

**LUCERNE  
FESTIVAL**

**SUSTAINABILITY  
REPORT**

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**2023**

# SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

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For more than 20 years, Lucerne Festival has been committed to social sustainability, in particular to supporting young talent. Through the Lucerne Festival Academy, a variety of prizes for emerging artists, and the Debut concert series, the Festival has always been committed to future generations and will continue to do so in the future.

Alongside social sustainability, in 2022 Lucerne Festival additionally set itself the goal of systematically and proactively integrating and institutionalizing ecological and economic sustainability into its operations. To this end, a new position focusing explicitly on sustainability was created in the fall of 2022. Lucerne Festival has moreover since 2021 been part of “Swisstainable,” Swiss Tourism’s sustainability program, and it has been a member of the “Sustainability Working Group” of Swiss Top Events (STE) since 2022.

As a first step, Lucerne Festival developed a long-term sustainability strategy in 2023. It follows the United Nations’ (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is based on a materiality analysis to identify the sustainability aspects that are particularly relevant for Lucerne Festival and that can be changed, as well as on a comprehensive calculation of the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint in the ecological area, which was carried out in cooperation with myclimate for the years 2021 and 2022. The sustainability strategy contains measures, guidelines, and targets for the period from 2023 to 2027.

The sustainability strategy and the CO<sub>2</sub>e targets it sets are evaluated on the basis of the annual calculation of Lucerne Festival’s CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint. This annual report documents the results of the evaluation and explains the sustainability projects carried out and measures implemented, as well as their results. It not only provides an overview of the past year but also shows the steps and goals planned for the current year in the various dimensions of sustainability (social, ecological, economic).



## SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Music for Future: The Podcast © Monika Ritter-Staus



### 2023 IN REVIEW

- Pilot project “Music for Future: The Podcast” made by and featuring children and young people from the Lucerne region
- Introduction of the new 40min Open Air to increase the accessibility of classical music
- Visit to the Children’s Hospital of Central Switzerland by participants of the Lucerne Festival Academy

### NEXT STEPS FOR 2024

- Expansion of the commitment to the area of inclusion, in particular through accessibility measures and improved information on the Festival website
- Continuation and expansion of the “Music for Future: The Podcast” project



## ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY

A new hedge being planted in Pfeffikon (LU) © Lucerne Festival



### 2023 IN REVIEW

- Reduction in total emissions by 9% despite the addition of a new festival (the Piano Festival)
- Sing-along event “Sing für Vögel” (together with BirdLife Lucerne) to raise awareness about the endangered situation with respect to bird populations; donation of CHF 15,000 to the hedge-planting project “Hedges for Red-backed Shrikes & Co.”
- Planting of 1,000 bushes as a habitat for insects and birds in Pfeffikon in the canton of Lucerne (together with BirdLife Lucerne)

### NEXT STEPS FOR 2024

- Implementation of various new measures to reduce energy emissions
- Carrying out maintenance work to preserve the hedge planted by Lucerne Festival in Pfeffikon/LU



## ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

KKL Luzern (LU) © Patrick Fuhrmann/Lucerne Festival



Even before the 2023–2027 sustainability strategy was drawn up, Lucerne Festival was already striving to promote regional added value, for example through

- Awarding contracts to regional service providers wherever possible
- Frequent cooperation with local event venues and organizers

Every year, Lucerne Festival generates economic, tourist, and cultural added value for the Lucerne region (quantified at around 22.6 million Swiss francs for 2015 in a study by the University of St. Gallen [HSG]).

# SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY



**In the area of social sustainability, Lucerne Festival focuses on the following three of the UN SDGs: “4: Quality Education,” “5: Gender Equality,” and “10: Reduced Inequalities.” In this way, we aim to systematically strengthen and further develop our long-standing commitment in this area (described in detail in the Sustainability Report 2022).**

## 2023 IN REVIEW

Although there was a strong focus in 2023 on the dimension of environmental sustainability, various projects were carried out that address the two SDGs “4: Quality Education” and “10: Reduced Inequalities” in particular.

For example, the podcast pilot project “Music for Future: The Podcast” was launched, through which children and young people from the Lucerne region have an opportunity to take on the role of cultural journalists: they attend school concerts and report on them, write short presentations, and conduct interviews; in the process, they are accompanied and coached by Lucerne Festival. In this way, they encounter classical music and process their experiences in age-appropriate short podcasts. The podcasts are available on our [website](#).

