



SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

24th Euretina Congress

REPORT BY **EUNET**

SUMMARY

The Euretina Congress is a cornerstone event in retinal medicine, uniting professionals from around the world to exchange knowledge and drive innovation. This spirit was evident at the 24th EURETINA Congress taking place from 19th to 22nd of September 2024 at the CCIB in Barcelona, Spain. The congress attracted nearly 8,500 on-site attendees and more than 1,100 online participants, offering a dynamic platform for learning and connection. The congress generated a carbon footprint of 21,294 tons CO₂-equivalents primarily driven by participant travel, accommodations, and catering. Recognizing the environmental impact of such a large gathering, this report marks a remarkable step towards making the event more climate-friendly.

By systematically gathering data on resource usage and emissions, identifying areas of opportunity, and offering practical recommendations, the report lays the groundwork for embedding sustainability more holistically into the congress' structure.

The report evaluates sustainability measures across key areas of the congress: Communication, Programme, Location & Congress Center, Materials & Construction, Exhibition, and Catering. Additionally, it summarizes Participant Voices on the topic of sustainability, which were collected on-site as well as in an after-congress survey. While many initiatives showed promise, the findings also underline opportunities for improvement in making sustainability a seamless part of the congress experience. Communication efforts included references to public transport but lacked a dedicated sustainability section on the congress' website or comprehensive sustainability guidance for attendees. The Programme incorporated a few well-attended sustainability-focused sessions, but these represented a small portion of the congress programme. The area Location & Congress Center demonstrated strong efforts, such as using 100% renewable energy, but inconsistencies in waste management detracted from these efforts. In the area Materials & Construction, local rental of materials and modular setups were positive steps, which reduced emissions from transport. The Exhibition showed the enormous potential for high reuse rates, yet many exhibitors missed opportunities to implement sustainable booth designs. Lastly, the area Catering demonstrated great sustainability approaches with vegetarian crew meals alongside around 2/3 vegetarian and vegan options for attendees. However, addressing the challenges of single-use packaging and reducing food waste through improved management strategies could further amplify the positive impact of these initiatives. It is particularly encouraging to note that many visitors consider sustainability an important topic and express a desire for further measures.

Overall, the findings underline the potential of a cohesive and proactive approach to sustainability across all areas in future editions of the congress. The Euretina Congress 2025 in Paris provides an opportunity to improve sustainability, aligning with the global urgency to mitigate climate impacts and achieve a more sustainable future for large-scale events.

OFFSETTING

- Offsetting does not undo emissions but offsets them elsewhere, typically on a global scale.
- It is crucial to note that offsetting should not replace direct efforts to cut emissions.
- For unavoidable emissions, offsetting helps mitigate their impact and serves as a valuable complement to the reduction measures outlined in this report.
- To ensure effective offsetting, it is essential to support high-quality, verified projects that prevent double counting and deliver long-term benefits.
- As part of Euretina 2024, 58 tons of emissions were offset through certified initiatives.

GENERAL REMARKS

Dates

Set up	16th to 19th September 2024
Pre-Summit	18th September
Congress	19th September to 22nd September 2024
Dismantling	22nd September 2024

People

Online Participants	1,121
Participants On-Site	6,367
Exhibitors	1,322
Speaker	369
Setup crew	337
Staff	100
TOTAL ON-Site	8,495

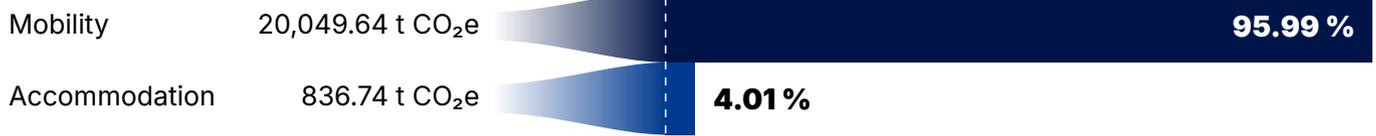
EVENT CARBON FOOTPRINT

Figure 1:

