

GENEVA YOUTH HOSTEL  
ASSOCIATION  
GENEVA HOSTEL



What we are doing to make  
sure your stay with us  
protects the environment

Sustainable development report

## OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

The Geneva Youth Hostel Association - which manages the Geneva Hostel - has made it a place where different cultures and generations can meet and exchange ideas. The Hostel welcomes tens of thousands of travelers from all over the world each year.

Our association shows its commitment to society, the environment and the economy through various channels:

### Social, health and safety

- Welcoming and accepting people without discrimination.
- Pricing policies accessible to tourists with modest budgets.
- Provision of meeting spaces.
- Healthy and nutritionally balanced meals.
- Reliable equipment that minimises any risk to health and safety.

### Quality employment

- Stable jobs in a friendly atmosphere.
- Favorable working conditions and training opportunities.
- Payment and benefits at least equal to industry standards.
- Fighting all forms of discrimination.

### Environment and climate

- Energy savings with lighting and equipment.
- Increased use of renewable energy.
- Preference given to local and seasonal produce.
- Reduction of waste and recycling of remainder.
- Protection of water by using green cleaning products.
- Promotion of soft mobility for guests and employees.
- Application of sustainable construction principles and heritage development for the maintenance and renovation of buildings, in full co-operation with the City of Geneva, the site owner.

### Local and socially responsible economy

- Use of local companies and producers according to availability.
- Stable and respectful partnerships with suppliers.
- Use of stakeholders involved in the social economy.

### Sustainable, successful management

- Quality of services and welcome in line with Swiss hotel standards.
- Transparent and rigorous management in compliance with legal provisions.
- Active co-operation with local tourism partners.

The Geneva Youth Hostel Association's commitments and concrete measures are demonstrated by its consistent and sustainable management policy, which is backed up by recognised and highly demanding certifications.





## Welcome to the Geneva Hostel !

**Make the most of your stay in our responsible establishment**

Travel and holidays allow you to expand your horizons and discover the diversity of our planet.

By spending a few days with us, you will not only be able to meet people from all over the world – you will also see how we contribute to sustainable development at local level.

We would like to show you exactly what we are doing to ensure that your stay with us preserves resources and has the lowest possible impact on the environment.

Since 2011, our organisation has been involved in a far-reaching sustainable development initiative, which has been honored with various certifications, including some of the most demanding. This initiative prompted us to redefine the way we work, shop, cook, maintain facilities and travel, so that we can welcome you in an increasingly healthy environment. It is also an opportunity to connect our hotel more closely to the region, by buying more and more local products and by working closely with partners in the area.

Our employees are directly involved in these actions, making them key players in this process. Our hostel's particularly low pricing policy – when compared with rates charged in the region – is one of our

main contributions to ensuring a balance between economic, social and environmental aspects. The regular financial support from the City of Geneva, which also owns the building and the land, makes it possible for anyone and everyone to spend a few days in our city.

In these pages, you can also find ways to enhance your visit to Geneva by exploring some of our region's beautiful projects which are pursuing these self-same aims.

On behalf of the Geneva Youth Hostel Association's committee, we would like to wish you a great stay with us, and we encourage you to help us build a more responsible world. Please join in with our efforts by adopting the environmentally friendly actions that we suggest in the pages that follow.

Enjoy your stay with us !

Emmanuel Délèze  
Director

Member of the  
Swiss Hostels Association



# Looking to the world is our vocation !

**171 countries visited us in 2015**

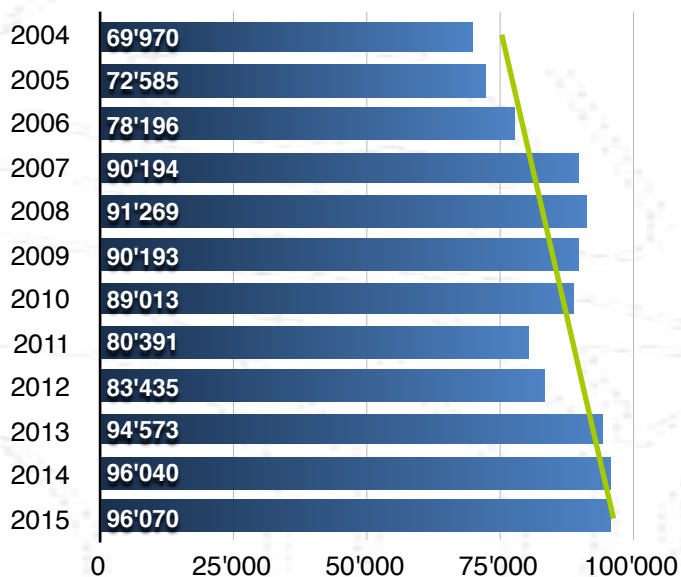
Our hostel is a meeting place for the whole world. 49,835 people stayed under our roof in 2015, for a total of 96,070 overnight stays. This is a record in the history of our establishment and one of which we are very proud. It represents an occupancy rate of 78.8%.

Reflecting the diversity of our guests, our team of 26 employees comprises 10 nationalities. This variety allows us to welcome you in over 6 languages and means we are particularly comfortable with cultural differences.

