

WGIR05 Fair Trade Wales

Senedd Cymru | Welsh Parliament

[Pwyllgor Diwylliant, Cyfathrebu, y Gymraeg, Chwaraeon, a Chysylltiadau Rhyngwladol](#) | [Culture, Communications, Welsh Language, Sport, and International Relations Committee](#)

[Strategaeth Ryngwladol Llywodraeth Cymru](#) | [Welsh Government's International Strategy](#)

Ymateb gan: Masnach Deg Cymru | Evidence from: Fair Trade Wales

1. What is your relationship, if any, to the International Strategy?

Fair Trade Wales aims to support, grow and promote the Fair Trade Movement in Wales. We are part of the Fair Trade global movement that puts people and the planet before profit. Fair Trade takes a holistic approach by connecting producers and consumers through making supply chains more transparent and providing better choices for shopping responsibly. Fair Trade is referenced specifically a number of times in the Welsh Government's International Strategy, for example on page 8 of the strategy one of the commitments made in order to establish Wales as a globally responsible nation is to:

Cement our reputation as a Fair Nation – a nation committed to Fair Trade, Fair Work and Fair Play, especially through our work on equality.

Wales was the world's first Fair Trade Nation, and achieved this status in 2008. Fair Trade Wales has worked with the Welsh and Scottish Governments, the Scottish Fair Trade Forum and others to update the criteria. These have been agreed by the Welsh Government this year and are available here:

<https://fairtrade.wales/2024/09/fair-trade-nation-a-refresh-of-the-criteria-measures-and-indicators-and-assessment-process/>

2. What are your views on the Welsh Government's International Strategy – what's worked well and any areas for improvement?

The statement of intent in the current strategy, and the three core ambitions, including the aim to establish Wales as a globally responsible nation, have set a positive tone and provided the hook on which to hang action. The International

Strategy references the Fair Trade Nation criteria, and this commitment needs to continue and be built on in the future.

Refreshed Fair Trade Nation criteria have been agreed this year by the Welsh Government.

The new Fair Trade Nation criteria are:

1. there is widespread awareness of Fair Trade;
2. there is significant engagement with Fair Trade across different sectors of society;
3. there is consumption and production of Fair Trade products;
4. there is political support and engagement with Fair Trade;
5. inequalities in global trade and society are challenged by Fair Trade.

In support of the criteria, and especially point 5, we suggest that the statement concerning the intergovernmental relations review, which the current strategy envisages will ensure better engagement about international matters, particularly trade, could be a lot stronger. There is a powerful case for a more formalised role for devolved nations in trade policy making. For example the Trade Justice Movement says:

‘There are a number of well-established proposals that could strengthen the place of devolved governments in UK trade negotiations.’

(Trade Justice Movement ‘UK Trade Policy: why good scrutiny matters’ May 2023 p 12)

https://www.tjm.org.uk/documents/reports/TJM_UK-trade-policy_why-good-scrutiny-matters_May-2023.pdf

In a future strategy there should be reference made more strongly to imports, to the need for support for ethical production, and for the Welsh Government to use whatever levers it can to push for ethical supply chains.

The Welsh Government should press for Free Trade Agreements to encourage shared pursuit of global decarbonisation ambitions and to incentivise good quality work. Sustainability and environmental chapters should be enforceable

The Future Generations Commissioner’s global responsibility commitment is welcome and needs to continue and be built on in a future strategy. The

International Strategy is an opportunity to cross reference and give coherence to the many ways in which activities, including policies, in Wales are relevant to international considerations. An example of this is the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act.

3. What are your views on the Welsh Government's priority international relationships for 2022-25?

4. What are your views on the availability of information on the Welsh Government's international activities and delivery of the strategy?

5. In your view, what information on the Welsh Government's international activities should be in the public domain?

6. What are your views on how the Welsh Government's international activity is resourced?

It has been, and continues to be, vitally important to resource the Wales for Africa Programme. Fair Trade Wales receives funding through this programme, which also supports the achievement of funding from other sources. The resources available should match the ambition in the strategy, and through long term and sustained funding partnerships, really effective work can be carried out. It is key that there are sufficient funds made available, in a long term way, so that organisations such as our own have the ability to plan. Relationships take time to build, work in schools for example needs time and resources, and this is rewarded with engagement from communities. It was notable, for example, that the areas in Wales which responded most positively to our recent art competition for young people were those where active Fair Trade Groups had engaged in art projects with local schools over a number of years. Long term investment in such community awareness and action is vital to developing the reputation of Wales as a Fair Nation.

7. What priorities and priority relationships would you like to see included in the Welsh Government's approach to international relations beyond 2025?

8. Are there any other matters you would like to draw to the Committee's attention regarding the Welsh Government's international relations?

There is public support for Fair Trade and for this work. For example, Yougov research carried out this year for the Fairtrade Foundation found that 83% of people in Cardiff bought a Fairtrade product in the last year. There are Fair Trade groups working in their communities across Wales, raising awareness, gaining support from their local authorities, working with schools and universities. In supporting Fair Trade, and giving a clear message about this in the strategy and providing practical support, the Welsh Government is supporting an ethical approach to production and supply chains which matters to people in Wales. This work has never been more important, as climate change adds to the challenges faced by the farmers who produce the products we need and value in Wales
