Policy Paper:

Proposals for Nordic-Baltic Sufficiency Policies and Measures for Climate Action

INFORSE-EUROPE
International Network for Sustainable Energy

Swedish Society for Nature Conservation

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- Latvia: Latvijas Zaļās kustības, Latvian Green Movement (LaGM)
- Estonia: Eesti Roheline Liikumine - Estonian Green Movement,-(FoE-Estonia)
- Belarus: Ecohome NGO (hosted in Lithuania).

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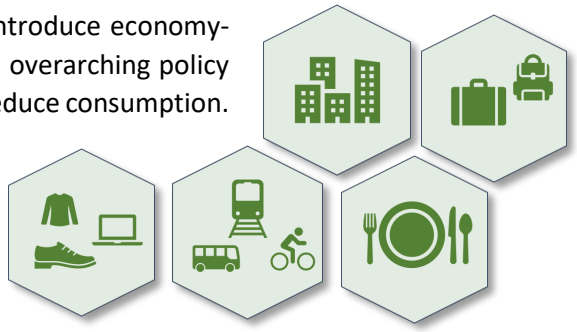
Policy Paper: Proposals for Nordic-Baltic Sufficiency Policies and Measures for Climate Action

Introduction

Climate change and other environmental problems are among the most urgent issues in our lifetime. The high consumption in Nordic countries, as well as in other Baltic Sea countries is leading to high greenhouse gas emissions. These emissions must be reduced as fast as possible, if we want to reach climate neutrality in less than two decades.

While emissions can be reduced with renewable energy, energy efficiency, a circular economy, and changes in agricultural practices, an increasing number of researchers conclude that we also need to reduce our consumption in order to reduce emissions fast enough. This is also described as the need to introduce sufficiency measures alongside measures for energy and material efficiency and renewable energy. For instance, sufficiency and its contribution to mitigate climate change is now included in the IPCC WG III report, chapter on buildings[1].

In this policy paper, we propose to follow the IPCC´s conclusion and introduce economy-wide policies for sufficiency. We propose to introduce sufficiency as an overarching policy framework to not only limit increases in material consumption but also reduce consumption. For private consumption, we propose to focus on five areas:



- The use of buildings, electricity and heating
- Transport
- Consumer goods, e.g., clothing, electronics, furniture
- Food
- Holidays

In addition, public sector consumption can be reduced with internal policies for the above-mentioned focus areas, except holidays. The climate effects of consumption are significant for each of the above categories, and all should be addressed to reduce our consumption-based climate effects and reach climate neutrality in two decades. An analysis of Danish consumption-based emissions shows that more than half of climate effects come from emissions outside national borders, including air transport.[2]

The Policy Paper is part of the project *"Sufficiency as Climate Action and for Sustainable Lifestyles in Nordic & Baltic Countries and Belarus"* in 2025-26**.** The Project is made in a partnership among the International Network for Sustainable Energy - Europe (INFORSE-Europe) coordinator in Denmark, Svenska Naturskyddsföreningen Norges Naturvernforbundet, Latvijas Zaļās kustības - Latvian Green Movement, Eesti Roheline Liikumine Estonian Green Movement (FoE Estonia) and Ecohome NGO (Belarus, hosted in Lithuania).
The project is financed by the Nordic Council of Ministers' Prosperous Future Grant Programme and co-financed by INFORSE-Europe, Naturskyddsföreningen, and Naturvernforbundet.

More on the Project at INFORSE-Europe: inforse.org/europe/Sufficiency_as_Climate_Action_Project.htm

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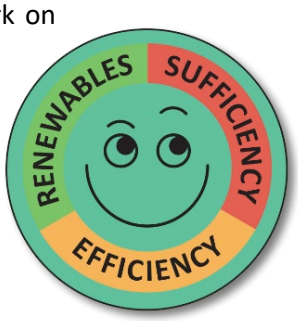
[1] Paragraph 9.4.4.3. in https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/chapter/chapter-9/
[2] https://inforse.org/europe/pdfs/Pub_Baeredygtig_levevis_som_klimapolitik_DK.pdf

Sufficiency Must Be Included in Climate Policies

Recognising **sufficiency policies as part of national climate policies** will strengthen climate plans and help reduce emissions from consumption. While sufficiency policies usually deal with specific sectors, to include sufficiency policies as a broad framework on national level would strengthen climate mitigation and help achieve climate targets more efficiently. Sufficiency policies also have **synergies with other policies** that support energy efficiency and a transition from fossil to renewable energy. For instance, combining sufficiency policies that promote alternatives to fossil fuel using activities (such as alternatives to fossil car driving, gas heating), with taxes on fossil fuels, creates a reinforcing effect from which the combined impact will be larger than the simple addition of each policy's individual effects.