In 2023, Lucerne Festival continued numerous successful offerings that are intended to provide important mediation efforts and enable broad sections of the population to enjoy music: these range from the widely varied program offerings for schools and families to the freely accessible live broadcast of the Opening Concert in Lucerne’s Inseli Park (known as “Lakeside Symphony”). Highlighted this time is the free world music week “In the streets”. It presented eight musical groups from all around the world who gave open-air performances in Lucerne’s Old Town, presenting a wide variety of musical styles, languages, and instruments – all with the aim of highlighting the abundant variety of music and encouraging listeners to be inspired by music. For this reason, Lucerne Festival attaches great importance to professionalism and diversity when selecting the artists who will perform. In addition, various formations visited regional schools, including the Rodtegg Foundation’s School for Children with Physical Disabilities.

The annual Lucerne Festival Academy (SDGs “4: Quality Education” and “10: Reduced Inequalities”) once again made it possible for some 100 young international instrumentalists to devote three weeks to a focus on the music of the 20th and 21st centuries and to gain important experience playing in the Lucerne Festival Contemporary Orchestra (LFCO).

Together with the Foundation Future Children’s Hospital of Central Switzerland (Stiftung Zukunft Kinderspital Zentralschweiz), five Academy members visited the Children’s Hospital of Central Switzerland on 2 September 2023 to play classical music and thus bring a change to the hospital’s daily routine. The next day, employees of the Children’s Hospital were invited by the Stiftung Zukunft Kinderspital Zentralschweiz and Lucerne Festival to enjoy a concert evening as part of the Summer Festival.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the free event series “40min,” Lucerne Festival introduced a new format: the inaugural edition, titled 40min Open Air, took place on the Europaplatz, right in front of the KKL Luzern, and comprised three back-to-back events. It was presented by Sarah Willis, a horn player with the Berliner Philharmoniker, who also performed in the third concert along with her Cuban ensemble Sarahbanda. Through this additional free event right outside the KKL Luzern, Lucerne Festival – with the support of Zurich Insurance – aims to bypass potential sociocultural barriers that might impede access and to inspire all sections of the community to enjoy classical music (SDG “10: Reduce Inequalities”).



Visit by Academy students to the Children's Hospital of Central Switzerland

© Patricia Thérissod

## NEXT STEPS

Following the successful pilot project, the “Music for Future” brief podcasts featuring children and young people from the region will be produced again in 2024. In addition to the Summer Festival, the Spring and Piano Festivals, and Forward Festival will also be included for coverage by these podcasts.

As previously announced in the 2022 report, in 2024 Lucerne Festival will focus on inclusion and thus on SDG “10: Reduced Inequalities.” In order to make our existing range of wheelchair spaces at all venues more visible (these can be reserved at special rates in the KKL Concert Hall), we are adding a subpage devoted to the topic of accessibility to the Festival’s website. It gathers comprehensive information on the various venues and provides an overview of access, wheelchair-accessible WCs, wheelchair parking spaces, and special services for people with visual impairments.

Lucerne Festival is also planning to launch a support service for people with visual impairments starting with the 2024 Summer Festival, through which they will be picked up from Lucerne’s main train station and accompanied to their seats in the KKL Luzern and then back to the train station. To this end, some of our staff in the KKL will be trained by the Visual Impairment Office of Central Switzerland (Fachstelle Sehbehinderung Zentralschweiz).

# ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY



In the area of environmental sustainability, Lucerne Festival focuses on the two SDGs “13: Climate Action” and “15: Life on Land.” Even before the 2023–2027 sustainability strategy was adopted, Lucerne Festival had already implemented and realized various measures to reduce its CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint. For 2021, a comprehensive though, because of to the restrictions imposed by the coronavirus pandemic, not representative calculation of the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint was carried out for the first time in collaboration with myclimate. This CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint calculation was carried out again for 2022 and measures were taken that were systematically implemented with the help of the 2023–2027 sustainability strategy. Following the two initial CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint calculations, the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint is now calculated annually in order to evaluate measures and targets.

Zurich Insurance supports Lucerne Festival as a climate partner in its ecological sustainability strategy, helps to develop initiatives to reduce Lucerne Festival’s CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions, and advises the Festival through its expertise in the areas of sustainability and climate action.

