



ESCAIDE and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set out a global vision for a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable future by 2030. These 17 goals provide a shared framework for addressing the world's most pressing challenges, from health and education to gender equality, urban development, and responsible consumption. For organisations and initiatives engaged in public health, the SDGs are not just aspirational – they are essential. They offer a common language and direction for building societies that protect and promote the wellbeing of all people.

At ESCAIDE, our commitment to the SDGs is closely aligned with our core purpose: to strengthen public health through scientific exchange, collaboration, and inclusive participation. As a platform that brings together experts, professionals, and communities from across Europe and beyond, ESCAIDE recognises its responsibility to reflect and support the values behind the global goals, not only in the scientific content we present, but also in how we plan, organise, and deliver the conference.

In recent years, we have taken steps to align ESCAIDE with the SDGs. Our efforts have focused on six priority goals that are most relevant to our mission and activities:





SDG 3. Good health and well-being

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

Achieving good health and well-being is our top priority, especially target SDG 3.3, on ending the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases by 2030.

What have we been doing?

- Providing quality scientific content, especially on SDG 3.3, and building professional networks.
- Organising sessions that examine research and evidence behind health promotion activities, highlighting their contribution to mental health and well-being.
- Designing sessions to support participants' mental and physical health, featuring activities such as dance, singing, yoga, and morning boost practices. Catering options are thoughtfully selected to include healthy, locally sourced, and plant-based meals.

What do we want to do next?

- Ensure the provision of first aid kits and menstrual products.
- Organise an ESCAIDE solidarity race to support social issues and create community and cooperation among the participants through sport as an engine of well-being.



SDG 4. Quality education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

Education is at the heart of ESCAIDE. As a scientific conference, we aim to support ongoing learning by providing a platform for sharing high-quality scientific insights among public health professionals.

What have we been doing?

- Sharing scientific knowledge and findings from applied research to support public health education across Europe and beyond.
- Offering keynote and plenary presentations by internationally recognised experts, covering a broad range of topics across the field of infectious disease and public health.
- Providing continuous professional development through presentations, workshops, and discussions on infectious disease control and public health practice.
- Supporting early-career professionals with opportunities to present their work, receive feedback, and connect with experienced colleagues.
- Organising Career Compass Sessions aimed at early-career professionals and students, providing insights into public health careers.



- Accrediting the conference each year with European CME credits from the European Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education.
- Holding the conference in a hybrid format to allow both in-person and online participation, making it more accessible globally.
- Ensuring there is no entrance fee, so that anyone interested can attend, regardless of financial means.
- Offering financial support to presenters through the Funding Initiative, helping ensure equal opportunities to share research.
- Using interactive tools such as live polls and Q&As during sessions to engage participants and encourage active involvement.
- Bringing together professionals from various countries and disciplines to strengthen collaboration and knowledge exchange.
- Creating opportunities for engagement and exchange, such as informal 'Meet the Expert' sessions, interactive roundtables, and facilitated peer learning formats. These spaces allow participants to connect with speakers, researchers, and policy-makers.
- Promoting long-term learning by providing all session recordings to registered participants for six months after the conference, enabling them to revisit key presentations, catch up on missed content, or reinforce important learnings.
- Publishing selected key sessions on ECDC's YouTube channel so that participants and the public can revisit or catch up on important content.
- Maximising the impact of selected recorded plenary sessions by transforming them into learning resources hosted on the ECDC Learning Portal, ensuring they continue to benefit a wider audience over time.

What do we want to do next?

- Keep broadening the scientific scope of the conference by including a wider range of topics, disciplines, and perspectives to reflect the evolving landscape of infectious disease prevention, public health, and epidemiology.
- Strengthen educational pathways for early-career professionals and students by expanding mentoring opportunities, developing practical skill-building sessions, and improving the visibility of career development content within the programme.



SDG 5. Gender equality

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

We want to drive change towards gender equality by taking action through a commitment to concrete measures and policies.

What have we been doing?