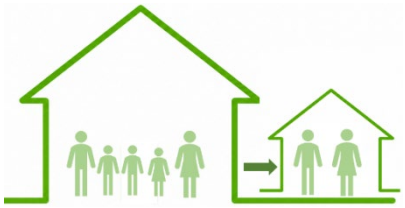
In the context of this project, sufficiency policies can be taken up on a **national level** or as a **Nordic or Nordic-Baltic Sea strategy**. The implementation of sufficiency policies, including those mentioned in this paper, should be part of that effort. Their potential for reducing climate and environmental impacts should be monitored, and effects on societal development - including on wellbeing, health, social cohesion, and private and social economy - analysed and considered in the policy making.

Sufficiency is not only about reducing consumption, but also about increasing it for people that have not reached a sufficient consumption level to live a decent life. Some of the policies mentioned below will promote this kind of sufficiency (like better conditions for soft transport modes that are also affordable modes of transport) while others might be regressive, for instance fossil fuel taxes. Negative effects for low-income families should be mitigated, especially in areas particularly affected by the sufficiency policies, which can include rural areas, where low-income families might be more likely to use fossil fuel cars and gas or oil for heating. Direct support should be combined with policies that promote a decent life with low consumption. This can include good public transport to avoid the need for a car, as well as through support for change of heating source and insulation of buildings to reduce heating costs.

We propose that sufficiency policies include the above-mentioned five types of consumption, as well as an overall policy framework that aims to implement sufficiency policies in parallel with energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other climate policies. Below follows an overview of sufficiency policies and measures for each of the five consumption types. They are selected to be generally relevant for Nordic and Baltic countries and Belarus, but not all policies are relevant for all countries.

Sufficiency in Buildings, Electricity and Heating

Energy use and climate effects of building construction are important contributors to climate change in the Nordics, Baltic countries and Belarus. Large dwellings and high indoor temperatures are contributing to this. Sufficiency measures and related policies which address this include:



- **Smaller living spaces and better use of old buildings**

Given that Nordic countries have some of the largest houses per person in the world, smaller houses are an obvious way of reducing consumption and greenhouse gases. While this can be promoted with building smaller houses, it is equally important to keep older buildings and reconstruct them for new uses, as the complete demolition and construction of buildings have considerable climate effects.

In Denmark, there is a trend towards smaller houses[3] and architects are promoting it[4]. While policies are not directly addressing this shift, it can be promoted by municipalities through support for planning denser towns, subdivision of land for construction of smaller houses, and support for the reuse of existing buildings in building permitting. The state can support it with higher taxation of larger or more expensive houses.

An informal Tiny House movement[5] has even garnered large Facebook groups in Denmark and Sweden, Youtube etc. In response to such movements, at least four Swedish construction companies are offering tiny houses[6], and in Latvia, some companies are offering tiny houses that are particularly popular with environmentally-conscious, younger people. Moreover, some Danish municipalities are making subdivisions for tiny houses, for instance Vejle[7].

Policies to promote smaller living spaces and the reuse of older buildings include: building regulations and building permitting that support smaller house and ban demolitions to construct new houses, property taxation that includes a size-based component, land divisions for tiny houses, more attractive rules for renting out rooms in houses, information campaigns on the benefits of downsizing, and support for family households in moving to smaller homes once the children have moved out.

- **Sharing facilities**

Sharing facilities will use resources better and reduce the need for space in houses. Shared facilities can be washing machines, kitchens and rooms for larger events, workshops, garden machines, and even solar panels with energy communities.

In Denmark and Sweden, many apartment houses and co-housing developments have common washing machines and common areas or houses with kitchens and rooms for larger gatherings than people can have in their own home. To make sharing a success, there must be enough facilities, such as enough washing machines and drying opportunities, and user-friendly booking and key systems. If done well, sharing facilities have co-benefits: regular contact in shared spaces with neighbours can create stronger social ties and lower living costs.