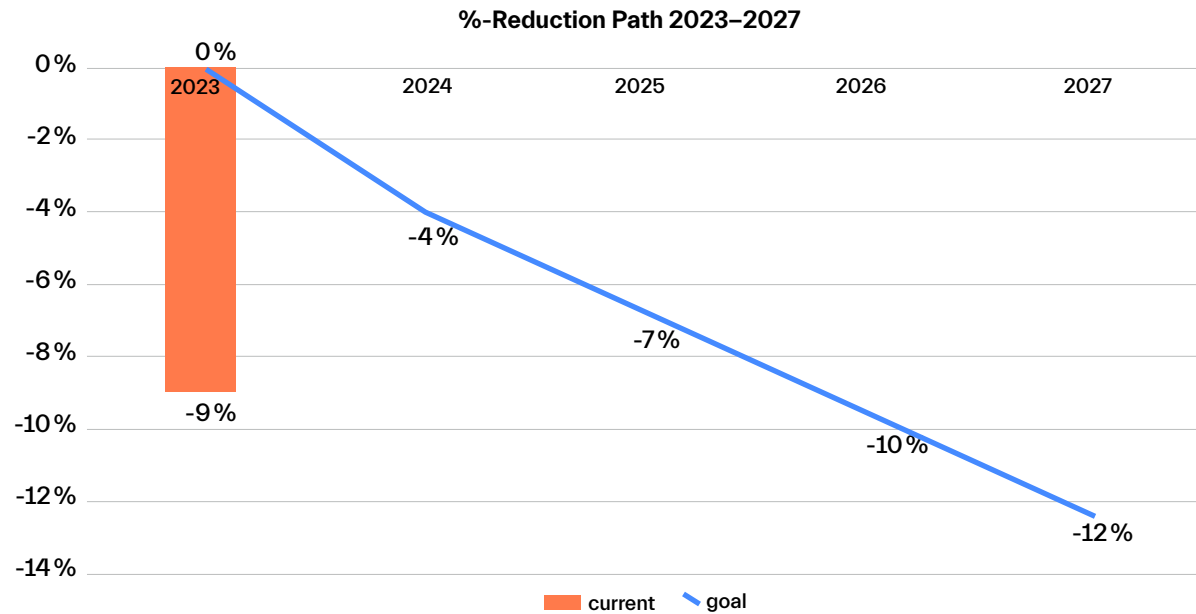
## 2023 IN REVIEW CO<sub>2</sub>e FOOTPRINT FOR 2023

Before comparing the key CO<sub>2</sub>e figures for 2022 and 2023, it should be noted that myclimate adjusts the emission factors annually to take into account current developments and the latest scientific findings. For example, the emission factors for flights in 2023 are generally higher than in 2022: if the number of flights remains the same, the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint in 2023 would still be higher. The emission factors for electricity consumption, on the other hand, are now set lower. These changes in the emission factors mean that the absolute CO<sub>2</sub>e values cannot be compared with each other. In order to ensure comparability, Lucerne Festival therefore updates the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprints of previous years to the latest standard and calculates the percentage change. Lucerne Festival has intentionally opted for this annual update in order to always document its footprint using the latest scientific findings. The CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint calculation is based on the internationally recognized “GHG Protocol” standard.

To illustrate the conversion of the absolute figures to the new standard:

	2022 (previous myclimate standard)	2022 (current myclimate standard)	2023 (current myclimate standard)	% Change
<b>Total emissions</b>	1'770 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	2'038 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	1'849 t CO <sub>2</sub> e	- 9 %
<b>Emissions per Capita</b>	32 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e	36.7 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e	25.2 kg CO <sub>2</sub> e	- 31%

This also has an impact on the CO<sub>2</sub>e reduction pathway, which was defined in the 2023–2027 sustainability strategy using absolute figures and on the basis of the old standard. The absolute figures have now been converted into percentage reduction targets based on 2022. In concrete terms, this means that the minimum target for 2027 is a reduction of 12% compared to 2022. The target for 2023 was not to increase the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint despite the addition of a festival (see the graph on the following page ↓).



