

Annual Report

2022-2023

**Fair
Trade**

ADVOCACY OFFICE



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Introduction

The Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO) was set up in 2004 by the World Fair Trade Organization (IFAT), Fairtrade International (FLO), the European Fair Trade Association (EFTA) and the Network of European World Shops (NEWS!). The FTAO catalyses collaboration within the international Fair Trade Movement on policy, advocacy and campaigning activity; it facilitates knowledge co-creation and sharing on Fair Trade policies and practices and it leads advocacy work on European Union legislation, policies and their implementation.

After 13 years at the helm of the FTAO, Executive Director Sergi Corbalán stepped down from his role at the end of June 2022.

Richard Adams, Chair of the FTAO Board of Directors, said:

“The Fair Trade Advocacy Office has been exceptionally fortunate in having Sergi Corbalán as chief executive for the last 13 years. Thanks to his vision, energy and leadership, FTAO has grown exponentially in size, income sources, authority and impact [...].The FTAO Board wishes Sergi all the best for the future, professionally and personally”.

Since October 2022, Jorge Conesa de Lara has taken on the role of Managing Director, while Eric Ponthieu assumed the position of Strategic Director in January 2023.





International Collaboration

World Fair Trade Day 2022: Global call for Climate Justice

The World Fair Trade Day is a global celebration which takes place every year on the second Saturday of May. It is organised by the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) to raise awareness on alternative solutions to the planet's economic and ecological challenges. The 2022 celebration focused on Climate Justice and the need to

deliver fair, inclusive and sustainable solutions to people who are suffering the effects of the climate crisis while addressing the root causes of climate change. For this occasion, the Fair Trade Movement and civil society allies organised hundreds of awareness-raising activities around the world (see here for [images](#)).

World Trade Organization 16th International Fair Trade Summit

Organised by the World Fair Trade Organization, the International Fair Trade Summit is the world's largest gathering of Fair Trade businesses and allies. The annual conference aims to bring Fair Trade Enterprises, supply chain managers, ethical market leaders, citizens and supporters together to work on social, economic and environmental transfor-

mation. The 16th edition took place in Berlin from 23 to 26 August 2022. During this occasion, the Fair Trade Advocacy Office presented the [report](#) on Fair Trade public policies around the world via an in-person conference. The event was attended, amongst others, by Leida Rijnhout, chief executive of the World Fair Trade Organization.

15th International Fair Trade Cities and Towns Conference

The 15th Fair Trade Cities and Towns International Conference was held in Quito, Ecuador, from 21 to 23 October 2022. The Conference was attended by delegations from the interna-

tional and Latin American Cities for Fair Trade campaign, made up of authorities, committee members, producers, and supporters of Fair Trade. Under the slogan "Fair Trade, in Sus-



tainable Cities Construction”, the aim was to strengthen the activities of the cities participating in the Fair Trade Cities and Towns campaign and, above all, create synergies between cities and countries.

In parallel, the FTAO, alongside the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Commerce of Ecuador, organized the first Euro-Latin American meeting of governmental authorities on Fair Trade. Under the theme of “Fair Trade as a strategy to combine environmental and social sustainability in trade relations between Latin

America and the European Union”, it gathered government and agency representatives from Ecuador, the European Union, Ghana, Germany, Belgium, Mexico, States of Africa, Pacific and Caribbean, Chile, Mexico, Panama, Honduras, Colombia and Paraguay, as well as a representative from the United Nations Forum for Voluntary Sustainability Standards. The participants exchanged their national experiences on public policies and/or national projects that promote Fair Trade or its principles. You can find the full press release of the event [here](#).

Fair Trade Advocacy Marathon 2022

After two years of online meetings due to the Covid pandemic, the Fair Trade Advocacy Office welcomed the Fair Trade movement from 10 to 14 October 2022 in Brussels for the Fair Trade Advocacy Marathon. The Marathon included external advocacy and also brainstorm, coordination and capacity-building activities. The high-profile event of this gathering was

the European Parliament Fair Trade Breakfast where the Fair Trade Movement and fair trade producers together with motivated young people met members of the European Parliament to discuss the [45 policy recommendations](#) developed by the young fair trade advocates for a global, fair and ecological transition.



