



# The Sustainable Hotel Insights

#01

November 2025



**FREE  
INSIGHTS**

**6 PRINCIPLES to make your hotel  
more socially sustainable**

*For everyone on the  
journey to making this Planet  
a more purposeful and  
hospitable place.*

# FOREWORD

## *Pursuing the path to sustainability – together*

**Social sustainability begins with a specific mindset: the decision to put people first. It's not an add-on, but the foundation of a hospitality industry that puts people first – and makes real change possible.**

Hotels have the power to be places where everyone feels welcome: guests with different needs and backgrounds. Team members with their own stories, talents and expectations. Suppliers, trainees, families, locals – in short: people. They are at the heart of every socially sustainable hotel.

In this download, we share six principles that show how you, as a host, can put social sustainability into practice – in your team AND with your guests.

We will answer these questions:

- What does social sustainability actually mean?
- How can you create fair and inclusive structures for both your team and your guests?
- Which aspects turn values into tangible action?
- And what does the first (or next) step look like?

We are MAP, a Zurich-based, Certified B Corporation, empowering innovative hoteliers and founders across the globe. We created The Sustainable Hotel to equip hoteliers with insights, tools and resources for building sustainable hotels – hotels that have a positive impact on both people and planet.

On the platform you will also find [our collection of handbooks](#), each dedicated to one of the four Ps

of sustainability: Purpose, People, Planet and Profit.

**Thank you for joining us on this journey. Together we can make the world a better and more welcoming place for everyone.**

**#onwards  
Your MAP team**



**VISIT THE SUSTAINABLE  
HOTEL NOW**

*P.S.: We'd love to hear from you along the way! Please feel free to share your feedback, insights and comments with us at [onwards@MAP-consultancy.com](mailto:onwards@MAP-consultancy.com).*



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*“Inclusive hospitality means no special treatment – but a natural sense of belonging.”*

**MAP BOUTIQUE  
CONSULTANCY**

(as cited in The Sustainable Hotel Insights 2025)





## FACTS (1/2)

### *Did you know?*

**Social sustainability – it may sound big, a little abstract even.** Put simply, it means putting people at the heart of everything you do and creating structures that ensure that no one is left behind – where everyone can live and work in a fair, safe and respectful environment.

**And in hotels, it often starts with the simplest of things: a ramp instead of a step, a genuine “thank you” at the end of a late shift, menus written in plain language, or the option to express requests non-verbally.**

Social sustainability is when different perspectives are embraced. When people with disabilities are not just included in theory but are actively welcomed. When trainees have their voice heard in a team meeting. When duty rosters do not only work on paper but also take lives into account.

## FACTS (2/2)

### *Did you know?*

**In short: social sustainability in hotels means creating hospitality for everyone – internally as well as externally.**

It's about appreciation within the team, fair opportunities for all, and a culture that not only accepts differences, but actively benefits from them.

Hotels are places of encounter. And that is exactly where social sustainability unfolds: through decisions, attitudes and small everyday actions (HSMA, 2023).

#### **DID YOU KNOW THAT...**

**1. Social sustainability makes your hotel measurably more successful?**

According to the Boston Consulting Group (2018), companies that live social sustainability intensively generate up to 19% more revenue. In a people-driven industry, genuine diversity is a true competitive advantage – for teams and for guest experience.

**2. Accessibility gives your hotel access to more than 130 million potential guests in Europe alone?**

Around 30% of people in the European Union live with some form of impairment that shapes their travel behaviour. Thinking inclusively – in terms of physical structures and communication – is not only about inclusion, but also about untapped economic potential (European Disability Forum, n.d.).

**3. Hotels with a socially sustainable culture see significantly lower staff turnover?**

In workplaces where appreciation, participation and development are part of daily life, employees stay up to twice as long.

Social sustainability has a lasting impact – on people, structures and costs (Chamberlain und Zhao, 2019).

[Explore our blog post to see how social sustainability can be realised in hotels – beyond symbolic gestures and lip service!](#)



# **ACTION**

*How to make your hotel more  
socially sustainable*

## WHY SHOULD YOU TAKE ACTION IN THIS AREA?

### **You attract people – not just employees.**

Socially sustainable hotels draw talent looking for more than a job. A clear set of values makes your hotel a magnet for motivated people who want to contribute and stay.

### **You strengthen your employer brand – credibly and long-term.**

Fair conditions, opportunities for development and a culture of appreciation not only make your hotel attractive; they also build trust and reputation. This is vital in the competition for skilled professionals.

### **You enhance your guest experience – for everyone.**

Inclusion, participation and genuine hospitality enhance the quality of every stay.

When people feel understood and respected, they do not just return – they recommend you to others.

