

One year FairTrade municipalities in Flanders

Do you also live in a FairTrade municipality?

Evolving from the “I’m sold” campaign: the model of the “FairTradeMunicipality” campaign is launched(February 2005).

We defy municipalities to fulfil six criteria and to convince many local organisations and authorities to choose for fair trade and durable agriculture: the council of the municipality, restaurants & pubs, organisations, companies, schools..... In a year’s time we wanted 10 municipalities to receive the title and 30 to apply for it. After a year it’s time for an evaluation. It turns out that 87 municipalities are applying, 10 of them obtained the title already!

Congratulations!

Following municipalities received already the nice FairTradeMunicipality sign as present; they managed to fulfil all the criteria and obtained the title: Gent, Zwijndrecht, Voeren, Hoogstraten, Kortrijk, and Lichtervelde. Moreover, following municipalities will also receive their title this month: Herent, Leuven, Herk-de-Stad en Heusden-Zolder. A nice spread over the five provinces of Flanders: 1 in East-Flanders, 2 in Antwerp, 2 in West-Flanders, 2 in Brabant and 3 in Limburg. Limburg clearly scores in Fair Trade.

In any case, felicitations go also to all the other municipalities still busy getting their title. Already the intention to try convincing various target groups in your municipality needs to be acknowledged.

Creativity all over!

The FairTradeMunicipality-hiker’s group from **Mechelen** likes parties. The volunteers developed the concept “party-master” together with Igemo (the association for the development of Mechelen and its surroundings). When serving snacks the “party-masters” highlight FairTrade- and biological products, seasonal and local ingredients and how to organise parties with minimal waste. These FairTrade “party-masters received a training in durable nourishment, theory and practise. This enhances people and personnel from the municipality to choose for durable products and at the same time they learn how our food choices impact the environment.

The 6 th. grade classes of all schools of **Herent** visited the world-shop and played there the acquaintance game. As a result all these young people are now familiar with the how’s and why’s of fair trade.

In all of **Middelkerke**, three advertisement towers, three meters tall, highlighted the campaign “I’m sold”. All public events related to the campaign are thus strongly promoted. In **Middelkerke** everybody must have seen these. The towers are located in central locations in the city (walking and bicycle paths).

Since 5 years the non-profit-organisation “Artikel 27” is pioneering FairTrade art in **Heusden –Zolder**. An annual exhibition with an art sale and various workshops support their activity. Up to now Heusden-Zolder has no world-shop. That’s why the FairTradeMunicipality-hiker’s group organises, during this exhibition, a FairTrade-shop offering the visitors artisan products and a fair cup of coffee in a FairTrade-pub.

Also **Leuven** managed to become FairTradeMunicipality. Representatives from Platform Local Agenda 21, Oxfam-Worldshops and Vredeseilanden supplied the participating pubs and restaurants a sticker for their windows reading “If you are sold, buy here”. This indicates to customers that they offer fair products.

In **Eeklo**, after their show, the musical brothers Walschaert from Kommil Foo came and listened to the FairTradeMunicipality initiative, they were kindly willing to take place before the camera. The two youngest worldshopkeepers really enjoyed it (see picture).

Not only Mechelen, but also its partner city, Sucre in Bolivia goes full steam for the title FairTradeMunicipality. Small scale coffee farmers, local markets, fair souvenirs..... the Latin version of FairTradeMunicipality is born. With the title, Sucre wants to prove that the whole city implements FairTrade, durable production and consumption. As such the city counsel is considering purchasing “fair milk” from a cooperative of small-scale milk farmers. Moreover the city wants to establish a market of local producers and stimulate tourists to bring home fair souvenirs.

Potential

In the meantime we are wondering how to continue. What can municipalities do more once they have the title? What are our long-term goals? We noticed that we launched a campaign which still has a lot of potential, whether it be linked or not to the “I’m sold” campaign. We keep you informed!

Did this article inspire you? You find much more on www.ikbenverdocht.be

Karin Hanus-Campaign service

Conceivable illustration:

Karin also mentioned an announcement for a training on March 25 which might have appeared in a former edition of the WW-krant.

	Candidate	Title	Total
West-Flanders:	14	2	16
East-Flanders:	20	1	21
Antwerp:	20	2	22
Vlaams-Brabant:	14	2	16
Limburg:	8	3	11
Brussels:	1	-	1
Total	77	10	87