If the total CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions for 2022 and 2023 are compared according to the new standard, a reduction of -189 t CO<sub>2</sub>e or -9% can be recorded. The total CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions include the Spring Festival, the Piano Fest, the Summer Festival, the Lucerne Festival Academy, the Forward Festival, and year-round office operations (including commuter and business traffic). That this reduction was achieved despite a new additional festival (Piano Fest) and despite visitor emissions being significantly higher in 2023 than in 2022 (due to around 20,000 more visitors) can overall be explained by the fact that the orchestras invited to the Summer Festival traveled significantly more by land (by train or bus). In addition, in comparison to 2022, a few more orchestras included their Lucerne guest performance as part of their tour and were therefore able to reduce the travel emissions per performance. This led to a halving of orchestra mobility emissions during the 2023 Summer Festival in comparison to 2022. Lucerne Festival cannot and will not attribute this change to its own efforts to sensitize guest orchestras to their mobility emissions (for example, by informing them about the

most important results of the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint calculation); this can only be attributed to an indirect influence. In any case, only the coming years will show whether the change represents a sustainable trend among the orchestras.

It is also encouraging to note that CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions generated by the materials used have been significantly reduced in comparison to 2022 (-36%). This reduction can be directly attributed to measures taken by Lucerne Festival in this area. By reducing the number and size of printed materials, for example, approximately 1 million printed pages were saved. In addition, all Academy members and employees received reusable bottles made from recycled aluminum to reduce the use of disposable cups and thus the volume of waste.

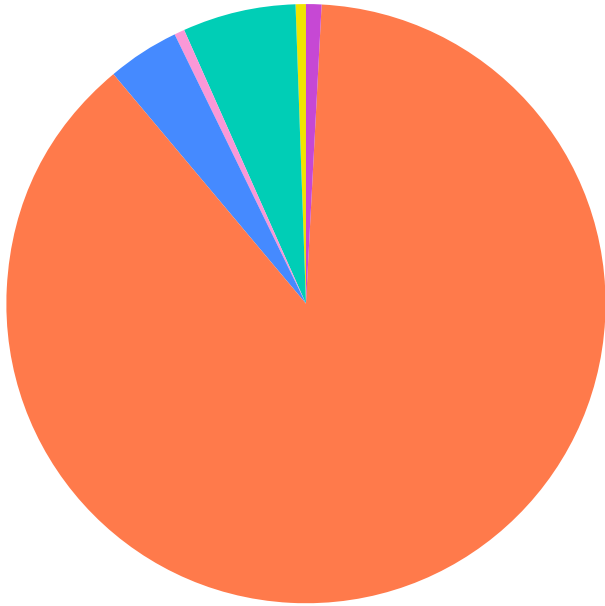
In addition to these positive developments, however, it should also be noted that energy emissions increased by 21% in 2023 in comparison to 2022: first, because of the addition and implementation of a new festival (the Piano Fest); second, because

office operations recorded increased energy consumption due to a lower rate of working from home in 2023. In September 2023, Lucerne Festival took part in the City of Lucerne’s “Impuls Umwelt” advisory service to identify potential for increasing efficiency in office operations. There has also been an increase in transport emissions (orchestra materials) (+25 t CO<sub>2</sub>e). However, similar to the orchestra’s mobility emissions, these transport emissions can only be influenced indirectly by raising awareness among the invited stakeholders.

It can be stated that the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint was not increased despite the addition of the Piano Festival and that the target defined in the strategy for 2023 was achieved. With a reduction in total CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions of -9%, Lucerne Festival was even able to significantly exceed this target. Further graphics on the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint can be found [on the following page ↓].

Since 2023, Lucerne Festival has been a member of myclimate’s “Cause We Care” program, which enables all Festival visitors to donate CHF 2 for environmental protection when purchasing a ticket. As a thank you, Lucerne Festival doubles the amount and places it in an earmarked “Cause We Care” fund. In 2023, CHF 2,346 was donated by visitors, meaning that a total of CHF 4,692 flowed into the “Cause We Care” fund thanks to the doubling by Lucerne Festival. One-fourth of this was used for the myclimate climate action project *to protect Tanzanian forests* 7, while the remaining funds were used to finance the SBB RailAway discount of 40% on travel to the festivals via public transport.

CO<sub>2</sub>e-SHARE BY CATEGORY



Category	%
Mobility	88
Materials	6
Transport	4
Energy	1
Waste and recycling	<1
Catering	<1

CO<sub>2</sub>e BY FESTIVAL/AREA



Festival/Area	%	t CO <sub>2</sub> e
Summer Festival	65	1203.8
Lucerne Festival Academy	20	365
Office	4.5	85.7
Spring Festival	4	77.2
Forward Festival	3.5	67.2
Piano Fest	3	50.1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1849.0</b>



## SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT: SING FÜR VÖGEL

The Sustainability Strategy 2023–2027 not only defines a CO<sub>2</sub>e reduction path but also stipulates that Lucerne Festival wants to take more responsibility for its CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint every year: either by supporting climate action projects (CHF 29 per t CO<sub>2</sub>e) or by launching regional sustainability projects of equivalent monetary value. The annually increasing percentage of the CO<sub>2</sub>e footprint for which the festival assumes responsibility starts at 20% in 2024 and should reach 50% in 2027. Lucerne Festival wants to prioritize regional sustainability projects in order to have a direct impact on the immediate living environment of its guests.