### **You future-proof your business.**

Social sustainability is not a trend but an investment in resilience: less staff turnover, healthier teams, stronger relationships – internally and externally – make your hotel more stable in times of change.

### **You take responsibility – and actively shape the industry.**

As a hotelier, you influence not just your team and guests, but also your community and your region. By embracing social sustainability, you help shape a hospitality sector that evolves towards greater humanity, fairness and long-term viability.



1

*Towards guests:*

## **CREATE INCLUSIVE HOSPITALITY**

**What it means:** Social sustainability becomes visible in how we interact with people – especially with guests. Inclusive hospitality is not about special treatment, but about natural belonging.

**What you can do:**

- Make sure your team understands terms like neurodiversity, hearing impairment or non-verbal communication – for example, through micro-training with social organisations.
- Provide information in your (digital) guest folder in plain language – especially about services, emergencies or check-out procedures.
- Equip housekeeping with pictogram cards to enable non-verbal communication with guests.
- Actively create an environment where guests with assistance dogs, wheelchairs or personal assistants and caregivers do not need to justify their presence.



## 2

*Towards guests:*

### **THINK ACCESSIBILITY – PHYSICALLY AND SOCIALLY**

**What it means:** Accessibility is far more than having a lift. It starts with the online booking process and ends at check-out – and it includes information, orientation and communication.

**What you can do:**

- Check whether your website is screen-reader friendly and whether contrast and font size are adjustable. [More on this in our blog post on sustainable hotel websites.](#)
- Carry out an accessibility audit of your property, asking questions like: is the reception desk wheelchair accessible?
- Use multilingual signage and pictograms, especially in key areas: lifts, emergency exits, toilets, restaurant.
- Communicate transparently on your website about existing barriers – rather than simply claiming to be “accessible”.



### 3

*Towards guests:*

## **ENABLE PARTICIPATION**

**What it means:** Social sustainability also means opening doors for people for who a hotel stay is not a given – whether due to health, social, economic or other reasons.

**What you can do:**

- Partner with schools, rehabilitation centres or social organisations to invite groups who rarely get to travel.
- Offer socially supported stays in the low season – for example, for family carers, families with disabled children or healthcare staff.
- Keep rooms available for assistants of guests with support needs – including clear information about room layout.
- Provide a dedicated contact person for guests with higher support needs – either in advance or upon arrival.

Find more practical tips in our *The Sustainable Hotel Handbook: People*.



4

*Towards your team:*

## **BUILD CONSCIOUS DIVERSITY**

**What it means:** A diverse team does not happen by chance – it grows from deliberate choices for the benefit of openness, fairness and a range of perspectives. Welcoming people with different backgrounds creates space where innovation and respect can thrive (Charta der Vielfalt, n.d.).

**What you can do:**

- Write inclusive job ads: avoid discriminatory language and state clearly that diversity is welcome. [Click here for more information.](#)
- Train your team regularly on [Unconscious Bias](#) – for example, through short, interactive workshops.
- Develop an internal diversity statement that makes your stance visible – on your website or in your team handbook.



5

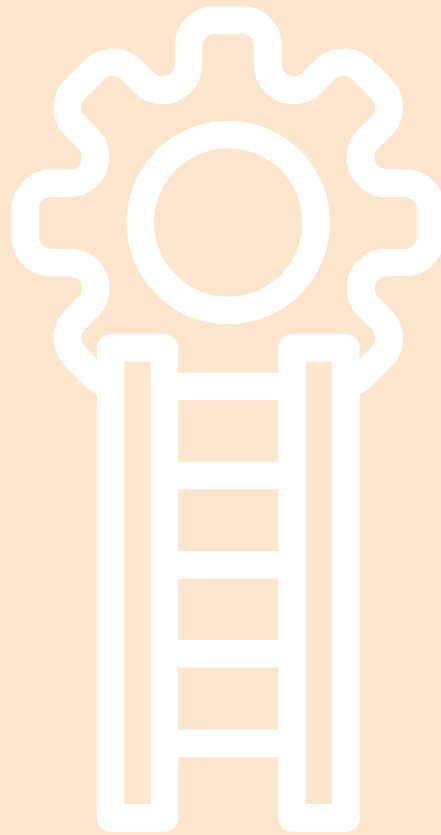
*Towards your team:*

## **FOSTER PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY**

**What it means:** Psychological safety is a working environment where people feel comfortable asking questions, speaking up and admitting mistakes – without fear of losing face or being put down. It is a key driver of trust, cohesion and innovation. This is not just a feeling: Google’s Project Aristotle shows that teams with a high degree of psychological safety are measurably more successful – more productive, more innovative and more engaged (LeaderFactor, 2025).