COP27 and the Fair Trade Movement

The COP27 Climate Change Conference was held in Sharm El Sheikh from 06 to 18 November 2022, bringing together global leaders and stakeholders to discuss a pathway to building back sustainably following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In the run-up to the conference, Fair Trade organizations reiterated their urgent call for inclusive climate solutions as

smallholder farmers and workers face growing climate threats. In the position paper titled [The Clock is ticking](#), the Fair Trade Advocacy Office, Fairtrade, the World Fair Trade Organization have intensified their calls for trade and climate justice, indicating the critical measures for delivering fair climate solutions and demanding the enforcement of public climate commitments.





European Union Advocacy

Deforestation-free supply chains

At the end of 2021, the European Commission has released its legislative proposal to prevent the export from and import to the European market of products linked to deforestation. In 2022, the FTAO and partners published [diverse recommendation papers](#) and suggestions for amendments. The aim was to move from an initial smallholder-blind proposal to an EU legislative tool that fully embeds the highest level of environmental standards while addressing the realities faced by smallholders,

Following the adoption of the European Parliament [ambitious negotiating position](#) highlighting the need to ensure a fair share of costs of compliance and outlining the responsibility of companies within their due diligence obligations, the FTAO and more than 50 CSOs and producer networks published [an open letter reiterating the urgency to conduct a needs assessment](#).

In December 2022, a political agreement was reached on the Regulation. The text reflected one of the FTAO's key requests by committing the European Commission to develop a comprehensive strategic framework on partnerships and cooperation with producer countries. The FTAO has helped co-develop a [dedicated paper on Partnerships](#), and it will continue to stay engaged with partners to ensure the EC delivers on its commitment.

In 2023, jointly with Fair Trade producer networks and local CSOs partners, the FTAO will assess current compliance gaps in the cocoa and coffee sector, identify which requirements are likely to pose specific challenges, and, on this basis, propose specific accompanying measures to support an effective implementation of the regulation.



Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence

On 23 February the European Commission published the legislative proposal on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence (CSDD). In the public consultation on the proposal, in May 2022, the [FTAO provided input](#) and called for the inclusion of living income in its Annex. See position paper [here](#). Together with civil society partners, the FTAO converted these recommendations into concrete amendments which were shared with EU policy makers. To emphasize the importance of explicitly including living incomes into the CSDD, the FTAO published a briefing in November 2022 with the

title '[What is Living Income and why it needs to be included in Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence](#)'. These priorities were reflected in the draft report of the responsible committee which will be finalised in the start of 2023.

Throughout 2023, the FTAO will continue to focus on advocacy towards the European Parliament while it is finalising its negotiating position and towards all institutions involved in the final interinstitutional negotiations with the main aim to facilitate the inclusion of small-holder farmer perspectives into the CSDD.

European Trade Policy

Published on 22 June 2022, the new Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) communication “The power of trade partnerships: together for green and just economic growth” set out the new commitments to be negotiated in Trade and Sustainable Chapters in new trade agreements. Though leaving aside human rights and focusing only on environmental sustainability, it is a step in right direction. See our press release [here](#). The biggest downside

is that the new policy is not applied to certain agreements still under negotiation (e.g. Chile, Mercosur, Mexico, Indonesia) and to existing trade agreements.

The FTAO participated in public consultations, meeting, events and campaigns, as to raise awareness on, *inter alia*, the need to encompass social and economic sustainability in trade agreements.

“GLOBAL TRADE, FAIR ENOUGH?”

On 26 January 2022, the European Parliament Fair Trade Working Group, with the support of the FTAO, hosted an event aimed at calling on the European Union to deliver on its commitment to develop a trade model which is fair, sustainable and puts the people and the Planet above profit. Framed as a discussion on trade and sustainable development and Human Rights and Environmental Due diligence, it highlighted that two of the key components of this much needed approach to trade are: Trade and Sustainable Development (TSD) policies and binding human rights and environmental due diligence. The take away notes are available [here](#).



EU regulation prohibiting products made with forced labour from entering the EU market

One year after its announcement, the European Commission introduced its [proposal](#) for a regulation prohibiting products made with forced labour from entering the EU market. The FTAO welcomed this long awaited action but considered that there was room for improvement to achieve an instrument that would effectively contribute to the global eradication of forced labour, addressing the root causes of forced labour and working hand in hand with third countries. The FTAO

has been actively working alongside CSOs with experience in Human Rights as to identify [the aspects that must be improved from the regulation](#), focusing on the need of remedies.

