



European
Climate
Foundation

Annual Report 2024

Advancing Climate Action for Peace, Democracy and Prosperity



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A Letter from the Supervisory Board

As Chair of ECF's Supervisory Board, it is a privilege to support an organisation working at the heart of Europe's response to the climate crisis – with clarity of purpose, political realism, and a deep commitment to progress.

2024 was another testing year. Climate action has come under renewed pressure from shifting political dynamics, economic headwinds, and a more hostile operating environment for civil society.

In this context, what stands out is ECF's capacity to stay focused and adapt. Even in turbulent conditions, the organisation has remained a steady ally to the climate ecosystem – supporting partners, shaping strategies, and helping protect the foundations of Europe's climate action.

A core part of ECF's strength lies in its ability to operate across local, national, EU, and international levels – and to connect them in ways that reinforce each other. This “four-level approach” is more essential than ever to advancing durable climate solutions and navigating complex political realities.

The achievements reflected in this report speak to the professionalism and focus of ECF's staff and management team, and to the strength of its partnerships across the climate movement.

As we enter a critical period, I am confident in ECF's ability to meet the moment. The organisation's strategic foresight, continued capacity for coordination beyond the climate ecosystem, and long-standing commitment to just and effective climate action, place it in a unique position to help navigate the path forward.

On behalf of the Supervisory Board, I would like to thank all those who have contributed to our shared mission over the past year. I'm looking forward to building on our strengths as we ally with new and existing climate champions in all sectors of society in the months ahead.

Kate Hampton



A Message from Laurence Tubiana

Ten years ago, the adoption of the Paris Agreement gave the world a framework for collective action – and a sense of possibility. Since then, we have seen real progress: net zero targets now cover more than 80% of global emissions, clean technologies have scaled at unprecedented speed, and climate action has gone mainstream – becoming deeply rooted across every level of society. But the political cycle has turned. Climate has slipped down global agendas, even as its impacts intensify. The opposition is no longer passive or isolated – it is organised, well-resourced, and in some cases openly hostile to the European model of open societies, civic space, and the very notion of international cooperation. We need to be clear-eyed about what we are up against. We also need to remember what has held – and what remains within our power to shape. And never forget our mission – whom and why it is all for: all humankind.

2024 was a tough year, but there were some hard-fought victories. The EU adopted the world's first continent-wide law to protect and restore degraded ecosystems. The UK became the first G20 country to fully phase out coal, following a decade of groundwork by the ECF and its partners. Important advances were made at COP29 on climate finance and carbon markets, with ECF-supported diplomacy playing a quiet but catalytic role. Momentum behind a Clean Industrial Deal continued to grow, positioning Europe's net-zero transition as an engine of competitiveness and resilience. And our partners across Europe helped secure long-overdue political attention to electricity grids, essential for the continent's energy and economic future.

We achieved these things not because the context was easy, but because the ecosystem was ready. Strategic foresight, responsiveness in funding and strategy, and deep national and sectoral knowledge allowed the ECF and its partners to anticipate shocks, adjust course, and keep moving forward. But we are under no illusions. What we are witnessing is not simply a slowing of momentum – it is a concerted effort to overturn the progress of the past five years. Climate ambition, multilateralism, and the ability of citizens and organisations to speak out are being targeted precisely because they stand in the way of a very different vision.



If Europe falls back, the global consequences will be profound. For all its flaws, Europe remains a “proof of concept” – the best example we have that decarbonisation can be delivered at scale within a democratic framework. If the climate transition is to succeed, people must believe it works – economically, socially, and politically. That means confronting inequality and economic insecurity head-on, and designing policies that are publicly credible and responsive to people's real concerns about affordability and fairness.

We also need to fight for multilateralism – not just defend it in principle, but prove it can still deliver meaningful results. COP30 in Belém is a real opportunity to do that: to rebuild momentum, restore trust, and show that global cooperation on climate can still rise to the scale of the challenge.

This moment demands a response as serious as the threat. In 2024, the ECF made significant changes to ensure we're ready. Our plans for 2025 are grounded in new realities, designed for maximum political resilience, and focused on shoring up what matters most. I am not naïve about the scale of the challenge. But I continue to believe that it can be met – and that we have the right strategy, the right partners, and the right team to do it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Laurence Tubiana'.

Laurence Tubiana



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2024 in Review

Advancing Climate Action for Peace, Democracy and Prosperity

2024 was a year of political transitions, leading to a much more complex context for climate action. The landscape across Europe has also shifted, with domestic politics in certain countries hindering the continent's climate ambitions and strained public finances limiting investment for the transition. All of these challenges underline the importance of ensuring our mission is positioned at the heart of a broader economic and security strategy – to foster stability, cooperation, and prosperity in Europe.

Despite these hurdles, there are opportunities to reinject momentum behind climate action. Over the past year, we and our partners have focused on seizing these opportunities – ramping up our work on clean industrialisation, competitiveness, and ensuring climate policies respond to citizens' everyday concerns. Going forward, we will further build upon these efforts to bring about our vision of a green, democratic, fair and peaceful Europe.

To achieve this vision, we focus on eight strategic portfolios, from fossil-free energy to international affairs to land, food, and nature. Across all these focus areas, we ground our strategies at the country level with 10 national and regionally focused teams, to make sure our efforts are tailored to local considerations. To help deepen and broaden public support for climate action, citizen engagement and cultural change underpin all of our work.

Thanks to the generous support of our donors, we act as a field catalyst for climate action in Europe and across the globe.



As a **strategic grant-maker**, we fund a diverse range of over 700 partners, collaborating with them to identify and support interventions that get us closer to climate safety.



As a **network enabler**, we foster a stronger, more resilient network by helping our partners build their capacities and create new connections. We also incubate and sustain new organisations, platforms, and coalitions to fill gaps in the climate ecosystem.



As a **narrative shaper**, we use strategic communications to inform key decision-makers, foster discussion on climate, and strengthen broad-based support for climate action. With a network spanning the political spectrum in countries across Europe and the world, we drive dialogue with business, governments, and civil society.



As a **thought leader**, we work with our partners to set the agenda and co-develop impactful strategies for climate action. We also convene, coordinate, and connect diverse actors from across the climate community and beyond.

In 2024, we progressed work across our eight strategic portfolios, placing climate solutions at the heart of the response to the challenges facing Europe.

ECF's Vision for Learning & Impact

As the climate movement faces new challenges and opportunities, at the ECF we remained focused on learning and adaptation. Throughout 2024, we built on our Learning & Impact vision developed in 2023, continuing to apply flexible strategies, learn from experience, and streamline how we measure progress to better support a resilient ecosystem. This vision is anchored in three key goals:

1

Understanding and assessing impact

Identify what works in complex systems to better understand how change happens.

2

Systematising collective learning

Promote a culture of collaboration, trust, and shared learnings with partners.

