



Fair Furniture
Group

Tomorrow is calling. We have the answers.

Social & sustainable
development report 2021/2022

What we stand for

As furniture producers and designers, we want to make the right choices. That is our challenge. Every day. As a group, as brands, as people. Our choices of today determine tomorrow. We don't always choose the easiest route, the fastest solution or the most profitable option.

We choose wisely. Honestly. Preferring refurbished over new. If that is not possible: sustainable and reusable materials. And if that is not an option? Then use local, non-fossil raw materials.

This is how we keep our brands sharp and focused. Because our most precious raw material is tomorrow. Innovation, determination and an open mind lead us to a sustainable future.

We are the Fair Furniture Group. A family of like-minded brands and people. Together, we can make anything. Smart ideas come to life in our local factories. Noble ideals become down-to-earth results.

Our doors are open, we love to show what we can do.


The future is calling. We are ready.
Fair Furniture Group

Our brands



Eromesmarko

The leading manufacturer of furniture for primary to university education.

 [Read more about...](#)



Be by Bèta

Lets everyone sit comfortably.

 [Read more about...](#)



Vepa

The most sustainable manufacturer of office and project furniture.

 [Read more about...](#)



De Lockerfabriek

The expert in locker solutions.

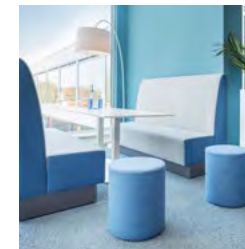
 [Read more about...](#)



Nomique

Unique and ergonomic. Working and sitting in the UK and Ireland.

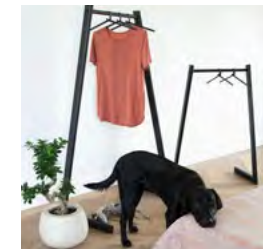
 [Read more about...](#)



Nice Price Office

Quickly setting up an office without any worries. That's Nice Price Office.

 [Read more about...](#)



Zooi

From waste to Dutch design.

 [Read more about...](#)



Part 1

Our story



Part 1

Our story

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We look forward to tomorrow!

We are pleased and proud to present this report on how our organisation, the Fair Furniture Group, is doing. A local manufacturing company, a family business and just a tad different from the rest... That is why in this report you will only read about subjects that we consider important: people, society and the planet. And yes: we put people first. Because without our people we wouldn't be here.

The people of the Fair Furniture Group invent, design, produce, assemble, organise, sell and so on. It is them - and their children and grandchildren - who motivate us to tirelessly search for new, sustainable raw materials. To invest in smart production techniques that are better for the environment. To introduce innovative furnishing concepts that help improve and enliven education. They keep us on our toes as we work with our partners to find ways of closing the cycle for a sustainable future for all.

A 100% socially responsible and sustainable business may sound like a daunting task, but if you stick to your ideals and genuinely care about the world of tomorrow, there are so many opportunities for a company to make a difference! Discover how we do this in our social & sustainable development report.

See you tomorrow!

Our colleagues on 2021

2021 was also a remarkable COVID-19 year. Everyone experienced it in his or her own way. Fortunately there was still room for success, both private and professional. And fortunately there was definitely room for fun.



Albert Braamskamp,
Technology Manager Fair Furniture Group:

“I am really very proud of the fact that we now have the most sustainable chair in the world, even with a negative carbon footprint. Proud that I have contributed to this. And beneficial to our planet!



Sharron Wormald,
Accountmanager Nomique:

“I worked within a dealer and specified Nomique for a number of years, and one thing that has always stood out to me is their dedication to sustainability. It’s clear that sustainability is not simply a tick box exercise, or a passing trend, but that it is the driving force behind everything they do and strive to do. It is a privilege to now be a part of Nomique and the Fair Furniture Group.”



Mazen Alzayat,
upholsterer Vepa:

“Thanks to Vepa I have obtained my first official Dutch MBO diploma. I had to follow many Dutch language lessons, all of which were done at Vepa. I am very happy that it worked out.



Rozemarijn Henzen,
interior architect Eromesmarko:

“The Inspiration Campus is part of our showroom in Wijchen where we explain all there is to know about materials and raw materials. It is a very special space that is always evolving. Everyone is welcome to come and take a look.”



Jan Mulder, Sustainability Manager
Fair Furniture Group:

“Nationale Nederlanden chose us as circular coordinator for the modernisation of its buildings in The Hague and Rotterdam. We had not handled anything on such a scale before, but the result is fantastic.”



Lynne Okhuijsen,
Production employee Be by Bèta:

“At the beginning of the Corona crisis, we were all a bit afraid of what was to come. Six months later business is booming. So many home office chairs have been sold! It is great to see how we as colleagues are handling this special period in time. We really are a team and together we’re giving it everything we’ve got. With 1.5 metres between us of course.”



Marije Veenstra, sales office employee
International Vepa:

“At Fair Furniture Group you don’t have to be afraid of getting stuck in the same place, When they notice that you want more or just something else, it can be arranged in no time. I was given the the opportunity to switch from Eromesmarko to Vepa and so now I focus on the world of office and project design. Exciting!”



Stefanie Beekers,
Brand experience Eromesmarko and Zooi:

“After two previous internships, I was allowed to help set up the new brand Zooi for my graduate internship, a very exciting and educational experience! In 2020 I started with a NIMA training and since then I’ve been responsible for the marketing of Eromesmarko. I am very happy to have the opportunity to develop myself further within this company.”

Highlights of 2020

VDB Group continues as Fair Furniture Group. A new name that expresses what the group of manufacturers of office, project and school furnishing stands for: sustainable furniture, made in the Netherlands and UK with a warm heart for people and with a focus on an honest and healthy future.



And also:

Opening of the **Meshallen** in Wijchen

Further development of **Ypsilon** in cooperation with **FOKLab**



Circular furnishing at **Nationale Nederlanden**



Felt collection made of 100% recycled post-consumer **PET felt**



Huge success home office **HomeFit©** and **Be by Bèta home office chair**



64,2% Gas reduction thanks to sustainable new building **Eromesmarko** in **Wijchen**



New showroom for **De Lockerfabriek** in Emmen (the Netherlands)

80.000 kg of virgin plastic saved by using recycled plastic in new products

Fair Furniture Academy has been opened

Vepa and Plantics receive **Renewable Materials Award 2021**

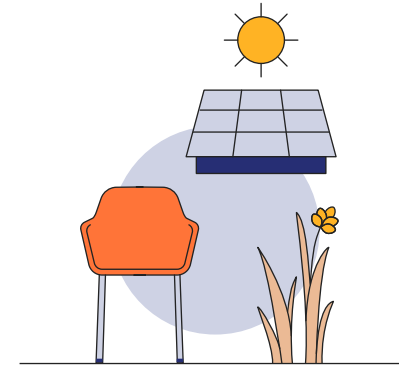
In short

Fair to people, society and the planet: that is the basis on which we want to build a new future-proof economy in which we, together with our people and stakeholders, continue to do business.



