



OUR
impact

Friends of the Earth Europe
Annual Review 2019


Amigos de
la Tierra
Internacional



Friends of the Earth Europe Annual General Meeting, Bulgaria, 2019. © FoEE

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PLASTICS, COP25, GAS, NATURE, ISDS			



WINNING CHANGE IN A WORLD IN FLUX



JAGODA MUNIĆ,
DIRECTOR, FRIENDS
OF THE EARTH EUROPE
MAY 2020

I write this from a new world. It is not one anybody could have imagined in 2019. Our societies and our daily lives are suspended mid-air, thrown there by the coronavirus pandemic. Yet in many ways, our past campaigning has laid the grounds for potential epoch-defining changes to come.

Coronavirus has touched us all – but far from equally. It has brought particular crisis, and death, to many of the poorest and most disadvantaged among us. Friends of the Earth expresses heartfelt gratitude to key workers who, despite facing new risks on top of long-standing poor working conditions, are keeping society running.

I have seen this pandemic reinforce our core values. Though physically distanced, our belief in a caring compassionate world within environmental limits has grown, and our shared values of solidarity, empathy and equality have never felt stronger.

A new era is on the horizon. Already we can see that old assumptions are no longer tenable: such as the idea that humans are separate from nature, that economic growth is more important than anything else, that planes will always fly, that neoliberalism is inevitable, that states cannot act decisively and radically in the face of emergency. New normalities are establishing. Let's make sure that they go in the right direction. This is a moment to transform our world and our unjust planet-killing economies – we must seize it.

Social movements are now well placed to help bring about a fairer sustainable world. Lessons have been learned from the failures of the last economic crisis. There is unprecedented consensus on the need for radical change to our economic system. And 2019 saw by far the biggest momentum the environmental movement has ever seen.

Friends of the Earth was diligently working – sometimes supportively from behind the scenes – at the centre of it. Buoyed by a wave of young people walking out of school, Friends of the Earth helped support the biggest protests for the climate ever seen, rocking public consciousness. We were a founder of the coalition that finally persuaded the world's biggest public bank, the European Investment Bank, to ditch funding for fossil fuels. Around 100 actions across 23 EU countries brought citizens and farmers together to demand a fair and healthy food system. And Friends of the Earth mobilised for European elections that put sustainability concerns at the heart of EU debate – and resulted in a dramatic shift in policy with the European Green Deal. Rising public consciousness was reflected in our highest ever media outreach.

We have much to be proud of, and a network that through coronavirus continues to be strong and connected to the grassroots. Big risks lie ahead. But I feel certain that, if we hold on together to the values of solidarity and care, we have the chance to rebuild the better, fairer, sustainable world we need.

/ THE EUROPEAN ARM OF FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL, THE WORLD'S LARGEST GRASSROOTS ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK

/ THE EUROPEAN NETWORK'S REPRESENTATIVE AT THE HEART OF THE EUROPEAN UNION CAMPAIGNING

FOR SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS TO BENEFIT THE PLANET, PEOPLE AND OUR FUTURE, INFLUENCING EUROPEAN AND EU POLICY AND RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

/ THE LARGEST GRASSROOTS

ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK IN EUROPE UNITING MORE THAN 30 NATIONAL MEMBER ORGANISATIONS AND THOUSANDS OF LOCAL ACTIVIST GROUPS ACROSS EUROPE

/ THE PEOPLE'S VOICE AT THE HEART OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

MOBILISATION



MOBILISATION

A MOVEMENT FOR FAIR, HEALTHY FOOD

Around 100 actions across 23 countries took place on mobilisation days for Good Food and Good Farming. All the events were in support of major reform of the EU’s Common Agricultural Policy – CAP, to support a transition away from unsustainable agriculture. The action days culminated with a 1000-strong protest outside the European Parliament in Strasbourg of citizens and farmers demanding a fair and healthy food system which allows local communities and biodiversity to thrive.

“EU POLITICIANS NEED TO LISTEN TO SMALL-SCALE SUSTAINABLE FARMERS WHO CAN HELP FIX THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND THE BREAKDOWN OF THE NATURAL WORLD.”

STANKA BECHEVA, FOOD CAMPAIGNER
IN *IRISH EXAMINER*

MOVEMENT TO END CORPORATE PRIVILEGE

847,000 Europeans people signed the Stop ISDS petition to reject a private court system for corporations and demand a better alternative to hold corporations to account. A week of action saw stunts and protests across Europe to get the message over loud and clear – we reject ISDS and corporate impunity.