In 2023, the FTAO will work on ensuring that the legislative text addresses root causes of forced labour and contributes to its eradication globally, taking into account the rights and needs of affected people.

Sustainable claims and labels

Under this workstream, the FTAO is monitoring progress on the European initiatives: “empowering consumers for the green transition” (2022); “substantiating green claims” (2023) and “sustainable food labelling framework” (2024). By establishing more requirements and definitions on what a sustainable claim is and how to certify a sustainable claim and/or label, the EU wishes to address greenwashing issues and misleading information provided to consumers.

The Fair Trade Advocacy Office welcomes the initiative, but regrets the methodologies put forward to substantiate sustainable claims and labels that do not seem fit for purpose. As a result, the FTAO, alongside partners in the food policy and organic movement published a [joint open letter](#) to ensure the Commission introduces mechanisms that effectively contribute to transition to agroecological practices.





EU policies for fair and sustainable textile supply chains

In March 2022, the European Commission published the announced [EU strategy for sustainable and circular textiles](#). The FTAO welcomed this important stepstone in addressing the many issues of the sector, but regretted that the strategy only referred to the environmental impact of textile production and consumption while [falling short on the social dimension](#), with no actions to improve working conditions and wages for textile workers.

With these objectives, the FTAO organised two policy dialogues with MEPs, CSO representatives and other stakeholders to raise awareness and think together of policy solutions at EU level. In February 2022, the Fair Trade Advoca-

cacy Office organised a side session in the context of the OECD Forum on Due Diligence in the Garment and Footwear Sector to discuss ways to regulate UTPs.

Through the rest of 2022 and early 2023, the FTAO worked actively in engaging the European Parliament to deliver a strong position on the EU strategy, one that gives the social aspect its rightful weight, and includes civil society's [demands for concrete actions](#).

With these objectives, the FTAO organised two policy dialogues with MEPs, CSOs representatives and other stakeholders to raise awareness and think together of policy solutions.



Image: Fabian Richter

The first one took place in Berlin in August 2022, while the second one was held in Athens in September 2022.

In January 2023, the FTAO was invited to speak at a [hearing](#) of the International Trade Committee, which was focused on UTPs in textile and garment sector. In February 2023, the FTAO has organised another side session titled “Unfair Trading practices: state of play and

role of the EU – OECD Side Session”.

In 2023, The FTAO will work on a White Paper with recommendations for policymakers and two studies documenting unfair trading practices found in the buyer-supplier relationships inside the EU, as well as good purchasing practices implemented by European Fashion Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and their obstacles to trade fairly.

EU competition law and cooperation agreements for sustainability

Competition Policy has been one of the EU policy priority areas for the FTAO over the past 4 years. It has an important role to play in the imbalances of power in supply chains, which need to be addressed to give producers and workers a fair share of the benefits of trade. The currently dominant interpretation of competition law does not take into account sustainability but rather focuses mainly on the lowest consumer prices in the short run. This results in social and environmental concerns currently not being part of the assessments for decisions on e.g. mergers or exemptions to sectoral collaborations for sustainability.

Hereby, in 2022 the FTAO focused its efforts on the European Commission’s revision of the upcoming Horizontal Guidelines around agreements between companies in particular.

The FTAO has been closely involved in the shaping of the draft Guidelines and it welcomed the fact that the EC introduced a standalone section

on the application of competition law to sustainability agreements that defines sustainability by taking into account the economic, environmental, and social dimensions of sustainability.

See more information in [the joint letter](#) to the Executive Vice President of the European Commission, Margrethe Vestager as well as in [the joint response on the draft Horizontal Guidelines’ Chapter 9](#) together with the Fair Wear Foundation, ISEAL, and the European Brand Organisation (AIM).

On 14 March 2022, the FTAO, together with the European Economic and Social Committee’s NAT and INT Sections, and the organised the conference on Competition Policy and Social Sustainability to continue the debate on how joint sustainability initiatives can be competition law compliant. Find the press release [here](#).

The final Horizontal Guidelines are expected to be published in June 2023.