3

Fostering an evidence-based culture

Rely on high-quality data and ongoing evidence about our work to continuously inform decisions and refine strategies over time.

Additionally, our vision considers impact across three levels: system-wide change, the ECF's role, and partner progress. It is embedded in our decision-making, in order to inform strategy and ensure thoughtful use of resources. At its heart is a commitment to fostering a learning culture—one that values curiosity, considers diverse perspectives, and sees failure as an opportunity for growth.



In 2024, we held the ECF Fossil Free Energy Days in Brussels, gathering partners from across the network to explore cross-cutting ideas on a green, just energy transition.

As part of our expanding capacity building work, in 2024 we organised two ECF PowerUp Academies: a workshop on supercharging ideas and projects driving the shift to fossil-free energy in Europe and North Africa; and a training on energy democracy, exploring the barriers and opportunities on community energy.



Sharing our Learnings to Drive Collective Change



As a strategic grant-maker:

With a network that has expanded from 282 grantees in 2018 to more than 700 in 2024, and the incubation and scaling of over 40 new organisations, the ECF is uniquely positioned to understand the needs of our partners and the broader ecosystem.

In 2024, amid major political shifts and a record number of elections—particularly in Europe—we remained agile, backing a wide range of organisations and funding 290 new partners to navigate and co-create effective responses to this changing context.

We saw notable milestones achieved through coordinated efforts from partners on the ground. For example, building on our 2023 work, the ECF's local network in Ukraine facilitated the installation of 60 photovoltaic power plants at hospitals and water utilities, prompting local authorities in the city of Zviahel to expand the project with five additional stations. Meanwhile, in

Poland, after years of strategic interventions by ECF grantees, the closure of the Turów complex—one of the European Union's top polluters—is now within reach.

We also focused on broadening climate constituencies and diversifying voices within the climate debate. This approach delivered meaningful wins across the spectrum, yet there's still untapped potential in building broader societal support and in engaging with more corporate actors to drive climate progress from within.

Moving into 2025, we recognise that opportunities for significant change are often at the country level, so we remain committed to investing in locally grounded strategic partners. Additionally, we've learned that to have the best possible chance of success, we need to build bridges with communities beyond climate, which will be a key priority for the years ahead.



As a network enabler:

Climate organisations in Europe are operating in an increasingly challenging environment. To help them stay resilient and effective, we launched the Network & Organisational Development (NOD) Strategy in 2024. This strategy expands our efforts to support partners with the resources, collaborative frameworks, and digital tools they need to thrive. By building a stronger, more connected network, the NOD is helping organisations navigate external pressures and boost the overall impact of climate action across Europe.

A key focus of our approach is listening closely to our partners. As such, in 2024, we heard a clear call for deeper insight into the ECF's strategic direction. In response, we're exploring ways to co-develop strategies with our partners to ensure alignment, transparency, and collective ownership. We're also committed to sharing learnings across the ecosystem to drive collective intelligence and continuous improvement.



As a narrative shaper:

Reflecting on past achievements and challenges, in 2024, our Citizen Engagement and Cultural Change portfolio streamlined its work into four areas: channels, voices, campaigns, and democratic innovation. This approach has driven significant impact on issues like clean energy, sustainable transport, and food systems across various countries. A key example is the "Britain Talks Flying" project, which tracked public sentiment on aviation, providing valuable insights for advancing transport decarbonisation. This initiative strengthened our network by delivering insightful data presented through unique networking and learning workshops. Building on this success, in 2025 we will expand our work on audience insights to ensure our initiatives remain grounded with public sentiment.

In parallel, we continue to see that powerful storytelling remains a key tool in climate action. In 2024, we identified a growing need for communications support within the climate ecosystem. Following the success of our "Earthstronauts" initiative in 2024—which focused on climate storytelling—we'll scale up training and networking to sharpen our partners' communication skills, using lessons learned from previous activities to guide future efforts.



As a thought leader:

Over the course of 2024, the ECF's strategic foresight capabilities evolved significantly, embedding analysis into our thinking, processes and culture. We tested different methodologies relevant to the climate ecosystem and ECF grant-making focusing on long term visioning, climate community resilience, and think tank functions around cross-cutting issues.

By stress-testing our approaches against various geopolitical scenarios, we ensure our work remains both relevant and resilient. In 2025, we'll continue applying this analysis to inform recommendations for policy and grant-making, helping our network embed forward-thinking into their strategies.

A standout moment for the ECF's thought leadership in 2024 was our first-ever Generative AI Hackathon for Climate Policy Advocacy, bringing together 80+ participants to develop AI tools for climate action. It marked a major innovation step, strengthened collaboration between philanthropy and tech sectors, and highlighted the need for clear processes and stakeholder alignment.



European and National Just Transitions

Supporting fair and effective climate policies from the local to European levels

We ground our work at the national level, with 10 country and regionally focused programmes as well as employees and partners across Europe. Our European country and regional programmes:



To complement our local-and national-level work, we also have dedicated programmes working on EU institutional and governance issues.



2024 key developments

Country level

In 2024, many of the EU's 'Fit for 55' climate policies began moving from legislation to the critical implementation process. From the local to European levels, we focused on supporting civil society in holding governments accountable and keeping climate high on the agenda.

Throughout the year, our country teams and partners used their collective expertise and knowledge of complex national dynamics to ensure the right strategies were deployed at the right times to advance progress. In 2024, our network pushed for improvements to countries' updated National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs), outlining how they will align with EU 2030 climate ambitions. They also highlighted the importance of doing so in an open and inclusive way, for instance by building links between the climate and democracy communities.

Our local initiatives also achieved several notable successes in 2024, with a selection of key highlights in Spain, the UK, and Poland detailed further.



Bridging climate and anti-poverty efforts in Spain

In Spain, we are supporting several multi-stakeholder platforms who are advocating for socially-just compensatory policies that promote inclusion, while highlighting the links between anti-poverty and climate action. For example, the Working Group on Social Inequalities in Transportation, coordinated by the Ecology and Development Foundation (ECODES), and several other partners helped introduce the concept of “transport vulnerability” into the forthcoming Sustainable Mobility Law. This concept has also been included in what will be the **first-ever Transport Poverty Strategy in Spain**. Additionally, ECODES helped incorporate housing rehabilitation for energy efficiency into the National Strategy for the Prevention and Fight Against Poverty and Social Exclusion. Looking ahead, we and our partners are focusing on ensuring that Spain’s forthcoming Social Climate Plan also includes these considerations.



Together with ParalleloZero, we documented the stories of people driving the energy transition, highlighting the Las Carolinas building in Usera, Madrid—an ecological collaborative housing project by the Entrepatrios cooperative in Spain | ©Ph. B. Zanzottera – ParalleloZero



Sustainably phasing out the Turów coal mine in Poland

The Turów lignite mine and its power plant have been major fixtures in Poland’s energy landscape and significant polluters, facing international disputes over their environmental impacts. Yet authorities have been hesitant to act, fearing economic repercussions. With our partners, we recognised the need for a clear roadmap to close Turów sustainably, in line with Just Transition principles.

