX Frankfurt 2025

isla.

Prepared by

weareisla.co.uk

CEO Statement



2025 has been a year of sustainability consolidation and change.

We've drawn on over two decades of learning, refined our practices and adjusted our approach. You'll see the results in this report: deep insight, clear data and transparency about what we're doing well—and where we're improving.

This **Event Sustainability Report** reflects that journey and showcases our efforts at IMEX Frankfurt 2025—from the earliest planning stages through to the live event. By sharing these insights, we aim to help you save valuable resources: time, energy and budget. Whether you're looking for eco-conscious ideas for your own events or best-practice examples to share with colleagues, this report has you covered.

This year, we expanded our use of TRACE by isla for deeper emissions measurement and insights, and we piloted frameworks like Better Stands to bring greater accountability to booth design. We've continued to work closely with our suppliers and venues to align efforts and integrate environmental considerations at every stage.

We're proud of the progress we've made, and we know there's more to do. But each step we take makes the next one easier—for us and for the industry.

That's why we're committed to going further—working closely with our supply chain partners and exhibitors, collaborating to understand their progress and challenges, and finding ways to accelerate their goals alongside our own. A truly environmentally sustainable sector relies on scalable solutions that span the entire supply chain and exhibitor ecosystem.

This report is just one element of our wider sustainability strategy. That strategy challenges us—and others—to deliver as much positive social and economic impact as possible for the high environmental cost of international travel. In the months ahead, we'll share more about how we're embedding sustainability more deeply into our long-term approach, operations and partnerships.

As ever, thank you to our partners—including our venue, Messe Frankfurt, our host city CVB, Frankfurt Convention Bureau and our sustainability consultants, isla. It's the passion, dedication, demand and creativity of our global community that make meaningful collaborations like these possible. 2025 marked a pivotal year of consolidation and transformation for us—and there's more to come.

Carina Bauer - CEO



At its core, sustainability demands accountability—owning our impact and acting on it. As CFO, my role is to ensure IMEX stays resilient and future-focused, and that means treating environmental risks and opportunities with the same rigor as financial performance.

This report reflects that commitment. It's grounded in a growing framework of measurement, accountability and continuous improvement. It's how we build confidence in the decisions we make today, while preparing for the challenges and opportunities ahead.

David Harrison - Chief Financial Officer, IMEX Group



Executive Summary

Our **2025 Event Sustainability Report** is structured around the goals we set for this year's show: reflecting on and assessing existing initiatives, strengthening measurement and sharing what we've learned.

This approach has given us our most detailed picture yet of our carbon footprint and progress. A **12-page emissions supplement** provides analysis across more than **25 measured data points**.

We've also identified four targeted reduction interventions, which together represent a **potential 8% cut in total emissions**.

By combining stronger measurement with clear goals and open reflection, this report shows how we're building the systems and transparency needed to make meaningful progress and support others across the industry to do the same.

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11

page emissions
supplement

25+

data points
captured

4

reduction
interventions
identified

representing
nearly
8%
of total
emissions

Show statistics

See news stories and photos from IMEX Frankfurt 2025 [here](#)

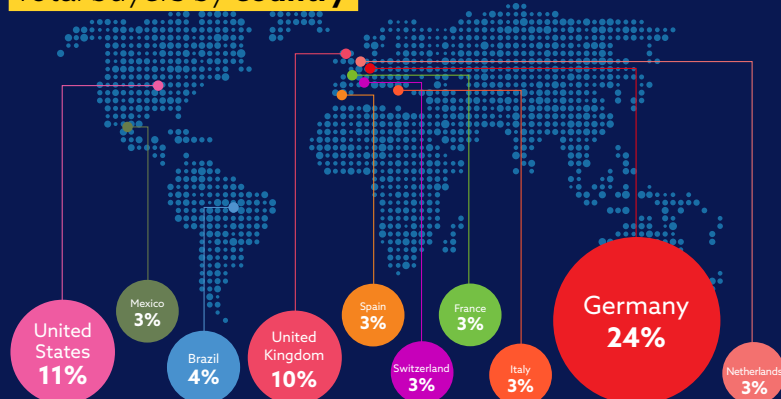
Total buyers at the show

4,466

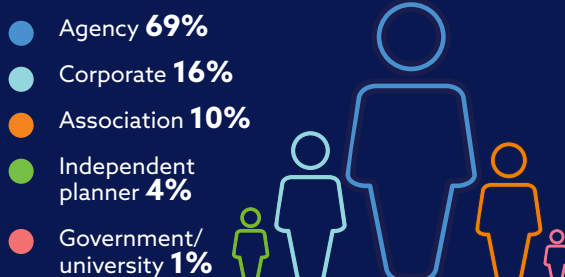
Buyers from **97 countries** 

Hosted buyers (3,489) + buyer attendees (977)

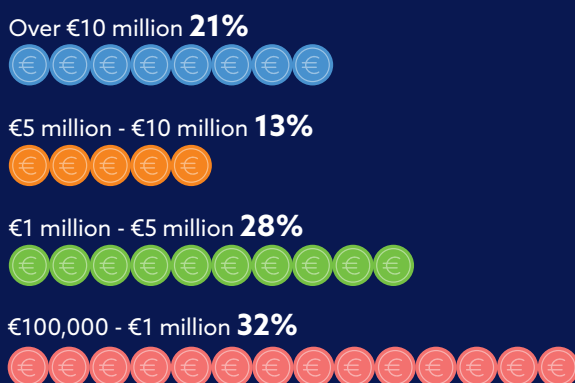
Total buyers by country



Total buyers by nature of business



Total buying power



13,335

Total participants

Including exhibitors



67,000

Total meetings

One-to-one, group appointments and presentations



2,900

Exhibiting companies



177

Press and Media

from 24 countries



A snapshot of
our journey so far



More than 20 years of taking action

2003

Launch of IMEX Frankfurt

Sustainability awards launched (now called the IMEX-EIC Innovation in Sustainability Award)

2008

IMEX becomes the first guest exhibition at Messe Frankfurt to **use green energy (hydro) for organizer electricity**

2011

Badge Back program introduced—collecting participant badges and lanyards for recycling post-show

2017

Donation program launched in partnership with ShoutOutLoud—collecting unused non-perishable food, potted plants, stationery and booth items for redistribution

Printed show catalog removed, saving over 2.7 tons of paper per show

All electricity, including exhibitor booths, sourced from renewable hydro power

2019

Sustainable Exhibiting Pledge introduced to guide exhibitor behavior

2022

First sustainability report published in partnership with MeetGreen

TRACE carbon measurement launched

2023

Reduced beef served at IMEX-influenced outlets in the exhibit hall and at the Gala Dinner

2024

Pilot of the Better Stands framework launched to support more sustainable exhibitor booth design

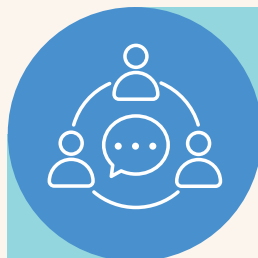
Menu icons introduced for carbon and water impact—data openly shared to increase transparency and encourage sustainable choices

A new way of working

We appointed isla as our strategic sustainability consultant for IMEX Frankfurt to support continued progress. Together, we developed a strategy for this year's show focused on three key pillars:



Measurement



Communication



Stakeholder engagement

We identified these as meaningful areas for improvement to help us strategically scale our impact.

While our 2025 show strategy centers on measurement, communication and stakeholder engagement, not all of these are easily shared in a show report. Much of the work involves internal

Look for these symbols across this report to see how our actions link to one or more of these pillars.

learning, capability building and process improvements.

This report focuses on what we can show, specifically our data and measurement. By presenting the report in this way, we aim to showcase our direct impact and improve how we communicate the work we're doing.

Across these three areas, we've set intentions to:



Strategically build on our emissions and waste measurement to better understand what drives carbon emissions.



Review our communications to shape a transparent authentic approach that builds positive influence.



Work with our stakeholders to establish clear measurement frameworks we can build on for future IMEX Frankfurt shows.