Image: Fair trade cocoa cooperative, Ecojad, Ivory Coast

EU policies for fair and sustainable cocoa supply chains

As a follow-up to the series of Cocoa talks conducted by the European Commission, the EU, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and the cocoa sector have agreed in 2022 to step up engagement by endorsing an Alliance on Sustainable Cocoa. After being actively involved in the multi-stakeholder dialogues, the FTAO welcomed this important milestone, particularly as it is coupled with an ambitious roadmap for action. The latter reflected some of the FTAO's priorities, with a focus on the necessity to increase farmers' income, recognising that prices and sustainability are two sides of the same coin. The FTAO, as part of the EU Cocoa Coalition, has urged stakeholders in a statement to also positively respond to the proposal of Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire for an Economic Pact on Sustainable Cocoa.

In 2022, the FTAO conducted a series of workshops for producer networks of the Fair Trade movement, with the aim to familiarize producers with the requirements and objectives of upcoming EU legislations that are expected to produce an impact on the cocoa sector (eg. CSDDD, EUDR). Moreover, the Cocoa Coalition published in two dedicated recommendations paper, one on [the corporate sustainability due diligence directive](#) and one on the [Regulation on deforestation-free products](#).

In 2023, the FTAO will monitor progress and ensure that the implementation of the roadmap effectively delivers on its objectives in an inclusive way, allowing for the participation of CSOs and producer representatives.

Young Fair Trade Advocates

The Young Fair Trade Advocates (YFTAs) finished its first one-year programme with more than 70 YFTAs based all over the EU and holding citizenships from all parts of the world being certified for completing the course. Additional to that around 10 local actions were conducted by YFTAs ranging from Fair Fashion Shows to Policy Recommendations presented to National MPs. The Fair Trade Advocacy Office also supported five organisations from Croatia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland and Romania in their Youth Advocacy Efforts with small scale grants leading to co-operations with those organisations also when the granting period was over.

In October 2022, the **Young Fair Trade Advocates**

developed and published [45 Policy Recommendations](#) and handed them over to MEPs during the European Parliament Fair Trade Breakfast.

In 2023, the Young Fair Trade Advocates will facilitate a webinar series with speakers from the Global South about EU Trade Agreements regarding four topic: Labour Rights, Environmental Sustainability, Economic Sustainability, Gender. These dialogues are a means to condense the most important demands from the representatives of the Global South and share those demands with MEPs to ensure that the latter are aware of the needs of the partner countries of EU Trade Agreements.

EU-WISE Young Citizen Consumers

The EU-WISE YOUNG CITIZEN CONSUMERS is an Erasmus+ project which started in December 2020 and ended in 2022. This pan-European project was led together with 4 partner organizations, namely Equo Garantito from Italy, the Polish Fair Trade Association from Poland, Project School from Italy and the Fair

Trade Advocacy Office in Belgium.

At the end of the 2022, the Consortium published a [toolkit](#) which highlighted the two different phases of the project. The first consisted in carrying out training courses for young people, called Youth Leaders in the four different countries, while the second involved the

Youth Leaders participating and carrying out local activities (education, advocacy, awareness raising, communication etc.), called Pilot Actions. The toolkit presents the methods

applied, SWOT analysis, evaluations, lessons learned, and policy recommendations gathered during these two phases of the project.

SchoolFood4Change

SchoolFood4Change (SF4C) is an Horizon2020 project which started in January 2022 and will last four years. The project aims at engaging schools as catalysts for a food system transformation towards diets that are fair, healthy, and sustainable for both humans and the planet. To reach this aim, SF4C will engage with 3,000 schools, including Fair Trade Schools, thus impacting 600,000 young people through 16 cities and regional governments across 12 European countries. In October 2022, the FTAO

alongside the World Fair Trade Organization-Europe organized a webinar on “School meals and inclusivity: a question of price?”. The webinar can be found [here](#).

In 2023, the consortium will keep working on the Whole School Food Approach, an holistic concept that offers pupils healthier and sustainable food choices in the long term. You can find the Guidelines for schools, cities and regions [here](#).