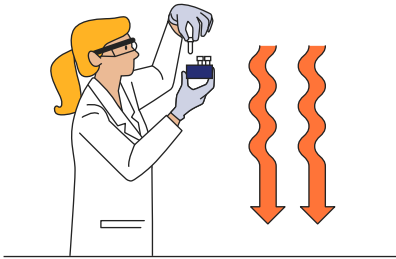
Consciously improving

We dearly love the world around us. The craftsmen in our factory, the men and women in the office, from welder to marketeer, from CEO to intern: we are all working consciously towards a better world. That is simply part of us. For a cleaner environment, we want to be a leader in our industry with clean, sustainable and circular products. Contributing to our environment, that is what we are all about. For young people, for the craftsmen of tomorrow, for students of the Praktijkschool, for organisations like NLdoet or for the clients and volunteers of the Food Bank. Everyone matters!



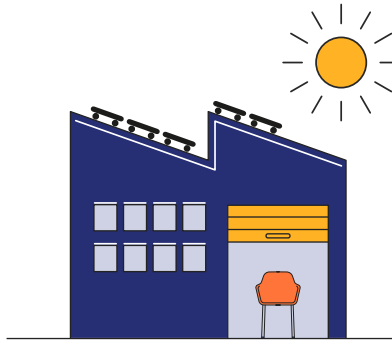
Together we complete the circle

The Fair Furniture Group wants to be a leader in sustainable, circular and social entrepreneurship. Not because it is trendy or a hype, but because for us it is the ultimate way to have a positive impact on the world around us. At the Fair Furniture Group, circular and social enterprise means, among other things: reusing materials, using sustainable energy, cooperating in the production chain and putting people first. That's a tall order. And we are not there yet. But we are well on our way. Together we complete the circle.



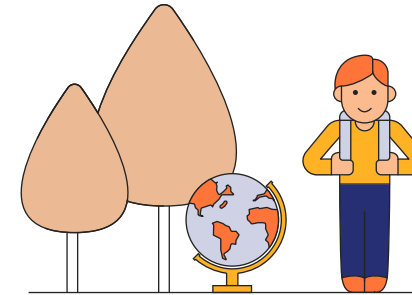
Put your money where your mouth is

How does one become a leader in sustainable, circular and social entrepreneurship? Well, by working together. Our aim is to improve every day. To lead the way in all aspects of corporate social responsibility. And, very importantly, to reduce our carbon footprint. Not in 2030 or 2025 but right now. We use science as our basis and closely follow the latest developments. As soon as a new energy source, material or technique presents itself, we immediately look for applications. Regardless of the year. We look beyond the trends of the moment.



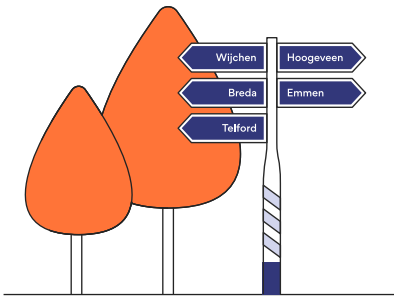
We are honest and open

We are 100% transparent in our sustainability goals. We do not pretend to be better than we are, we share our results and are honest and open about our processes and the materials we use. In our factories, we regularly show people around who are interested in our products and the way we work. All are welcome!



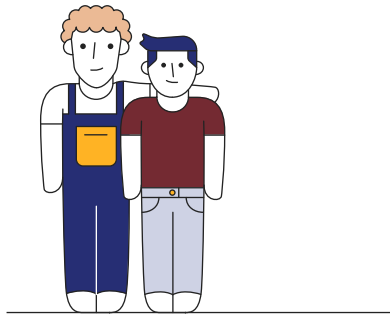
We only have one planet Earth

Fossil raw materials are running out and their extraction has a major impact on our planet. As a group we believe that the use of sustainable raw materials, the reuse of discarded furniture, the use of the renewable raw material wood or the use of recycled materials, always takes precedence over the use of fossil raw materials. So that is what we are doing. We focus on reuse, value preservation and waste reduction. We develop circular solutions for our waste materials and the waste of others. This way, we ensure that nothing ends up in the waste bin. We do this because we believe that there is no other way. We only have one planet Earth. Let's not waste it.



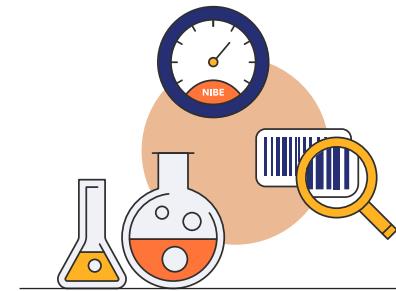
Only local

In our factories in Breda, Emmen, Hoogeveen, Telford and Wijchen, we produce all our furniture close to our customers. As are our suppliers. Our suppliers for raw materials are always local. Whenever possible, we choose suppliers from the Netherlands and Great Britain. If not, we make deals with suppliers from Western Europe. As a result, we keep control and know for sure that the people who supply our raw materials have good working conditions and we can guarantee that the OECD and ILO guidelines as well as environmental laws are enforced at their companies. Opting for local also limits the distance between our suppliers, our production sites and our sales market. This way, we save both time and the environment.



People create a brighter tomorrow

For us, corporate social responsibility is not something we just do on the side. It is the way we work. Every day, in our own factory, we dedicate ourselves wholeheartedly to our customers. But we cannot separate our beautiful companies from what is happening around us. With what we do, with the knowledge and the people we have, we can really mean something to others. We seize these opportunities - every day. Because we have an eye for people who do not always have everything going for them in life. Social return is anchored in our company, for example in the cooperation with various practical schools and Maram education. They support young people who are stuck in current educational systems, we offer them a place to learn as well as a place to work.



We dig deep

Environmental impact, circularity and health: we want to get to the bottom of things. That is why we are constantly assessing and researching together with the education and science sectors. First, we check whether a certain new raw material or technology is sustainable according to our strict sustainability criteria. Next, we calculate the environmental impact and only then we'll use it in our production. As a result, we can show our customers the exact material composition, the origin of the raw materials and the environmental impact of each product. Knowledge is power!



Seven solid brands, one family

The Fair Furniture Group is a family business. A family business with five Dutch shareholder families, with the third generation now at the table. For us, continuity of the group comes before personal gain. That is what makes our company stable and financially strong. Roel Wiekema is a member of one of those families. He is a co-founder of the Fair Furniture Group and he was managing director of Vepa and later of the VDB Group/Fair Furniture Group for 34 years.





People first; that is truly a legacy of Roel Wiekema. One that is very much cherished by the Fair Furniture Group. For example, everyone shares in the profits. Roel Wiekema: When I started working for the company in 1968, it was unique that all employees, including those in production, received an annual profit distribution. I still remember a very particular profit distribution, it was in 1971 - just after the establishment of Vepa. We weren't making money yet, but we wanted to share something with the employees, so everyone received a crate of apples. With the friendly request to return the crate, because of the refundable deposit. Well, that is hard to imagine now.'

A group of 'headstrong companies' with more than 100 years of history, the first of which started working together in 1998.

Headstrong

The story of the individual companies goes all the way back to 1909. Bicycle pedals, air conditioning, caravans; really anything and everything was made by the companies, which had no connection with each other at the time. Each company moved along with the market and regularly changed its strategy and vision. A bunch of 'headstrong companies', according to Wiekema, the first of which started working together in 1998. 'Then the VDB Group was founded. Quite simply, we used the first letters of Vepa, Drentea and Bèta for our group name.