**What you can do:**

- Check in with your team regularly – for example once a month – focusing on “What went well?” rather than only on problems.
- Make it a routine that everyone contributes and speaks at team meetings – regardless of role.
- Use feedback tools (for example anonymous check-ins or digital surveys) to include quieter voices.



# 6

*Towards your team:*

## **ENABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**What it means:** Social sustainability means enabling people – beyond their job description. Development is not a reward; it is part of a respectful way of working together.

**What you can do:**

- Co-create individual development paths for team members – including non-academic career paths.
- Hold structured one-to-one conversations twice a year – focusing on potential, not only performance.
- Provide a small annual budget per team member for external learning – for example, language courses, digital skills or communication training.

*“Social sustainability in hotels means creating hospitality for everyone – internally and externally.”*

**MAP BOUTIQUE  
CONSULTANCY**  
(as cited in The Sustainable Hotel  
Insights 2025)





## BEST PRACTICE

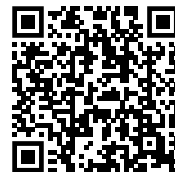
### *Masatsch*

**At Masatsch in Caldaro, South Tyrol, social sustainability is more than a promise – it's daily reality. As a barrier-free hotel run by Lebenshilfe Südtirol, an organisation dedicated to supporting people with disabilities, Masatsch combines hospitality with a clear social mission: people with and without disabilities work together – as equals, with respect and professionalism.**

The hotel creates space for encounter, participation and genuine inclusion – not as an add-on, but as second nature. Guests with specific needs find not only architectural accessibility but, above all, a warm and competent team that embraces diversity and builds trust. Masatsch demonstrates powerfully how social sustainability can be practised in everyday hotel life – with conviction, passion and impact.

Masatsch: A place for everyone. Different by design, good at heart.

Discover more in our Client Story with Christine Karadar – offering inspiring insights behind the scenes of this inclusive hotel.





## SUMMARY

### *Key takeaways*

**Social sustainability is not a final destination – it's a path you choose every single day.** This guide shows that social sustainability in hotels does not need to feel abstract. It begins with the small things: in daily interactions, in conscious choices, and in the attitude with which we meet people – whether guest or team member.

**With these six principles, you can make social sustainability tangible, anchor it in your hotel and continue to evolve:**

- You design inclusive hospitality.
- You embrace accessibility holistically.
- You enable participation – beyond standard measures.
- You create space for diversity.
- You foster psychological safety.
- You support development based on equality and respect.

**Social sustainability means taking responsibility – for people and relationships. For hotels that are more than just places to sleep. For a culture of working together that inspires, connects and shapes the future.**

Thank you for taking this journey with us. The future of hospitality is social – and it begins with all of us.

#onwards  
Your MAp Team



# PEOPLE HANDBOOK

*Fair, human, future-ready hotels – built on social sustainability.*

**Social sustainability is not an add-on – it is the foundation of a future-proof hospitality industry.** The People Handbook defines your key stakeholders and shows, step by step, how to create fair structures for your team, your guests and your partners – with practical tools and examples from the field.

- **Clear insights into your key stakeholders** – what they want, need and expect from your hotel
- **Hands-on exercises** to turn theory into action
- **Scorecards** to track progress on social sustainability
- **Action steps** aligned with leading hotel sustainability certification programmes
- **Guidance on job ads** – attract and hire the right people
- **MAP Advice** – lessons from years of working with boutique hoteliers
- **Expert interviews with hoteliers** and practitioners who lead by example
- **Best-practice case studies** from outstanding sustainable hotels worldwide

Take this route to learn more [HERE](#).



## GO FURTHER: PEOPLE MUST-READS AND SEE

### ARTICLE

#### Ritz-Carlton Founder Horst Schulze On The Secret To Customer Service

by boardmember.com  
In this blog post, Horst Schulz, co-founder of the Ritz Carlton Hotel Company, talks about how the brand empowers its employees and how Purpose plays a major role in doing so.

[LINK](#)

### BOOK

#### Humankind - A Hopeful History

by Rutger Bregman  
The book "Humankind - A Hopeful History" is a very careful, deep-dive analysis into our human history from a modern perspective, with the aim to provide an answer to the longstanding question on whether human beings are innately "good" or "bad."

[LINK](#)

### GUIDE

#### Know How Guide: Human Rights and the Hotel Industry

by Sustainable Hospitality Alliance  
The Know How Guide: Human Rights and the Hotel Industry provides an overview of human rights within hospitality, with guidance on developing a human rights policy, performing due diligence and addressing any adverse human rights impacts.

[LINK](#)

### SOURCES

Boston Consulting Group. (2018). How Diverse Leadership Teams Boost Innovation.

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Chamberlain und Zhao. (2019). The Key to Happy Customers? Happy Employees.

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[LINK](#)

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