We contrasted the EU’s pursuit of Investor State Dispute Settlement – ISDS, and other variants, with its lack of engagement in negotiations for a binding treaty on transnational corporations and human rights. Heeding our calls, the EU then took a much more proactive approach at the UN Binding Treaty on Business and Human Rights negotiations in Geneva.

847k

PEOPLE REJECTED ISDS & CORPORATE IMPUNITY

Left: Protestors in Strasbourg demanding the European Parliament act for good food and farming.

© Good Food Good Farming



Handing over our demands for an end to ISDS to European Commission Vice-President Timmermans.

© FoEE / Lode Saidane



WE ALL HAVE THE RIGHT TO ENERGY

Over 100 activists, trade unionists, campaigners and ordinary citizens came together in Brussels at the 'Right to Energy Forum' to debate and unite for energy solutions for all.

The severity of energy poverty in Europe was laid bare in our first-of-its-kind EU-wide ranking – released with the Right to Energy coalition. We showed 17 EU countries have significant levels of energy poverty; it is most prevalent in South and

East Europe, and household expenditure on energy is rising, especially for low-income families.

In recognition of the benefits of energy saving for people and planet, the European Green Deal foresees a Renovation Wave. The key is now to achieve strong legislation to phase-out substandard housing.

Below: Environmentalists, trade unionists and anti-poverty campaigners unite at the Right to Energy Forum in Brussels. © FoEE



“AS LONG AS THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION SUPPORTS NEW FOSSIL GAS PROJECTS... A ZERO-CARBON EUROPE WILL BE BEYOND REACH.”

MOLLY WALSH, CLIMATE JUSTICE CAMPAIGNER IN *EU OBSERVER*



The launch of the Save Bees and Farmers ECI outside the European Commission headquarters. © FoEE / Lode Saidane

A DIFFERENT AGRICULTURAL MODEL IS POSSIBLE!

We launched a European Citizens' Initiative to support farmers, and save bees and nature. Backed by more than a hundred environment, farmer, organic and beekeeper organisations, the petition calls for a phase-out of synthetic pesticides by 2035. Toxic agrochemicals have brought the ecosystem to the brink of collapse. The solution is agriculture without toxic chemicals. Our goal is one million signatures so that the European Commission and the European Parliament will be obliged to address our demands.



.....
"A TARGET 30 YEARS IN THE FUTURE
IN 2050 DOES NOT REPRESENT
EMERGENCY ACTION."

SUSANN SCHERBARTH, CLIMATE JUSTICE
CAMPAIGNER IN *THE GUARDIAN*
.....



Left: Students lead climate strikes in Ljubljana. © FoE Slovenia / Nejc Trampus



Above Left: Vast crowds for the climate in Edinburgh. © Richard Dixon
Above: Young women join 270,000 in Berlin. © BUND / Jörg Farys

EUROPE A NEVER-SEEN-BEFORE YEAR FOR CLIMATE PROTESTS

Mass climate protests hit the streets of every European country, uniting millions of students, workers and adults, as part of the largest mobilisations for the climate ever seen worldwide. They demanded urgent, massive and transformational action for a safe fossil-free future.

We stood with the young people on strike – for whom the future is so uncertain and who will have to live with the consequences of previous generations' inaction. And we were inspired by the youth-led movements lighting a beacon of hope in times of climate crisis. Friends of the Earth and Young Friends of the Earth member groups supported the strikes in myriad ways.



Left: Vienna: We fight for beauty. © GLOBAL 2000 Right: Global climate strikes hit London. © FoE EWNI

Friends of the Earth groups organised workshops for students, offered the strikers space and infrastructure for meetings, provided expertise to shape demands, produced guides for adult allies, set-up a well-being area with snacks and drinks, gave materials, and covered costs for leaflets and posters. In many places our groups helped with logistics, connected young people with the media, and promoted and amplified the protests through their channels.

In Netherlands Friends of the Earth mobilised for the country's largest ever climate strike. 40,000 people defied rain and wind to demand a fair climate policy.

Spain saw unprecedented mobilisations, of which Friends of the Earth was a key organiser, culminating with more than half a million people taking to the streets in December.

Young Friends of the Earth Germany helped bring about 270,000 people to a single demonstration in Berlin as part of a year-long mass movement of young people across Germany. And in August, with Young Friends of the Earth Europe, they helped organise Camp for [Future], a huge gathering of young activists from all Europe, in the coal-mining region in the west of Germany.

