



Cefnogr gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
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Fair Trade Nation

A refresh of the criteria, measures and indicators,
and assessment process

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Background

In 2006, in the early years of devolution and at a time of high profile campaigning on the issues of global poverty and inequality, civil society and the governments of Scotland and Wales joined together in a shared commitment. Both countries pledged to become the world's first Fair Trade Nations, and an agreement was reached on criteria and additional desirable objectives for Fair Trade Nation status. In 2008, Wales achieved Fair Trade Nation status and in 2013 Scotland also achieved the status. Fair Trade Nation status was seen as a way of adding value to Fair Trade campaigns by providing a) a mechanism for Fair Trade campaigners to have greater influence on a national level; b) a lever that can be used to help drive further change; c) a mandate for government action and a mechanism to hold government to account and d) a view of the commitment to being a Fair Trade Nation as a commitment to continuous change – a journey rather than an endpoint.

Developing the criteria

While there has been a level of interest in other nations and regions for the concept of Fair Trade Nations, so far, Scotland and Wales remain the only Fair Trade Nations. In 2016, attention turned to potentially expanding the number of Fair Trade Nations and the need to revise the existing criteria. A meeting was held in Glasgow, attended by representatives from Fair Trade Organisations in Canada, the Netherlands, Northern Ireland, Poland, Scotland, Sweden, and Wales. They met to discuss what had been done and what might be developed to promote the principles of Fair Trade through Fair Trade Nations and Regions campaigns. A further meeting was held the following year at the International Fair Trade Towns Conference in Saarbrücken, where attendees further developed a joint position statement. This statement outlined eight key points of shared understanding, summarising the agreements reached in Glasgow and Saarbrücken:

1. Fair Trade Nation and Region campaigns need to be organic, inclusive and grassroots-led. Where such campaigns have emerged, it has been led by campaigners' demands to take action to the 'next' level
2. There needs to be an added value in having a Fair Trade Nation or Region campaign
3. A Fair Trade Nation or Region campaign has to be a dynamic process, an opportunity for further change, a pioneering journey, and a platform to campaign for further action
4. It has a leadership and coordinating role offering a space to bring together campaigners, civil society and policy-makers
5. While there is a desire to have a shared understanding of the concept

and value of Fair Trade Nations and Regions, it is essential to any Fair Trade Nation or Region that it is relevant and sensitive to its own cultural, social and political setting. ‘Basic’ guidelines might be developed representing areas where it might be expected Fair Trade Nations and Regions would be active. However, the detail of guidelines would need to be relevant and specific to the particular nation or region

6. While there is a desire to move forward together in cooperation in developing the concept of Fair Trade Nations and Regions, there is a recognition that as a grassroots movement, the nature and character of individual campaigns cannot be determined by any external actors
7. Central consideration should be given to Fair Trade producers in any understanding of Fair Trade Nations and Regions, acknowledging the significant differences between nations and regions that are more consumers or producers of Fair Trade products
8. The Sustainable Development Goals/the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should be used to frame our understanding and development of the model of Fair Trade Nations and Regions

The Saarbrücken statement also endorsed “areas to be explored for ‘basic’ guidelines” – a set of six categories that might form the basis for developing revised criteria. These categories were:

1. Community engagement and awareness, including the relationship between Fair Trade Towns campaigns and Fair Trade Nations and Regions campaigns
2. Political engagement and support
3. Availability and purchasing of Fair Trade
4. General awareness of Fair Trade
5. Activities supporting Fair Trade across different sectors of society
6. Trading relations of Nations and Regions.

Subsequent discussions considered evolving the fifth category (activities supporting Fair Trade across different sectors of society) into a broader category on equality and inclusivity. Consensus also emerged in Saarbrücken that further work was needed on how Fair Trade Nation status

would be assessed.

In 2018 the Welsh Government requested Fair Trade Wales review Fair Trade Nation status, a review which culminated in the Fair Trade Wales report "Fair Trade Nation". This report was the subject of discussion at a series of events held in Cardiff in 2018. An international delegation was brought together to further reflect on the Saarbrücken position statement, from which a Memorandum of Understanding (based on the Saarbrücken text) was agreed upon.