Now we are the Fair Furniture Group, a group of seven solid brands, each with its own speciality. Together there is nothing that we cannot do when it comes to furnishing.'

Always a step ahead

The individualistic character has always remained and today it still determines the vision of the group. Roel Wiekema: We have always invested in new developments and innovative production techniques. Even when everyone was outsourcing - especially back then. To always be a step ahead, that was - and is - our goal. Not to be the biggest, but definitely the fastest. In recent years, I have been enormously proud of the sustainable vision of my successor Frits Muijsson which is really felt throughout our company: not just talking about sustainability, but acting in a sustainable way. The fact that our family business became Fair Furniture Group in 2020 is therefore a logical step for us to take towards what we all want: sustainable business. Honest, strong and solid. Fair to the planet and fair to people and society.

The sustainable vision which is really felt throughout our company: not just talking about sustainability, but acting in a sustainable way.



Our rich history



1909

Start production of school furniture and gymnastics equipment (establishment of the first Fair Furniture Company: Kooijmans-Mes (Eromesmarko))

1951

Start production of office furniture (Drentea)

CSR vision: local, sustainable and employment opportunities

1968

Start production of office chairs (Be by Bèta)

1971

Shareholder families start with Vepa

1995

Collaboration social employment services

1997

ISO 9001 certification

1998

Establishment of VDB Group (the predecessor of the Fair Furniture Group)

2000

ISO 14001 certification

2008

First circular revitalisation project with Essent

Sustainable wood FSC® certification

Start collaboration Delft Technical University: Han Brezet, Professor Design for Sustainability

2009

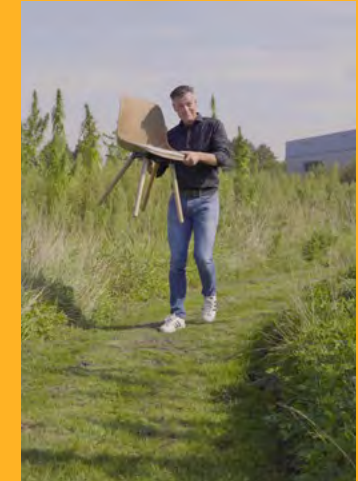
Sustainable wood PEFC certification



Fair Furniture Group



inside inside



2010

LCAs as a basis in collaboration with Delft Technical University

2014

Introduction Felt chairs from recycled PET bottles.

First PaaS (Product as a Service) project with Sita

2015

Creation of own research garden GreenField

Start of own research lab on biobased materials

2017

100% reuse of textile and steel waste streams

Establishment of Zooli, home accessories from residual materials

2018

Initiator NPR 8313 circular measuring methods

Founding partner INSIDE/ INSIDE independent tool for sustainable interiors

Vepa most sustainable company of Drenthe and winner of the 'Drenthe company of the year' award

Green Product Award winner chair Felt

Plastic Whale by Vepa

Unique metal recycling with our own cube press

2020

Gas reduction of 64.2% in new building Eromesmarko, Wijchen

Vepa and Drentea continue together

Introduction of the world's most sustainable chair, together with Plantics

VDB Group continues as Fair Furniture Group

2021

Audience Award Circular Awards with Hemp and together with Plantics winner of Renewable Material of the Year 2021

Founding of Fair Furniture Academy and opening of De Lockerfabriek showroom

What we believe is fair

1

We are a family business of Dutch origin where continuity comes before profit.

2

We produce everything in our own factories in Breda, Emmen, Hoogeveen, Telford and Wijchen.

3

We have 92% of our staff in permanent employment.

4

We let our employees share in the profits.

5

We accept social responsibility, not only for our employees, but also for others outside our company.

6

We offer apprenticeships to precisely those students who would otherwise not be able to find an apprenticeship.

7

We open our doors to those who are interested.

8

We do not have anything made elsewhere in the world to reduce labour costs.

9

We produce sustainably and are 100% honest about this to the outside world.

10

We do not create waste but use our residual materials for new products.

11

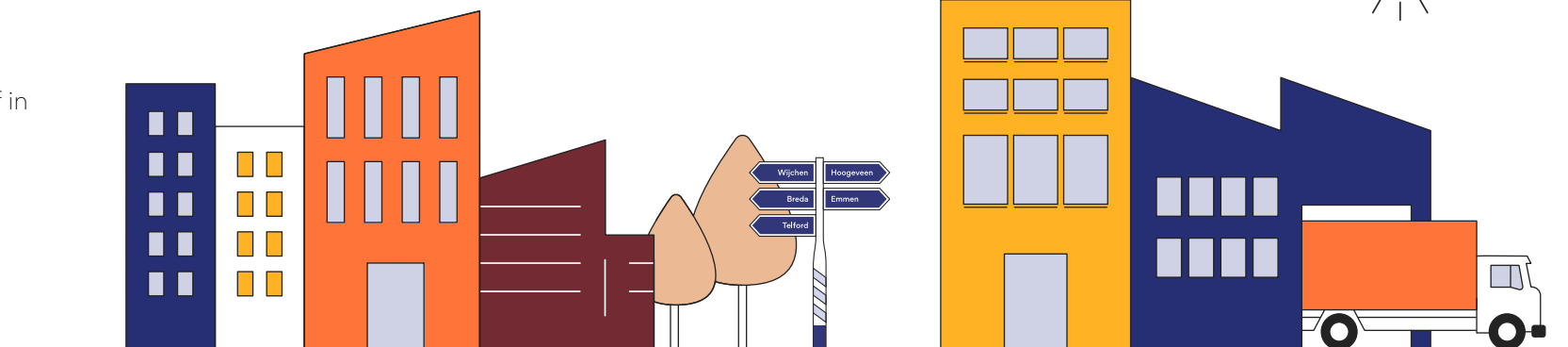
We buy our raw materials locally and in Western Europe.

12

We design our products circularly.

13

We let our people learn, and focus on vitality and sustainable employability.





Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, the United Nations set 17 ambitious world goals for sustainable development. These 'Global Goals' are, for the period up to 2030, an important collective priority, with which we fight poverty, inequality and climate change. It is up to all of us - Governments, businesses and 'ordinary' people - to work together towards a better future for everyone. And of course we are happy to do our bit. In our factories, our offices and beyond.



Think big

Seventeen goals to make the world a better place by 2030; That is what we as Fair Furniture Group are 100% committed to. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have been agreed upon by the member states of the United Nations, including the Netherlands and UK. As a top notch family business, we are keen to make a positive contribution, particularly to the goals in the areas of poverty, education and the climate crisis; challenges that directly relate to our role in society and the economy. In doing so, we also look beyond the borders of our small country, for example when it comes to the origin of our raw materials and the human rights conditions in our chain.

Thinking big is not foreign to us, so we also want to make a contribution to the restoration of biodiversity. We are happy to show the positive impact of producing locally to anyone who wants to learn about it. For example, by not outsourcing to low-wage countries, we also retain knowledge in the production process and we offer employment in our industry. We see it as our responsibility to work together towards a better future for everyone.