Policies to support shared facilities can include building regulations requiring common rooms (which can also have other functions, such as shelters in emergency situations), information campaigns (like exchanges of good practices and practical ways of organising facilities), and systems to book facilities.

[3] https://byggeri-arkitektur.dk/Mindre-plads-faar-prioritet-hos-flere-nybyggere
[4] https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/indland/toneangivende-arkitekt-vil-have-os-til-bo-mindre-vi-kan-ikke-laengere-forbruge-saa
[5] https://www.dr.dk/nyheder/kultur/vi-vil-gerne-leve-paa-faerre-kvadratmeter-trenden-om-bo-smaat-breder-sig
[66] https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1424935/FULLTEXT01.pdf
[7] https://www.vejle.dk/da/nyheder/28-grunde-til-tiny-house-byggeri-udbydes-i-ny-rosborg/

- **Co-housing**

Co-housing is a group of homes designed for more interactions and where the residents share communal spaces such as washing rooms, a common house or a big room for shared dinners, events, etc. Eco-villages are a form of co-housing that place greater emphasis on environmentally sustainable lifestyles and often include production of food for self-consumption. Co-housing is popular in Denmark, where 15-20 new co-housing projects are established each year, adding to the 420 co-housing projects existing in 2021 with 10,000 dwellings[8]. However, this is only a small fraction of the 3 million Danish dwellings.

For co-housing to succeed, an enabling legal framework is needed. Co-housing projects should have access to mortgages and other forms of financing on terms comparable with those available for conventional housing. Land and development opportunities also need to be made available, and information and guidance should be provided to potential residents. Policies to promote co-housing can include integrating co-housing solutions into urban regeneration and redevelopment projects.

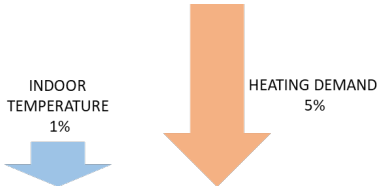
Policies to support co-housing include building regulations that promote co-housing, land divisions that provide space for co-housing, enabling rules for re-purposing old buildings to co-housing, information about co-housing opportunities to gather interested local people, early involvement of interested citizens to ensure they can influence, build ownership of, and agree how they want to live together in a coming co-housing project.

- **Time-dependent use of heat and electricity**

Given the supply variation over time in renewable energy, environmental effects of heat and electricity can be reduced by moving heat and electricity use in time, usually within one day. An increasing supply of equipment is easing this process, but lifestyle adaptation is still necessary. The price difference between hours combined with accessible apps listing electricity prices and availability of automatic systems to turn on and off electric heat pumps and car charging have been effective in guiding many consumers, notably in Denmark, to move electricity use to periods with low prices.

Policies to promote time-dependent use of heat and electricity use should start with electricity prices that follow the renewable energy production hour by hour. In addition, there should be free advice on adjusting energy consumption during a day, for instance with heating controls that use electricity when renewable energy is available, as well as information on environmental benefits.

- **Reduce indoor temperatures to reasonable levels**



Reducing the indoor temperature by 1°C reduces heating demand by about 5%[9]. Indoor temperatures can be reduced in many ways, including lowering the general temperature, particularly in rooms when they are not used and during nights, as well as introducing more efficient thermostat controls.

While smarter thermostats that can regulate the heat according to time and external signals are gradually increasing in Nordic countries, many countries in the Baltic countries and Belarus still lack such equipment .. Requirements for smart thermostats is an important policy for an increased uptake.

Sufficiency is not only about lowering temperatures, but also about ensuring that all have sufficient heating and other energy for a decent life. Energy savings are an important part of that, but will not solve all problems regarding lack of energy, i.e. energy poverty. In the Northern and Eastern European countries, energy poverty usually means that, during winters, people face high bills (particularly with bad home insulation), forcing some households to drastically cut back on heating and lower indoor temperatures to unreasonable levels. This is a big challenge in Estonia.[10]

Policies to reduce indoor temperatures to reasonable levels include requirements for smart thermostats that can regulate temperatures according to the use of each room, for instance according to daily usage patterns, information on benefits, like energy and cost savings, and on how to use smart thermostats.