The dialogue around revising the criteria slowed during the global pandemic. However, in 2021 the process regained impetus when the Welsh and Scottish Governments supported Fair Trade Wales and the Scottish Fair Trade Forum to engage with stakeholders internationally to refresh the Fair Trade Nation criteria to better reflect Fair Trade ambitions for the future; strengthen the collaborative approach with potential stakeholders to ensure that new criteria can be applied by administrations internationally; and enhance the assessment process of the criteria to ensure that claims are meaningful and robust.

Throughout 2022 and 2023, Fair Trade Wales and the Scottish Fair Trade Forum led a consultation and engagement process with key stakeholders in order to refresh the criteria. A review was undertaken by a consultant Steve Brooks. Following his review, a wide stakeholder engagement exercise was undertaken. Stakeholders involved in the engagement included Fair Trade organisations and campaigners globally and those with knowledge and experience of measuring activity, outcomes and impact. Those involved in this process included the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), WFTO-Africa and Middle East, WFTO-Europe, the Fair Trade Advocacy Office (FTAO), the Fairtrade Foundation, the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Fair Trade Small Producers and Workers (CLAC), Ethical Consumer, the Office for National Statistics, Scotland's International Development Alliance (SIDA), Soil Association, and Hub Cymru Africa. Input was also received from Dr Matthew Anderson of the University of Portsmouth.

This process led to the announcement of the refreshed criteria by Welsh and Scottish Government Ministers at the event in the Welsh Senedd in July 2023 marking 15 years of Wales having Fair Trade Nation status, and to

the publication of this document setting out measures and indicators and the assessment process.

Refreshed Fair Trade Nation criteria

A Fair Trade Nation is one where...

- 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.**

Proposed criteria, targets and evidence required

Below are the criteria and the proposed targets along with proposed measures and indicators. They have been drawn up following widespread consultation with stakeholders. These include a mixture of quantitative and qualitative evidence including polling research, case studies, narrative reports, collation of data from external sources, and documentary and desk-top research.

I. There is widespread awareness of Fair Trade

Awareness of Fair Trade is an essential basis for further engagement with, purchasing and production of Fair Trade. Awareness in itself is a positive foundation and shows successful promotion of the concept.

Targets

50% of the population are aware of Fair Trade.

At each renewal, this population number must increase until it reaches 75%, at which point

it needs to be at least maintained.

Evidence

A quantitative assessment carried out through a poll or research company.

This measure could have an optional ‘individual support’ measure, and therefore nations could choose to measure individuals’ engagement through polling and use of the Development Engagement Lab’s engagement triangle.

Engagement triangle

1. Totally Disengaged
2. Marginally Engaged
3. Informationally Engaged - Sharing stories via social media or signing petitions or writing to their MP or political representative.
4. Behaviourally Engaged - donating, volunteering for development NGOs, attending events.
5. Fully Engaged

2. There is significant engagement with Fair Trade across different sectors of society

Engagement goes beyond simple awareness and requires involvement with Fair Trade including activities promoting further awareness, purchasing and production of Fair Trade. In order for engagement to be deemed significant at the nation level, it needs to be geographically widespread and also across different sectors of society. Whereas criterion I is focused on individual awareness, this criterion is based on collective/organisational/group engagement. Each nation through their coordinating body would need to define their definition of engagement and its significance in line with their nation’s social, cultural, economic, and political context.

Targets

50% of regions/municipalities/cantons/local authorities have Fair Trade activity going on in them

National activity and engagement in at least three of the following six areas: Public, private, third/voluntary sector, education & youth, arts & culture, and civil society.

Evidence

Evidence provided by the nation's Fair Trade coordinating body. This could include:

- Number of communities actively promoting Fair Trade;
- Number of education establishments engaged with Fair Trade including the number engaged through Fair Trade schemes for schools, colleges and universities and activities including involving Fair Trade in wider activities such as global citizenship teaching and learning;
- Levels of public sector engagement with Fair Trade in policy and activities;
- Private sector purchasing and promotion of Fair Trade; third/voluntary and civil society promotion and purchasing of Fair Trade;
- Use of Fair Trade products at arts and culture events and venues and promotion of Fair Trade to the arts and culture sectors.