Our IMEX Frankfurt 2025 Reporting Goals

1. Showcase

our work across environment, attendee experience and advocacy to highlight the breadth of our sustainability commitments.

2. Improve

emissions measurement to enhance reporting and guide future reduction planning.

3. Share

what we've learned to show transparency and support others on their journey.

This report follows the progress we've made toward these goals and includes an emissions supplement.



Goal 1:

Showcase our work across environment, attendee experience and advocacy to highlight the breadth of our sustainability commitments.

Environment

Deepening our understanding of environmental impact by embedding more robust measurement through TRACE by isla and expanding the Better Stands program to drive more sustainable exhibiting practices.



Attendee experience

Supporting well-being and engagement through initiatives such as the IMEXrun and our dedicated well-being spaces. Creating moments that prioritize health, balance and positive connections.



Advocacy

Using our platform to influence wider change. Through forums, pledges and partnerships, we bring the industry together to share learning, raise ambition, and drive collective progress.





Better Stands, a global initiative founded by Informa, supported by the International Federation of Exhibition & Event Services (IFES) and hosted by Net Zero Carbon Events.

It aims to reduce waste in the events industry by encouraging the shift from single-use, disposable booth elements to reusable, modular structures.

Awards are given based on how reusable key booth components are—such as flooring, graphics and lighting.

We measure bronze and silver levels as this is where the biggest impact can be made.

Following a successful pilot in 2024, we expanded the initiative at IMEX Frankfurt this year, evaluating 100%* of space-only booths through a combination of pre and post-show data collection and on-site audits.

To support the broader scope, we trained and deployed additional on-site personnel to assess booths and ensure consistency across evaluations.

100%
of space-only
booths
assessed*

Results for 2025:

SILVER 96

BRONZE 15

NOT REUSED 64

111 booths achieved an award 63%

*10% up on our assessment target!



Find out
more about
**Better
Stands**



In 2025, isla became the official sustainability consultant for IMEX Frankfurt.

isla helped reconfigure this year's sustainability report, and the TRACE platform was deployed more widely across the supply chain to accurately measure and track the show's carbon footprint.

The emissions supplement, prepared by isla, takes a deeper look at the drivers behind emissions —providing the detail needed to turn data into actionable insight.

Find out more about TRACE

Total show footprint, excluding booth emissions, is 14,622 tCO₂e— the equivalent of 6.5 million beef steaks or 40 million glasses of dairy milk.



MEASURING SCOPE 3 WITH
trace
by isla.
Driving event industry change



An
estimated
250
runners took
part!

The **IMEXrun**, a 5 km morning run along the River Main, returned as a wellness activity that encouraged movement, fostered community and showcased Frankfurt as a destination.

The **Be Well Lounge** once again offered attendees a peaceful retreat from the trade show buzz, with daily activities including meditation and breathwork to support mental, emotional and physical well-being.

74 people took part in seven guided sessions.

This doesn't include others who used the space outside the sessions.

Clean the World

Clean the World partners with hotels, resorts and venues to collect used soap and plastic amenity bottles that would otherwise be discarded. The soap is reprocessed into safe new bars, while plastics are either recycled or repurposed into cleaning products.

These recycled soap bars are distributed to communities facing hygiene challenges—reducing waste, improving public health, and offering a circular solution for the hospitality sector.

600 hygiene kits were packed and donated to Bahnhofsmission Frankfurt—a charity based at Frankfurt's railway station that offers support to people in need.

**NEW
FOR 2025**

600
hygiene kits
packed!

Hygiene articles are always in high demand. The small containers of shower gel and shampoo are particularly useful for our guests as many of them are constantly carrying their belongings, so large and heavy items can be obstructive. The single-packaged toothbrushes and dental tablets are also very practical.

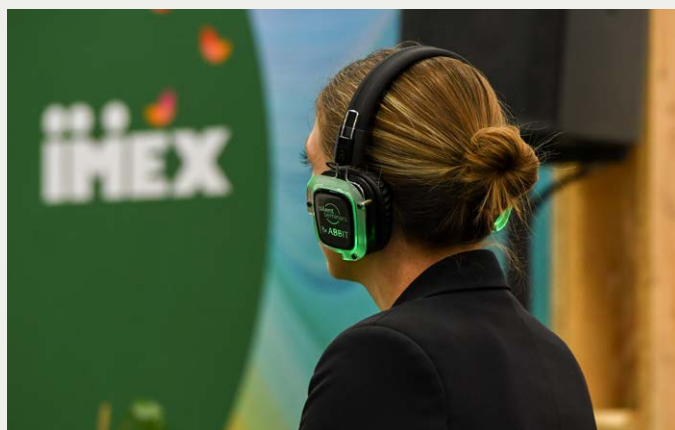
Daniel Modellmog,
Deputy Head of Bahnhofsmission Frankfurt



People and Planet Theater

We take our role as global connectors seriously. This year, we expanded our People and Planet Theater to become a dynamic central hub within our program.

More than just an exhibit space, the People and Planet Theater serves as an incubator for ideas—bringing together social entrepreneurs, DEI advocates, nonprofits and industry champions who are exploring the intersection of inclusivity, social impact and environmental responsibility in live events.



People & Planet Pledge

Exhibitors and attendees were invited to commit to at least four sustainability or social impact actions, including:

- **Attending Impact education sessions**
- **Choosing plant-based food**
- **Donating unused items**
- **Downloading the TraffickCam app**

Those who took the pledge were recognized with a green booth number and/or a ribbon to signal their commitment.

Number of exhibitors and attendees committed to the pledge:
51 attendees and 14 booths





LEADERSHIP

Influence+Impact

Earning a permanent seat at the top table for business events

120
destination
representatives and
20 policymakers
from more than
30 countries



Policy Forum

The IMEX Policy Forum brings national and city policymakers, association leaders, destination innovators and industry thought leaders together to discuss and influence the future of business events through policy development and strategic destination management.

The 2025 edition marked a significant shift in the global narrative around business events. No longer seen simply as a subset of tourism, business events are being recognized as essential drivers of place leadership, innovation and economic growth.

The Forum highlighted a growing consensus: the most successful destinations are those that provide platforms where business events accelerate innovation and deliver societal benefits."



Natasha Richards, Director of Impact and Industry Relations, IMEX Group

Discover the [Policy Forum](#)

74
students from
across Europe
at the Future
Leaders
Forum

IMEX-MPI-MCI Future Leaders Forum

Celebrating its 20th anniversary, the Forum welcomed 74 final-year hospitality, tourism and event management students—primarily from Germany and Central Europe—for expert-led education, networking opportunities and career immersion.





TRACE growth

- ✓ 4,677 events  934
- ✓ 3,065 completed events  345
- ✓ 389 client businesses  125
- ✓ 2,248 individual users  739
- ✓ 2,715 unique supply chain collaborators  208

isla. Made Possible Festival 2025



We set out to deliver six sessions on Impact—and delivered **14**

Education

Building on the 2024 "Impact" theme, we introduced **Talking Point: Impact 2.0 - Activating the Future**, shifting the focus from awareness to actionable strategies and measurable change.

Programming was designed to spark real impact through practice—not just conversation—on topics such as climate-conscious planning, the circular economy, regenerative strategies and systemic DEI integration.

We're proud to be an approved Events Industry Council (EIC) Preferred Provider, with the majority of our education sessions qualifying for CMP continuing education credits. Our education program is also ICCASkills-accredited and ILEA CSEP- approved.



This year's education program included a track dedicated to our Impact Talking Point. Sessions explored ESG, CSR and net zero—alongside powerful, personal stories and ideas.



We introduced participants to ordinary people who've achieved extraordinary things and shared the many different ways to make a positive impact."

Tahira Endean, Head of Programming, IMEX Group



Goal 2:

Improve emissions measurement to enhance reporting and guide future reduction planning.

Improved measurement

We're strengthening how we track emissions by setting clear objectives across energy, waste, travel, catering, transportation and production. We've deepened data collection, included co-located events, engaged suppliers, and optimized our use of TRACE by isla to build a more complete and actionable footprint.