Located in a calm spot a few minutes' walk from one of the city's liveliest areas and the highlights of International Geneva, our hostel is a great example of the link between "local" and "global", both in terms of its organisation and its location.

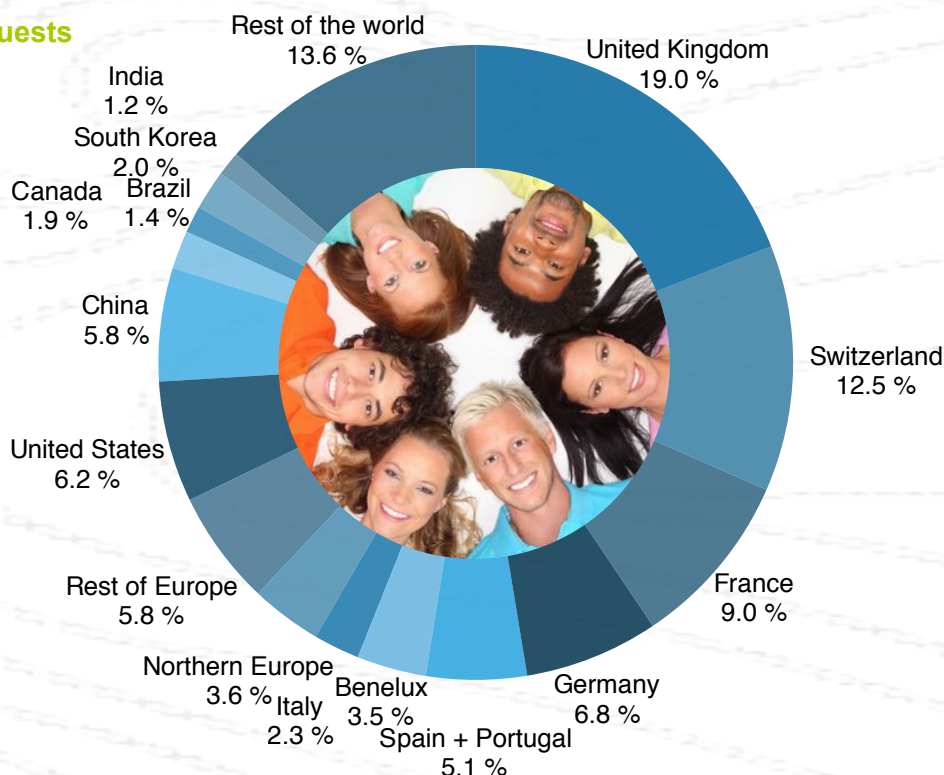
The renovation works carried out from

Change in overnight stays



2011 to 2013 by the City of Geneva, which owns the building, and by the Foundation for Social Tourism in Geneva, made substantial improvements to the quality of visitor reception, the use of space, the upgrading of the architecture and energy savings.

Where our guests come from





For several years now, we have been undertaking a huge initiative with the aim of obtaining different certifications for our quality management, our contribution to climate and environmental protection, and for sustainable development in general.

We therefore obtained the **ibex fairstay label** in December 2012. It testifies to our ongoing commitment in terms of sustainability and covers the following aspects:

- Management performance
- Ecological sustainability
- Regional sustainability
- Social sustainability
- Economic sustainability

Recertification in 2015 raised us to **Silver level**.



## We have been privileged to receive several certification marks

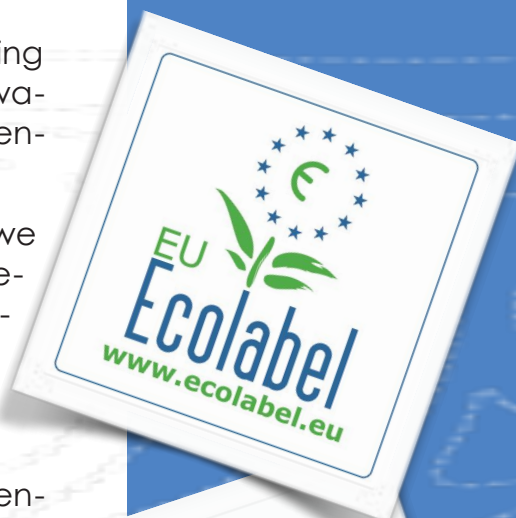
**Quality, environment, climate protection, sustainable development**

The **European ecolabel** means that our hostel is taking measures to use renewable energy sources, to save water and energy, reduce waste and protect the local environment.

The **myclimate climate-neutral hotel label** shows that we itemise our greenhouse gas emissions annually to reduce them, and offset the residual amount by supporting a climate-protection project. This means that your stay with us has no impact on the climate.

Finally, we have implemented a complete series of measures to develop the quality of our service. This enables us to improve our welcome and thus ensure you have an enjoyable stay in our hostel.

The Swiss Tourism Federation has therefore awarded us its **Quality level II label**.



## Energy management

The ongoing conversion of the buildings by the City of Geneva, the owner, as well as our efforts to modernise equipment and lighting, are contributing to the gradual reduction of the building's energy consumption.