This could be shown through:

- Number of places with Fairtrade status, or that are active in promoting Fair Trade including digital campaigning;
- Case studies of groups and organisations carrying out activity; social media, press and broadcast media;
- Using social auditing principles;
- Polling data;
- Assessing activity on a scale from 1-5 from highly insignificant to highly significant.

3. There is consumption and production of Fair Trade products

The production, supply, purchasing and consumption of Fair Trade products is central to the success of Fair Trade and contributes to Sustainable Development Goal 12. Some nations have traditionally had a greater role in either production or consumption. There is a trend towards more nations globally having involvement in both production and consumption. However, currently most nations remain involved significantly more in one than the other. There is no one established measure of production or consumption but there are a number of useful indicators.

Targets

- Consumption – Maintaining/growing level of consumption of Fair Trade products based on established benchmark OR setting a benchmark if a nation has not set one prior to the assessment.

- Production - Maintaining/growing level of production of Fair Trade products based on established benchmark OR setting a benchmark if a nation has not set one prior to the assessment.

Evidence

The best possible relevant available data and information to be collated which may include:

- The best possible market data (where available) showing levels of production/purchasing;
- Consumer research on reported purchasing including claimed purpose and active choice;
- Public sector procurement reporting showing levels of Fair Trade procurement;
- Campaign data where it might be available showing availability of Fair Trade products;
- Number of Fair Trade or ethical shops selling Fair Trade products;
- Number of businesses producing Fair Trade products; number of registered Fairtrade or verified Fair Trade producer organisations or producers;
- Amount of Fairtrade price/premium paid or tonnage sold on Fairtrade terms by producer groups.

4. There is political support and engagement with Fair Trade

Political support and engagement at a national level and across local government is an essential part of being a Fair Trade Nation. There is an available typology for assessing public policy commitments to Fair Trade:

Targets

The administration of the whole geographic area must achieve type 4 of public policy typology (see above), increasing, in some way every renewal, up to achieving type 1.

The legislature and at least 50% of local governments/ authorities/ municipalities must engage with Fair Trade

Evidence

A report, with evidence of achieving the above target including:

- Government - inclusion of Fair Trade in government policy - measured through

policy/strategy documents, government website and comms, support for Fair Trade national network

- Parliament - Motions, debates, questions in parliaments - measured through parliamentary record and also public support from parliamentarians
- Local government - Motions, statements of support, support for Fair Trade groups and activities locally, inclusion in procurement, support of councillors etc, activities etc.

5. Inequalities in global trade and society are challenged by Fair Trade

Fair Trade is wider than Fair Trade products and a definition of Fair Trade includes 'campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.' Fair Trade contributes to wider social justice campaigns challenging global inequalities. This criterion is focussed on that contribution to wider challenges to inequalities. A narrative report by the national coordinating body would allow for the flexibility needed for each administration as their culture, history and important issues of the day all vary.

Target

Fair Trade activities challenge at least two areas of wider inequality

Evidence

A report that highlights which inequalities in global trade and society have been challenged and how they have been challenged including key case studies created through stakeholder engagement. Areas that could be included are:

- Anti-racism
- Climate Crisis,
- Colonial legacies,
- Cultural erosion,
- Gender imbalances,
- Global inequalities,
- Historical prejudices,
- Minority languages,
- Trade justice,
- Resilience of producers through the pandemic.