Following years of advocacy and strategic interventions by our local partners, such as analysis showing that Poland’s domestic energy market would effectively phase out lignite by 2030, the closure of the Turów complex is on the horizon. Local decision-makers have declared their intent to apply for support under the Just Transition Fund and to develop a new transition plan to phase out the complex. This milestone underscores the importance of **collaborative efforts in driving sustainable change and highlights the critical role of the ECF and our partners** in shaping a cleaner, more sustainable future for the region.

Milestones for clean power in the UK

In September 2024, the UK marked an iconic milestone with the closure of its last coal plant, **becoming the first G20 country to fully phase out coal**. This achievement was the result of a decade of coordinated efforts spearheaded by our network of local partners. This has led to a strong wave of coal phase-out momentum across Europe and beyond.

Alongside this milestone, following years of efforts by our partners, the UK government lifted its ban on offshore windfarms and committed to doubling Britain’s current onshore wind capacity by 2030. Additionally, informed in part by our partners’ analysis, the new Labour Government committed to securing an almost fossil-free power sector (<5%) by 2030 and set out a strong workplan to achieve it.

EU Level

Upholding climate action in the European elections

2024 was also a critical year for climate at the EU level, with parliamentary elections in June. In the months leading up to the elections, polling showed that there was still a broad consensus in support of continued climate action from voters across the political spectrum in every European country. However, with economic and security issues understandably topping the agenda, it was essential to ensure climate solutions were viewed as answers to these challenges too.

In the run-up to the elections, we partnered with business organisations, such as the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership and the Spanish Green Growth Group, who have been at the forefront of this work. In France, we also supported the **launch of a new coalition of 16 progressive business networks** under the coordination of the Mouvement Impact France, aiming to ensure that the voices of entrepreneurs committed to the environmental and social transition were heard during the campaign. During this period, many of Europe’s leading industries began championing this cause – for example, through the Antwerp Declaration for a European Industrial Deal.

Driving progress at the EU level

Amidst these turbulent times, we persisted in driving progress from the local to national to EU levels. Our partners played a significant role in contributing to key EU climate policies, such as the Critical Raw Materials Act in May, the Net Zero Industry Act in June, and the Nature Restoration Law in July.

Additionally, the ECF-incubated [European Climate Neutrality Observatory](#) (ECNO) is gaining recognition as a key monitor of economy-wide progress towards climate neutrality in the EU, highlighting where action is needed. In July, ECNO’s [second annual progress report](#) was released, receiving considerable media attention. The EU Commission and European Scientific Advisory Board have both since referenced ECNO methodology in their own progress assessments.



In July 2024, ECNO released its second annual flagship progress report, offering insights on the EU's path to climate neutrality for the new policy cycle.





Fossil-Free Energy

Accelerating a just transition to affordable, secure clean energy

Our fossil-free energy team is working to keep Europe on track to phase out coal and gas and replace them with cleaner, more secure energy sources. Together with our partners, we are promoting energy solutions that are affordable, accessible, and supported by the public. For example, we collaborate closely with consumer and anti-poverty organisations to ensure that the solutions we promote are fair and people centred, while also supporting an energy transition that improves security, strengthens European industry, and provides good-quality jobs.

2024 key developments

Unlocking delivery of the transition at country level

In 2024, we continued our efforts to reduce Europe’s exposure to risky fossil fuels, while ramping up our initiatives to unlock real-world delivery at country level and secure public and political support for the transition. In the first half of the year, our network focused on making electricity grids a political priority, positioning grid investment as foundational for future economic prosperity and energy security. Notably, **our partners played a pivotal role in ensuring that electricity grid investment is now a key component of the EU’s strategic agenda**, which is set to guide the policy priorities of the next EU Commission. Recent developments in the Iberian Peninsula underscore the urgency of these efforts, highlighting both the need and the work still ahead.

Powering clean and affordable heating solutions

Transitioning to clean home heating can deliver significant [socio-economic and climate benefits](#)—lowering energy bills, enhancing security, and reducing fossil gas reliance. But strong policy action is essential to ensure these solutions are accessible. With affordability at the core, in 2024 we partnered with the European Heat Pump Association (EHPA) to convene 26 influential stakeholders—including civil society, industry leaders, and financial institutions—to develop a roadmap addressing the barriers to heat pump adoption. This collaboration was a **crucial milestone in creating a unified approach to clean heating** and led to the development of the [EU Heat Pump Accelerator Plan](#), presented to the European Commission as a blueprint for action. Building on our recommendations and momentum generated, the Commission launched the [EU Heat Pump Accelerator Platform](#), a new EU-wide initiative focused on improving affordability, customer experience, and heat pump accessibility across Europe.



Heat pump production at Clivet in Villapaiera, Belluno, Italy—part of ParalleloZero’s photoreportage highlighting people at the heart of the energy transition produced together with the ECF. | ©Ph B.Zanzottera – ParalleloZero

Right-sizing the conversation on hydrogen

Over the past year, we also worked to right-size the conversation on hydrogen, as reality sets in around its use as a meaningful pathway to decarbonisation. For example, we funded analysis by civil society groups and think tanks to clear the path for policy and financing measures that support electrification as the most cost-effective, efficient, and low-risk approach to decarbonising the energy system. As a result, the debate around hydrogen at EU and national level is shifting more quickly than expected.



Engaging communities on renewable energy

To meet our climate goals, we must rapidly build new infrastructure for renewable energy. In many places, this will require the construction of facilities such as wind and solar farms, electricity grids, and offshore wind in both rural and marine landscapes. As this transition unfolds, it will be important to navigate land use, environmental, and community considerations to ensure clean energy is deployed at the speed and scale needed to phase out fossil fuels while respecting people and nature concerns.

In response, throughout 2024 our Fossil Free Energy programmes and partners worked to ensure that the deployment of renewables respects nature conservation and community interests both on land and at sea. In Spain, for example, we are engaging with farmers and rural communities to resolve opposition to renewables, while also championing best practices on siting and community benefits and engagement. Read more about our support for a community-driven energy transition [here](#).



Above: At the 2024 ECF Fossil Free Energy Days in Brussels, our network came together to spark ideas for a fair, green energy future.

Below: In May 2024, we supported the European Energy Communities Forum bringing together partners from the energy democracy movement across Europe.



ReNew2030: Accelerating the global renewable energy transition

2024 marked the first year of implementation of ECF-founded ReNew2030, a unique global coalition of experts, civil society, and philanthropic organisations working toward a first, fast, fair energy transition by mobilizing key actors across government, business, and communities around the world.