Friends of the Earth England Wales and Northern Ireland published an open letter in The Times newspaper signed by green and youth NGOs, academics and public figures in favour of the strike.



RESISTANCE



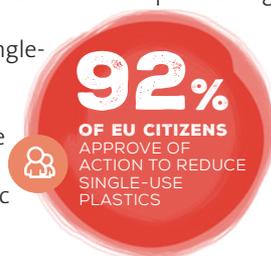
RESISTANCE

Working to stop a dangerous deal on carbon markets at the COP25 climate summit.
© Victor Barro / FoEI

REUSABLE SOLUTIONS TO PLASTIC POLLUTION

Our investigations proved that a faster transition to new consumption systems to halt the damage of single-use plastics is possible. We found that governments have the tools to boost reusable alternatives and slash wasteful single-use packaging and products. Our report 'Reusable Solutions' detailed how the new EU Directive on single-use plastics can be implemented to drive down plastic pollution and increase reuse.

With our national groups and allies we held a public event and met MEPs to share information and build strategies for implementing the findings of the research.



"ACTIVISTS, NGOS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES HAVE BEEN FIGHTING THIS USELESS PROJECT FOR YEARS – AND TODAY THEY'VE BEEN PROVED RIGHT,"

ANTOINE SIMON, GAS CAMPAIGNER IN EURACTIV

CARBON MARKETS DEFEATED... FOR NOW

Our international federation and Friends of the Earth Spain reacted quickly when a last-minute change of venue relocated the United Nations climate talks from Santiago to Madrid. The change of continent did not stop us putting Southern voices and social movements centre-stage. Inside the summit our delegation worked hard to expose the dangers of carbon markets and helped prevent a damaging deal on carbon markets being struck. On the outside we helped organise a march of half a million people on the streets of Madrid calling for climate justice.

MAJOR VICTORY AGAINST MIDCAT

A climate-damaging gas pipeline project between France and Catalonia was blocked by French energy regulators – a major win for campaigners. The €3 billion project had been prioritised for EU support but was refused on grounds of lack of necessity and high cost. Protests had taken place across France and Spain against the plans and the decision is a major victory for local resistance to fossil-fuel infrastructure. We keep up the pressure against climate-damaging gas projects which have no future in a Fossil Free Europe.



#SaveKresna – No motorway in Kresna Gorge, Bulgaria. © Ivan Donchev

NATURE PROTECTION ENFORCED

Pushed by our joint advocacy with other NGOs the European Commission launched a comprehensive suite of infringement cases against Member States for failure to implement EU nature protection laws – the Birds and Habitats Directives. One case concerned the biodiversity-rich Kresna Gorge in Bulgaria where the government has been trying to push through

destructive motorway plans. The Commission took a strong line to protect nature and endangered species leading the Bulgarian government to withdraw the funding application. This followed persistent resistance to the plans from Friends of the Earth Bulgaria and allies.

INTRA-EU ISDS KILLED

There will be no more investment arbitration cases within the EU.

This is after our ongoing work to remove the rights given to multinationals to claim damages through Investor State Dispute Settlement – ISDS mechanisms got results when the EU and Member States agreed to get rid of all Intra-EU Bilateral Investment Treaties (BITs). 190 such treaties were in existence. They all contained investment arbitration (ISDS) and therefore restricted governments' ability to enact laws in the interest of the public and the environment. The agreement followed a ruling by the European Court of Justice that ISDS by an EU-registered company against an EU Member State was illegal.

“EU GOVERNMENTS SHOULD TAKE THE PARIS AGREEMENT SERIOUSLY AND REFUSE TO NEGOTIATE WITH (THE US) ITS MOST PROMINENT HOLDOUT.”

MUTE SCHIMPF, TRADE CAMPAIGNER
IN *POLITICO*



Campaigners demand an end to ISDS outside the European Commission in Brussels, overseen by Lady Justice. © FoEE / Lode Saidane

TRANSFORMATION



YOUTH PLANS FOR A JUST TRANSITION

Young people came together for a three-day training in Aberdeen, Scotland on the theme of Just Transition as part of a series of events on working with affected communities organised by Young Friends of the Earth Europe groups. They looked specifically at how to transition away from oil while protecting workers' rights. Young people from Aberdeen gave crucial input on how to put the community at the heart of asks for a Just Transition. The young people took away analysis that a larger restructuring of the economy is needed to promote wellbeing instead of economic growth.