In 2023, Lucerne Festival launched its first regional sustainability project in the area of environmental sustainability with a focus on SDG “15: Life on Land.” On 3 June, the “Sing für Vögel” sing-along campaign on the Europaplatz drew attention to the endangered situation of birds and contributed to improving their habitat – thus reflecting the 2023 Summer Festival theme of “Paradise.” The 21st Century Chorus, Cho(h)renschmaus, conductor Franziska Murbach-Scherer, the Atenea Quartet, tenor Ziad Nehme, and presenter Beatrice Kern ensured a successful supporting program.

Lucerne Festival had pledged to donate CHF 5 to BirdLife Lucerne’s hedge-planting project “Hedges for Red-backed Shrikes & Co.” for every person in attendance. With 300 participants, an amount of CHF 1,500 would have been raised, but this was multiplied tenfold. The Festival presented BirdLife Lucerne with a donation of CHF 15,000.

In order to go beyond than merely making a financial contribution but also to become actively involved, the Festival team rolled up their sleeves to grab a spade on 9 November 2023 and planted around 1,000 bushes in Pfeffikon/LU together with BirdLife Lucerne. The resulting 400-meter-long hedge will soon provide a new home for insects and birds.

**“We don’t just want to make a financial contribution, we want to get actively involved by raising awareness and tackling the issue ourselves. It is very important to us to be able to contribute to the preservation of biodiversity and of the various habitats.”**

Danièle Gross,  
Commercial Director, Lucerne Festival



As part of the Summer Festival, a “Paradise Garden” was also installed on the Europaplatz together with Stadtgrün Luzern. This was based on the “Sing für Vögel” sing-along event and consisted exclusively of sustainably cultivated, native plants from Stadtgrün Luzern, making it a paradise for Lucerne’s butterflies, birds, and bees, as well as for the community. All materials, including the plants, could be reused by Stadtgrün Luzern after the festival. BirdLife Lucerne and myclimate raised public awareness of biodiversity and climate action issues through information boards in the Paradise Garden.



## NEXT STEPS

Regarding the area of SDG “13: Climate Action,” all measures will be continued due to their effectiveness. The awareness-raising measures in the area of mobility emissions by our guest orchestras will also be continued, even if their success cannot be measured directly. In addition, the participants of the Lucerne Festival Academy 2024 will once again receive water bottles made from recycled aluminum in order to keep waste and material costs as low as possible.

Since the reduction targets in the area of energy emissions were missed, the following new measures will be implemented in 2024:

- Electricity services are being switched from “ewl Naturstrom” to “Luzerner Wasserstrom” in order to obtain energy directly from the Lucerne region.
- The fluorescent tubes in the Lucerne Festival branding are being converted to LED.
- The automatic activation of screen-saver time is being reduced from 15 minutes to 5 minutes.

In addition, regional sustainability projects relating in particular to SDG “15: Life on Land” will also be continued in 2024.

Lucerne Festival is further committed to the sustainable preservation of the 400 meters of hedges planted in Pfeffikon in 2023 and will provide on-site maintenance in 2024.



Hedge planting day Lucerne Festival  
© Lucerne Festival

# ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY



**As an international but regionally anchored presenter of musical events, Lucerne Festival generates economic, touristic, and cultural added value for the entire Lucerne region every year.**

Lucerne Festival awards contracts to service providers on as regional a basis as possible in order to promote the Lucerne economic region and frequently works with a wide range of local venues and event presenters. In 2017, a study by the University of St. Gallen (HSG) quantified the regional added value that Lucerne Festival generates as a result: Lucerne Festival generated around CHF 22.6 million in regional added value for the Lucerne region in 2015 (source: Scherer, R., and Strauf, S. (2017): *Die regionalwirtschaftlichen Effekte von Lucerne Festival 2015*).

These efforts, which were already in place before the introduction of the Sustainability Strategy for 2023–2027, have been incorporated into this strategy and institutionalized by focusing on SDG “8: Decent Work and Economic Growth”.