Knowledge co-creation

Fair Trade Public Policies around the world

In 2022, Fairtrade International and the Fair Trade Advocacy Office hosted a series of webinars exploring good practices in public policy environments, starting with some of the country case studies that can be found on this 2021 study on [Fair Trade Public Policies around the world](#), authored by Veselina Vasileva and Didier Reynaud. The first webinar was co-organised with CLAC on 18 January 2022, and focused on Public Policies in Ecuador. Lorena Muñoz from the Ecuadorian Directorate for Multilateral, Regional Trade Organisations and Trade Facilitation, Vice-Ministry of Foreign Trade – MPCEIP raised the importance of the implementation and funding of Fair Trade public official strategies and policies. The second webinar took place on the 7th of March on Public Procurement in Lat-

in America and followed a study by CEPAL and CLAC on this particular topic in Latin America. Finally, on 31 August, the FTAO organised a webinar on Brazil. This webinar showed the strengths and the weaknesses of the Brazilian case with a focus on the Brazilian Fair Trade and Solidarity System, and the institutionalization of Fair Trade at a national level. All information around Fair Trade Public Policies around the world can now be found on a new dedicated [webpage](#).

In 2023, The Fair Trade Advocacy Office will organise a series of webinar and workshops to that will look at what is Local Fair trade and existing good practices, exploring the implications for public policies.

Mapping Local Fair Trade

In 2022, the FTAO prepared an overview of 18 local Fair Trade initiatives and their characteristics across the world. The overview aimed at exploring the diversity of existing initiatives. It will serve as the starting point for a global Fair Trade movement discussion about the future of extending the principles of Fair Trade beyond the South-North model. The research

found that initiatives for local Fair Trade have multiplied in the past years, however challenges remain. In 2023, we are organising a series of webinars and workshops that will build upon the findings of the overview and address open questions around promoting the adoption of the principles of Fair Trade beyond the traditional model.



The Role of Governments in Enabling Living Income in Global Agriculture Value Chains

Guidance for public policy makers

LIVING INCOME GUIDANCE FOR GOVERNMENTS

The [Living Income Guidance for Governments](#) was created for policy-makers interested in providing support to smallholder farmers in an effort to close the gap between actual incomes and a Living Income in agricultural value chains. The publication provides food for thought and inspiration to policymakers around the world that wish to take action to ensure that all farmers, regardless of their position in a value chain, receive a Living Income.

The publication was launched at the [High-Level Meeting on Living Income and Living Wage](#) on 21 June 2022 in Berlin, hosted by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The press release can be read [here](#).

Moreover, the FTAO together with the Living Income Community of Practice and the Sustainable Food Lab has organised a webinar on the role of Governments in enabling Living Income in global agriculture value chains joined by government leaders who are shaping strategy and creating policy related to Living Income in multiple sectors and regions. The event is available [here](#).



Research report: The sustainability of agri-food imports into Belgium – How can Belgian Federal Authorities pave the way towards more sustainable global agrifood supply chains?

Globalised food value chains are today among the main drivers of environmental and social harms. In 2020, the Belgian Societal Responsibility Working Group of the Interdepartmental Commission for Sustainable Development drew up a proposal for a federal “Beyond Food Strategy” which aimed at contributing to a transition of the agri-food sector towards sustainable food import chains. In 2022, the Federal Institute for Sustainable Development decided to deepen that proposal by commissioning to le BASIC, the University of Antwerp and the FTAO an in-depth analysis of the international agri-food supply chains imported to Belgium from a sustainability perspective, in

order to prioritise those for which new ecological and social transition trajectories can be put in place. The research has allowed to identify the main food commodities from non-OECD countries that are imported into Belgium, as well as their major sustainability issues from both an environmental and social perspective and outline concrete action points and policy recommendations that can be taken by the Belgian federal government to foster the transition towards more sustainable agri-food supply chains. In the context of this study, a series of interviews were conducted, and 2 successive webinars were organised with relevant stakeholders.

Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence in Public Procurement

In setting up an enabling environment, Public Procurement is a clear tool available to public policy makers to incentivise sustainable and fairer value chains and support companies investing in sustainable production. As mandatory human rights and environmental due diligence policies are being developed across EU members states and at the level of the EU, the FTAO, Electronics Watch and IndustriAll devised

a series of webinars on the topic of [Delivering Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence in Public Procurement](#).

The series was meant for public buyers, policy makers working on human rights and environmental due diligence, civil society organisations and the broader public.