GETTING FOSSIL FUEL INTERESTS OUT OF POLITICS

We launched a new campaign for 'Fossil Free Politics' with the aim of cutting fossil fuel interests out of politics, so that climate policy is conducted entirely in the public interest. We launched with new research showing BP, Chevron, ExxonMobil, Shell, Total and their lobby groups have spent more than €251 million lobbying the EU since 2010. Already more than 230 organisations have backed our demands. And, in response to the campaign's call to reject partnerships with the fossil fuel industry, The Guardian announced it will no longer accept advertising from oil and gas companies.

www.fossilfreepolitics.org

In Aberdeen, Scotland young people plan for a Just Transition. © Young FoE Scotland

"WE MUST LISTEN TO THE MILLIONS OF YOUNG CLIMATE PROTESTERS ON OUR STREETS AND CUT FOSSIL FUELS OUT OF OUR POLITICS NOW."

MYRIAM DOUO, CORPORATE CAPTURE CAMPAIGNER IN AFP



A climate protest in Berlin.

© BUND / Jörg Farys



TURN-OUT IN
THE EUROPEAN
ELECTION ROSE
BY

50%

AMONG 16/18-24
YEAR OLDS.



A REAL GREEN DEAL?

Civil society at large succeeded in pushing climate change up the agenda of the European elections. All mainstream European political groups were forced to address sustainability and make climate pledges in the election debates.

Our member groups in 14 countries organised pre-election debates, events and materials to get-out-the-vote. Turn-out in the elections rose for the first time – and went up by a whopping 50% among 16/18-24 year olds.

The new European Commission took office under pressure to act on the planetary emergency. It responded, coming forward in just its second week with its 'European Green Deal'. This major environmental

package marks a new level of joined-up thinking and a change in tone in response to public concern. It acknowledges the direct impacts of Europe's resource over-consumption – a breakthrough for our work to reduce the EU's footprint. It promises a Just Transition Fund to help workers and communities make the shift to fossil free societies – a policy Friends of the Earth and trade unions have demanded for years. And it includes plans for a Renovation Wave to promote energy efficient buildings – something which can help rebuild the lives of energy poor citizens. But overall the package falls short. We continue to bring transformational solutions to strengthen the Green Deal and achieve the systemic change we need.

YOUTH SOLIDARITY FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Young people from around Europe took part in a training on food sovereignty and solidarity. It was led by La Via Campesina – the international movement of peasants. Hearing members of La Via Campesina give first-hand accounts of their struggles gave the young people insights into the problems with our food system and left them equipped and inspired to act in their respective countries. The event was just one in Young Friends of the Earth Europe's 'Growing Together' project.



Young people growing together in Malta.
© YFoEE

"WE'RE ON A RUNAWAY TRAIN TO ECOLOGICAL AND CLIMATE COLLAPSE AND THE EU COMMISSION IS GENTLY SWITCHING GEARS INSTEAD OF SLAMMING ON THE BRAKES." **JAGODA MUNIC**, DIRECTOR IN *REUTERS*

A FOSSIL-FREE EIB

The world's biggest public bank, the European Investment Bank (EIB), ditched funding for fossil fuels beyond 2021. In doing so, the bank – the lending arm of the European Union – became the first multilateral lender to end financing for most new fossil fuels projects. The bank announced it would now focus on investments with a long-term contribution to the EU decarbonisation plans for 2050.

Friends of the Earth Europe was a founder of the 'Fossil Free EIB' campaign which put public