**Highly motivated by our own sustainable and social goals,
we focus on the following SDGs:**



Quality Education

Learning-working places

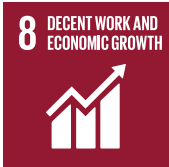
Every year, we offer dozens of students the opportunity to gain valuable knowledge and skills within our companies.

Employee development

We promote lifelong learning within our Group as well, with equal development opportunities for all employees.

Educational environments programme

Proper and future-proof education with equal opportunities for everyone is very important to us. We have the ability and a strong drive to - together with others - play an important role in the development of education, based on the conviction that innovation in the educational environment leads to better education. 'Educational environments' is at the same time an appeal to ourselves, to education partners and schools to invest in the development of education. For this purpose we have established De Meshallen, the Fair Furniture Academy and the Eromesmarko school.



Decent Work and Economic Growth

By focusing on continued inclusive and sustainable economic growth with decent work for all our employees as well as the employees of our suppliers, we achieve continuity within our companies. For us, this means: working with trust, with pleasure and respect, according to the regulations and in continuous consultation with stakeholders.



Responsible Production and Consumption

Sustainability in every sense of the word is the leitmotif in everything we do. Our business model is evolving from furniture manufacturer to sustainable raw materials broker.

We are well on the way to using only natural raw materials and/or unused residual flows. Without waste and without environmental impact.

With our Fair Furniture Academy, we create a 'green work and lifestyle', through awareness, admiration, development and action.





Life Below Water

Stop talking. Let's start doing!

With this in mind, we are taking action against the plastic problem. Every year, more than eight million tonnes of plastic ends up in the world's waters, with disastrous consequences for nature (and ultimately for humanity). In collaboration with Plastic Whale, we create unique furniture made from plastic waste and we support an extensive awareness programme in the Netherlands and far beyond to combat the plastic problem.



Life on Land

FSC® and PEFC™

At the Fair Furniture Group we have been using only certified wood from sustainably managed forests since 2008.

GreenField

Ecosystems are the foundation of a sustainable earth. That is why, in 2014, we created our own ecosystem with the 'GreenField project', where respect for the earth, for people and nature is central. There is no waste, we experiment with our own natural raw materials such as hemp, grasses and flax, support biodiversity and grow fruit and vegetables in a fully organic way for our local Food Bank (Voedselbank Zuidoost Drenthe).



Furnishing according to Sustainable Development Goals

We look beyond the horizon. We are committed to the Sustainable Development Goals and want to help others in their sustainable development. For example, by building and furnishing educational or business buildings with the UN Global Goals in mind. Together with the educational institution or entrepreneur, we investigate all the possibilities and, if required, we manage or support projects.

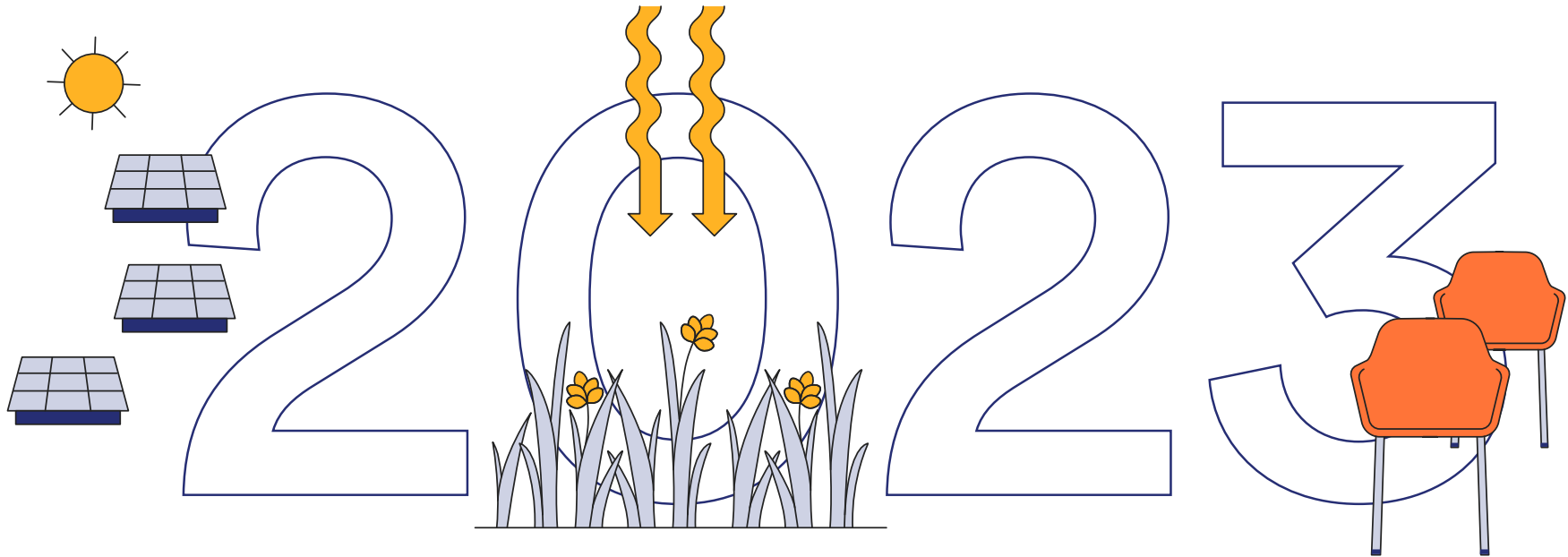




Sustainability goals in day-to-day practice

The Sustainable Development Goals confirm the direction that we, as the Fair Furniture Group, have been taking for decades and provide guidance for future choices in the areas of sustainability, circularity and social responsibility. As a group we have also formulated a number of pragmatic 'personal' goals that each of us is fully committed to, now and in the years to come.





Energy-neutral production

We are committed to energy-neutral production. The objective is to achieve energy-neutral production on at least one of our production sites. This will be our production site in Breda where we will install at least 210 additional solar panels.

Less CO₂ emissions

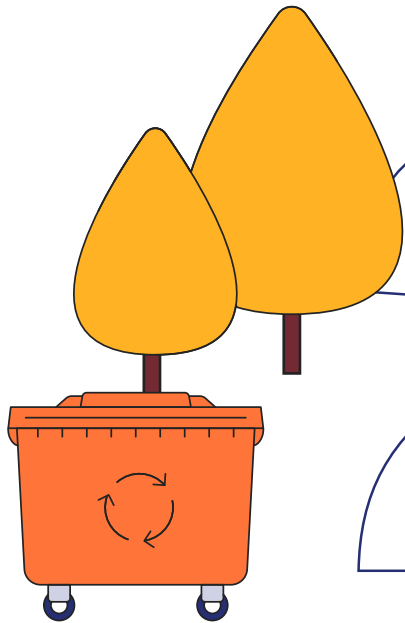
In 2020, we have developed our first CO₂-neutral products. By 2022, we want to add at least one more CO₂-neutral product to our collections.

Furniture made from roadside grass, hemp or old furniture

Much of our research focuses on the production of furniture made from, for example, hemp, roadside grass or old furniture. The first research phase has been completed and we expect to achieve tangible results soon in our Research Lab in Emmen. For the research into furniture made from roadside grass, we are working together with the Dutch Department of Public Works.