Major milestones included the launch of the \$500 million Renewables Investment Platform for Limitless Energy (RIPLE), in partnership with the Nigerian Sovereign Investment Authority; co-hosting the first Global Renewable Summit in New York; and helping to scale solar access while strengthening rural community participation and ownership in Northern Mexico with the Ejido Solar initiative.

2024 also saw the launch of ReNew2030’s first Community of Impact, focused on supporting community-led energy efforts. Public engagement grew, with the coalition featured on NPR’s TED Radio Hour and in FT Sustainable Views, helping to highlight the broader challenges and opportunities of the energy transition.

These developments reflect the collaborative efforts of ReNew2030’s partners across the world. While much work lies ahead, the coalition remains focused on supporting systemic change and helping to build a more inclusive, sustainable energy future. ReNew2030 is unique in philanthropy as a collaborative, peer-to-peer network of global re-granters, and the ECF is proud to serve as an incubator for this innovative initiative.



Clockwise from left:
Deborah Ramalope, ReNew2030 Director, at the Global Renewable Summit in New York.
Launch of the Renewables Investment Platform for Limitless Energy (RIPLE).
Ejido Solar initiative in Mexico, empowering rural communities to own and manage renewable energy projects. | ©Iniciativa Climática de México.



Europe in the World and International Affairs

Building international partnerships to strengthen the climate transition in Europe and worldwide

Our international team works with partners in Europe and around the world to build and sustain global progress on climate. As part of this, we work to ensure that Europe delivers on its climate promises to (re)build credibility and leadership, while strengthening multilateral alliances for action. We are also helping to develop best practice on topics such as green trade and climate governance.



COP29 Regional Climate Foundation discussion on subnational governments' leadership in driving climate action on the road to COP30.

2024 key developments

International relations in 2024 were dominated by high-profile elections and growing political divides. Half the world's population voted during the past year, leading to power shifts and narrative changes, with an intense focus on competitiveness – often at the expense of cooperation. Against this backdrop, **our international teams played a vital role in ensuring that climate remained on the agenda at key moments** throughout the year, such as at Climate Week New York and COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Climate Week New York has become an increasingly important convening for the climate community, representing an excellent opportunity to engage on the international climate stage. We hosted several high-profile gatherings during this event, such as the EU-US Track 1.5 Dialogue, which helped foster transatlantic discussion on key climate topics.

Driving ambition at COP29

Groundbreaking multilateral agreements saw progress on finance for climate mitigation and carbon markets at COP29, with our international programmes and partners on the ground in Baku pushing for higher ambition.

For example, the ECF-hosted **International Climate Politics Hub (ICPH)** has become an invaluable actor supporting discussions amongst key decisionmakers on critical topics such as finance for climate mitigation and carbon markets, through daily briefings, analysis, and other tools.

The **2050 Pathways Platform** has further fostered collaboration among multilateral development banks and other donors to support net-zero strategies. This ongoing engagement has strengthened coordination on technical assistance and knowledge-sharing, making it easier for countries to access the support they need for net-zero planning. We also capitalised on growing interest in subnational action by, for instance, hosting [an event](#) that showcased city- and state-level leadership. In parallel, our CEO Laurence Tubiana joined the Urban20 event alongside the G20, highlighting the vital role of local governments in climate action.

The ECF's Climate Finance programme, in its role as Secretariat of the **Green Guarantee Group**, hosted events on climate finance from the private sector, activating a diverse range of stakeholders to address the challenges associated with using guarantees to support finance for the green transition.



Supporting multilateralism in a fractious world

Throughout the year, one of our main priorities has been protecting and reinvigorating multilateral climate action in an increasingly divided geopolitical context. Our CEO Laurence Tubiana has continued to champion reform of climate governance, preserving the [‘Spirit of Paris’](#) against the risks of fragmentation and ossification in the current UNFCCC system.



G20 Brasil: New Challenges in International Taxation Panel with Laurence Tubiana.

These efforts became even more critical at the end of 2024, following the results of the US election and the withdrawal of the world's largest emitter from the Paris Agreement. Despite these setbacks, Tubiana continues to highlight, as featured in op-eds in the [Financial Times](#) and [Le Monde](#), that **multilateral climate action remains resilient, backed by increasing economic momentum and a strong subnational movement.**



Germany's citizens' assembly on nutrition titled 'Nutrition in transition: between private matters and state tasks.'

Citizen Engagement and Cultural Change

Strengthening broad-based democratic support for climate action

Faced with growing efforts by fossil fuel lobbies to stall progress and polarise debates on climate change, we need to strengthen democracy and empower citizens in support of ambitious climate action.

We collaborate with news, digital, and cultural organisations with the expertise to engage, inform and inspire people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. Alongside this, we are working to expand the range of channels where climate debates take place, going beyond traditional media spaces to meet people where they are. We also collaborate with organisations using innovative participatory methods to empower people to discuss and help shape a net-zero future, such as citizens' assemblies.

2024 key developments

Engaging with communities and building a strong mandate for the transition

Our flagship work on citizen engagement and cultural change is helping to build a strong democratic mandate for the energy transition that Europe needs. Throughout 2024, **we engaged directly with communities on the practical politics of the transition and diversified the voices and channels we work with** to connect with a broader range of citizens. Our citizen engagement, country, and energy teams and partners worked hand in hand to ensure that the deployment of renewables respects nature conservation and community interests. We also deepened our efforts to understand how people view climate topics, and tackled misinformation at key moments.

In Spain, for example, our network is engaging with farmers, agricultural organisations, and rural communities to resolve opposition to renewables, while championing best practices on siting, community benefits, and engagement. For instance, our partners are working with farmers' unions to highlight ways that the ecological transition can help ensure the survival of the family farming model. They are also engaging with rural communities on the opportunities that the transition can bring in areas such as housing, mobility, and the bioeconomy.



Documentary 'Revivir El Campo' by researcher-influencer-activist Diego García Vega on promoting new narratives to reconcile nature and agriculture in Spain.

In the run-up to the EU elections, we supported widespread, in-country polling to ensure we have robust data and audience insights. This helped deepen our understanding of how climate change and policies to address it are truly understood by voters, and how they were likely to feature during the campaign. Alongside these efforts, our partners played a key role in countering false claims and keeping citizens and the media better informed and engaged on climate issues. We supported more than 20 fact-checking organisations across Europe to debunk climate mis- and dis-information through a website that was updated daily, as well as publishing four disinformation reports that were shared with journalists, decisionmakers and academics.