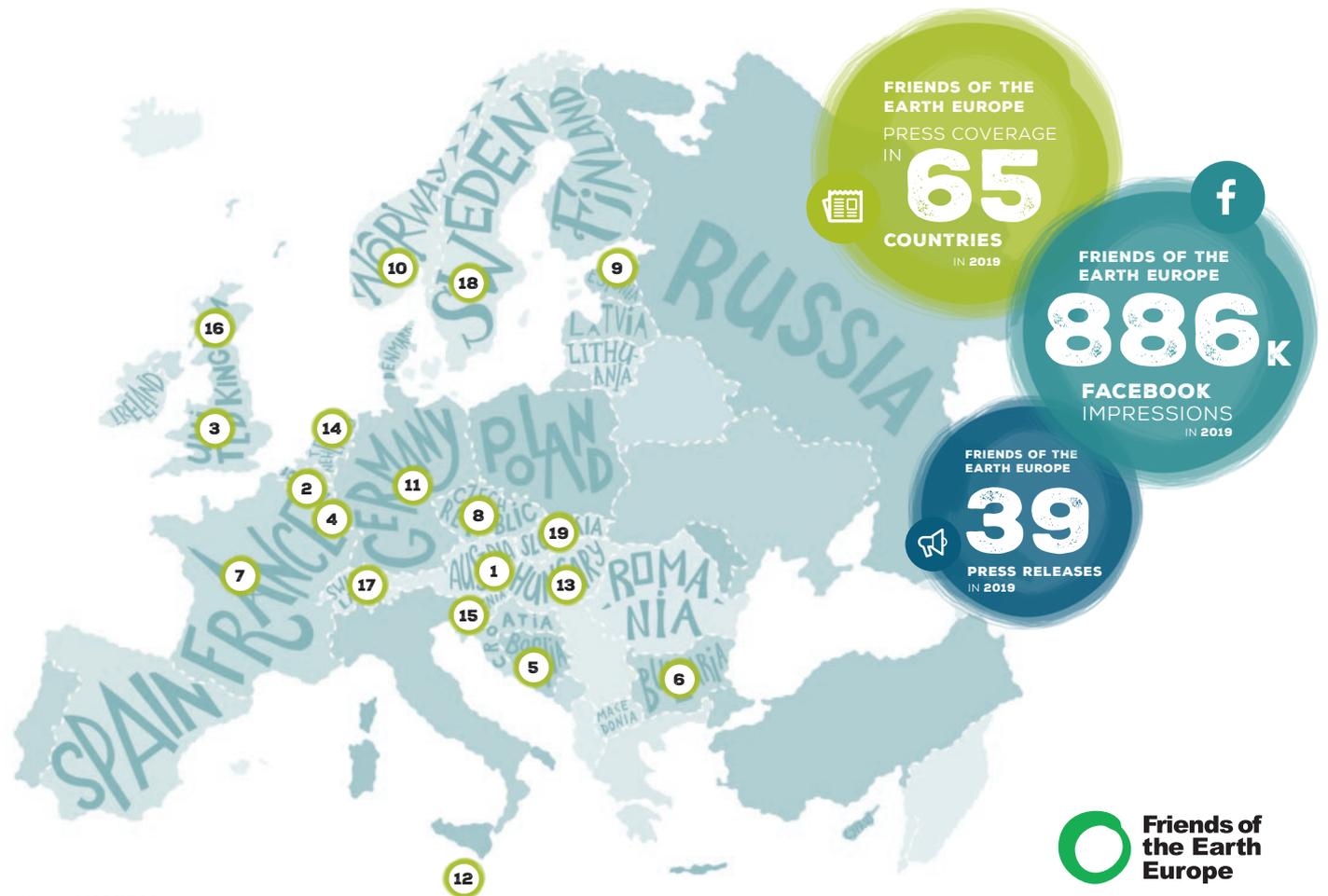
pressure on the bank to align all its lending with the objectives of the Paris Agreement.

This is a huge step towards a Fossil Free Europe. Yet, a dangerous loophole in the new lending policy could leave the door open to fossil gas projects which use so-called 'low-carbon gas' – a loosely-defined group of fuels which still cause considerable emissions. We're keeping up the campaign against financing of all fossil fuel infrastructure – including gas.

"IT IS LONG PAST TIME TO END PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR MORE OIL, COAL AND GAS PROJECTS."

COLIN ROCHE, FOSSIL FREE CAMPAIGNER
IN *THE FINANCIAL TIMES*





1 AUSTRIA
NO TO DANGEROUS NUCLEAR

More than a quarter of a million signatures collected by Friends of the Earth Austria helped stop the start-up of a nuclear reactor. The Mochovce 3 reactor, just over the border in Slovakia, has faced constant problems and multiple accidents since construction began 35 years ago. Friends of the Earth Austria alerted the media over evidence it obtained that the reactor was not safe to go into operation.

The start of the reactor has been permanently postponed unless international experts deem it safe.

Austrian activists outside the Slovak embassy.
© FoE Austria





Local anti-fracking campaigner
Tina Louise Rothery.

© FoE EWNI

3 ENGLAND, WALES AND NORTHERN IRELAND FRACKING STOPPED IN THE UK

After determined campaigning by local groups and NGOs, the UK government announced a moratorium on fracking in England (joining similar moves in Wales and Scotland). 8 years of protests, arrests, demonstrations, letters, emails, tears, and community organising culminated in a major victory. Friends of the Earth provided human, moral, legal, political and financial support to the incredible local groups who were on the frontline every day at the gates of the fracking site in Lancashire.