Separating glue from wood

Our goal for the coming year is to integrate a new glue installation into our production process so that we can separate various layers of (glued) wood and reuse them.



Sustainable replacement for polyether foam

One of our priorities is to find a worthy replacement for the polyether foam in sofas and chairs. We have already developed a substitute for the filling of our acoustic products in the form of recycled textiles: Re-felt. Our objective is to replace polyether foam in sofas and chairs with a non-plastic version within 4 years.

100% waste-free

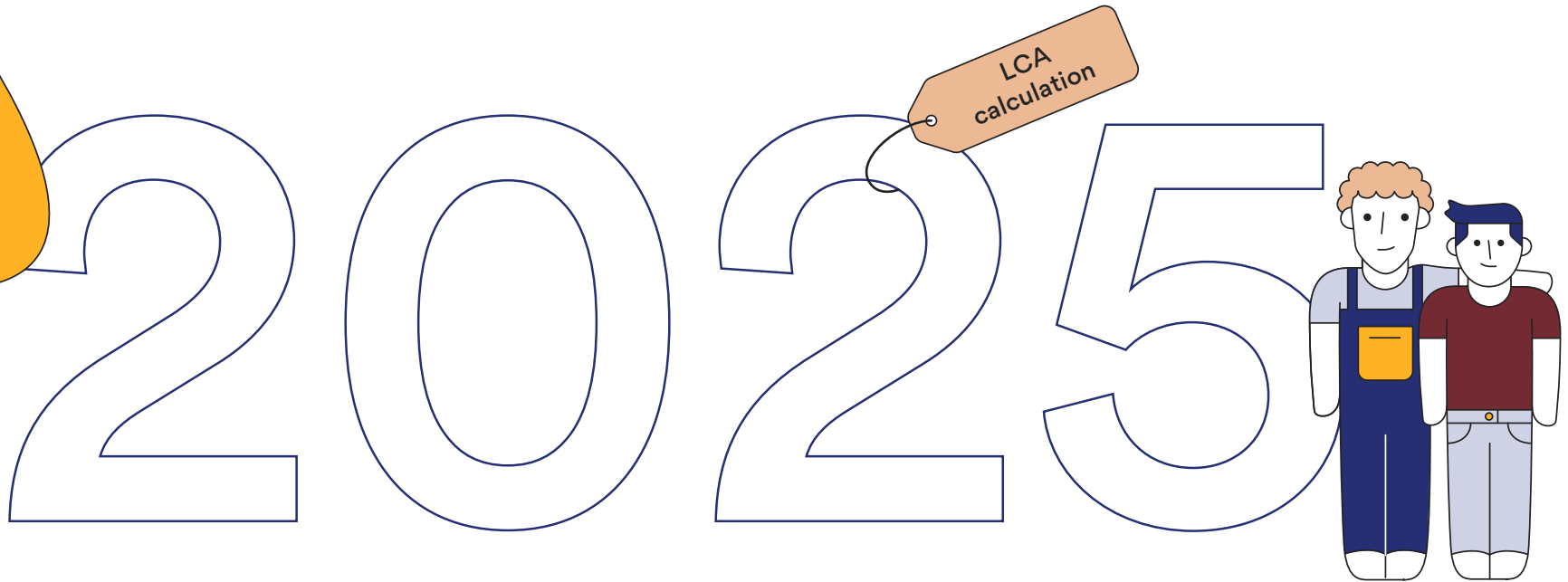
We are working towards a completely waste-free business operation. We want to achieve this for all companies within the Fair Furniture Group by 2025.

Understanding the environmental impact of our products

We calculate the environmental impact of our products by means of a life cycle analysis (LCA). By 2025 all products within the Fair Furniture Group must have an LCA calculation.

Increase inclusiveness and diversity

We are committed to have a minimum of 5% of our workforce made up of internships, graduation projects and apprenticeships for students with a distance to regular education.



Part 2

Fair to people and society



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People are the lifeblood of a company

This is also true for the companies of the Fair Furniture Group. The success of our products is based on the craftsmanship and enthusiasm of our people. We care about our own people, but also, for others in society who are not so close to us.

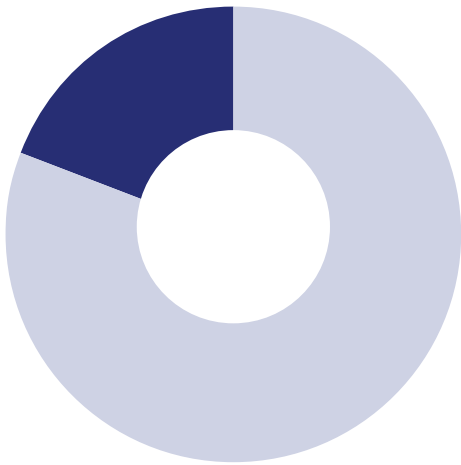


With training and work places, social projects, research and voluntary activities, we like to give something back to society. We invest in more enjoyable and better education, by bringing education, government and entrepreneurs together and by realising innovative furnishing concepts.

We take our responsibility for the health and well-being of our customers and end-users very seriously and we are very committed to doing business honestly and transparently.

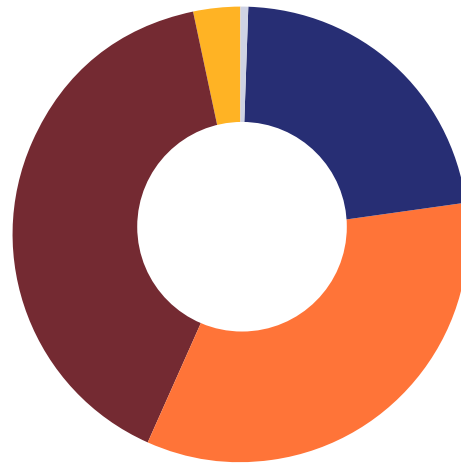
Our 457 people

Men and women



- Man 370
- Woman 87

Age



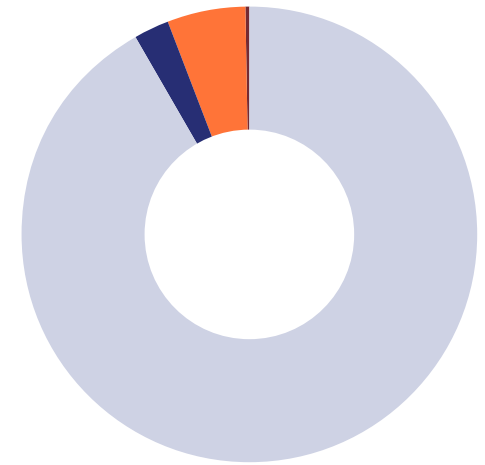
- Up to 20 years 3
- 20 - 35 years 102
- 35 - 50 years 154
- 50 - 65 years 184
- 65+ 14

Years of employment



- Up to 5 years 156
- 5 - 15 years 137
- 15 - 30 years 98
- 30 - 45 years 58
- 45 and more 8