[8] https://bofaellesskab.dk/images/build_projekt/Kortlaegning-og-analyse-af-bofaellesskaber-i-Danmark.pdf
[9] https://sparenergi.dk/privat/spar-energi-i-hverdagen/spar-paa-varme-og-vand-i-hjemmet
[10] https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/europe-environment-2025/countries/estonia/energy-poverty

Sufficiency in Transport

The transport sector is the largest or the second largest sector contributor to climate change in Nordic and Baltic countries. There are large opportunities to reduce emissions, including with less transport and more sustainable modes of transport.

- **Reducing transport demands**

A large part of transport use is for commuting, which can be reduced through more opportunities to work from home and shorter distances between homes and workplaces. Shorter distances between homes and shops, schools, kindergartens and other places visited daily can also help reduce transport needs, as well as leave people with more time for constructive activities.

In recent years, centralisation led to increased distances, for instance in Denmark, where some parents are trying to defend local schools by turning them into private schools. Also in Denmark, some trade unions seek to protect employees' ability to work from home one or two days a week, but working from home is not a statutory right. Moreover, in Denmark, there is also a ban against large shopping centers outside larger towns and without good public transport.

Contrary to such sufficiency-aligned proposals, in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, generous tax deductions for commuters encourage longer travel, in particular by car. Such benefits cost the Danish state around 5 billion DKK per year. This is not the case in Baltic countries, where commuting costs are considered personal, though some employers may have reimbursement options in place.

Policies to reduce travel include:

- Land-use planning that supports shorter distances between dwellings, workplaces and other places such as shops and schools.
- Phase-out or reduction of subsidies for commuting, and make it independent of the mode of transport to promote modes of transport other than cars. To avoid negative effects for low-income workers, the subsidies can be made income dependent.
- Promotion of working from home, including the right for employees to work from home where possible.
- Information on the benefits of commuting shorter distances and by bicycles, such as more time for other activities, and less stress.

- **Move transport to non-motorised transport**

Cycling and walking are good alternatives to cars for shorter distances. With modern technologies such as electric bicycles, including electric cargo bicycles, it is possible to reach longer distances and transport more things. For many, cycling is a more pleasant way to get around, brings joy and provides exercise and flexibility, and helps to save on fuel, parking, and costs. Micromobility vehicles, such as bikes, are the perfect choice, for distances of up to around 10 km between homes and workplaces.

There are large health benefits associated with cycling and walking, compared to travelling by car, and in Denmark these benefits have been quantified at 8 DKK (1 €) per km people cycled[11].

Increased cycling and walking rely heavily on the municipalities' ability and willingness to create safe, connected, functional and well-maintained cycling infrastructure, and demands addressing the structural and social barriers that continue to limit cycling in many towns. Particularly in the Baltics, there is a need to address reckless driving (of cars),

[11] https://www.trm.dk/media/n23fpzta/kommissorium-for-udarbejdelsen-af-en-national-cykelstrategi2.pdf

which is often alcohol-related, and reduce speed limits, as these issues are connected to death statistics and the perceived safety of shared roads. Cities have more cyclists, so urban speed limits are especially beneficial for safe cycling. In general, infrastructure for micromobility requires state-funding in addition to local contributions from municipalities. The Copenhagen area has an ambitious cycling policy with good cycling infrastructure like cycling 'super paths' ('*cykelsuperstier*') for longer distances connecting municipalities. Copenhagen's harbour is bridged by a series of cycling super paths dedicated to cyclists and pedestrians.

Policies for more non-motorised transport include mainly city planning and investments in safe cycling paths and other cycling infrastructure including safe and convenient bicycle parking. State support to municipalities for this is important, in particular for smaller municipalities with low budgets. The Nordic countries have less fatalities on roads, so the Baltic states could adopt Scandinavian policies to help deal with reckless driving and ensure that speed limits are kept low and enforced. In addition, there can be information about the benefits of cycling.

- **Promotion of public transport**

Trains and buses have much less environmental effects and energy use than private cars, in particular when they are electrified. In Sweden, the Skåne region has had success with promoting public transport with local trains and buses.

Policies for public transport include investments in public transport on all levels from high-speed trains, and light rails in larger urban areas, to buses covering sparsely populated areas where operational subsidies are also needed. Public transport must also be as frequent as possible, predictable, and easy to navigate, with understandable explanations of routes, transfers, safety measures, and ticket systems. The public transport investments should be combined with information to help travellers reassess regular car use by highlighting the everyday benefits, including saving time, reducing costs, and avoiding stress. Information should also emphasise the broader societal value of public transport.