### Take the opportunity to visit Geneva's Conservatory and Botanical Garden !

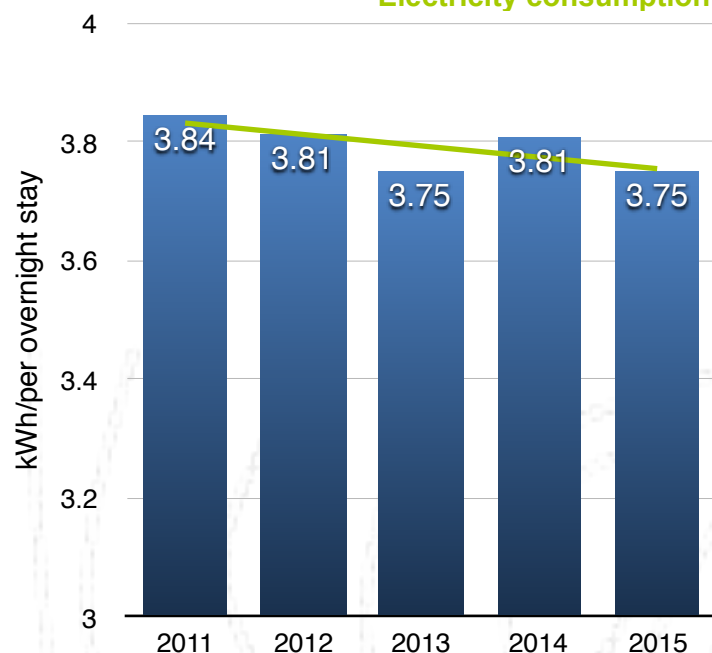
With around 6 million plant samples, the conservatory has one of the largest herbariums in the world. You can discover a wonderful assortment by strolling through the magnificent garden or the large greenhouses which are located a 15-minute walk from the Geneva Hostel.

The CJB uses 100% renewable energy ! A wood and biogas burner has been installed, as well as thermal and photovoltaic solar panels, to meet the historical greenhouses' significant heating requirements.

Further information: [www.ville-ge.ch/cjb](http://www.ville-ge.ch/cjb)

## We have low energy consumption While helping the environment

### Electricity consumption



### Electricity

In 2015, 3.75 kWh of electricity were consumed for each overnight stay, i.e. almost 20% less than the average in comparable facilities.

Furthermore, you should know that we only purchase renewable energy. 20% of the power supplied to us by our provider, SIG, is produced from new renewable energy sources (solar and biomass) and hydropower certified by the particularly demanding Swiss label Naturemade Star. The remainder comprises TÜV SÜD EE01-certified hydropower.

100% of the electricity we consume is from renewable sources. In 2014, generation could be broken down as follows:

• Genevan hydropower dams	24.1%
• Swiss hydropower dams	24.7%
• European hydropower dams	49.6%
• Solar energy produced in Geneva	1.5%

Since 2016, we have increased the share of solar power and locally produced electricity by selecting an even more environmentally friendly product from our supplier, Services industriels de Genève (SIG).

## Our power comes from 100% renewable energy sources

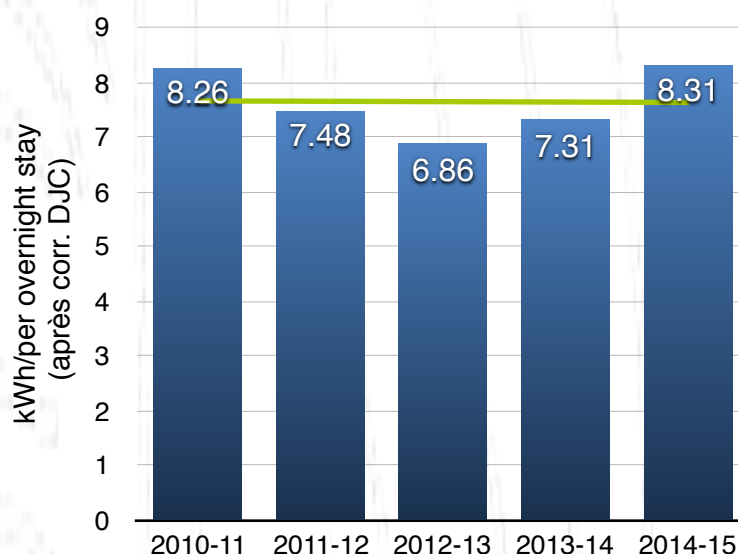
**Almost one quarter is generated in our canton**

### Heating

The buildings' heating and hot water is produced from natural gas and a small solar thermal power facility which was installed on the roof by a school during an awareness workshop. The latter produces between 19,700 and 22,500 kWh per year, i.e. almost 4% of the heat we need for hot water and heating.

However, the architectural configuration of the building makes it difficult to extend the facility.

Heat consumption for heating the buildings and hot water





# We do all laundry on site

## So we avoid making numerous journeys



### Cleaning and laundry care

We wash over 75,500 kg of linen each year in the laundry room which is in the basement of the building. This means we can avoid taking it to an external laundry while keeping jobs on site.

Furthermore, we select our cleaning products so that an increasingly large proportion is certified by an environmental label. In 2014, 42.7% of the 5,155 kg of products we bought displayed an ecological certification mark (European or Nordic ecolabel).

For cleaning surfaces, microfibre cloths reduce the need for detergents. Because of their special structure, they are more effective at removing dirt.