Measurement objectives

This year, we set measurement objectives to better understand the emissions impact of IMEX Frankfurt 2025—with an emphasis on improving data quality to drive meaningful action and future reductions.

We set specific targets to collect data across energy, waste, travel, transportation, catering and show production, including our co-located events.

These targets were supported by a plan detailing how the data would be collected, and the level of detail expected in each area.

And we made great progress—see for yourself across the following pages!

We worked with the following principles in mind:

Clear supply chain expectations

to maximize data quality for better analysis and insights

Include measurement of co-located events

to build a more complete view of emissions impact

Engage our supply chain

to successfully execute emissions measurement

Optimize how we use TRACE

to fully benefit from instant data visualization and analysis

Goals and targets

We set measurement objectives to build a better understanding of the emissions impact of IMEX Frankfurt 2025. Our focus was on improving data quality to enable meaningful action and future reductions.

We set targets at the overall event level, as well as setting specific targets to collect data across energy, waste, travel, transportation, catering and show production. We've outlined some of our key objectives, along with more specific, measurable targets below—and our progress against them.

OBJECTIVE

Complete data collection within one month of the event, with the report produced and published by October.

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

Data collection was completed mid-August—three months after the show. This is an improvement on last year.

However, we didn't meet our data-collection target and published the report a few weeks later than planned.

OBJECTIVE

Create a baseline data confidence score, with all key suppliers sharing how they collected data, and estimating the percentage of data they collected.

NOT ACHIEVED

47% of our total supplier base—and 100% of our core suppliers—submitted data.

We're working to formalize our data confidence as part of our ongoing strategy.

OBJECTIVE

Measure all catering provided by Accente across all four days of the live event, including separate reporting for co-located events. Also estimate catering during build up and breakdown.

TARGET

Measure 100% of all on-site meals across all venues including: meal type, primary protein, serviceware and drinks.

PARTIALLY ACHIEVED

We successfully managed data collection across the show and the Gala Dinner, ensuring it was delivered in the required format.

However, we didn't achieve separate measurement of co-located events or build up and breakdown.

OBJECTIVE

To repeat last year's successful participant travel measurement.

TARGET

90% of participant travel—both ground and air—to be entered into TRACE.

90% of hotel stays recorded.

ACHIEVED

We achieved an average data collection rate of 95.6% across eight different audience groups.





Engaging stakeholders for maximum success



With a clear measurement strategy in place, engaging the supply chain was the next step in setting ourselves up for success.

Key supply chain partners were invited to a TRACE onboarding session to help them get started with the platform, understand how we defined our measurement boundaries, and what that meant for them.

These sessions focused on platform onboarding and ensuring the goals were understood, while also creating space for open discussion.

As we talked through the measurement boundaries, suppliers were invited to highlight where data was hard to get, or to suggest ways to improve data collection.

Suppliers received a clear and practical TRACE measurement onboarding pack. It included step-by-step guidance for collecting and entering data, along with information on where to go for help if needed.

However, more detail was needed on the exact data required and how to submit it.

As a result, we'll be adding clauses to supplier contracts covering measurement and data submissions.

100%
of our core
suppliers
submitted
data



Emissions Supplement

IMEX Frankfurt 2025

For the first time, we have a holistic view of IMEX Frankfurt's emissions—and what's driving the numbers.

Gaining this level of visibility has been invaluable, but the data also raises new questions. Each insight reveals another layer of understanding, and highlights where we need to dig deeper.

In this supplement, we share insights across every event touchpoint—from transportation and travel, catering and energy, to materials and waste impact.

Executive Summary

Our focus this year has been on measuring our impact—with strong support from stakeholders. Measurement is foundational. It's not only key to understanding our footprint, but also to how we start to reduce it.

The data we collect enables transparent, effective communication and forms the basis of our decarbonization strategy for the years ahead.

This year, we aimed to capture data not only for IMEX Frankfurt (Halls 8 and 9 at Messe Frankfurt), but also for co-located events such as the Gala Dinner, Policy Forum, Association Focus and Exclusively Corporate.

While we weren't able to capture everything, we did complete separate analyses for energy, waste and water use at Association Focus, as well as catering at the Gala Dinner.

Alongside the data we've gathered, we've identified and highlighted key gaps. This context will help shape our 2026 measurement targets and ensure we continue building a fuller picture of our impact.

We've organized the data into key impact areas so it's easy to see where change matters most.

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23 Production materials

24 Catering

25 Waste

26 Transport

27 Staff travel

28 Participant travel

29 Our exhibitors*

30 Reduction modeling

*Note: where we use the term 'exhibitors' in any dataset, we are generally referring to booth construction materials, transport and construction staff travel & accommodations

Some useful context for understanding the figures:



500 kgCO₂e

= 4,854 km of per person bus travel, or 782 return trips from Frankfurt Central Station to Messe Frankfurt

1 tCO₂e

= 43,452 miles of per person train travel, or 28 return trips from London to Frankfurt

10 tCO₂e

= 47,846 km traveled by small car, or 50 return trips from Hamburg to Frankfurt

10,000 tCO₂e

= 68 million km of plane travel, or 4,077 return flights from London to Las Vegas

Reading notes

Where data is available, we've included 2024 figures for comparison.

We've listed our measurement goals alongside the outcomes.

You can track progress using these symbols:



Achieved



Partially achieved



Not achieved

Event emissions overview



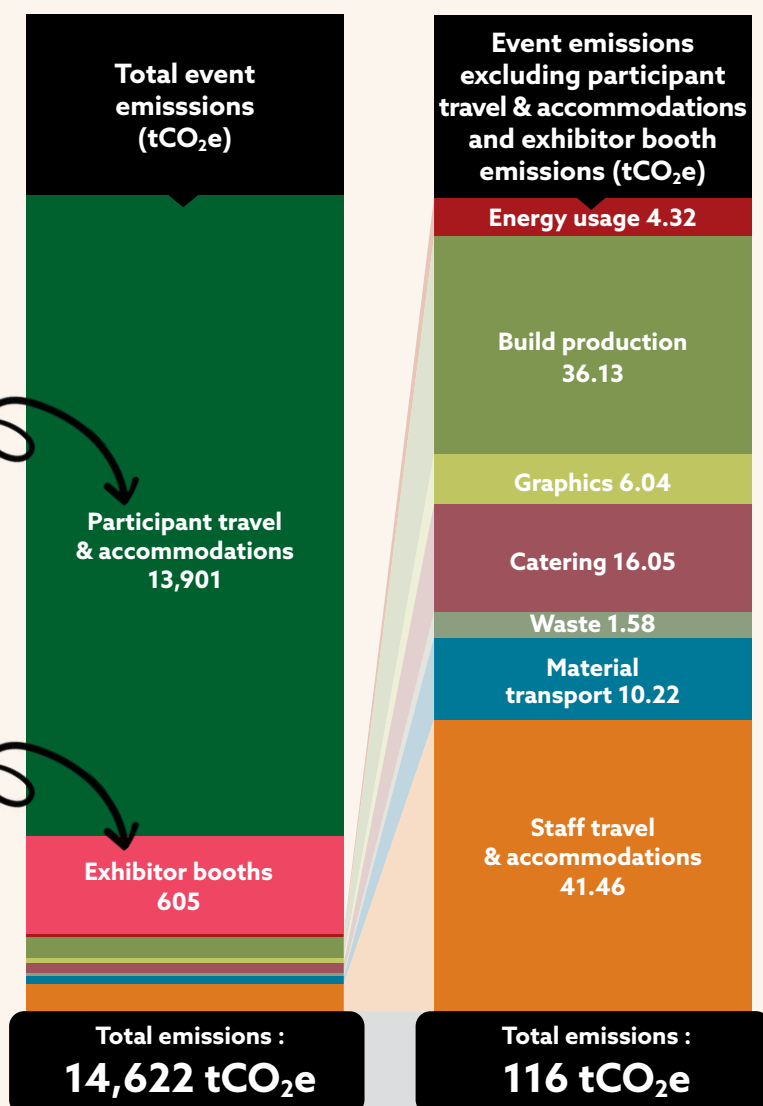
One of our key goals this year was to establish a robust emissions measurement strategy and plan.