4 LUXEMBOURG WE CAN STILL SAVE NATURE

In response to the unprecedented threat of nature collapse, Friends of the Earth Luxembourg formed new powerful alliances with scientists and the youth climate movement to force the issue onto the political table. The partners supplemented the UN's global findings on biodiversity decline with specific information and demands for Luxembourg. On World Biodiversity Day they published a death notice for an extinct bird in one of the country's largest newspapers - prompting an emotional public outpouring. The message was that we can still save nature but only with fundamental change in our societal model and economic system.

2 BELGIUM (WALLONIA & BRUSSELS) BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

It was a year of reflection for Friends of the Earth Belgium (Wallonia), as they brought all their members together to build a new vision for the future. Through discussions and workshops on simple living, non-violent economy and a living earth, as well as other activities and decision-making processes, the whole network experienced the power of participative democracy and the importance of citizen empowerment at the local level.



Citizen empowerment in action in Belgium.
© FoE Belgium (Wallonia)



Celebrating 'Solarna Pecka'. © FoE Bosnia & Herzegovina

5 BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA PIONEERING SOLAR ENERGY VILLAGE

'Solarna Pecka' is the first citizen initiative to bring solar energy to rural Bosnia and Herzegovina. This ground-breaking crowdfunding scheme by Friends of the Earth exceeded its target, collecting more than €6000 from donors worldwide. The money raised will bring solar thermal collectors for hot water and photovoltaic panels for power generation to the remote village idyll of Pecka. What better present for the group's 20th anniversary than to lay the foundations of the country's first solar energy community?

6 BULGARIA SETBACK FOR NATURE-WRECKING MOTORWAY

Plans to build a nature-wrecking motorway through Kresna Gorge, Bulgaria's most biodiverse wildlife spot, suffered a setback. After countless petitions, community meetings, videos, investigations, and letters; the European Commission, the highway's funder, raised serious concerns

7 FRANCE TOTAL IN COURT

Friends of the Earth France made history by taking the fossil fuel giant Total to court in the first-ever legal case under France's new corporate vigilance law. They brought the case, together with four Ugandan associations, against Total for its oil mega-project in Uganda. The project threatens the health, livelihoods and human rights of local populations, and risks irreversible damage to the environment and the climate. The aim of the legal action is to prevent the violations from continuing and recurring for the tens of thousands of other Ugandan people.



Two local community leaders from Uganda go to court against Total. © FoE France

8 CZECH REPUBLIC RESCUING LIVING FORESTS

Czech forests face manifold threats which are only intensifying with the climate crisis. Friends of the Earth Czech Republic has been campaigning for a 'Forest Law' to better protect forests and allow more natural regeneration. More than 60,000 citizens put pressure on the hitherto inactive government via a petition, letters and meetings. The campaign gained wide support among the public and academia, and MPs finally agreed the new law to bring resilience and biodiversity back to these precious forests.



Campaigning for - and winning - a Forest Law in Czech Republic. © FoE Czech Republic

9 ESTONIA PARTNERS FOR A JUST TRANSITION

Friends of the Earth Estonia organised roundtables on Just Transition in a region of the country heavily dependent on the fossil fuel industry. A truly inclusive discussion took place for the first time between environmental organisations, industry, unions, local people and state representatives. The events built trust and lasting partnerships between local actors crucial to managing the transition in a socially fair way.



NORWAY

10 ARCTIC ISLANDS SAFEGUARDED

The sensitive arctic ecosystems of Norway's Lofoten Islands are finally safe from oil drilling, after Friends of the Earth Norway won the backing of all main political parties. Mass mobilisations and a festival outside the Labour Party's conference got the party, the last hold-out, to change its policy - effectively removing the possibility of oil drilling. The campaign built on huge youth climate uprisings led by Young Friends of the Earth Norway.

11 GERMANY AN END-DATE FOR COAL

Friends of the Earth Germany worked alongside many actors and movements to coordinate unprecedented climate protests, and helped force the government to plan to stop burning coal. A hard-fought compromise was reached to phase out coal by 2038 after negotiations between industry, trade unions, environmental NGOs, and affected regions. While this date comes too late, it was a success to get the government to agree to shut some of the dirtiest coal plants quickly, and Friends of the Earth Germany continues to do everything to move the end-date earlier.