Bringing citizens into decision-making in North Macedonia

The city of Skopje in North Macedonia is among the worst in Europe for air pollution, with a high rate of pollution-related deaths. In 2024, we supported the ZIP Institute to hold a Climate Assembly on air pollution in Skopje, with the aim of engaging citizens in decision-making, strengthening climate policy, and addressing challenges in resolving contentious issues. The Climate Assembly delivered 19 policy recommendations on how to lower air pollution to the City's Mayor and Council, which were **unanimously adopted by Skopje City Council – a historic and unprecedented achievement**. Such cross-party support for the recommendations demonstrates the power of citizen engagement in overcoming political barriers and working together for common good. The assembly proposals included initiatives such as increasing the use of solar energy, concrete sustainable transport measures, and improved regulation and oversight, including more effective environmental inspection activities.



Climate Assembly on air pollution in Skopje, North Macedonia | ©ZIP Institute



Clean Transport

Ensuring a fair transition to clean, affordable transport

Countries across Europe are tackling vehicle tailpipe pollution, which causes over a quarter of the continent's climate footprint and fuels major air pollution in cities. We are helping to ensure that this transition to cleaner transport is fair and effective, benefits our health and environment, boosts local economies, and is supported by consumers, auto workers, and the rest of society.

To do this, we are driving the shift to electric vehicles (cars, buses, and trucks), while limiting dependence on the mining of critical minerals and the associated negative impacts. We are also striving to secure and create good e-mobility jobs for the future, and supporting partners across European cities who are working with residents on measures to reduce air pollution and improve health and quality of life.

2024 key developments

In 2023, pioneering legislation was passed that mandates a phase-out of polluting cars in the EU by 2035. Therefore, in 2024 we and our network focused on reinforcing that win, despite a challenging political and economic environment. We centred our efforts on protecting the commitment, supporting countries in moving towards electrification, and backing the development of the local electric mobility industry and supply chains.

With considerable support by our partners, 2024 also saw **three significant EU policy achievements**. In April, the **Critical Raw Materials Act** was signed, which is essential to establishing more resilient supply chains for sectors critical to the transition, such as batteries to power electromobility. In May, the EU adopted **CO2 standards for heavy duty vehicles**, which will reduce emissions over time through electrification. That same month, the EU adopted the revised **Air Quality Directive**, setting more stringent standards for air pollutants, a key tool to protect citizens' health and quality of life. Several of our partners, such as the Clean Cities Campaign, contributed key research and analysis that supported this directive.

Understanding what people really think about flying and climate

Flying holds cultural significance but significantly contributes to climate change. Cutting aviation emissions is essential to meet the Paris Agreement goals, but climate policies must be fair—rising flight costs would burden everyday people far more than millionaire jetsetters. Therefore, the climate and aviation conversation must evolve to reflect real-world values and experiences.

In 2024, we partnered with leading researchers and 44 civil society organisations to better understand public sentiment around flying and climate. By combining media analysis and public opinion polling, our findings showed that nearly half of respondents thought airlines should do more to cut emissions, and most supported cheaper train travel.

These insights are valuable to our partners and the broader climate community. The data not only supports current efforts to decarbonise aviation but also offers a benchmark to measure progress. Most importantly, it lays the groundwork for stronger, more public-aligned strategies moving forward.



Presenting Project Take Off: a new initiative with leading climate philanthropies, partners and thought leaders aiming to bring aviation in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.



Launch of a new wind turbine in Czechia, unveiled during Wind Energy Day in collaboration with our partner, the Czech Society for Wind Energy (©Česká společnost pro větrnou energii).

Europe's Industrial Transformation

Enhancing Europe's long-term prosperity while strengthening security

Global political and economic changes are questioning Europe's economic model and sparking debates over the future of its industries. Europe must now design an industrial strategy that will help decarbonise and spur innovation in the manufacturing and heavy industry sectors, develop competitive and resilient clean tech value chains, and create a level playing field with its trading partners. This strategy will improve the continent's resilience to shocks, provide good jobs, and support a fair transition from fossil fuels.

2024 key developments

Accelerating a clean industrial transformation

In 2024, the themes of clean industry and competitiveness dominated both the international climate community and the EU psyche. The EU elections in June saw these, along with cost of living and security issues, rise to the top of voters' and parties' priorities. The ECF first coined the phrase 'green industrialisation' in 2022, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the growing threat of high energy prices to EU stability. In response, we mobilised our network and commissioned foundational studies that helped shape the conversation. In 2024, we strengthened these efforts by **implementing a dedicated Clean Industrial Transformation strategy** that aligned our industry, transport, energy, policy, and finance work under a shared vision.

This readiness meant that we were poised for impact in 2024. Many of our partners provided key input for EU consultations around early pieces of legislation, such as the Critical Raw Materials Act and Net Zero Industry Act. We also supported leading think tanks, such as Bruegel, the Institute for Climate Economics, and the Royal United Services Institute, who helped place clean industrialisation at the heart of the next EU mandate.

Throughout the year, we funded studies and workshops to build knowledge and momentum among decision-makers on industrial decarbonisation, clean tech investments, and supply chain resilience as cornerstones of national security, competitiveness, jobs, and prosperity. We also backed a campaign focused on decarbonising heavy industry, especially steel, and electrifying low and medium heat industrial processes. Underpinning these workstreams are important efforts in countries to build support for the clean manufacturing sector, particularly through driving a just transition for workers.

Looking ahead, we and our partners are focusing on the EU Clean Industrial Deal, which was presented in February 2025. Though challenges will emerge, this initiative has significant political momentum and is a crucial vehicle to pursue climate action and showcase Europe's commitment to pioneering a clean future.



Anuga FoodTec trade fair with the European Heat Pump Association (EHPA) and the German energy efficiency network DENEFF to showcase how electrification and energy-efficient technologies can reduce emissions in the food supply chain.



Facilitating a fair shift for the workforce

We are committed to ensuring that clean industrial transformation leads to jobs and benefits for people. In **Spain**, the Green Voices initiative, led by our partners at Harmon, captured the stories of 18 individuals navigating the shift to green jobs. Shared across media platforms, these stories sparked national conversations on green employment, generating over half a million social media impressions and 20+ TV and radio interviews. With [Fundación Generation Spain](#) leading training efforts for emerging green jobs, we are prioritising worker inclusion. In 2024, their solar panel installation program successfully trained and placed many individuals in the renewable energy sector, offering long-term career opportunities, especially for young people and those seeking new skills.

Green Voices Initiative Spain led by our partners at Harmon, capturing the stories of 18 individuals navigating the shift to green jobs.

In **Italy**, we facilitated discussions among economists, industrial associations, unions, media, and decision-makers to explore the energy transition’s impact on jobs, showcasing [real-life success stories](#) of those already benefiting. In parallel, we supported the creation of the Climate Labour Alliance for Sustainable Mobility, connecting trade unions, companies, and workers in the automotive sector with expert partners from our network. This initiative helps foster a collaborative and constructive dialogue about the opportunities, challenges, and tensions in the industrial transition, building trust between labour and climate advocates.