Here we're sharing the results—our total footprint, shown both with and without participant travel.

And while it might be easy to assume participant travel is entirely outside our control, the data shows otherwise—you can read more on page 28.

This gives a clearer view of all the areas where we have influence and impact. According to our measured data, participant travel & accommodations (especially air travel) are the largest contributor—responsible for over 95% of total emissions.

We also acknowledge a blind spot in booth data. Based on historical modeling from 2023, we estimate exhibitor emissions at around 4% of the show's footprint. While that may seem small by comparison, exhibitors account for an estimated 84% of all other (non-travel) emissions. That's significant—not just in terms of carbon, but also in the volume of waste generated on site, which must be factored into our overall impact. Improving the accuracy of this data is a key priority for us moving forward.





OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND TARGETS:

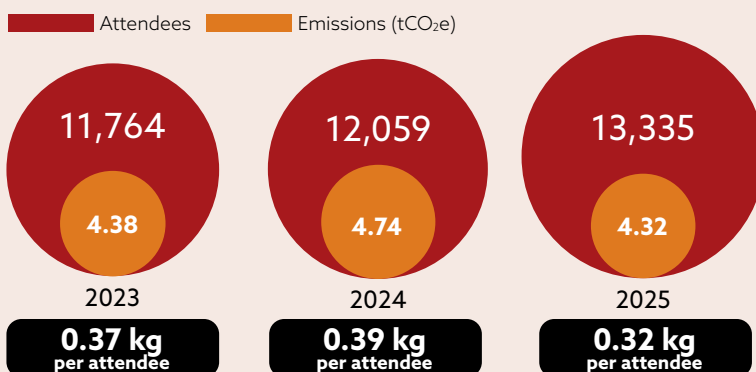
- ✓ Gather complete energy usage data across the show's primary venue—Messe Frankfurt and all co-located venues.

Choosing the right venue is key to measuring energy and water use. Messe Frankfurt is a trusted partner—providing reliable data and helping us reduce the show's impact in both areas.

In 2025, energy consumption decreased by 17,830 kWh—enough energy to power an electric car to drive **2.85 times around the Earth's circumference**. This reduction led to energy-related emissions savings of 0.42 tCO₂e at Messe Frankfurt.

This decrease happened despite a 10% increase in attendees. This is testament to Messe Frankfurt's commitment to low-carbon energy, through initiatives such as gradually switching to LED lighting, implementing needs-based temperature regulation in the halls and managing lighting centrally.

IMEX Frankfurt Energy Emissions (tCO₂e) and total attendees

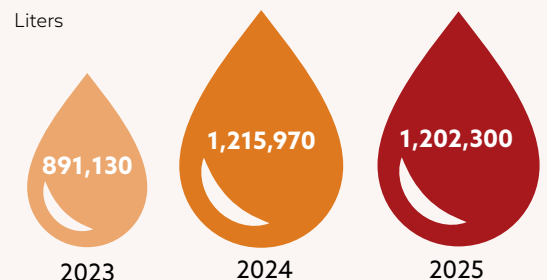


In 2024, average outdoor temperatures in Frankfurt were 1.6°C higher, which we understand drove a spike in energy use for cooling. As global temperatures continue to rise, more energy will be needed to stay comfortable, potentially creating a cycle of growing demand and rising emissions.

Water

Water use in 2025 totaled **1,202,300 liters**, with over 99% used at Messe Frankfurt. This represents a **1% decrease compared to 2024**, despite a 10% increase in participants. The data suggests that individual behavior has little influence on overall water use.

IMEX Frankfurt 2025 Water Consumption



Future reductions will therefore need to come from broader system-level changes at the venue, balanced alongside other environmental goals.

Both energy and water are impact areas that depend on the actions of our venue, Messe Frankfurt, rather than steps taken directly by us.

That's why it's essential we continue to collaborate with and support the sustainability efforts of Messe Frankfurt and our venue partners.



Total emissions: 42.17 tCO₂e
Per attendee: 3.16 kgCO₂e

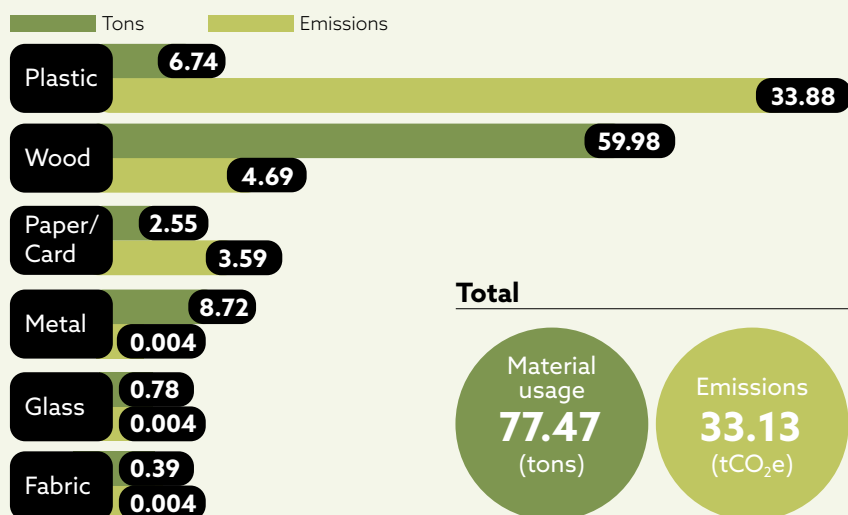
Objectives, Goals and Targets:

- ✓ Gather 50% of all materials used on site or the top 10 materials used by each supplier (excluding exhibitor materials and supply chain)

Figures do not include build and graphics from exhibitors. Given that 95% of booth space is space-only, which is exhibitor-led, this impact is expected to be significant. See page 29 for info on how we're addressing this data gap.

Throughout the show build, we focused on designing for reuse—removing the year from signage and prioritizing simple, impactful designs that work year after year without losing brand impact. Our measurement covered all IMEX-branded elements, carpet and education theaters.

Material usage (tons) compared to emissions (tCO₂e)



Source of materials:



Onward life of materials:



Carpet Use

We've continued to reduce carpet to the minimum required for safety compliance. This year, we reduced the total weight of carpet used at IMEX by a further 26%.*

Carpet use at IMEX Frankfurt (kgs)



*While this reduction in carpet use is significant, further investigation is needed to understand where this reduction has come from, so we can ensure continued progress.



Eventpower collected 1.5 tons of carpet—25% of the total recovered—for reuse at the Frankfurt City Triathlon.



OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND TARGETS:

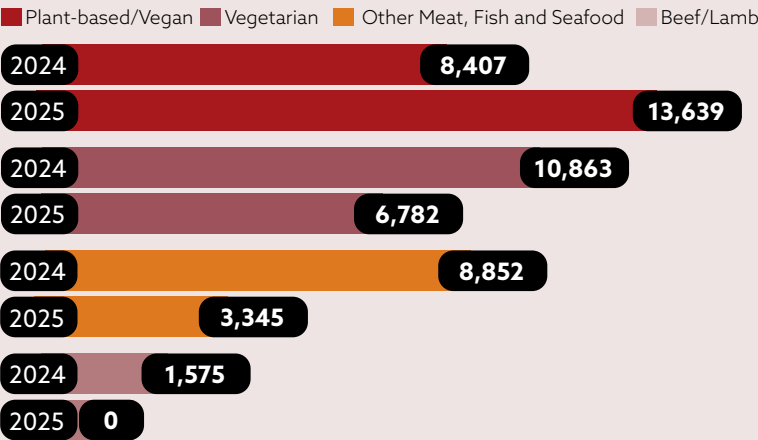
- ✓ To measure 100% of all on-site meals, including meal type, primary protein, serviceware and drinks across all venues.