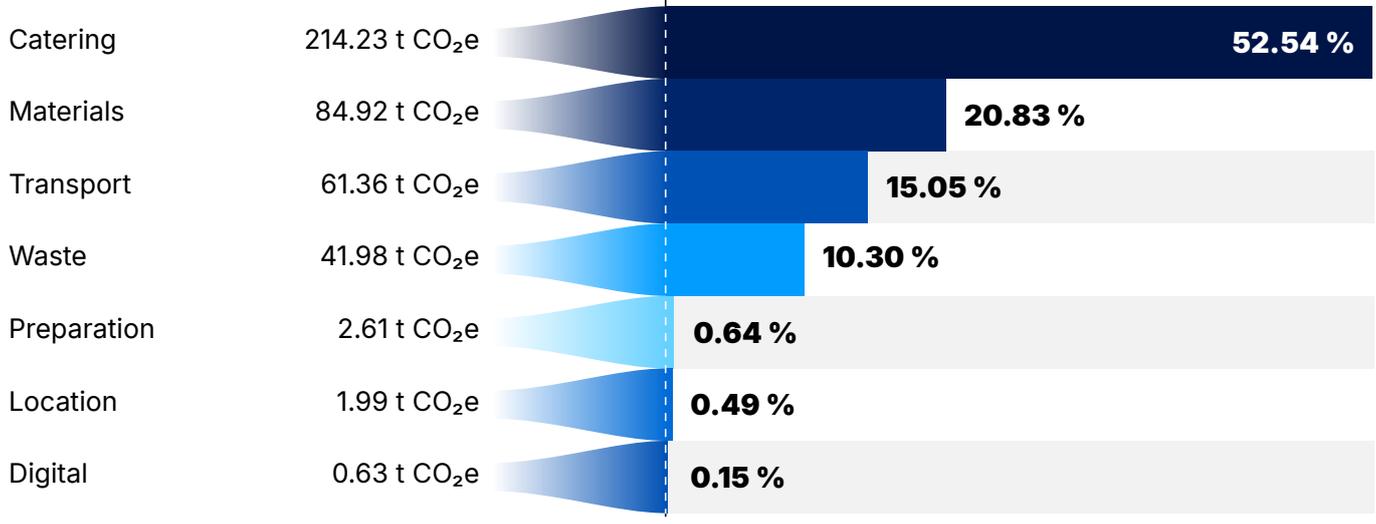
Allocation of emissions to the different emission sources.

This report expresses values in CO₂ equivalents (CO₂e), encompassing the impacts of water vapor, methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), and other greenhouse gases, thereby accounting for total greenhouse gas emissions.

Travel Emissions



Emissions Excluding Travel



Sum **21,294.10 t CO₂e**

Per Participant On-Site 3.34 t CO₂e

Per Participant Online 0.007 t CO₂e

Mobility 20,049.64 t

Participant travel to and from Barcelona accounted for the largest share of the congress emissions. The primary share is caused by international flights due to a high number of participants from other European countries and countries abroad (especially U.S., Australia, China, Japan, and Mexico). Transportation within Barcelona via cab and public transport is included, however the share of emissions is below 1% due to the comparably small distances.

Accommodation 836.74 t

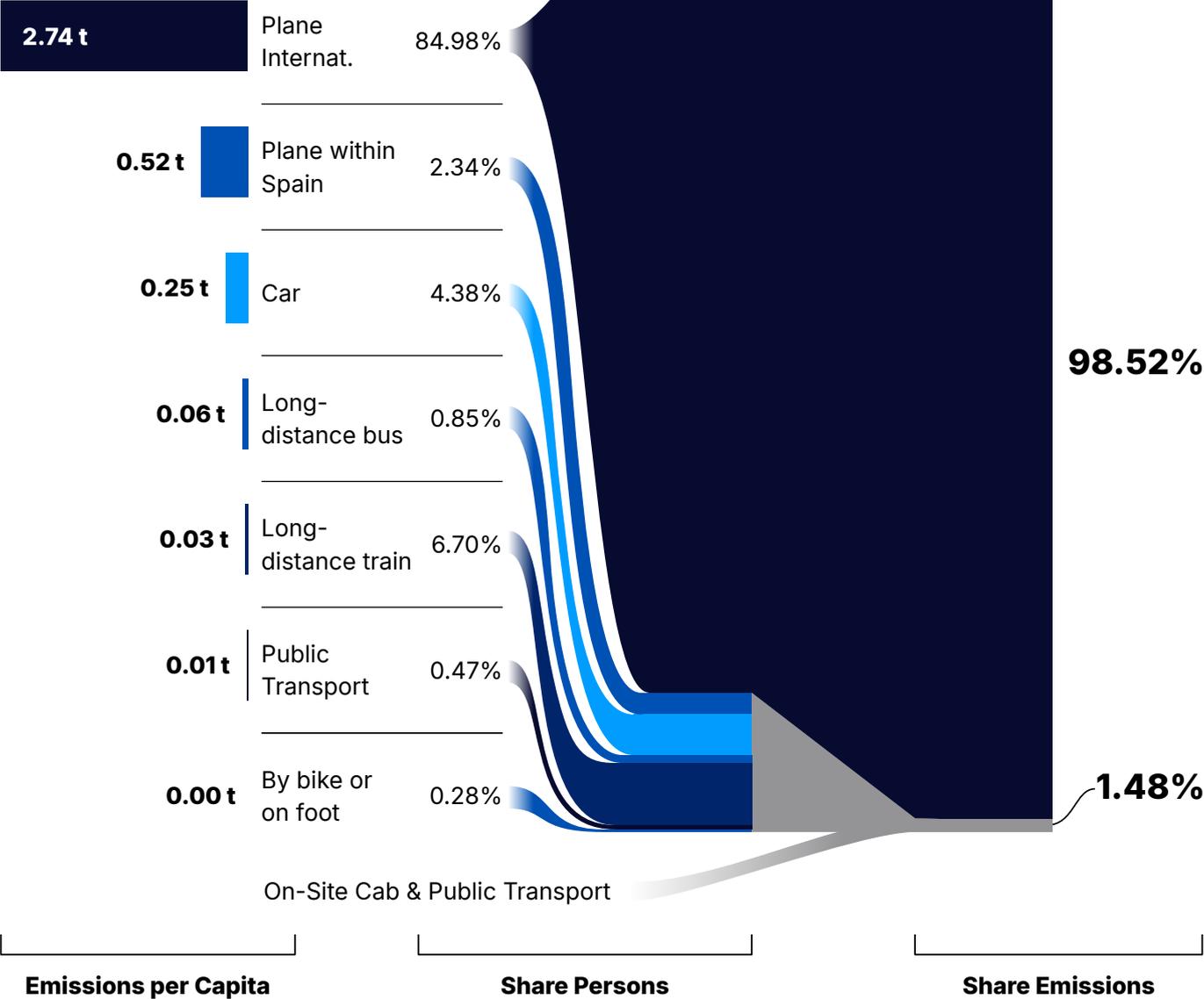
Visitors spent a total of more than 25,000 nights in