Type of employment



- Permanent 419
- Learning pathways 12
- Temporary 25
- On-call 1

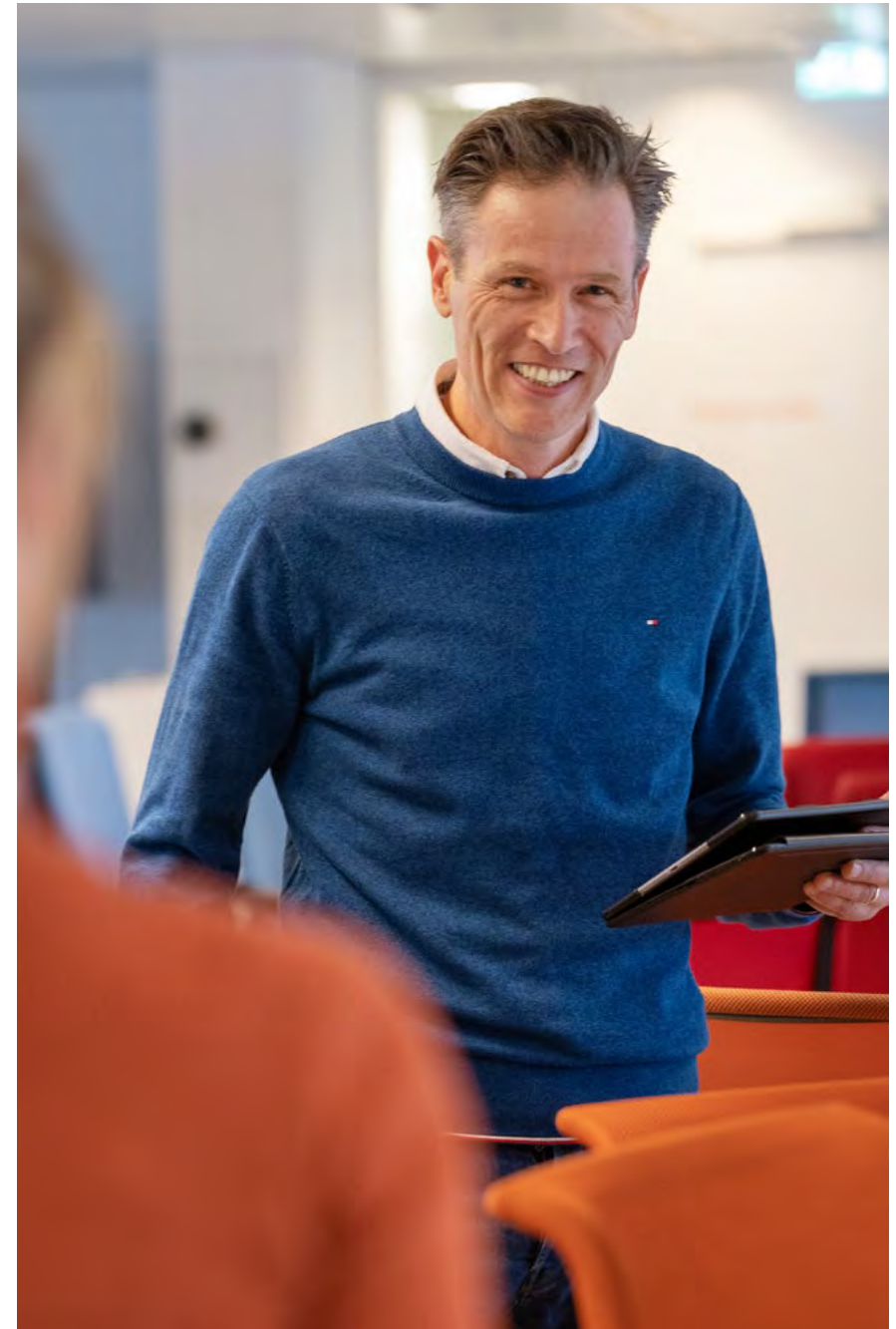


Caring for employees

We are proud of our people and they are proud of their company, brands and products. And it shows. We have low staff turnover and a remarkably low absenteeism. We invest in personal training plans, a safe and healthy working environment and excellent fringe benefits.

We are proud of our people and they are proud of their company, brands and products.

The Fair Furniture Group is one of the few manufacturing companies to offer and promote a four-day work week. Many of our employees have to deal with high physical demands on a daily basis and we believe it is very important that they are able to do their work in a safe and healthy manner. That is why we are striving for an occupational health & safety system in accordance with ISO 45001. By paying attention to vitality and prevention and dealing with health complaints or limitations in a conscious and serious manner, we minimise the risk of employees losing their jobs due to disability.





Profit sharing

The management's vision and working method is down-to-earth and headstrong. That means innovation and investment where possible, even when the market is unfavourable. This way of thinking has its effect on the entire organisation. Our people like to think, work and decide with us. Therefore, it is only natural that they also share in the profits. That is how we have been doing things here for decades.

Being and staying fit

Exercise is important for staying fit, so we encourage our employees to take part in physical activities. For example, we invite them to participate in joint walking, cycling and running events. To keep everyone involved with each other and the company, we regularly organise team outings, an annual fishing day and enjoyable workshops. We personally honour colleagues who are celebrating their anniversaries - and there are more every year. Once a year we close down the company to enjoy - together with possible partners - an active employee day.



Educational enviromnements

‘Lifelong learning’: we are fully dedicated to that. But we would not be the Fair Furniture Group if we did not have our own twist on it: Educational enviromnements. It is no coincidence that this is the motto of the education furnisher of our group: Eromesmarko. Together with others, we, at Eromesmarko, want to play an important role in the development and enlivenment of education. We are convinced that innovation in the learning environment leads to better education. ‘Educational enviromnements’ is an appeal to ourselves, our (educational) partners and schools to invest in the development of education.





Fair Furniture Group

Eromesmarko school

We regularly organise seminars and theme days for primary and secondary schools, vocational education and higher professional education. We invite experts in the fields of educational innovation, evolving learning environments, moving learning, identity & image of schools and the 21st century school building. In an informal setting, these experts share their knowledge and exchange experiences with participants from the industry. In recent years, we have organised various seminars where professionals from primary education to scientific education shared knowledge in the pleasant and informal setting of the Eromesmarko school.

‘Educational environments’ is an appeal to ourselves, our (educational) partners and schools to invest in the development of education.



Research with education

‘What will the educational environment of the future look like?’ ‘What is the influence of trends in education on the physical learning environment?’ We share our knowledge and experience for a broad research project together with a large group of other experts from education, science and housing. Together, we support graduating students from secondary vocational education, higher vocational education and university education in their research into various issues relating to a wide range of educational developments. In three stages - Share, Explore, Experience (SEE) - students work towards valuable insights to innovate the educational environment. As the initiator of the research community, each year we organise one or more meetings around a current topic, at which students present their research results.



Every child counts!

Educational concepts of Dr. phil. Michael Kirch

A different approach leads to smart solutions for all types of education - that is our conviction. At the Fair Furniture Group we are constantly looking for new ways to support and stimulate educational innovation with new insights and designs. To this end, we collaborate with a leading scientific expert in this field: Dr. phil. Michael Kirch. Dr. M. Kirch works for the chair of Pedagogy and didactics for primary education at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University in Munich. Among other things, he researches the influence of the learning environment on education and what opportunities it provides for improvement. An important motto here is: every child counts.