This data does not include catering provided on exhibitor booths. We do not expect this to significantly impact total emissions and have therefore excluded it from our measurement objectives.

27%
of Gala Dinner guests chose the plant-based main course, down from 36% last year, but a notable increase from under 10% before 2022.

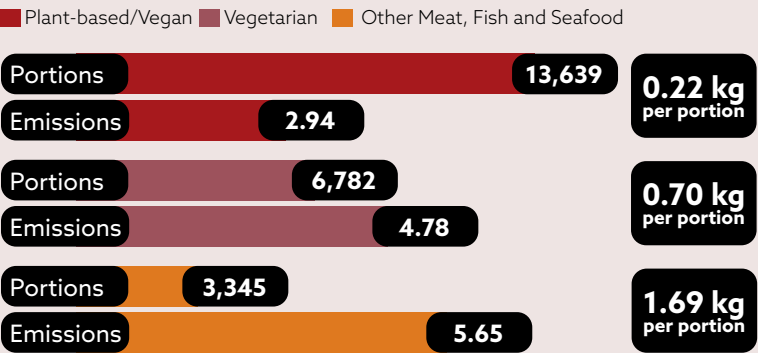
Catering is a key part of the attendee experience, and we’ve made strong progress in shifting to lower-carbon menu options. At the Gala Dinner, no red meat was served, and across the show, red meat accounted for less than 10% of all food portions.

Portions by food type



At Messe Frankfurt, 86% of the food served was meat free. 67% was plant-based/vegan, up from 44% in 2024. That’s well above the industry average of 56%, according to the *isla’s Temperature Check Europe - 2025*.

IMEX Frankfurt food emissions (tCO₂e) per food type

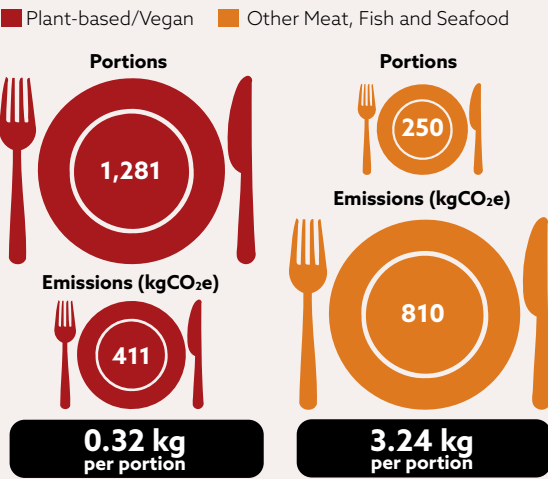


A key strategy to reduce emissions from show catering is to avoid serving red meat. Replacing red meat with other meat or fish results in an average 78% emissions reduction per portion.

The Gala Dinner

To support low-carbon choices at the Gala Dinner, we made the impact of each option clear on the menu. All starters and desserts were plant-based, not just to reduce emissions, but because we thought they were the top choice for flavor too.

Gala Dinner food emissions per portion



Drinks at the Gala Dinner accounted for ~ 2% of total catering emissions.

Food waste totaled three tons and averaged 255g per attendee. That’s about the weight of a steak. This figure includes all organic waste collected during IMEX, from kitchen prep to all participant- facing facilities.



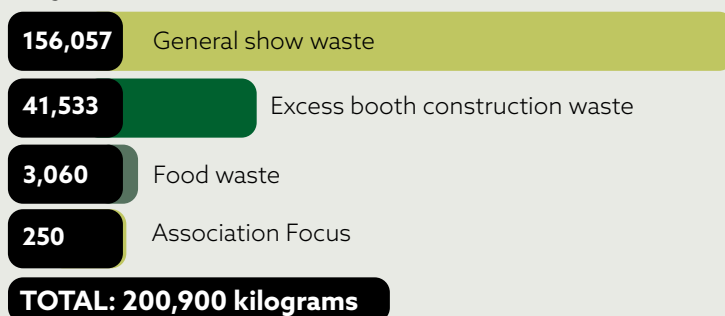
This data does not include waste managed off site by exhibitors/the exhibitor supply chain.

We've measured waste from the show, waste from Association Focus at Kap Europa, excess booth construction waste (paid for by exhibitors) and food waste from catering at Messe Frankfurt.

This year, many of the IMEX assets used across the show reached the end of their four-year lifecycle. As a result, the total volume of waste increased by 71.2 tons compared to 2024—roughly equivalent to six full standard UK garbage trucks. Emissions also rose by 46%.

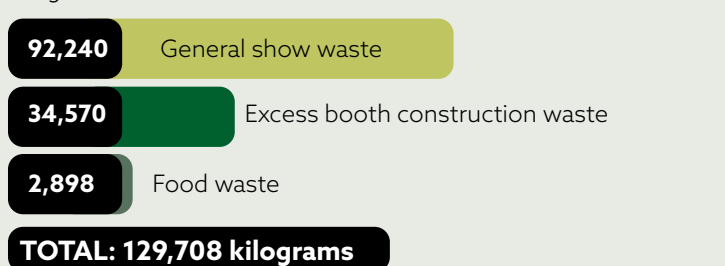
2025 Waste figures

Kilograms



2024 Waste figures

Kilograms

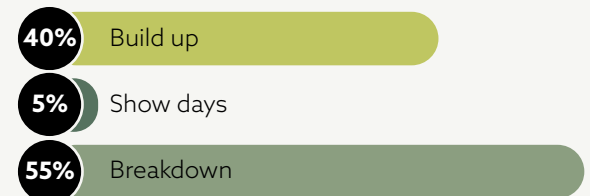


The share of waste paid for by exhibitors decreased by more than 5% between 2024 and 2025. It's unclear whether this reflects a genuine reduction in waste generation or simply that more exhibitors are taking their waste off site.

OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND TARGETS:

- ✓ Gather details of all waste produced, including waste from production and graphics materials, food waste, serveware and packaging waste, and general participant waste.
- 1/2 Ensure waste data is separated into pre and post-show across all co-located venues.
- 1/2 Assess waste separation, labeling and usage during live show days.
- ✗ Qualify the waste generated— i.e. which elements of the show are entering the waste stream for incineration.

Waste by show phase



We're concerned by the high volume of waste during build up and will be looking into what's causing it.

Total waste per participant (kg)*

*excluding co-located events



In 2025, waste per participant reached its highest level since 2022. Part of this increase comes from IMEX assets reaching the end of their four-year lifecycle, adding around 0.75kg per participant. However, this doesn't fully account for the rise.

Despite increasingly reliable venue data, it's still unclear how much of the increase is due to improved measurement practices, higher participant numbers, or other contributing factors. We're committed to investigating this further with our venue partners.

What's clear is that this underlines the importance of **circular design in temporary event infrastructure**—ensuring assets are reused and repurposed wherever possible, rather than generating waste at the end of their life.

Material transport

Total emissions: **10.22 tCO₂e**

Number of journeys: **198**

Distance: **8,835 miles**

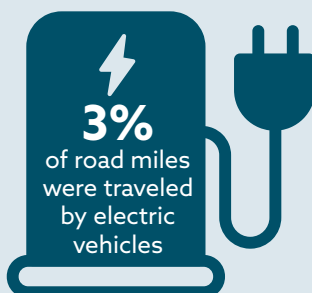
OBJECTIVES, GOALS AND TARGETS:

✓ To capture 25% of material transport.



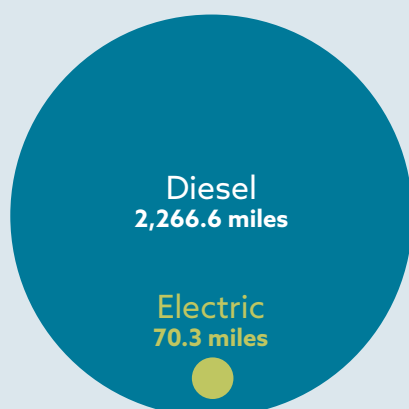
Material transport data was captured from five key suppliers at IMEX. However we were unable to collect data across the wider supply chain, many of which are based outside Frankfurt. As data collection improves and measurement boundaries expand, reported transportation emissions are expected to rise—giving a more accurate picture of the total impact.