Furthermore, we have devices which are specially designed to prevent the overuse of soap.



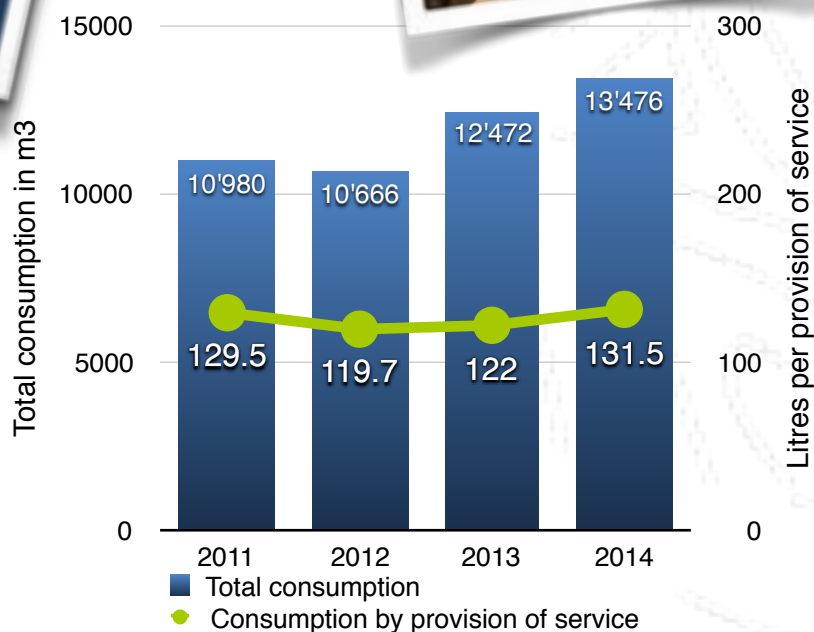
### You too can help us to save water

Water is a precious commodity for all of us. Although Switzerland is sometimes referred to as "the water tower of Europe", we still need to be careful. You can help us to save water and the energy used to heat it:

- By not taking overly long or hot showers;
- By turning the tap off when you brush your teeth or shave;
- By using mainly cold water when you wash your hands;
- By using the small flush in the toilet if a lot of water is not necessary.

### Water consumption

We are seeing an increase in water consumption. This is only partially explained by the increase in the number of people coming here. This is why we installed new water-saving devices in Autumn 2015 on almost all of our taps and showers, as well as automatic switches.

