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Fairtrade – An International Movement

Fairtrade is a movement built upon principles of international co-operation and solidarity. It grew within the UK as a grassroots movement- fought for by those who believed the inequity in the trade system should exist no longer. It was soon realised that to help those in developing countries we needed not simply to provide aid, but to revolutionise the system of trade. Only with fair trade would a lasting positive impact be made.

That was the 1960's as part of the 'Trade not Aid' movement. What about now?

If anything, trade has become more international as the decades have passed. With advances in technology the world is on our doorstep. No longer can we exist in 'splendid isolation'- what happens in other countries can affect us; and our actions can impact upon others.

Within Europe there has been great change, supported by political will. In 1994 the European Parliament adopted the "Resolution on promoting fairness and solidarity in North South trade" realising the problem – and acknowledging solidarity and fair trade as part of the solution.

It is this pan-European approach -one of international co-operation- that brings me to report on where the Fairtrade movement is now.

Earlier this month Lille, twinned with Leeds, played host to a large international Fairtrade conference "*forum national du commerce équitable*". I was asked to speak at the conference on behalf of Fairtrade Leeds. There I joined speakers not just from France, but also from places such as Morocco and Palestine. I shared our experiences from Leeds: talking about how we became a Fairtrade City; the nature of the movement in the UK; and about international co-operation.

As well as hearing first hand from one of the newest Fairtrade producers - makers of Palestinian olive oil - I also got a chance to discuss the similarities and differences between the Fairtrade movement in the UK and France.

In the UK the Fairtrade movement is just that, a movement. It came about after years of grassroots activism and organisation. You only have to look at Fairtrade Towns – Garstang,



this issue

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Latest News

Eurovision Song Contest

This year's Eurovision Song Contest was won by Germany's Lena Meyer-Landrut. Her song "Satellite" gained 246 points and beat 24 other countries to the trophy. Congratulations!

Languages

You can improve your conversation skills, learn about other cultures and meet new people at our new adult language exchange.

Join us for a drop-in session on 22 June, 1pm to 3.30pm at Leeds Central Library.

Find more details on page 2 or on

http://europedirectleeds.org.uk/?page_id=1277

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http://europa.eu/epso/index_en.htm - new competitions open in July!

100+ places to learn a language online
<http://www.c4lpt.co.uk/Showcase/100languagelearning.html>

Art Museums in Europe
<http://www.artcyclopedia.com/museums-int.html>

unprompted by others, set about making itself the first Fairtrade Town - to see how our movement has maintained its bottom-up approach. From speaking to those involved in Fairtrade in France it would seem that for them, the opposite is the case. At present it seems to be led by government at various local and regional levels.

France has some of its own unique challenges to overcome. Take for instance Fairtrade wine. Here it is hugely popular. In France however things are a bit different! It's pitching against French wine, not only hugely popular throughout France, but also an economically important export.

But putting those differences aside, the need for international co-operation and solidarity has never been more vital. I attended a workshop on public procurement with representatives from Leeds City Council and Ville de Lille. It was clear that many of the problems we face here when it comes to sustainable procurement are exactly the same in France, as we fall under the same regulations. As recent as 20th May we've seen the European Parliament, in its "New Developments in Public Procurement" report, call on the EU Commission to support Fair Trade in public procurement.

With such a need for international co-operation across Europe, it was pleasing to see such strong international relations between Lille and Leeds - particularly on the topic of Fairtrade. Only with an international outlook will we achieve further reform to bring about fair trade.

Thanks to Ian Adderley, Chair, Leeds Fair Trade <http://www.fairtradeleeds.org.uk/>

Learn a new language this year!

Do you want to practice your language skills? Be more fluent in conversation? Learn about other cultures?

We are passionate about languages here at Europe Direct Leeds. Between us, we speak six languages and we know more staff in the building who speak further languages. So it's always exciting to get together for events and learn a few words in a foreign language.

This is especially useful during holiday time!

After talking to some colleagues from Europe Direct Waterford in Ireland (who have inspired us!) we would like to introduce **language exchange sessions**, where you can team up with other learners and native speakers, chat and improve your linguistic skills.

What languages do you want to learn, which ones do you already know? When is the best time for you? Find out more details plus contact form on http://europedirectleeds.org.uk/?page_id=1277 or just email us at europedirect@leeds.gov.uk.

Not sure what benefits learning a new language would bring? The EU gives examples on http://ec.europa.eu/education/languages/language-learning/doc171_en.htm