- **Car-sharing and ride-sharing**

Easy access to shared cars can reduce the need for private car ownership. When using a shared car, people usually pay for the use of the car only when using it. This is for many people cheaper than owning a car as it eliminates fixed ownership costs, but more expensive per km when they use the car. When every single trip has a direct, visible out-of-pocket expense, drivers become highly conscious of the cost of driving. In this way, they are more likely to use public transport and bicycles for trips, where their transport needs are well served in these ways. Both in the Nordic and Baltic countries, there often are no car-sharing options outside bigger cities.

There is also peer-to-peer ride-sharing, where car owners take passengers for a small payment, organised via an app, such as Nabogo in Denmark[12]. If this is coordinated with public transport, it can also reduce car travel and provide mobility to areas where public transport is inadequate. In Estonia, Norway, and Latvia, there are Facebook pages where you can organise carpools. In these, the car owner dictates the route, but others can show their interest in sharing a particular trip. There are also international groups such as 'Tallinn-Riga-Vilnius carpool' on Facebook. In Sweden, there is a website and app to organise commuting together- Skjutsgruppen - samåkning för alla![13]

In Latvia, some companies and municipalities only refund car travel for their employees, if more people travel together in the same car. This promotes resource sharing and reduces costs for the institutions.

Research shows that the effectiveness of shared mobility depends on how well these services are embedded into local mobility systems, including residential areas and transport hubs, but the lack of this is a barrier today.

Car-sharing is increasing in popularity in Sweden, but here one of the most important barriers is the imbalance in parking and regulatory conditions: while private car owners often benefit from inexpensive residential parking, car-sharing operators face higher parking costs, which ultimately discourages users from switching. In Denmark,

[12] https://nabogo.com/da/cases/nt/

[13] https://skjutsgruppen.se/

many municipalities provide free parking for car sharing clubs. They have app or non-app based sharing systems and usually a fixed parking place. There are also car-sharing with free-floating, where you can find and leave cars anywhere on the street within the area of the system.

Policies to promote car sharing include good conditions for car-sharing clubs, such as free parking with charging facilities, support for establishing car sharing clubs, and information on car sharing, both for the general public (as car sharing is not so well known) and to prospective organisers to help setting up car-sharing clubs.

- **Reduce air travel**

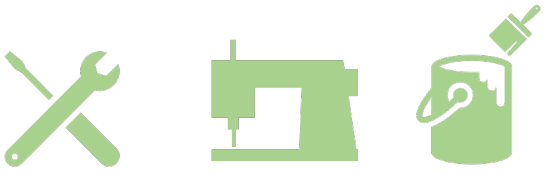
Air travel is the most polluting form of travel and alternatives in the form of trains and shorter travel (for instance for holidays) is for many people the most effective way to reduce personal climate impacts. Denmark and Norway have aviation passenger taxes that give an economic signal to reduce air travel, but the signal is not very strong. Sweden has alternatives in the form of night trains; within Sweden, to Norway and to Germany via Denmark. There are long-distance coach networks in the Baltic region; distances are small inside Estonia and Latvia, so the focus is on high-speed rail (the future project is Rail Baltica) instead of investing in legacy-speed overnight infrastructure. The Baltics should be encouraged to use the combination of long-distance bus and train travel.

Policies to reduce air travel include aviation taxes, phasing out subsidies for airports, taxes on aviation fuels, development of alternatives that are attractive also in price and not much longer in time, supplemented with night trains. Night trains can be subsidised, which is important for the start-up and also during critical periods, as during the Covid19 crisis. It is also important that it is easy to get tickets for long distance train and bus travel, that there is information, and for new users, also better guidance in booking longer train and bus travel.

Sufficiency in Consumer Goods

Our consumption of products is depleting resources and producing greenhouse gases, well beyond sustainable levels. Nordic countries consume and discard large amounts, for example with Danish people consuming 200 kg per year of plastic products made from oil, of which a large part has a very short lifetime and end up as waste. There are many ways to reduce this over-consumption.

- **Reduce consumption with better repair options**



Lasting goods are only really lasting if they can be repaired. The repair of products is threatened by cheaper products combined with higher wages as well as more advanced products that are harder to repair and need more specialised spare-parts. One example addressing such barriers can be found in Denmark, where there is a tax reduction for repairs of white goods.