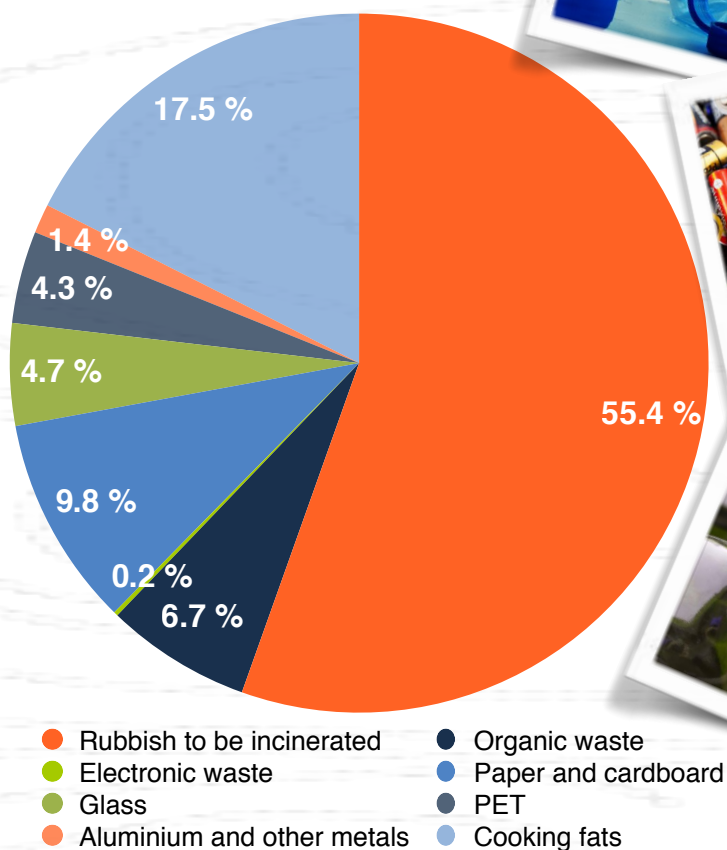




## Waste management

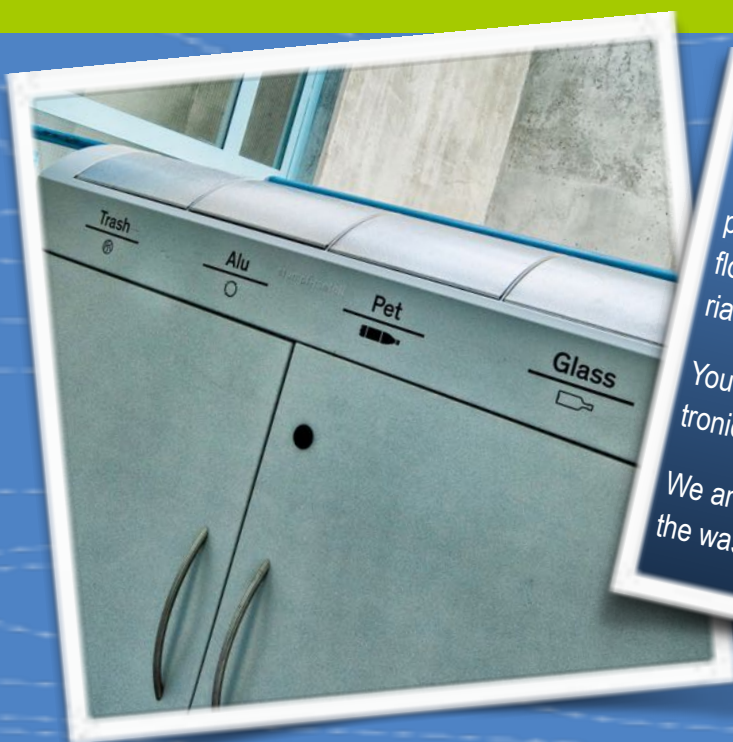
We sort our waste systematically and we have recently installed sorter bins in every corridor so that our guests can get involved in this. In 2014, 374 g of all types of waste were disposed of by provision of service. This sorting system allows us to increase the value of 44.6% of the material. The remainder is incinerated and produces electricity and heat.

We are aiming to reduce the total amount of waste we produce by 15% by 2018, for example by eliminating some packaging. We also want to increase our recycling rate to 60%.



## Reducing waste and increasing its value

### To cut down on material waste



#### You can also help us to recycle waste

Plastic bottles, glass and aluminium can be deposited in the collection points available on each floor, in the entrance hall and towards the cafeteria.

You can also bring paper, batteries and small electronic devices to reception.

We are counting on your support to help us reduce the waste of precious materials !



# Procurement

## Reducing impact throughout the lifecycle

### Sustainable procurement

We have developed a charter that establishes the principles of respect for the environment and human beings when making our purchases. This helps us to improve the quality of the goods and equipment we buy by reducing the environmental impact during their manufacture, transportation, usage or disposal.

For example, over 80% of the paper and printed materials we buy are made from recycled paper. This applies to all our toilet paper.

Whenever we buy an item of office equipment, we take its energy consumption into account.

We do not use individual bars of soap or bottles of shampoo. Instead, we have installed wall dispensers.

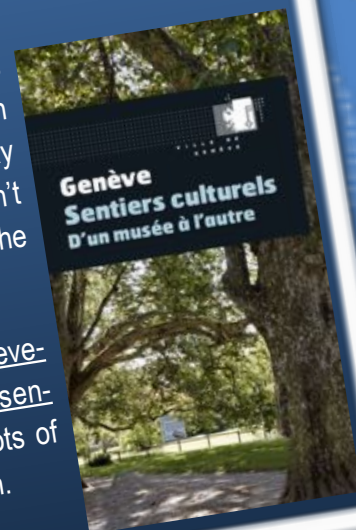


### Geneva's culture trails: expanding your horizons from one museum to the next

The Geneva culture trail app offers walks from monuments to museums. These walks will reveal picturesque corners of the city while taking you to Geneva's cultural hotspots. You can therefore discover the treasures of the collections housed in our museums, but also their architecture, their history and the famous people who have influenced the region.

You'll also find the city's cultural event calendar on this app. It's a great way to make sure you don't miss out on any of the fun!

And the site [www.geneve-ville.ch/promenades/sentiers-culturels](http://www.geneve-ville.ch/promenades/sentiers-culturels) has lots of additional information.





## Food and drink

In 2013, we bought

- 4.4 tonnes of fruit and vegetables
- 8.9 tonnes of yoghurt
- 3.2 tonnes of cheese
- 4.1 tonnes of meat
- 8.4 tonnes of starches
- 4.5 tonnes of other food products
- 10,500 litres of milk
- 14,300 litres of fruit juice
- 14,200 litres of mineral water and carbonated drinks

We are always looking to use more products made in Switzerland or in the region to reduce transportation. We are now offering some meat-free meals because of meat's significant impact on the climate. Try them, they're excellent!

The coffee and the orange juice that we serve both have a fair-trade label.

Apart from butter – which is particularly sensitive in terms of hygiene – we have eliminated all individual breakfast packaging (jam, cheese, sugar, etc.) to limit waste.



### Food: stop the waste !

If your eyes are bigger than your stomach when you fill up your plate, some of the food will end up in the bin! This is waste that you can easily avoid by taking a smaller portion, especially as you can come back for seconds if you're still hungry.