Flexibility first

Inviting, transparent and flexible spaces with plenty of room for playing and working together, but also quiet places where you can sit and relax for a while, are essential. 'Flexibility' is the key word in the approach of Dr. M. Kirch. Kirch did a lot of research into the environment in which children and professionals can develop optimally. He is convinced that the proper playing and learning environment can positively influence the behaviour of children, as well as team leaders, teachers and parents involved. New insights, developments and challenges require an innovative and flexible environment that, among other things encourages individualised education.

Educational lab in Düsseldorf

Eromesmarko is one of the founders of the Rhein-Maas Zentrum in Düsseldorf. A living lab for everyone involved in education. To start, the teachers and students of the ZfsL (Zentrum für schulpraktische Lehrerbildung) teacher training college Düsseldorf will use the lab first. Prospective teachers can experiment with learning environments in the lab and discover what works best for them. But other schools, administrators, authorities, educational advisers, architects and companies involved in the design of learning environments are also welcome at the Rhein-Maas Zentrum.

Prospective teachers can experiment with learning environments in the lab and discover what works best for them.

Projekt Lern-Raum also organises courses and workshops in the Rhein-Maas Zentrum on the relationship between education and learning environment. Plans for new buildings or renovation are often the reason for participants to look for knowledge in this area, but they also come for inspiration regarding the redesign of a teaching space or to sharpen their own ideas on teaching and learning environments. Rhein-Maas' refers to the connection between the Netherlands and Germany. Organisations from both countries work together with the aim of sharing knowledge and innovating together. It is inspiring to look across borders!

Fair Furniture Academy

At the Fair Furniture Academy, we help others to do business with love for people and planet. Participants are introduced to every aspect in which we, as the Fair Furniture Group, excel. It is an inspiring place where our interactive workshops provide new knowledge and insights and where visitors can engage in peer-to-peer discussions. You will discover everything there is to know in the field of sustainable production, circular furnishing, CSR and product training.





De Meshallen

A breeding ground for knowledge

De Meshallen is the leading platform (virtual and in real-life) for valuable contacts between education-related organisations. The goal is to improve education by connecting education, government and entrepreneurs.

The physical part of De Meshallen is located in Wijchen. It is the number one place for education-related companies to meet, work, network, confer and train in an inspiring atmosphere. The completely renovated building on the Nieuweweg offers extensive facilities that all participants can use and where they can organise their own and joint activities. In addition to this inspiring location in Wijchen, participants can also visit the virtual environment of the Meshallen-app and there is also a growing community on social media. More than 40 education-related companies, foundations and entrepreneurs are participants of De Meshallen.

Partner: HAN University of Applied Sciences Arnhem and Nijmegen

A smart partnership between De Meshallen and HAN: De Meshallen facilitates the minor in Smart Industry in its building. Companies are desperate for professionals who not only understand new technology, but can also apply it. Smart Industry students specialise in a specific product or process within a company and make it 'smart'. All participants of De Meshallen can initiate a project. For example, students have worked on issues for Let Things Talk and Aryzon, both participants of De Meshallen.

Social return

Doing something for others

At the Fair Furniture Group, we have an interest in people who do not have everything going for them in life. As long as they want to work for the world of tomorrow, as we do, they are welcome to participate in work and activation projects in the GreenField or at our production sites. Or, they can use residual materials from our factory for their own projects and we will provide personal support.





WerkPro 



Social enterprise

Specific examples of initiatives that have been incorporated into our business process are the cooperation with the social employment agency WerkPro / Verslavingszorg (addiction care) Emmen-Hoogeveen and with Toolbox located in Emmen. At WerkPro they make beautiful outdoor furniture from our wood and steel residual materials. Toolbox is a proper 'social enterprise' where people with a distance to the labour market are given a real opportunity to make a valuable contribution to society and work on self-reliance.

People with a distance to the labour market are given a real opportunity to make a valuable contribution to society and work on self-reliance.

Together with detainees

In-Made is the production company of the Dutch Custodial Institutions Agency (DJI) that offers employment and education to detainees, so they can learn a trade and reintegrate successfully into society. We have asked the DJI to use the expertise and capacities of In-Made for the realisation of the government contract 'PI Zaanstad'. We continue to support these detainees by purchasing 'zuivere koffie' (Dutch for pure coffee) for our Hoogeveen location. Zuivere Koffie offers motivated (ex) detainees a second chance by learning a trade. Zuivere Koffie is the only organic coffee in the world roasted in prison.



Employment

We are a large furniture manufacturer that does not outsource to countries where wages are much lower. In a country where the manufacturing industry, and the jobs it provides, are getting scarcer, we see this as an important challenge and responsibility.

Our own people in our own factories transform tubes, sheets, panels and textile rolls into furniture and complete furnishings. We use the same knowledge for refurbishing existing furniture, even furniture from other brands. And why would you outsource production to low-wage countries when you can responsibly create local jobs by cooperating with social partners in the region?

We have been working consistently for decades with various social employment agencies, not because we have to, but because we can. For example, the wooden frames of a number of our products are made by people with visual impairments. Whenever possible, we also offer jobs to people who wish to return to work from an unemployment or disability situation.





Dutch lessons on the work floor with Maram education

We are very happy with our colleagues Mazen and Mohamad from Syria. They had their own successful clothing and furniture upholstery business in Syria, but in the Netherlands they did not qualify for an upholstery training. Their language deficiency was too great to obtain the diploma within the time allowed. Maram- education supported these men with daily one-to-one lessons on the shop floor, so that they could still obtain their diploma. A perfect example of how much is possible if we create a 'educational environment' and not get stuck in the traditional classroom way of teaching.

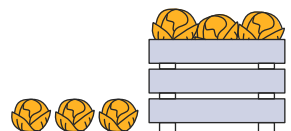


NLdoet

Every year, you will find us at the Dutch National Volunteer Day 'NLdoet'. Because we believe that we should help each other if we can. We are more than happy to make time for this during working hours. Together with the organiser of NLDoet, the Oranje Fonds, we shine a light on voluntary work and invite everyone to roll up their sleeves for two days in March in our GreenField in Emmen. Each year, these are great days for social contacts as well as solidarity. During the last edition of NLdoet, our employees in Wijchen worked on planting trees, a litter campaign and park maintenance in several residential areas. The colleagues of Be by Bèta removed litter from the canals of Breda.

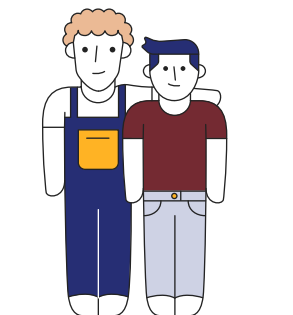
Alzheimer Nederland

Be by Bèta is a corporate friend of Alzheimer Nederland. Just like Alzheimer Nederland, we believe that physical activity is extremely important. In order to stay healthy, we encourage people to alternate sitting and standing work on a regular basis. Working in a standing upright position helps to get more exercise during the working day. And that is not only important for preventing back, neck and shoulder complaints, but also, to reduce the risk of dementia. If we all live healthier lives and exercise more, scientists believe that up to 30% of all dementia cases could be prevented. For every Be Brave office chair sold, we donate € 2.50 to this great foundation. We are proud that, as an official corporate friend, our donations can contribute to a future without dementia.