The data shown here does not include transportation emissions from exhibiting companies, many of which have global supply chains. We've provided an estimate of these emissions on page 29, as they're expected to significantly contribute to the show's overall footprint.



What types of engines were used?

Distance (miles) by engine type



One long-haul
air freight journey of
4,038 miles represented
26%
(2.68 tCO₂e) of total
transportation
emissions.

How far did transport travel?

Just 2% of journeys produced nearly half of all transport emissions (49%)—this includes the single air freight journey. In contrast, the other 98% of trips, all under 100 miles, accounted for the remaining 51%. This demonstrates how important it is to support and utilize a local supply chain!

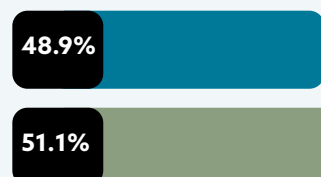
% share of trips by distance

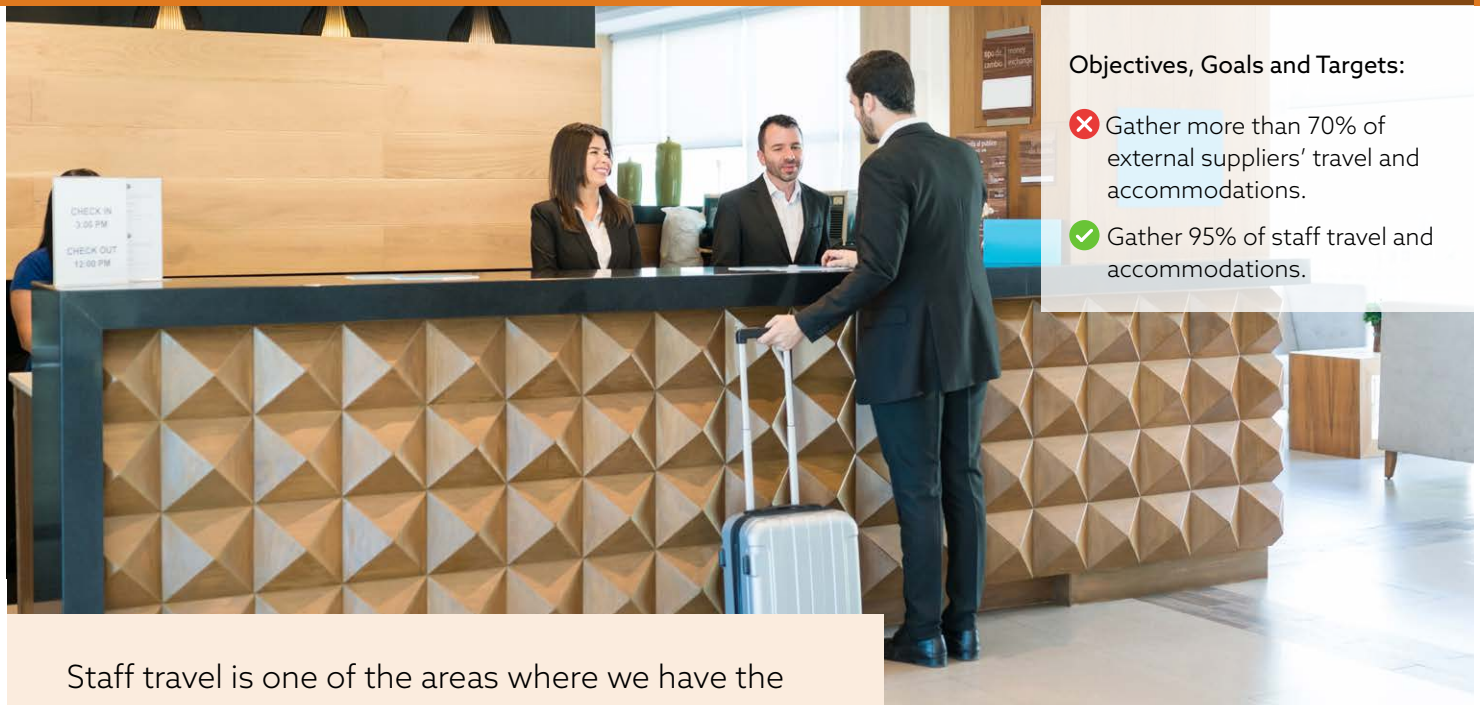
■ More than 100 miles ■ Less than 100 miles



% share of transport emissions by distance

■ More than 100 miles ■ Less than 100 miles





Objectives, Goals and Targets:

- ✗ Gather more than 70% of external suppliers' travel and accommodations.
- ✓ Gather 95% of staff travel and accommodations.

Staff travel is one of the areas where we have the most control. We've collected detailed data on travel to Frankfurt and movement within the city during the show. With better data, we can act quickly to reduce our team's travel emissions. This will be a key focus for reduction targets in 2026.

IMEX team travel

Total emissions: **25.06 tCO₂e**

In 2025, almost all IMEX team flights (97%) were taken from London, generating 23.69 tCO₂e, accounting for just over 94% of all staff travel emissions. The team took 116 flights, which made up just over 60% of all staff, but contributed a striking 93% of staff travel emissions.

The opportunity for change is clear. If our team had switched even one leg of the London to Frankfurt journey to rail, emissions would have dropped by 9.14 tCO₂e — almost 40% of our total flight footprint.

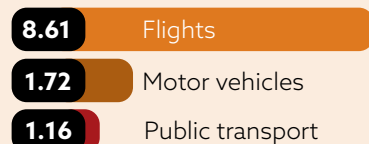
We'll be looking at how we manage this for our 2026 show.

Working with **Fairconstruction** and **Accente** allows us to make the most of existing infrastructure and reduce unnecessary staff travel and transportation.

IMEX team travel emissions (tCO₂e) by transport type



Supplier travel emissions (tCO₂e) by transport type



Staff accommodations

4.91 tCO₂e

375 total nights

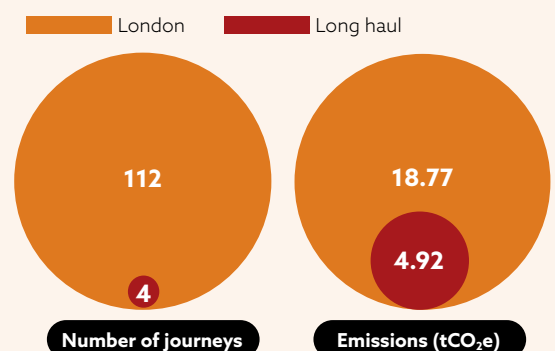
16% of total staff travel & accommodation emissions

Supplier travel

Total emissions: **11.49 tCO₂e**

Although we requested travel data from our wider supply chain, we only received data from six of 15 suppliers contacted. Committing to wider engagement will allow further insight here.

IMEX staff flights



All IMEX staff travel and accommodations will be offset through Cloverly's high-quality carbon-offsets*

* Offsets don't eliminate emissions. When used responsibly, they support high-integrity carbon removal and reduction projects.

Participant travel & accommodations

Total emissions:
13,901 tCO₂e



Objectives, Goals and Targets:

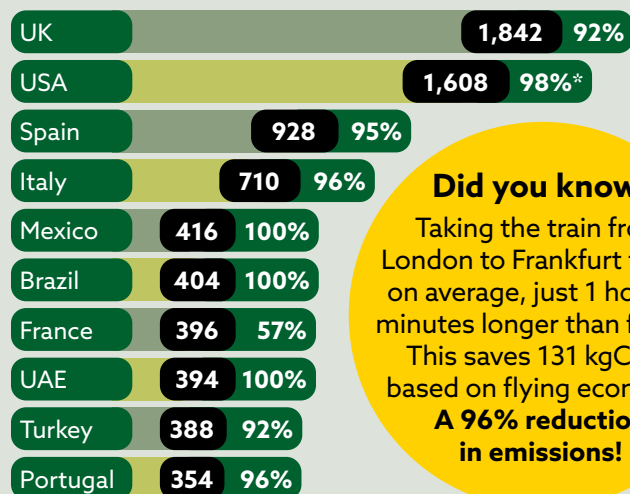
- ✓ Capture 90% of participant travel, both ground and air, in TRACE. Capture 90% of hotel stays.
(We then extrapolate to report on 100% of journeys.)