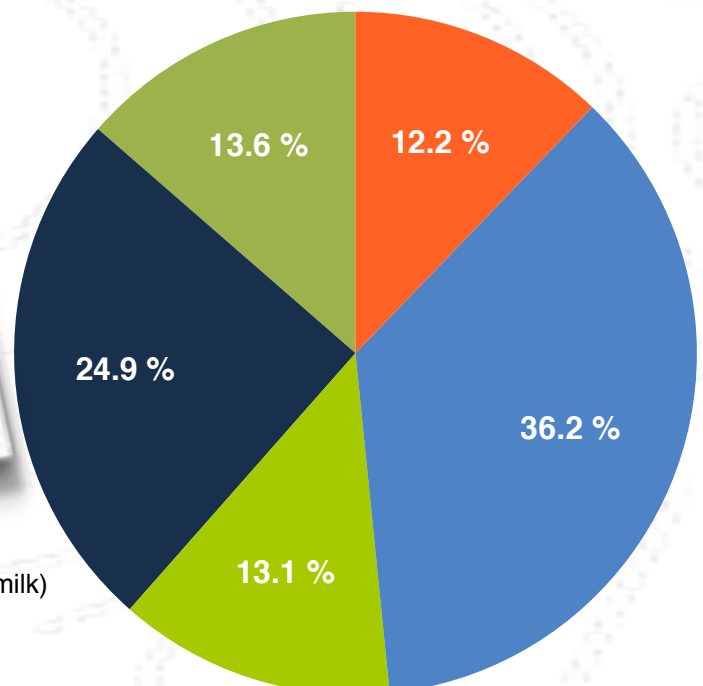
In this way, you'll reduce the impact on the environment and on animals, and this helps us to keep prices low for your board.

And please don't forget to sort your waste when you return your tray. We can then recycle this waste correctly.

- Meat and fish
- Dairy products (excluding milk)
- Fruit and vegetables
- Starches
- Other food products

## Food

### Towards local and organic produce



## The whole of Geneva by free public transport

When you arrive at the Geneva Hostel, you will receive a card which gives you free access to public transport. Please use it instead of taking a car or a taxi. You will be able to discover Geneva and its region using the very dense bus, tramway and train network. Try the "Geneva seagulls", too: small electric boats that cross the harbour of Geneva in a blink of an eye whilst showcasing some magnificent views. There are two landing stages, which are 6 and 12 minutes' walk respectively from our hostel.  
[www.mouettesgenevoises.ch](http://www.mouettesgenevoises.ch)



## Genèveroule: bikes to discover the city and the surrounding region

The Geneva Hostel offers financial support to the Genèveroule association ([www.geneveroule.ch](http://www.geneveroule.ch)), which offers free-to-use bicycles at different locations in the city during the summer and hires them out the rest of the year. It's an excellent way for you and your friends to visit every corner of the region using the many cycle paths. You can also find an [interactive map on the canton's website](#) ([www.ge.ch](http://www.ge.ch)).

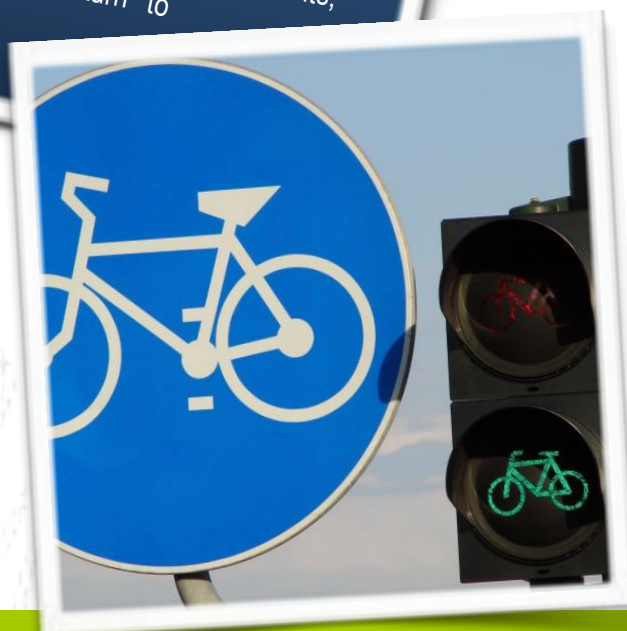
Playing an active role in reintegrating people into work, the organisation hires, among others, unemployed people who are no longer eligible for benefits, thereby facilitating their return to stable employment.

## Mobility

Of the 33,400 km of journeys made by our employees between their respective homes and our facility, 66% are by public transport. In addition, many people live in the immediate vicinity of the hotel and can therefore walk to work. This helps to considerably reduce both our impact on the environment and road traffic pollution.

Moreover, since 2016 we have been refunding 50% of the price of our employees' public transport season tickets, allowing them to opt for transport options that respect the environment.

We do not use our vehicle very much. Between 400 and 450 litres of petrol per year are enough for the journeys we make. And, once it is no longer road-worthy, we will replace it with an electric vehicle.