In **Poland**, in partnership with the Polish Wind Energy Association, we highlighted green job opportunities for miners by sharing real testimonies of those retraining as wind turbine technicians. Supported by a poll showing strong public backing for green jobs, this initiative reached over 35 million people, raising widespread awareness and engagement on the potential of green jobs in the country. In **Germany**, thanks in part to our local partners, industrial trade unions are increasingly engaging on planned investments for clean steel and now widely consider it an economic opportunity for what is an aging and crumbling asset fleet.



Photo reportage project by ParalleloZero showcasing the transition from coal-dependency to renewable energy efficiency in Poland | ©Ph B.Zanzottera – ParalleloZero



Shifting the Financial System

Supporting finance flows and corporate action consistent with the Paris Agreement

Tackling climate change requires a fundamental shift in the global financial system and corporate operations. Recent crises, high inflation, and interest rates have led to a cost-of-living crisis, highlighting the need for financing the transition and new business models. Meanwhile, outdated international financial infrastructure makes it difficult for the Global South to access essential funds to address and mitigate climate change, significantly caused by the Global North.

We believe that financial institutions, companies, and governments all play a role in ensuring a just transition to a net-zero economy. Together with our partners, we focus on three main areas:

- 1 Public finance:** Helping ensure that public finance supports the EU's transition to a fair, net-zero economy, and building strong international climate finance.
- 2 Private finance:** Encouraging corporations and financial institutions to manage climate risks, create strategic transition plans, and increase financing for the transition.
- 3 Public policy:** Highlighting the importance of central banks and financial supervisors in managing the broader economic risks posed by climate change.

2024 key developments

In 2024, we collaborated with financial stakeholders – including investors, development banks, and consumers – to help EU finance legislation work for climate, explore international avenues for raising climate finance, and help ensure that the international monetary architecture supports a climate- and nature-safe future.

A milestone on corporate sustainability and due diligence

In May 2024, a significant EU policy milestone was achieved with the **adoption of the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD)**, which requires companies to prevent adverse human rights and environmental impacts in their operations and supply chains. Despite some compromises during negotiations, the directive’s core principles remain intact. Many of our partners, from investor groups to environmental organisations, played a crucial role in advocating for this policy.

Following this milestone, in November 2024 the EU announced a simplification agenda, including changes to sustainable finance reporting, due diligence, and taxonomy. This Omnibus package is seen as a step back in global climate legislation, potentially weakening the EU’s Green Deal commitments. Our network will stay actively involved in the debate over 2025 and the next five years.

Enhancing the use of green guarantees to scale up climate finance

In 2024, our Executive Director for Finance and Nature, Morgan Després, was appointed by the German government to lead the Secretariat of their initiative, the **Green Guarantee Group (GGG)**. The GGG aims to enhance the use and efficiency of green guarantees to scale up climate finance in emerging markets and developing economies. During COP29, the GGG released its first scoping note, identifying existing challenges that hinder the full potential of green guarantees and suggesting policy adjustments. Additionally, three side events on green guarantees were held, featuring high-level participation from the COP29 Presidency. Looking ahead, the GGG is focusing on developing recommendations for policymakers and ensuring the political relevance of its deliverables.

Unlocking innovative measures for climate finance through the Global Solidarity Levies Task Force

Launched at COP28 to galvanise global coordination for international levies to fulfil climate commitments, the Task Force welcomed several new member nations in 2024, bringing the total to 17, including Djibouti, Fiji, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Zambia. It also began technical work on eight levies under consideration, including maritime, aviation, fossil fuels, and financial transactions. Ahead of COP29, our co-chairs – Mia Mottley (PM of Barbados), Emmanuel Macron (President of France) and William Ruto (President of Kenya) – published [an op-ed in Project Syndicate](#), calling on governments to join this initiative. In November, the Task Force published its one-year [progress report](#), and is now working towards the goal of presenting politically feasible proposals at COP30 in Belém in 2025.

Left: ECF CEO Laurence Tubiana moderating the in-person Global Solidarity Levies Task Force’s sherpa meeting in 2024

Right: Global Solidarity Levies Task Force convening at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November 2024.





Agrivoltaic Gathering in Italy by the AIAS (Associazione Italiana Agrivoltaico Sostenibile, Italian Agrivoltaic Sustainable Hub) in collaboration with Le Greenhouse and Set Energie.

Land, Food and Nature

Building land use and food systems that support people, communities and nature

How society uses land, especially for food production, has a major impact on planetary health. Decades of intensive factory farming have increased greenhouse gas emissions, harmed biodiversity, and contributed to social problems in rural areas – while failing to provide secure access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food.

To address this, we are working to **build climate and nature-friendly land use and food systems that prioritise the needs of farmers, rural communities, and consumers.** We are also promoting solutions to ensure bioenergy is kept within sustainable limits and that nature-based solutions, such as restoring forests, do not displace real reductions in fossil fuel use.

2024 key developments

Protecting nature and progressing climate action

The past year has demonstrated the growing importance of integrating nature concerns with climate action. Therefore, in 2024 we undertook a comprehensive project to incorporate work already taking place, and chart a course for new priority areas, under the umbrella of climate and nature. Part of this involved redefining our natural sinks-related work to build a strong forest pillar across Europe.

As forests are one of Europe's main carbon sinks, we are advocating for resilient forests for adaptation and mitigation, looking into ways to direct finance towards forest protection and restoration, and backing the implementation of previously won laws. This includes the Nature Restoration Law, the regulation dealing with emissions and reductions in the Land Use, Land Use Change, and Forestry (LULUCF) sector, and the Renewable Energy Directive, with its articles on wood burning.

Alongside our partners, we also **helped shape the EU's groundbreaking Deforestation Free Supply Chain legislation**, tackling deforestation driven by the imports of certain commodities such as coffee and soy. As the first of its kind worldwide, it sets a high EU standard that will influence approaches taken by other countries.

Following a setback in March 2024, our team and partners acted quickly to help preserve the EU's iconic Nature Restoration Law, which was agreed to in August. Over the past three years and ramped up ahead of the parliamentary votes in 2023 and 2024, we supported a multi-stakeholder campaign aimed at landing this vital piece of legislation, including funding research projects and building allegiances with citizens, businesses, and farmers. The law has emerged mostly intact, but our work here is far from done, and we and our network are now focusing on successful implementation.

Ensuring a fairer future for farmers and citizens

To depolarise the conversation around nature restoration at the height of the farmer protests, we continued working with a range of farming groups, many of whom were vocal in urging for greater support in the green transition. Our CEO Laurence Tubiana also authored an opinion piece in [POLITICO](#) calling for a fairer future for farmers. "Addressing the inequities in our food system is essential to delivering justice for farmers and securing climate action," she argued.