Celebrating safety from drilling for the Norwegian Lofoten Islands. © Alva Førsund / Natur og Ungdom

MALTA

12 GREEN ISSUES GO BIG SCREEN

Choosing an artistic and audience-focused approach to highlight their campaigns, Friends of the Earth Malta organised the country's first environmental film festival, CineAmbjent. Hundreds of spectators enjoyed short films from around the globe dealing with the climate crisis, agriculture, plastic pollution, global inequalities, resilience, and relationships between people and nature. The festival served as a platform for community engagement and fostered lasting dialogue.

Massive climate protest in Berlin.
© BUND / Jörg Farys

13 HUNGARY CETA STUMBLES

Friends of the Earth Hungary has always opposed CETA - the controversial trade deal between the EU and Canada. Without warning in 2019, the Hungarian government brought the deal to its National Assembly for ratification. Friends of the Earth Hungary immediately started working for the postponement of the vote - alerting allies, contacting members of parliament, talking to the media. Within days the ratification proposal was withdrawn, giving hope to the struggle to block this damaging deal at the EU level.

NETHERLANDS

14

17,000 PEOPLE SUMMON SHELL TO COURT

More than 17,000 people in the Netherlands became co-plaintiffs in Friends of the Earth Netherlands' climate case against Shell - one of the world's biggest polluters. 400 people turned up in person to Shell's headquarters to deliver a legal summons challenging Shell to reduce its emissions as quickly as possible. The plaintiffs argue that Shell is threatening human rights by knowingly undermining the world's chances to keep warming below 1.5C.



Some of the 17,000 plaintiffs deliver a giant summons to Shell.
© FoE Netherlands

SLOVENIA

15

THE MAJORITY CALLS FOR ACTION

The largest climate campaign in the history of the country was launched by Friends of the Earth Slovenia and 3 other environmental NGOs. Called 'The majority calls for action' (Večina pričakuje ukrepe), the campaign was supported by nearly 13,000 individuals and over 250 organisations representing over a million people. It brings together everyone from beekeepers to firefighters and academics to urge the government to recognise climate breakdown as a crisis and urgently address it.



A 10-hour reading outside the vote on Scotland's new Climate Law. © Maverick Photo Agency / Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

SCOTLAND

16

NEW LAW FOR JUST TRANSITION WILL SLASH CO₂

Building on the largest climate protests ever seen, Friends of the Earth Scotland successfully pushed for a new Climate Law to slash carbon emissions 75% by 2030, enshrining Just Transition principles. Together with allies, they led a 10 hour read-out of the landmark IPCC report. Future climate plans will need to explain and reduce impacts on workers and communities currently dependent on high carbon industries.

SWITZERLAND

17

100,000 SIGN FOR NATURE & LANDSCAPE

Working with allies, Friends of the Earth Switzerland launched two 'people's initiatives for biodiversity and landscape' aimed at forcing serious government action to preserve nature. With the help of 150 volunteers, they collected more than 100,000 citizens' signatures in the streets - enough to ensure new legislation will be put to the population in a referendum, unless the parliament takes the requested measures.

18

SWEDEN

ACTIVISM WORKS!

A big fossil gas terminal in the port of Gothenburg was stopped after protests. Many members of Friends of the Earth Sweden joined the grassroots demonstrations against the terminal which would have been a new entry point for fossil gas imports. The Swedish government rejected the private company Swedegas's permit request to connect the terminal to the gas grid - a major victory after years of campaigning and proof that activism works!



Organising for the climate in Sweden. © FoE Sweden

19

SLOVAKIA

ACTION PLAN TO END COAL

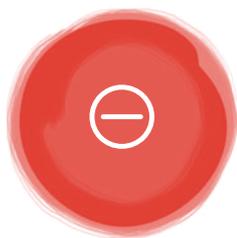
The Slovak government approved a transformational Action Plan for the country's coal region's transition, shaped by the local community. It places the public interest in protecting the environment above the private interest in extracting coal reserves, and obliges ministries to finance the transition with the maximum possible level of participation from the local community and other impacted actors - what Friends of the Earth Slovakia had been calling for.



While our network continued to win campaigns and achieve real-world change from local to global level (see pages 12-16), in 2019 our member groups also reported being affected by reduced space for civil society.