**By bike, on foot or by public transport**  
**We minimise our carbon footprint when we travel**



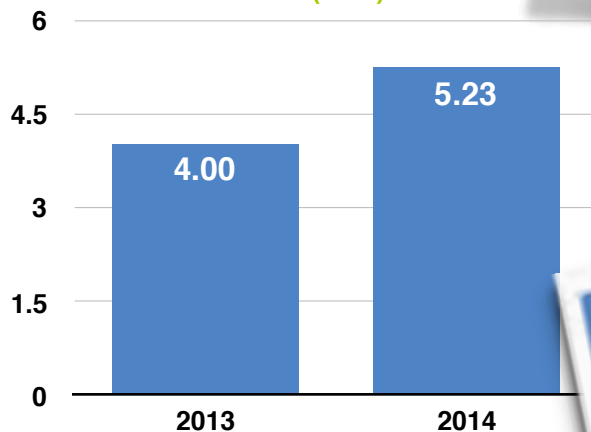
# Service quality and sustainable development: a shared responsibility

**Our employees seek improvement for all**

## Staff training and management

Training workshops for our staff regularly discuss specific aspects of sustainable development. These are opportunities to integrate the different comments and ideas that everyone offers during the exchange of ideas, with a view to finding ways to improve the quality of the service our guests receive and that of environmental protection. Once selected, these new pathways are integrated into an action plan that allows us to plan our efforts and monitor our progress.

Number of training days per member of staff (FTE)



From 2015, we systematically introduced sustainable development-related tasks into our executives' contractual job descriptions.

This allows everyone to devote the time needed to protect our resources and reduce environmental impact. In this way, we are sharing the responsibility for implementing our programmes across the whole of the organisation so that everyone contributes to it.



## Enjoy Geneva's many parks and the nearby countryside

The city's size, the presence of Lake Geneva right in the city centre and its large number of parks and walks bring nature to the heart of the city and the immediate surrounding areas. Parks are places to relax that offer unfamiliar perspectives and opportunities to discover indigenous and exotic species: in addition, music festivals are often held in the city's green spaces.

The **Geneva parks** app for iPhone and iPad, launched on the occasion of their 150th anniversary, will give you all the information you need for some exciting excursions. Free on Mac Appstore.



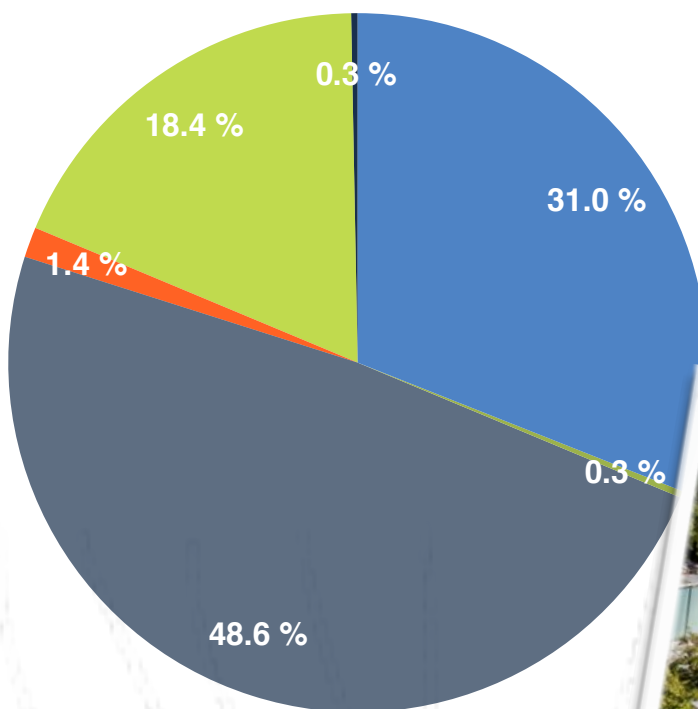
## Climate protection

Since 2011, we have been systematically noting all our greenhouse gas emissions to find out where we can intervene to reduce them. Between 2011 and 2013, we have therefore been able to lower them by 8.6% by provision of service. Since 2014, a change in our calculation method has made it difficult to compare annual data. But we are able to note that each overnight stay generates 4.99 kg of CO<sub>2e</sub>, which is low in comparison to comparable establishments.

Building insulation, the decision to make fewer journeys with our vehicle, the very widespread use of efficient lights, smart food choices, the decision to do all laundry in-house and many other environmentally friendly behaviors acquired in awareness workshops attended by all our staff. These are all examples of actions we have taken that have enabled us to gradually reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

## A climate-neutral hotel

**We calculate, reduce and neutralise our carbon emissions**



- Energy and refrigerants
- Business travel
- Food and drink
- Travel from home to work
- Waste, water, cleaning and toiletries
- Administration

### Climate neutrality

The energy required to heat the building comes from a boiler room located in a neighboring building managed by the City of Geneva. The natural gas that fires it is supplied by Services Industriels de Genève (SIG) which neutralises emissions through carbon offset projects.





## We support the development of clean energy

Our residual carbon is offset by supporting the construction of biodigesters for rural families in India

### Climate offsetting

As it is impossible to eliminate all of our greenhouse gas emissions, we are involved in financing a project in India. It replaces the use of kerosene and wood, habitually used for cooking in rural households, with family biodigesters, which can produce biogas. By collecting vegetable waste and manure and slurry from livestock, the methane emitted can be recovered and used as environmentally friendly fuel. This curbs the use of fossil fuels and deforestation, at the same time as preventing methane from being released into the atmosphere.

In addition, the manufacture of these facilities creates jobs and offers greater comfort and convenience to inhabitants (less time spent collecting wood, savings made with respect to buying kerosene, fewer fine particulates released into the air), while developing local expertise.

This Gold Standard-certified project is supported by the myclimate foundation, a Swiss organisation with an international presence, which manages many projects of this type.