IMEX Frankfurt welcomes participants from around the world, so travel-related emissions are expected to be significant.

While these emissions fall outside our direct control, we're committed to collecting data and doing our part to support lower-carbon travel. One finding that stands out is the high number of European flights, despite Frankfurt's excellent international rail links.

Where are our participants flying from?

Top 10 countries by number of flights and % of participants from each country choosing to fly



Did you know:
Taking the train from London to Frankfurt takes, on average, just 1 hour 15 minutes longer than flying?
This saves 131 kgCO₂e based on flying economy.
A 96% reduction in emissions!

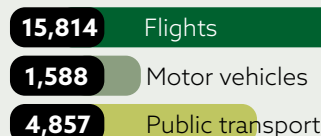
* collection of this data is based on self-declaration by participants, which may impact accuracy

It was interesting to learn that the most popular country to fly from is the United Kingdom, representing 1,842 trips!

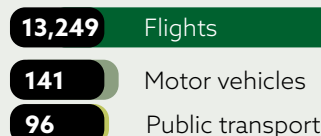
Getting to Frankfurt

71% of all journeys were by air, accounting for 98% of emissions—and half of those flights were within Europe.

Number of journeys by transport type



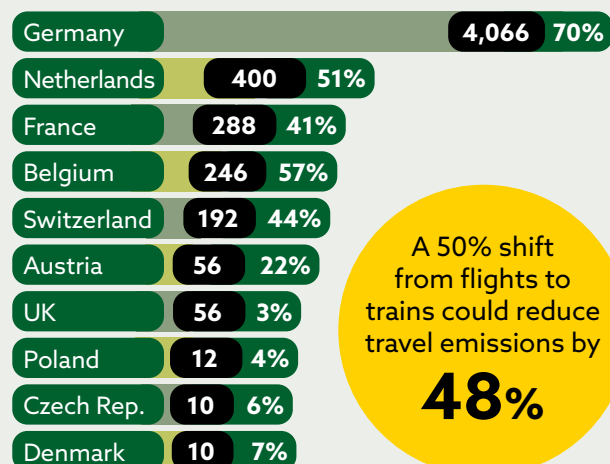
Emissions share by transport type (tCO₂e)



Frankfurt has exceptional transport links. Frankfurt Central Station connects to cities across Europe—one reason Messe Frankfurt is such a strong venue partner. Despite this, 50% of all flights originated within Europe. This makes encouraging more international train travel a major opportunity to reduce emissions.

Which participants are already taking the train?

Top 10 countries and % of participants choosing to travel by train



A 50% shift from flights to trains could reduce travel emissions by

48%

12 participants who indicated train travel from the United States have been excluded due to concerns about data accuracy

Estimated impact of exhibitor booths



Right now, data from exhibitors is limited. There's a careful balance to strike between keeping the show accessible and successful, and introducing new requirements that could feel like barriers.

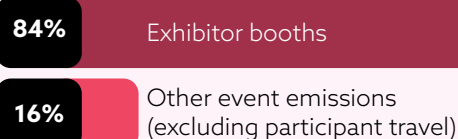
However, exhibitors are central to the success of our sustainability endeavors. We have a responsibility to lead by example and work collaboratively with all our stakeholders to reduce the show's overall impact.

This year, we significantly expanded the **Better Stands** initiative, covering 100% of space-only exhibitor booths. To build a picture of emissions associated with exhibitor booths, we used historical data from 2023, based on estimated emissions from 17 booths. By applying the average emissions per square meter, we estimate emissions from exhibitors will exceed 605 tCO₂e. The methodology is logical but is based on a small sample size, so we anticipate the actual emissions footprint to be higher.

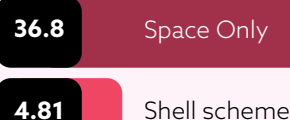
Looking ahead, there's a real opportunity to make meaningful progress—and it starts with better data. Future shows will explore new ways of measuring exhibitor impact. Not just to calculate a carbon footprint, but to understand what's driving emissions—from material choices and sourcing to booth lifecycle and staff travel.

Total estimated exhibitor emissions exceed
605 tCO₂e

Estimated impact of exhibitor booths compared with the wider show:



Estimated emissions per stand type (kgCO₂e per sqm)



When participant travel is excluded, exhibitor booths are estimated to generate **84% of total event emissions**. That makes exhibitor engagement a critical area for us to focus on to guide effective decarbonization.

Beyond booth type, exploring differences by region, size and common supply chain partners will enable more targeted and efficient action.



Simple changes could have a big impact...



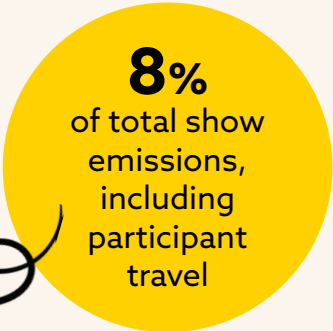
As this report shows, some of the most powerful opportunities for progress don't always come from sweeping changes, but from simple interventions that make a big difference.

Whether it's how we travel, design temporary infrastructure, or collaborate with exhibitors and partners, there are clear ways to cut emissions and reduce waste by rethinking familiar practices.

If we....	Savings of tCO ₂ e
Swapped air freight for sea	3
Swapped 25% of UK flights for train	150
Swapped 25% of European flights for train	1,065
Shift 50% of IMEX staff flights to train journeys	9
Potential emissions reductions from some simple swaps	1,227

By paying attention to these moments—and acting on them—we can accelerate our journey toward a more sustainable future, together.

Exhibitor engagement is not just a growing priority, but also a clear opportunity. Many exhibitors are actively looking for support and guidance on how to take effective action, and working with them will be a central pillar of our strategy from now on.



Goal 3:

Share what we've learned to show transparency and support others on their journey.

Shared learnings

Being transparent about what works—and what doesn't—helps move our industry forward. We've highlighted our key learnings: the need for deeper exhibitor engagement, closer alignment with supply-chain partners, and embedding sustainability at every stage of event planning.





What we've learned...

We've strengthened our internal knowledge and now have a better understanding of where we can make meaningful progress.

While we've shared learnings from the show throughout this report, our key takeaways go further. They point to how we, as an organization, can take further effective action.

95.4%
of floor space
used by space-
only booths.



An opportunity to go further

We've made strong progress in measuring our own direct activities, but a large part of the event's footprint is likely to come from exhibitors.

With over 95% of booths being space-only, exhibitors have significant freedom in how their booths are built—and with that, the potential to drive meaningful sustainability gains. By engaging exhibitors more closely, we can help shape better practices, influence material choices, and reduce impacts across the entire show.

Currently, limited visibility into third-party materials and logistics creates a gap in understanding. Expanding measurement to include exhibitor activity will help close that gap, strengthen overall reporting, and open new opportunities for guidance, collaboration and continuous improvement.

Mark Mulligan, Director of Operations, IMEX Group



Our supply-chain is our superpower!

Improving environmental performance is a shared goal across the events industry, and our supply chain partners can supercharge success.

They're willing and able to provide sustainability data and take action to improve outcomes. But without shared definitions, clear expectations, and structured feedback, the process risks becoming a tick-box exercise.

By aligning through earlier engagement, consistent guidance and post-event reviews, we can unlock greater potential and drive year-on-year improvement.

Roger Lehner, Senior Operations & Sustainability Executive, IMEX Group



Progress requires action beyond the show floor

Action doesn't begin and end on the show floor. Our teams work year-round, and sustainability must be embedded into every stage of planning and delivery—not just the live event.

From sourcing and contracting to logistics, marketing and post-event debriefs, every touchpoint is an opportunity to drive better outcomes.