In addition to these efforts, we supported a **landmark outcome for the future of agriculture in the EU.** In September, the EU Commission presented a major report on the future of agriculture, which was set up to defuse the farmer protests of the past year. It resulted in a set of better and potentially more consequential recommendations than originally hoped, thanks to the involvement of many of our partners in the negotiations. Ultimately, it may provide the basis for major improvements in how the EU governs its food and farming sector.



Above: ©Ph.Alessandro Treves – Perimetro
Below: ©Ph.Alessandro Sala – Cesura



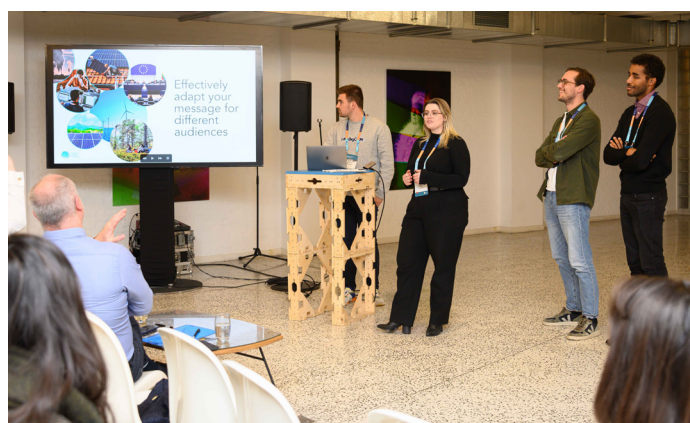
Building a Robust Climate Ecosystem

Supporting civil society under threat

Our effectiveness relies on the health and resilience of our ecosystem of partners. However, civil society's operational space and funding is under threat in many parts of Europe. To address this, in 2024 we expanded our Network and Organisational Development (NOD) strategy, responding to needs identified by our grantee community.

Complementing our existing work to build and strengthen the ecosystem through entity-creation, training, and convening, this strategy formalises our approach to improving network capacity. We recognise this work as central to the success of our shared missions. By ensuring our partners have the skills, structures, and networks to effectively operate and transition to long-term sustainability, we can increase our shared impact and drive scalable, meaningful climate action.





We hosted a GenAI for Climate Policy Hackathon, uniting climate change professionals and AI experts from across Europe to tackle environmental and organisational challenges.

Building a stronger climate network through capacity-building initiatives

In 2024, we brought our NOD strategy to life through a series of targeted events aimed at empowering our partners. For example, in November, we held our first-ever **Generative AI Hackathon for Climate Policy Advocacy in Brussels** which brought together climate change professionals and AI experts from across Europe to collectively uncover and design GenAI solutions for climate action challenges. Tackling four key challenges identified through a scoping exercise, including combatting misinformation, the Hackathon resulted in prototypes that were voted on by a panel of experts, with the winning solutions selected for development and roll-out.

Alongside these efforts, we further expanded our **capacity-building and training programmes for climate communications professionals**. Launched in 2022, our PowerUp Academy for communications professionals in the energy sector has expanded year by year, offering mentoring and workshops across Belgium, Türkiye and Hungary. This year, we organised a new edition in Istanbul, which united partners from across the Mediterranean to develop a regional strategy.



In 2024, we hosted two editions of the ECF PowerUp Academy that brought together climate action professionals to boost their storytelling and communications skills on advancing the shift to fossil-free energy.

Key Figures and Financials

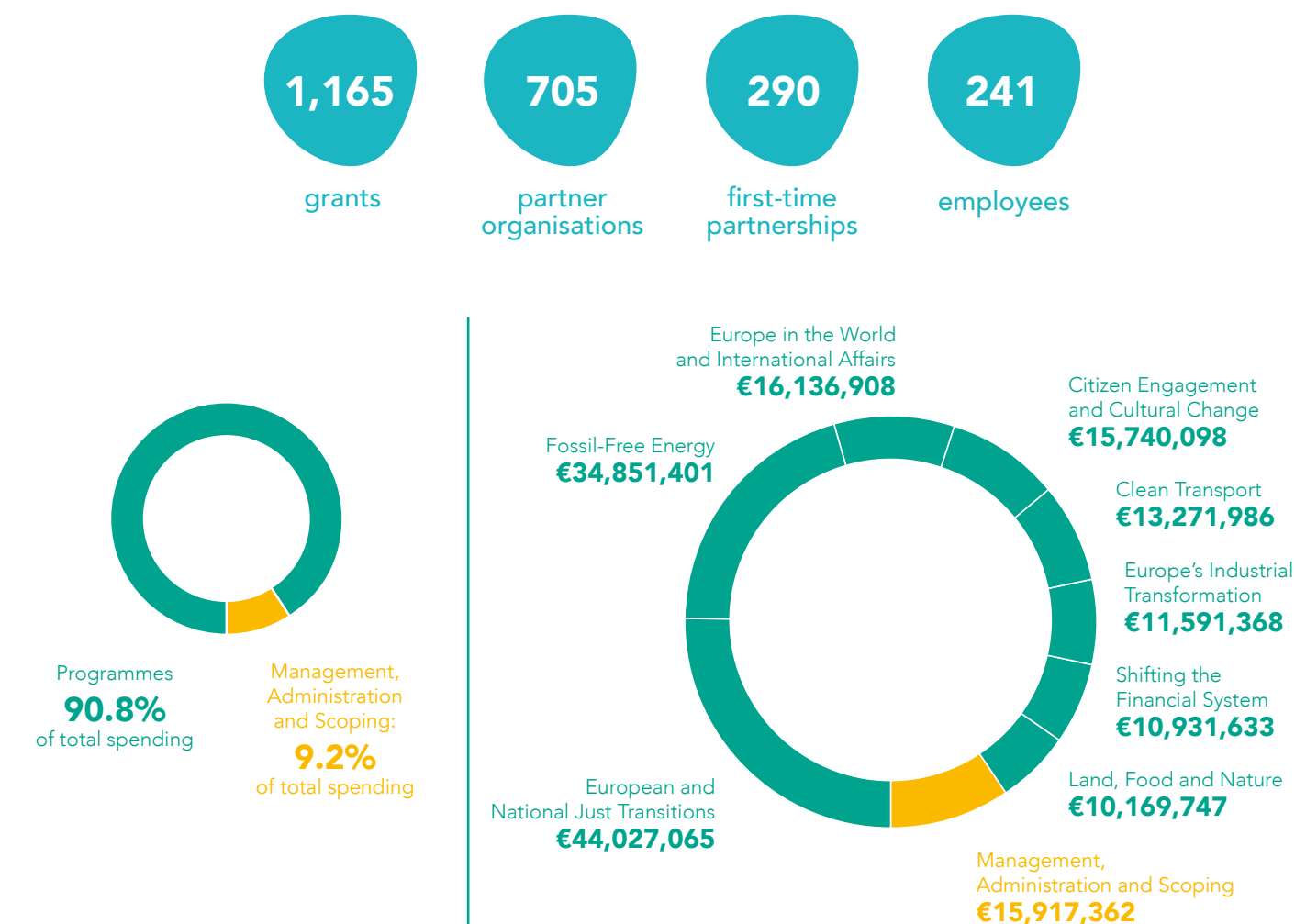
Building, diversifying and strengthening our network

Thanks to the generous support of our philanthropic partners, in 2024 we provided 1,165 grants to 705 partner organisations. With 290 first-time partnerships, we have developed and expanded our ecosystem to new areas of action.