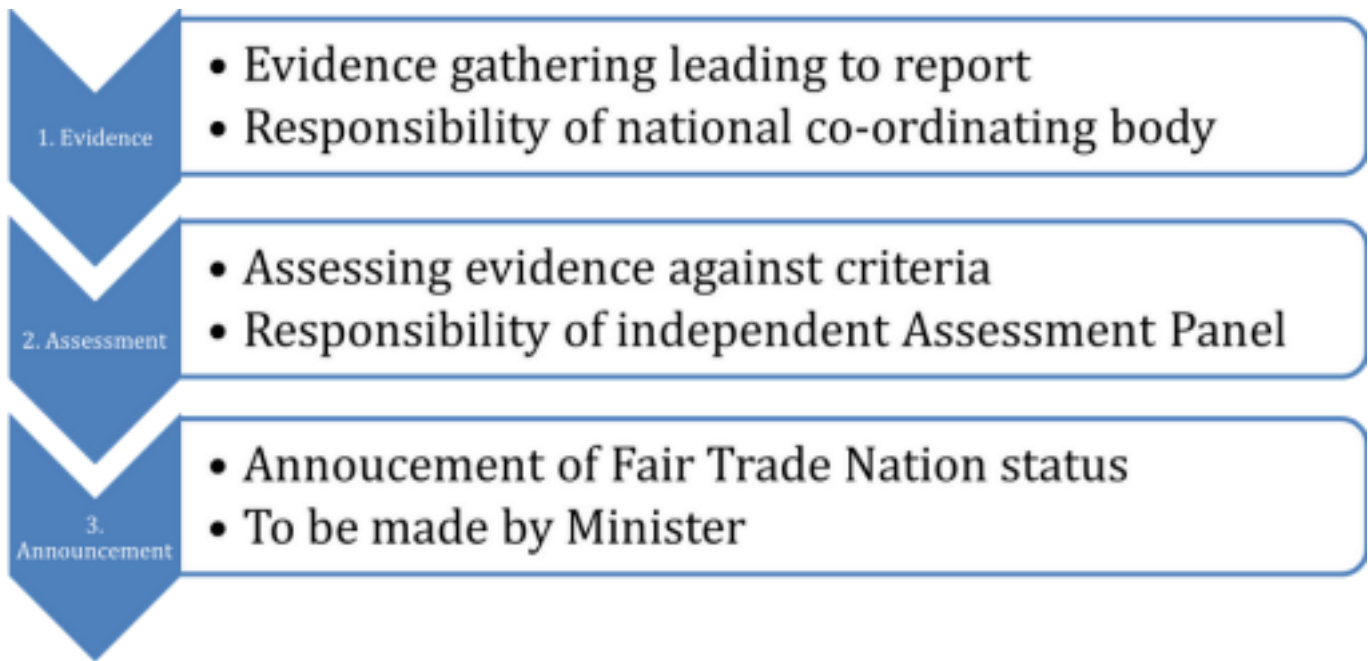
Assessment process proposal

The independent consultant who reviewed the Fair Trade Nation criteria highlighted the assessment process carried out in Scotland in 2012/13 and 2016/17 as “a case study on how a nation can assess its progress against the criteria in a way that is transparent and independent.”

The process was grounded in social accounting and auditing techniques. The Scottish Fair Trade Forum as the national co ordinating body was responsible for drafting the report which detailed the evidence of performance and impact. This involved data gathered through polling, desk research, surveys and interviews, documentary research and working with the movement to develop case studies. This report was scrutinised by an independent Assessment Panel that was gathered together by the Forum. The Assessment Panel reviewed the evidence in detail, requesting additional information or clarification as and when needed to assess the report against the Fair Trade Nation criteria. The Assessment Panel on both occasions included a broad spectrum of representation including individuals with expertise in social accounting and auditing, academic study, Fair Trade organisations and public bodies.

The Assessment Report was published and publicly available for scrutiny. The report was presented to the relevant Minister for an announcement to be made on achieving or maintaining Fair Trade Nation status.

This process separates the evidence gathering (carried out by the co-ordinating body); the assessment process (carried out by an independent Assessment Panel); and the announcement (made by the relevant Minister). The proposal is to use this same process but to include the necessity for representation from producer organisations in any Assessment Panel. This should enshrine within the process the principles of transparency, independence, and the involvement of actors from low and middle-income countries.



Previously, there has been no agreed process for renewal. It is necessary to find a balance between ensuring regularly that the criteria continue to be met and not to cause a drain on resources by carrying out assessment too regularly. We recommend that renewal should take place every 5-10 years. This would allow for a level of confidence in the robustness of the assessment process and flexibility for different nations to carry out the assessment process within financial and time resources.