Effective implementation of the new EU "Right to Repair" will make repair easier with requirements to make products more repairable and to label how repairable a product is, but currently only a few products are covered. Voluntary repair cafés and repair workshops are increasingly popular. They cover many types of products, including electronics and mending of clothes. Some repair shops also offer that people can learn how to alter their clothing, wash and dry it properly, and care for it in a way that extends its lifespan.

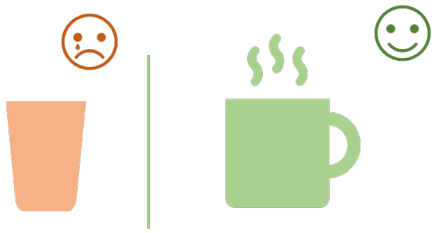
Policies to support repair include labelling of repairability, information to consumers about repair opportunities, easily available repair manuals and other information on how to repair products, and free workshop facilities for volunteer repairers. In addition, repair work can be supported with no or low VAT on repairs.

- **Reduce consumption by extending the lifetime of products**

  The longer the lifetime of products, the lower the environmental impact (as long as the product is energy efficient). One way to extend the lifetime of products is to require longer warranty periods. In Norway warranty is 5 years for many products, well above the EU minimum of two years. Also, partnerships including consumer protection authorities and environmentally responsible manufacturers can promote products with long lifespans. Further, a ban on planned obsolescence and requirements for computer program and mobile phone upgrades can increase the effective lifetimes of products. Planned obsolescence is not allowed in the EU.

  Policies to promote longer lifetime of products include longer warranties, stronger actions against planned obsolescence, also against electronics (computers etc.) that have a limited useful life because of program updates so consumers have to buy replacements sooner, ban on destruction of unsold products (EU has banned destruction of unsold clothing and shoes from July 2026), and consumer information on lifetimes of products.

- **Reduce single-use products**

  Single-use products have increased with growing fast-food consumption, but also for other purposes. EU regulations have limited single use plastic products, which mainly has replaced them with single use products of natural materials as wood. Denmark has taxes on plastic products, which is giving a price signal, although weak, to limit single-use. In Estonia, only reusable food containers, cups and cutlery may be used to serve food and drink at public events. There are a couple of organizations with deposit-and-return systems for these reusable light containers that operate in Estonia and cater the needs of events and restaurants.

  An important category of single-use products are clothes that are only used once or very few times and discarded after a short period.

  Policies to reduce single use products include taxes on single use products, deposits combined with alternatives that replace single-use products, and campaigns and information about multi-use products. Deposit systems can also reduce single use, for instance for cups and plates at take-away places.

- **Reduce packaging**

  A large part of the plastic we use and the waste we generate is packaging. The EU has a strategy to reduce packaging waste and increase reuse and recyclability of packaging. This includes targets for recycling and reuse of bottles and of transport packaging of plastic, as well as requirements for take-away food places to offer food without the packaging, if the customers bring their own containers.

  Deposit systems on bottles are very effective with return rates of 93% (Denmark) to 98% (Norway). Deposit could be increased to other products and packaging. Also taxes on plastic and other packaging (as in Denmark) can reduce waste.

  Policies to reduce packaging include taxes on packaging for instance on shopping bags and deposit systems that can be expanded to cover all bottles and jars for food.

- **Use existing products better, i.e. clothing**

  Many products are not used very much, for instance much clothing. One proposal is to encourage limited shopping, for instance to only 5 pieces of clothing per year (not including socks and underwear), promoted by Naturskyddsföreningen in Sweden. Another way is second-hand shops and flea markets. These are quite popular in the Nordic and Baltic Sea countries.

  Policies to use products better include supporting second-hand shops and markets, like swapping markets where the users swap their products, such as clothing, and no VAT on second hand products. More control of the safety of very cheap products, for instance sold via the internet, can also steer consumers towards opting for good quality second-hand products.