Fair Trade International Symposium 2023

The FTAO collaborated as part of the steering committee shaping the Fair Trade International Symposium 2023, ‘Fair Trade Connections’. The symposium will take place between 19 - 21 June 2023 at the University of Leeds. The symposium will include workshops and panels taking place in person, complemented by some online and hybrid sessions to enable the participation of people both locally and internationally. The main aim of the event is to create spaces for local campaigners and practitioners to interact

and to create a space for a discussion around the future of Fair Trade.

The topics will include:

1. Education for Sustainable Development
2. Localising the economy
3. The environment and climate change
4. Decolonization and southern voices
5. The social economy and social enterprise
6. Business engagement with human rights and climate regulations

CONSOLIDATING AND SCALING UP FAIR, ACCESSIBLE, SUSTAINABLE AND SHORT FOOD CHAINS IN THE EU

The Fass-Food project - Fair, Accessible, Sustainable and Short (Fass) Food Chains in the EU- is a project led by the Institute of Development Policy (University of Antwerp, Belgium), in cooperation with the World Fair Trade Organisation Europe (WFTO-Europe) and the Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO), which ended in December of 2022

The projects objectives were to:

Map the relevant ecosystem of national and EU-level actors who can contribute to consolidate and scale-up short and collaborative food chain initiatives with a view to creating healthy, accessible, sustainable and fair food systems in the EU

Identify institutional, organizational and technological innovations to overcome existing lock-ins

Set up a consortium of actors from the mapped ecosystem to implement identified solutions and strengthen existing leverage points.

Suggest a smart mix of recommendations to consolidate and scale up FASS-Food supply chains in the EU

Final report can be found [here](#).







Our team

Managing Director – Jorge Conesa (from October 2022)

Executive Director – Sergi Corbalán (until May 2022)

Strategy Director – Eric Ponthieu (from January 2023)

Policy Manager – Jorge Conesa (until September 2022)

Project Coordinator – Alice Sinigaglia (Consultant)

Project Coordinator – Matthias Haberl

Project Coordinator – Marta Garda

Project Coordinator – Didier Reynaud

Policy & Project Advisor – Elena Lunder (Consultant)

Policy & Project Officer – Virginia Enssle

Policy & Project Officer – Fabian Richter

Policy & Project Officer – Charlotte Vernier

Policy & Project Officer – May Hylander (from January 2023)

Policy & Project Officer – Paola Plaku (from January 2023)

Junior Communications Officer – Sarah Chenoun

Finance & Administration Manager – Begum Sidar

Junior Advocacy Officer – May Hylander (until December 2022)

Junior Communications Officer – Paola Plaku (until December 2022)

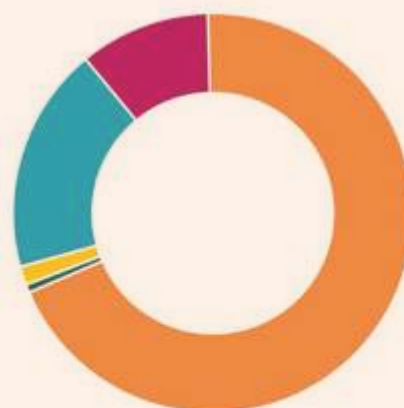
Finances

Fair Trade Advocacy Office would like to thank all the organisations and institutions that financially support our work.

2022

Income

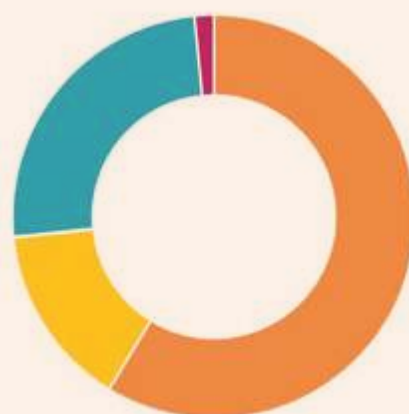
Sales & provided services	€ 10,784
Membership fees	€ 131,405
Donations	€ 75,890
Grants & other income	€ 493,599
Miscellaneous & operating income	€ 4,726
Total Income	€ 716,405



- Sales & provided services
- Membership fees
- Donations
- Grants & other income
- Miscellaneous operating income

Expenditure

Staff Costs	€ 456,251
Office Costs	€ 113,744
Fundraising Costs	€ 569
Activity Costs	€ 194,582
Other Costs	€ 12,008
Total Costs	€ 777,154



- Staff Costs
- Office Costs
- Fundraising Costs
- Activity Costs
- Other Costs



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