Thanks to our comprehensive approach to managing greenhouse gases, we have been able to display the **myclimate climate-neutral hotel label** since 2012.



## Our environmental protection targets for 2018

Compared with 2014 values, these are the goals we are pursuing:

	Unité	Valeur 2014	Objectif 2018	Remarque
Electricity	kWh/overnight stay	3.81	<b>3.70</b>	
Heating	kWh/overnight stay	7.31	<b>6.9</b>	After climate correction
Water	litres/overnight stay	140.3	<b>120.0</b>	
Total amount of waste	g/PoS	374	<b>280</b>	
Recycling rate	%	51	<b>44</b>	Conversion of waste
Proportion of organic food	%	0.8	<b>15.0</b>	
Proportion of regional food	%	8.4	<b>30.0</b>	
Proportion of organic drinks	%	6.0	<b>20.0</b>	
Proportion of regional drinks	%	35.8	<b>45.0</b>	
Amount of detergents	g/PoS	50.3	<b>45.0</b>	
Proportion of eco-labelled detergents	%	42.7	<b>60.0</b>	
Greenhouse gas emissions	kg CO <sub>2e</sub> /PoS	4.68	<b>4.30</b>	Before climate offsetting

PoS: provision of service

**Looking to the future**  
**To keep on doing better**





## Competition

**You could win one of 50 Swiss knives !**

Answer the questions below and send this page, or a photocopy of it, to

**Geneva Hostel**  
**30 Rue Rothschild**  
**CH-1202 Geneva**

or hand it in at reception by **31 December 2016**.

**With a bit of luck, you could win one of 50 Swiss knives, the perfect holiday tool and a typical souvenir of our country!**

**You'll find the answers in the previous pages.**

What proportion of the electricity we consume is produced in Geneva ?

- ☐ 10,2%
- ☐ 24,7%
- ☐ 25,6%

For what label did we achieve Silver level in 2015 ?

- ☐ European ecolabel
- ☐ FST Quality label
- ☐ ibex fairstay label

What proportion of our employees' journeys between their home and the hotel is made by public transport ?

- ☐ 15%
- ☐ 66%
- ☐ 74%

**Good luck !**

Anyone can take part in this competition free of charge.  
Only one entry per participant. Your information will not be passed on to any third party.



What waste can you put in the sorter bins available on each floor of the hotel ?

- ☐ glass, aluminium, PET, rubbish
- ☐ batteries, glass, paper
- ☐ rubbish, cups, aluminium

How much CO<sub>2</sub> is emitted per overnight stay in our establishment ?

- ☐ almost 250 kg
- ☐ almost 1 tonne
- ☐ almost 5 kg

Do you have any suggestions for other ways in which our hotel can do even better at protecting the environment ?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Surname: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

Country: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_



# Glossary

## To see clearly

### Heating degree day (HDD)

In winter, the heating degree day corresponds to the difference between the average temperature of the day and the reference value (in our case 18°C). It allows us to estimate heating requirements and to make comparisons independently of climate effects.

### CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (or CO<sub>2e</sub>)

The climate impact of a product, server or energy carrier, for example, is often calculated as "CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent" or "CO<sub>2e</sub>". The carbon dioxide is effectively taken as the benchmark, as this is the greenhouse gas responsible for the largest proportion of global warming. Next, all other greenhouse gases are converted by a factor that gives equivalence with CO<sub>2</sub>. Methane has a potential greenhouse effect 25 times higher than CO<sub>2</sub>; some synthetic gases (refrigerants, insulating gases, etc.) are up to several thousand times higher.

### Greenhouse gas

A molecule which, when emitted into the atmosphere, allows part of the solar energy reflected by the Earth to be stored. For a hotel, the greenhouse gases are primarily

- **Carbon dioxide** (CO<sub>2</sub>), which is produced: by burning fossil fuels to heat buildings and water; from electricity produced from oil, natural gas or coal; from the transportation of people and goods, and from the production and processing of food;
- **Methane** (CH<sub>4</sub>), which is mainly emitted from farmed animals' consumption (cattle digestion), crops in flooded areas (rice fields) and the decomposition of vegetable waste.

### Discovering nature in the region

Located just a few hundred metres from the hostel, The La Libellule Association Nature Centre offers many activities and workshops to help you discover the wealth of local fauna and flora. Aimed at classes, families and everybody else, the entertainment, excursions and permanent exhibitions on offer are a wonderful opportunity to spend some quality time in our region and learn something at the same time! Don't miss it!

Information, programme and contact details:  
[www.lalibellule.ch](http://www.lalibellule.ch)

• **Nitrous oxide** which the agricultural industry produces from the nitrogen fertilisers it uses

• **Refrigerant gases** which are needed for the cooling mechanism of refrigerators and freezers, as well as air conditioning.

### Provision of service (PoS)

A reference unit primarily used by the ibex fairstay label. It adds up the number of overnight stays and the number of meals delivered by the establishment, for both customers and staff. Each of these values is associated with a coefficient so that its respective significance can be seen in the final value.





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## **DIALOGUE**

Do you have any questions about our strategy, commitments, or initiatives on sustainable development ?

Feel free to get in touch using the contact details opposite !