- **Sharing of products**

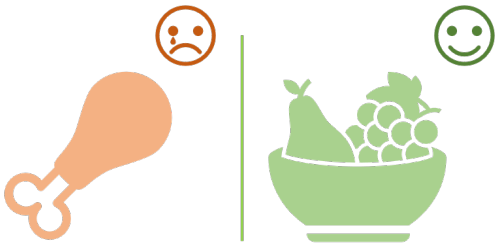
Many products are only used for a short time, from children's clothes and sports gear to many types of hand tools. Throughout the region, private companies rent out tools and equipment. In Norway, BUA (*Barn- unge- aktivitet*, 'children- youth- activities'), an NGO with around 290 locations in over 200 municipalities, offers free sports and leisure gear for children. In Norway and Estonia, there are public libraries with "libraries of things," such as Tingotek in Norway, who also borrow out sports equipment, hand tools, sewing machines, and music instruments. Also in Norway, services like Parkdressen rent out outdoor clothing, and other initiatives share baby clothes and equipment such as car seats and strollers for babies.

Policies for sharing include public "libraries of things", VAT free renting of products, information to consumers on sharing opportunities, for instance through databases of public, commercial and peer-to-peer sharing places.

Sufficiency in Food

Food has a large environmental footprint, in particular meat and cheese. This can be reduced with more plant based food instead of animal products and by reducing food waste. Also organic food has lower environmental impact than the same products as non-organic, but organic meat still has a much larger environmental impact than most vegetables. Food that is transported by airplane also has a large climate footprint, including fruit and vegetables.

- **Reduce consumption of animal products**

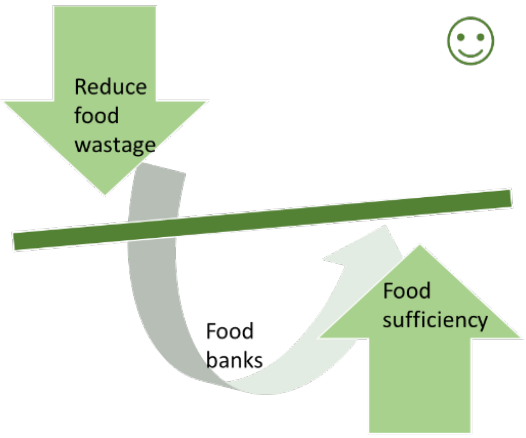


Reducing consumption of animal products is highly relevant in the Nordic and other Baltic Sea countries as research[14] shows that food is one of the key domains where shifting practices can significantly cut environmental pressures. Public canteens can be a good place to start, including school kitchens given that public bodies have full control and users can learn about vegetarian and vegan dishes. In Estonia, there is a campaign for meat free Tuesdays, and in Denmark, the municipality of Aarhus has introduced an internal tax on meat for its canteens, so canteen leaders are nudged to buy more vegetables and less meat with the available budget. Health authorities in Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Estonia and Latvia publish national guidance on healthy diets, recommending more vegetables and less meat than in the average diets. In Latvia, some supermarkets give free fruit to children.

Policies to increase plant-based food include taxations on meat and other high-emission foods, no VAT on vegetables, less meat in public canteens, for instance with meat free days, always having a vegetarian alternative, and internal taxation. In addition, policies should include information on the benefits of reducing or eliminating meat consumption, including health benefits and improvements to animal welfare. Food is a sensitive issue and information works best when framed as positive, practical, everyday choices, rather than as a sacrifice.

[14] https://fulfill-sufficiency.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Deliverable_6.2-v2.pdf