Embedding sustainability across the full lifecycle makes it a year-round commitment—one that enables continuous improvement and builds each edition on the progress of the last.

David Harrison, Chief Financial Officer, IMEX Group



Looking ahead

This year's report highlights a key truth: sustainability progress can't be limited to the show floor. The insights we've shared show that meaningful action must happen year-round—built into every stage of planning, delivery and collaboration.

Our next step is to turn this momentum into a clear, long-term strategy. This will help us build on what we've learned, set sharper goals, and ensure progress continues between editions of the show.

Two areas will be central to this work:

Travel

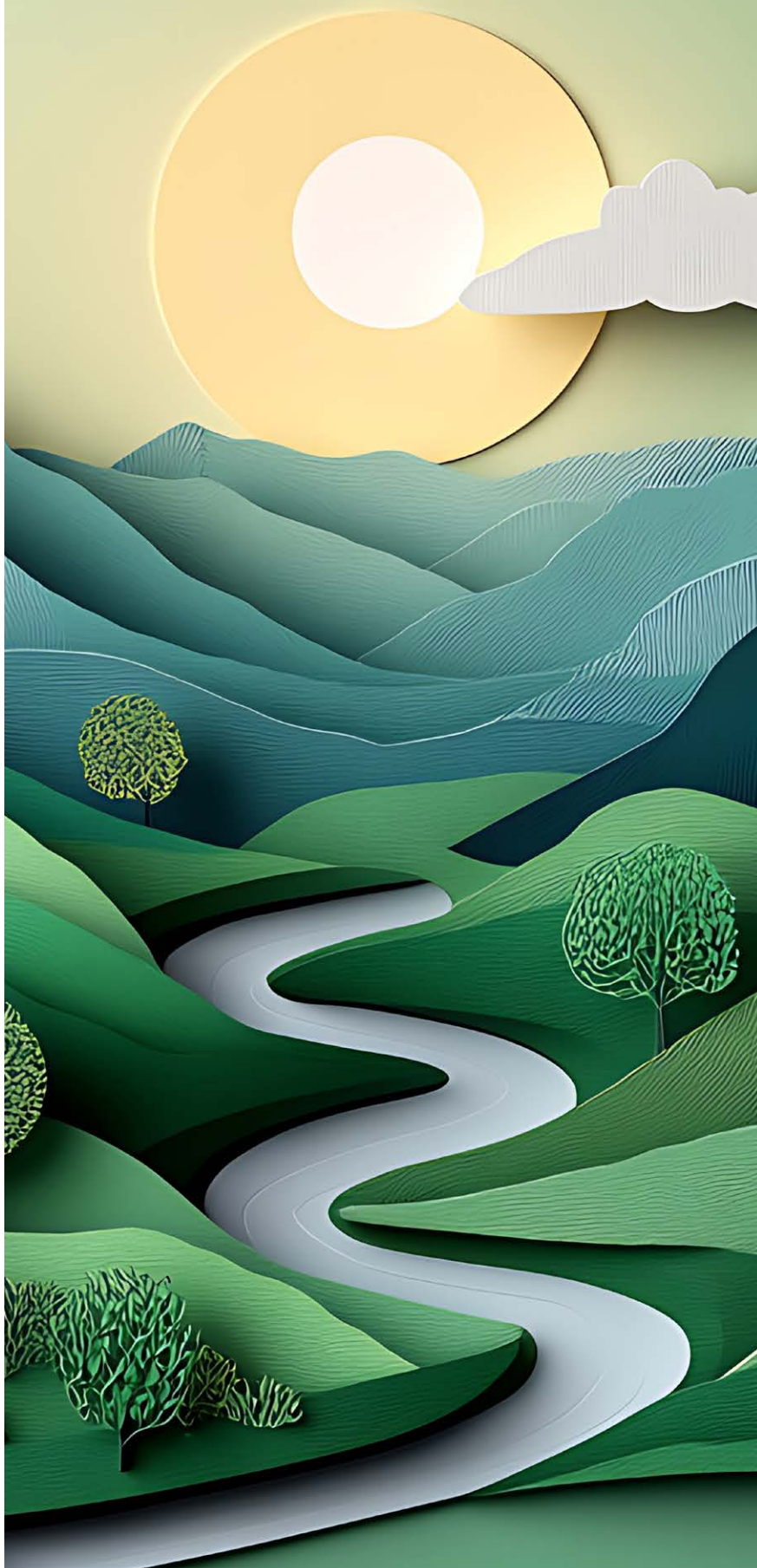
Exploring how we can reduce emissions from participant and staff journeys, supporting smarter choices and enabling change where it matters most.

Exhibitor booths

Working more closely with our exhibitor community to address circular booth design, material choices and logistics—unlocking some of the biggest opportunities for reduction.

This project marks the start of a wider sustainability strategy for us. We've already taken steps to ensure our strategy looks beyond a single show and embeds accountability and improvement throughout the year—and across our global community. We'll be sharing more in the months ahead.

Thank you



We'd like to thank all our valued, long-standing partners who helped to make our sustainability impact possible:

- ➔ **Accente**
- ➔ **Eventence**
- ➔ **Events Industry Council (EIC)**
- ➔ **Fairconstruction**
- ➔ **Fairservices.net**
- ➔ **Frankfurt Convention Bureau**
- ➔ **Hanse Mondial**
- ➔ **isla**
- ➔ **Messe Frankfurt**

Prepared by

isla.
weareisla.co.uk

Appendix

Waste Incineration

Around 12% of residual (non-recyclable) waste from the show is sent to a local waste-to-energy (WtE) plant in Frankfurt, operated by FES/Mainova. Here, waste is converted into electricity and district heating—enough to power tens of thousands of homes.

Germany's WtE plants are among the most efficient and tightly regulated in Europe. Incineration also prevents methane emissions from landfill—methane being far more damaging to the climate than CO₂. In fact, processing one ton of waste this way avoids around 1.4 tons of CO₂e that landfill would otherwise release.

However, incineration isn't impact-free. Burning waste produces CO₂, along with ash and trace pollutants like heavy metals and particulates. These are tightly controlled under German and EU law, but the ash still requires careful handling and disposal.

While incineration is a better alternative to landfill, it remains a less-than-ideal solution because it falls outside Circular Economy (CE) principles. CE principles focus on reducing, reusing and recycling materials to keep them in circulation for as long as possible.

What is a carbon factor?

A carbon factor (CF) is a coefficient that shows how much greenhouse gas (GHG) is released by a specific activity. You might also hear it referred to as a conversion factor, emissions factor, emissions intensity, or carbon intensity.

Carbon factors are based on data from direct measurements, population datasets and official statistics such as those from the Department for Transport or the Civil Aviation Authority.

Take energy for example: under a market-based approach, a country's energy mix (how much comes from sources like wind or gas), combined with transmission and distribution losses, is used to calculate the carbon factor for mains electricity. This is expressed as CO₂e per kWh.

Measurement Methodology

We've worked with TRACE by isla—an event-specific carbon measurement and reporting platform—to calculate our emissions. TRACE follows an externally approved methodology, aligned with the GHG Protocol and GRI Standards for environmental reporting.

It applies carbon factors from internationally recognized databases, including DESNZ (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero) and ICE (Institution of Civil Engineers). These factors represent globally relevant averages, with local factors and data used wherever available.

Find more detail on TRACE's methodology [here](#), or contact trace@weareisla.co.uk.

Offsetting

For the second year running, we've offset our staff travel emissions through Cloverly—a provider offering carbon offset programs worldwide.

Cloverly only lists credits and projects that meet rigorous international standards. All credits are validated and verified under ISO 14064-3/14065, ensuring the integrity of the underlying methodologies. Cloverly is also recognized by the IC-VCM label as a CCP-eligible registry, further confirming its compliance with credible offsetting standards.

These offset projects meet some of the highest standards available, providing assurance of both credibility and impact.

However, while high-quality offsets can support a sustainability strategy, they're not a substitute for direct emissions reduction. We know that lasting progress starts with reducing emissions at source.