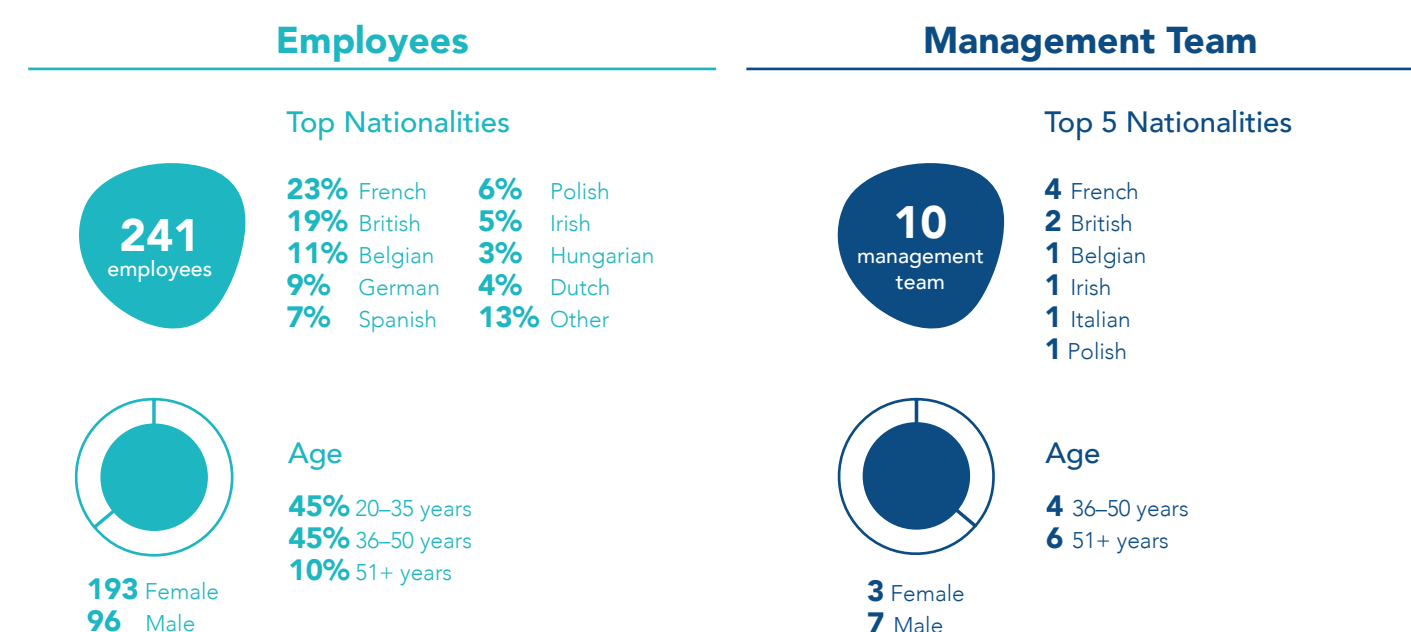
These figures are based on our latest audited financial overview from 2024. They cover regranting activities across our programme portfolios, as well as management, administration and scoping. In addition to these programmes, we incubate platforms to create and build out new institutions that are needed for climate action. These include the [Pooled fund for International Energy \(PIE\)](#), [ReNew2030](#), [Forum New Economy](#), and [Climate Finance Fund](#). In 2024, ECF-hosted platforms had a total of 48 employees and €74,444,032 in expenditures.

Read more about our [funding partners](#), [grant-making](#), and [governance](#).

Key Figures & Financial Overview



Employees and Management Team by gender, age and nationality



Looking Ahead

Despite ongoing global turbulence, there are still opportunities ahead to reinject momentum behind climate action and ensure climate solutions are at the heart of Europe's response to economic and security challenges.

2025 sees both the 10-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement and COP30 in Belém – chances to push countries to make stronger national commitments, work more closely with sub-nationals and civil society, and enhance global cooperation to address the climate crisis. Together with our partners across Europe and the world, we are committed to upholding and increasing spaces for multilateral dialogue and partnerships to make progress on key issues, create fairer and more resilient climate governance, and strengthen the ecosystem. More than ever, we must ensure that Europe's leadership in international climate diplomacy holds firm, if we are to sustain global cooperation and keep climate ambition on track.

In Europe, the EU's much-awaited Clean Industrial Deal is a crucial vehicle to showcase the bloc's commitment to pioneering a green future. This initiative has significant political momentum and is a crucial vehicle to pursue climate action and showcase Europe's commitment to pioneering a green future. While challenges may arise, this moment also opens up new avenues for the continent to lead by example. Europe can inspire global action and forge strong international partnerships by fostering innovation, enhancing green technology, and setting robust environmental standards.

Alongside clean industrial transformation, we must also make sure that climate policies respond to citizens' legitimate concerns about security and the economy. Together with our partners, we are focusing on further strengthening public support for climate action – building coalitions, growing citizens' agency, and creating democratic spaces for civil society to advocate for solutions that meet citizen priorities. Alongside these efforts, aligning European finance with policy ambition and social concerns will be key.



Looking ahead, we are facing strong headwinds. This year, our ability to respond swiftly and flexibly to changing sociopolitical conditions will be central to furthering our goals. With the challenge to multilateralism and the gap left by the US on the international stage, Europe can and must step up as an international climate leader. Its role in demonstrating decarbonisation on a multinational scale and fostering international climate diplomacy with developing countries now takes on even greater gravity. As a vital enabler of Europe's climate ambitions, the ECF has a crucial role to play – and together with our remarkable network of partners, we are ready to fulfil it.

**The Hague (head office)**

Riviermark 5
2513 AM The Hague
The Netherlands

Berlin

Neue Promenade 6
10178 Berlin
Germany

Brussels

Rue de la Science 23
1040 Brussels
Belgium

Budapest

Szervita tér 8
Budapest 1055
Hungary

London

Fora - 180 Borough High Street
London, SE1 1LB
United Kingdom

Madrid

Calle Veneras 9
28013 Madrid
Spain

Paris

5 Rue Saint-Fiacre
75002 Paris
France

Warsaw

Koszykowa, 59/3
00-660 Warsaw
Poland



European
Climate
Foundation

[LinkedIn](#)
info@europeanclimate.org
www.europeanclimate.org