- **Reduce food waste**



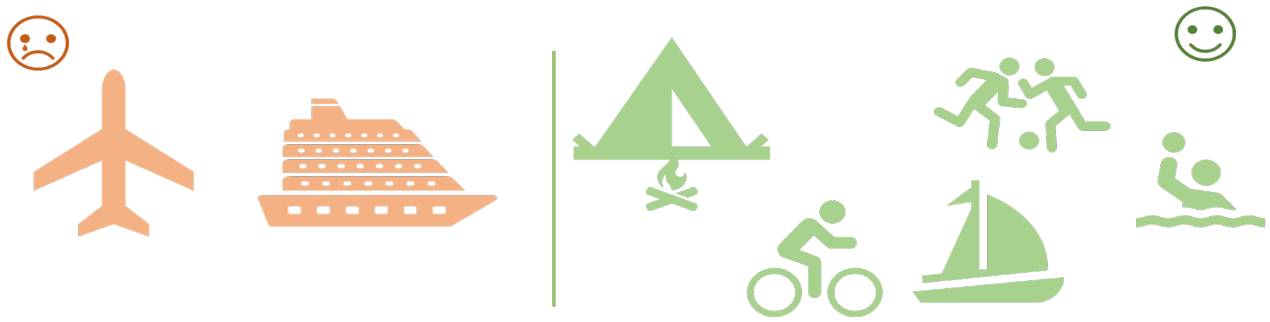
Food waste can be reduced with better planning of food use, but also with collection of food that would have been thrown away though perfectly edible and redirecting this surplus from retailers and restaurants etc. to lower-income communities.
Some of the initiatives are websites that help consumers to reduce food waste, and food banks with volunteers that collect food for people in need. In Estonia, the Consume Food Smartly initiative shares information about food waste and provides tips on how to avoid it, aimed at homes, shops, restaurants and educators. There are also targeted campaigns towards schools in Estonia. In Norway, a food bank, Matsentralen, distributes food to people with economic problems, working with volunteers. Similar food bank initiatives exist in other Scandinavia countries. Also in Estonia, some supermarkets have dedicated cupboards and fridges in their parking lot and place unsold near-expiry food there after the shop is closed. Then people can take the food for free. It is a collaboration between municipalities, business and volunteers. In all countries, food is often sold at a lower price on the last day before expiration. Some restaurants and bakeries have a similar scheme where you can buy a cheap "Too Good to Go" bag with food in the evening. Instead of Danish Too Good to Go, Estonians use the Finnish ResQ Club app but more food retailers and service providers need to partner with them and it needs popularisation.
Policies to reduce food waste include requirements for shops and restaurants to offer any unsold food (food that cannot be sold the next day) for free when they close, cooperation between local authorities and civil society to establish food banks, information on how to reduce food waste for consumers, shops, and restaurants.

Sufficiency in Holidays

For many Nordic people, holidays are contributing even more to climate change and resource consumption than their daily lives. This includes long holiday trips with airplanes, but also holidays with cruise ships, and other activities that consume high amounts of fossil fuels. Sustainable holiday alternatives can include more sustainable, shorter travels and less resource-intensive holiday options.

- **Replace airplanes with trains for holidays**

For many holidays, it is possible to replace air travel with trains or buses. Most main train lines are electrically driven and have low climate impacts. Compared with airplanes, buses also have significantly lower environmental and climate impacts. This replacement of air with ground travel often implies shorter distances, but the holiday quality can be the same. One way of replacing air travel with train travel is with night trains, where a night train trip can replace a trip with an airplane and a night at a hotel for distances up to around 1500 km.
Policies to replace airplane holidays with other holidays include taxation on aviation and making attractive alternatives available, both long-distance trains including night trains and offers of local package holidays similar to charter tours. Establishing long-distance trains including night trains will require government support, at least for the start up period of a few years and during difficult periods.



- **Shorter travels for holidays**

  Holidays in the home country or nearby countries can replace long-distance holidays, with the possibility to experience new horizons, get new insights, and also relax. Whilst many are used to going abroad on winter holidays to escape the cold for warmer weather, a cultural shift could encourage embracing seasons and leaning into the coziness of winter, for instance.

  This shift is already happening, with tourist agencies advertising domestic holidays, and a recent survey showing that most school children in Latvia prefer to travel inside Latvia. On the other hand, there are also records in air travel in 2026[15].

  Policies to support holidays with shorter travel include support and campaigns for local holidays, support for local, eco-friendly tourism, highlighting both their attractions and their environmental benefits.

- **Replace high consuming holiday forms with lower consuming forms of holidays.**

  In particular, changes from cruise ships to train travel or, eventually, sailing ships, will reduce environmental impacts considerably. Many cruise ships are sailing from town to town, for instance around the Baltic Sea. The same towns can be visited with trains and ferry boats at around the same time, but the experience is different without the facilities such as swimming pools, while the same facilities are all available in the cities visited. Cruise ship tours could be replaced by packed holidays with the same opportunity to experience the world and with similar comfort. There are train alternatives offered from small travelling agencies in Scandinavian countries.

  Policies to support alternatives to high-consuming holidays include taxation of cruise ships, airplanes and others and the fuel they use similar to car fuels, limits to cruise ships in harbours, requirements for stop of motors and use of land based electricity in harbours, information on train alternatives and other alternatives, for instance on bicycle tours.

[15] (https://www.newsweek.com/global-air-travel-had-busiest-day-on-record-12245968)