16 FRIENDS OF THE EARTH EUROPE MEMBER GROUPS HAVE EXPERIENCED SHRINKING CIVIC SPACE IN THEIR COUNTRY.

The most common form of shrinking space reported in our network is Stigmatisation and negative labeling (13 countries). But members of our network say they have experienced all of the most common recognized forms of shrinking space.*



13

COUNTRIES

STIGMATISATION
& NEGATIVE
LABELING



10

COUNTRIES

ADMINISTRATIVE
RESTRICTIONS
& UNDUE STATE
INTERFERENCE



9

COUNTRIES

CRIMINALISATION
THROUGH
PROSECUTION
& INVESTIGATION



8

COUNTRIES

PARTICIPATION
UNDER
PRESSURE



5

COUNTRIES

PHYSICAL
HARASSMENT
& INTIMIDATION

These experiences reflect the long-term decline in democracy in Europe - in 2019 there was serious restrictions in civic space on every continent, including Europe.**

It is imperative the EU institutions defend freedom of the press, freedom of assembly and the right to protest, and funding and access for civil society organisations to fulfil their watchdog role.

WE CALL FOR:

- 1 the active involvement and promotion** of participation of CSOs in EU policy-making;
- 2 the active protection** of CSOs, including the expansion of rule of law mechanisms for their protection, measures to promote and enable civic space, and adequate funding;
- 3 the prevention** of new legal frameworks in any member state that are restrictive for the freedom of association, assembly or expression.

* Based on the model of different types of pressure that civil society actors can face, by Van der Borgh and Terwindt, 2014.

** Civicus - 2019 State of Civil Society report.

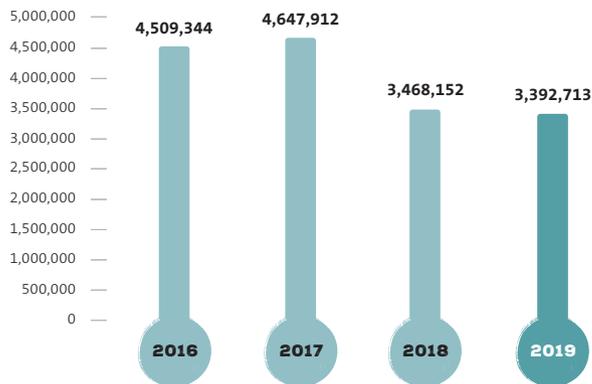
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

2019

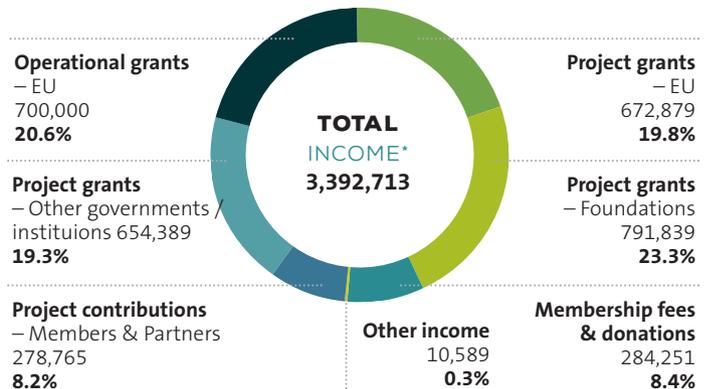
Our income stabilised in 2019 after peaking between 2015 and 2017 thanks to a large multi-annual grant from the European Commission's Directorate General Development and Cooperation (DEVCO).

In 2019 we achieved a good balance between income sources, in accordance with our objective to avoid dependence on too few funding sources. We ended 2019 in the positive position of having a balanced budget for 2020, meaning funds for our planned activities in 2020 are secured. Three new funders have started to support our work while the relationships with most of our donors will continue.

INCOME TRENDS 2016-2019 (IN EUROS)



INCOME 2019 (IN EUROS)



EXPENSES BY DEPARTMENT 2019 (IN EUROS)



EXPENSES BY TYPE 2019 (IN EUROS)



* Numbers may not exactly equal totals due to rounding.

All figures rounded to the nearest Euro. Full copies of Friends of the Earth Europe's accounts are available from the Belgian national bank at www.nbb.be from 1st July 2020. Quote company number 0443.252.089. Details of our funding can be found on our website: www.foeeurope.org/about/financial



Friends of the Earth Europe's work would not be possible without the support of our donors. We would like to thank the following institutions and foundations for helping fund our work:

EU Institutions:



European Commission Directorate
General Environment
*(Executive Agency for Small &
Medium-sized Enterprises - EASME)*
LIFE programme



European Commission Directorate
General Agriculture
- CAP Info Measures



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