- Collecting and using data on gender representation among abstract submitters, presenters, speakers, reviewers, moderators and Scientific Committee members to identify gaps, monitor progress, and support fair and balanced participation across the conference.
- Working towards and regularly checking the progress of gender balance among speakers, presenters, reviewers, moderators and Scientific Committee members, to ensure fair representation in conference sessions.
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive space for people of all ages, genders, and abilities.
- Building a programme that includes diverse topics and voices, showing a variety of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences.

What do we want to do next?

- Implement policies that reinforce our commitment to gender balance.
- Include gender-related public health topics more visibly in the programme.
- Support parents attending the conference by offering breastfeeding and childcare facilities, helping them manage both professional and family needs.



SDG 10. Reduced inequalities

Reduce inequality within and among countries

We ensure non-discrimination and equality for all ESCAIDE participants in our adherence to the principles of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as part of a transformative change where no one is left behind.

What have we been doing?

- Encouraging authors to reflect on diversity and inclusion in their research, by considering the inclusiveness of their research approach and how diversity, in terms of geographical representation, culture and ethnicity, may affect findings and interpretations.
- Including Diversity, Equity and Inclusion topics in the programme, with sessions dedicated to diversity and inclusion in science and highlights of research from underrepresented groups.
- Ensuring representativeness in the programme with speakers with diverse genders, nationalities, ages, career stages, and scientific backgrounds to provide varied perspectives.



- Ensuring representativeness in the Scientific Committee across genders, countries, and scientific backgrounds.
- Monitoring country representation, affiliations, gender of abstract submitters and presenters, reviewers, moderators and attendees to track the representativeness of the conference.
- Balancing presentations, to support a wide range of voices, by accepting one abstract per presenter. By limiting the number of accepted abstracts to one per presenter, we aim to encourage broader participation and showcase a wider range of perspectives.
- Using a triple-blind peer review system to ensure novelty, quality, and fairness in our abstract selection process.
- Offering free registration for all and opportunities for funding to cover the costs of abstract presenters, prioritising those from under-represented countries.
- Providing a hybrid participation whereby all participants, online and onsite, are encouraged to submit questions online to ensure equal opportunities for involvement.
- Rotating locations and having virtual participation to enhance accessibility and reducing travel barriers.
- Offering different food options, such as halal, kosher, vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free.
- Using inclusive imagery in promotional material.
- Including transcripts in our live sessions and educational materials to ensure access to knowledge for all.

What do we want to do next?

- Adopt an inclusive language policy to be sensitive to differences and convey respect for all people while avoiding prejudice.



SDG 11. Sustainable cities and communities

Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

We are dedicated to creating an inclusive, safe, and sustainable location by reducing emissions, promoting green transportation and making use of sustainable buildings.

What have we been doing?

- Guaranteeing high levels of sustainability with a venue certified with ISO 20121 that operates entirely on hydropower, significantly reducing its environmental impact.
- Having a venue committed to sustainability issues, such as energy efficiency, water consumption, waste reduction, sustainable sourcing, and carbon reduction, and ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities.
- Locating venues in close vicinity to avoid the use of transport.
- Encouraging eco-friendly travel, offering discounts on public transportation.



What do we want to do next?

- Promote sustainable vehicles and ensure secure parking for bicycles and chargers for electric and hybrid vehicles.



SDG 12. Responsible consumption and production

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

Local action is key to our measures. We want to promote sustainable consumption and production patterns by using sustainable materials, reducing unnecessary consumption, and recycling waste.

What have we been doing?

- Reducing waste generation through prevention, reduction, recycling and reuse.
- Reducing paper usage and switching to digital formats. Presentations, posters, and programme information will be available on screens and in the conference app.
- Having measures in place to manage food waste.
- Providing water stations and encouraging participants not to use disposable bottles.
- Offering sustainable catering with locally sourced food and plant-based options to participants.
- Having local suppliers as a commitment to enhancing the economic and social value of the hosting territory.
- Offering information about local community projects for participants to take part in during the conference.
- Offsetting carbon emissions from travel, venue operation, food and water, participants were offered a green gift of planting a tree in the ESCAIDE forest, which now hosts 3 000 trees worldwide.

What do we want to do next?

- Promote the [UN carbon footprint calculator](#) in order to raise awareness about sustainability and protection of the environment.
- Place and clearly mark the waste separation bins at the venue.