Barcelona for the congress. Emissions from accommodation amounted to a total of 836.74 tons of CO₂ equivalents.

Catering 212.23 t

Catering for participants contributed significantly with 212.48 tons of CO₂ equivalents. One half of the emissions were generated in direct influence areas of the congress via lunch bags, side events, restaurants on-site and crew catering, the other half originated from meals outside the venue. Emissions from packaging are included in the calculations.

Figure 2:
Allocation of mobility emissions for travelling to and from Barcelona and for on-site mobility

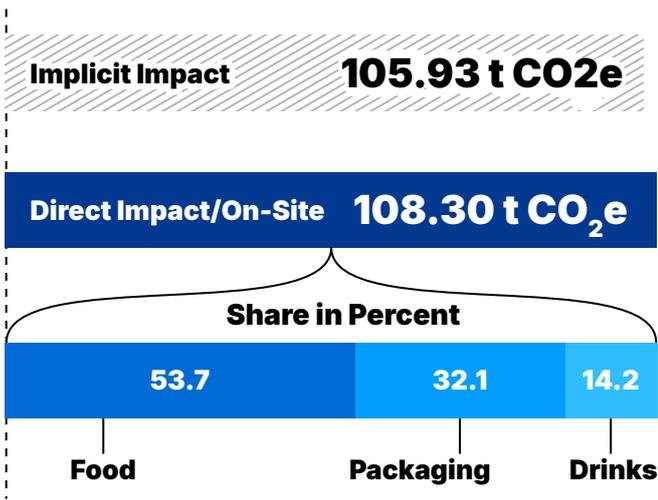


Materials 84.92 t

The materials used for the exhibition area and all buildings in the main congress areas generated 74.19 tons of CO₂ equivalents. It is important to note that this calculation only includes emissions from single-use materials and attrition. Therefore, actual emissions may have been higher, as the calculation reflects only the emissions directly attributable to the Euretina Congress 2024, excluding reusable materials. For materials purchased for long-term use, emissions have been allocated proportionally based on their lifespan.

Figure 3:

Allocation of catering emissions to the different emission sources



Transport 61.36 t

The transportation of materials and goods caused 61.36 tons of CO₂ equivalents. This includes all emissions of the transport partner Interflow as well as transportation by m|events.

Waste 39.13 t

Waste disposal resulted in emissions of 39.13 tons of CO₂ equivalents. Emissions occurring from waste disposal on- and off-site included.

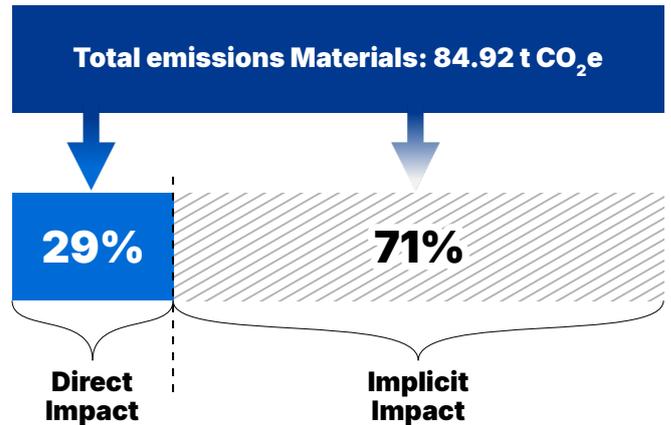


Figure 4:

Proportion of emissions from materials purchased directly for the congress (direct impact) or generated by exhibitors & sponsors (indirect impact)

Preparation 2.61 t

Preparatory activities, including site visits, led to emissions of 2.61 tons of CO₂ equivalents.

Location 1.99 t

Operating the event venue produced a comparatively low 1.99 tons of CO₂ equivalents. It has to be mentioned that gray emissions from building the venue are not included in the calculation, which would lead to a significantly higher amount.

Digital 0.63 t

Digital activities from streaming of online sessions, webpage and mailings contributed a modest 0.63 tons of CO₂ equivalents to the total emissions.



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