Food bank: food from the GreenField

Together with the Food bank Voedselbank Zuidoost Drenthe, we have set up a large part of our circular knowledge garden, the GreenField, as an ecological vegetable garden. Volunteers work the soil, pull weeds and fertilise the garden in an eco-friendly way. All super healthy and from our own backyard. Quite a few families in our area enjoy 'our' beans, potatoes, cauliflower and much more.



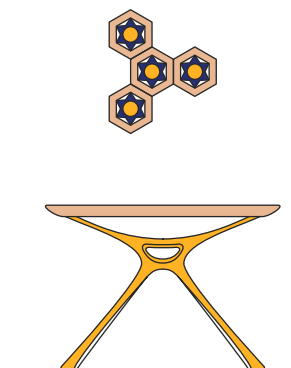
Sustained employment

The mission of Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind (MTIB) is to provide people with mental or physical disabilities with the opportunity for sustainable employment. The organisation has helped thousands of people in Britain find jobs in recent years. Nomique and the Merthyr Tydfil Institute for the Blind collaborate in the development of wooden components for benches. The organisation also supplies CNC cut cardboard for various applications.



Tour Facilitair

Tour Facilitair is a tour for and by the facilities industry. Clients, suppliers and consultants: everyone is welcome. We are co-initiator of the Tour Facilitair. A successful and sporting event with as many as 200 participants in 2021. Part of the contribution of the partners and sponsors goes to charity. In 2021, proceeds were donated to the CliniClowns.



Plastic Whale

Thanks to our cooperation with Plastic Whale from Amsterdam, we are able to offer primary school children the opportunity to go plastic fishing on the Amsterdam canals free of charge. In doing so, we increase awareness and educate them at an early age about the need to tackle the plastic soup problem.



Relaxation after exertion

Cycling, running and walking

We like to help our people stay healthy and fit. The Vepa Cycling Team, Vepa Running and the Fair Furniture walking competition guarantee sportive ambition, fun and team spirit. Relaxing together in the great outdoors is just as important as training for challenging regional tours and events.

Winter sports

An unforgettable winter sports weekend full of action, relaxation and fun. Enjoy skiing and snowboarding together in the refreshing outdoors. Every year we go to Willingen with a select group of Vepa dealers. Guaranteed to be successful!

Team DSM

With our own Vepa Cycling Team we organise several challenging events every year, some of which are in cooperation with Team DSM. Vepa is official supplier of the ambitious cycling team Team DSM. Just like Team DSM, we consider it a challenge to become increasingly better and more sustainable and to provide the perfect vital working environment.

Together with the education sector

We feel not only the social responsibility for (the development of) our employees, but also for others outside our company. Close contacts with various regional educational institutions are an integral part of our organisation. Every week, dozens of young people gain work experience in our factories under the guidance of our professionals. A number of these institutions focus in particular on vulnerable students, for whom it is not always easy to find a suitable place. They are more than welcome with us.



Learning a rewarding trade

In addition to several school-based pathway (BOL) and training on the job pathway (BBL) students, we also offer the opportunity to learn a beautiful trade to dozens of students at the practical school Meander Hoogeveen, Stad & Esch practical school, PRO practical education Hoogeveen and Emmen and the entry class of Regional Training Centre (ROC) Nijmegen.

We also work with technasium students at the Roelof van Echten College and assist students at Windesheim University of Applied Sciences with their minor or (graduation) internship.

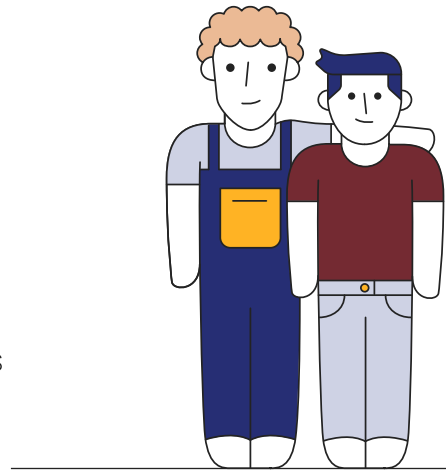


Girlsday – VHTO

VHTO (national expertise bureau for girls/women in beta/technical professions) is committed to increasing the participation of girls and women in technology. During VHTO Girlsday, we open our doors in Wijchen for girls aged 10 to 15 years. They can participate in interesting activities, get to know female employees and learn more about scientific/technological activities. In short, Girlsday lets girls experience the undiscovered world of science, technology and IT up close! Eromesmarko has been organising participation in this national event for years in cooperation with the Maaswaal College in Wijchen.

Honest and ethical business

Corporate social responsibility means that we also take our responsibility when it comes to the partners we work with.



The Fair Furniture Group is guaranteed not to have any connections with organisations that are not committed to Human Rights. We talk openly with our suppliers about doing business fairly and about respecting laws and regulations. We only work with companies that have the same stringent criteria as us when it comes to ecological and social responsibility. It is precisely for these reasons that we exclusively select Western European suppliers.

When choosing suppliers, we look at both the commercial and moral side of the organisation. Our supply chain is fully transparent and the standards of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) are a matter of course for our suppliers as well. Our

suppliers as well as their suppliers must also comply with a Code of Conduct that has been drawn up by us. This includes agreements on corporate social responsibility and specific working conditions. In line with the OECD guidelines, we investigate where the most important risks take place. These are certainly not empty phrases for us and we only enter into relationships with companies of which we are certain that they share important norms and values with us, such as:

- 1 Compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- 2 Compliance with the ISO 26000 guideline for Corporate Social Responsibility.
- 3 Compliance with OECD guidelines and ensuring full supply chain responsibility in the areas of human rights, child labour, the environment and corruption.
- 4 Compliance with the fundamental ILO Conventions on working conditions, child labour, slavery, the right to strike and freedom of association and assembly.
- 5 Compensate employees fairly and provide a safe and healthy working environment.
- 6 Respect the individual orientation, physical attributes and/or religious beliefs of employees.
- 7 Taking measures to protect the environment as much as possible.

Part 3

Fair to the earth



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Fair to the earth

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Fair to the planet

Fair trade means doing business guided by the core values of sustainability and circularity. At the Fair Furniture Group, this mission has long been a daily reality. We are 100% committed to being a leader in our industry. We go for clean, sustainable and circular from design to transport. From innovative raw materials to the reuse of old furniture. When it comes to energy and the cooperation with manufacturers, we go to great lengths to achieve our goal: taking care of tomorrow's world.



Leading in circular business practices



FFG platform, one modular technology for desk systems of all our brands

Exchange of components and circularity at its best for 20 years now.



Project Lefier

The existing 500 workplaces completely refurbished and then reused in their own interior.



Project Nationale Nederlanden (NN)

In two office buildings with more than 4000 employees a complete renovation of the workplaces. 90% was reused!



Project Tejin-Aramid

Revitalisation of all office chairs. Parts of broken chairs were used to repair others. We keep the remaining parts in stock for future repairs. Great, isn't it?

Circular products:

Zooi design made from waste.

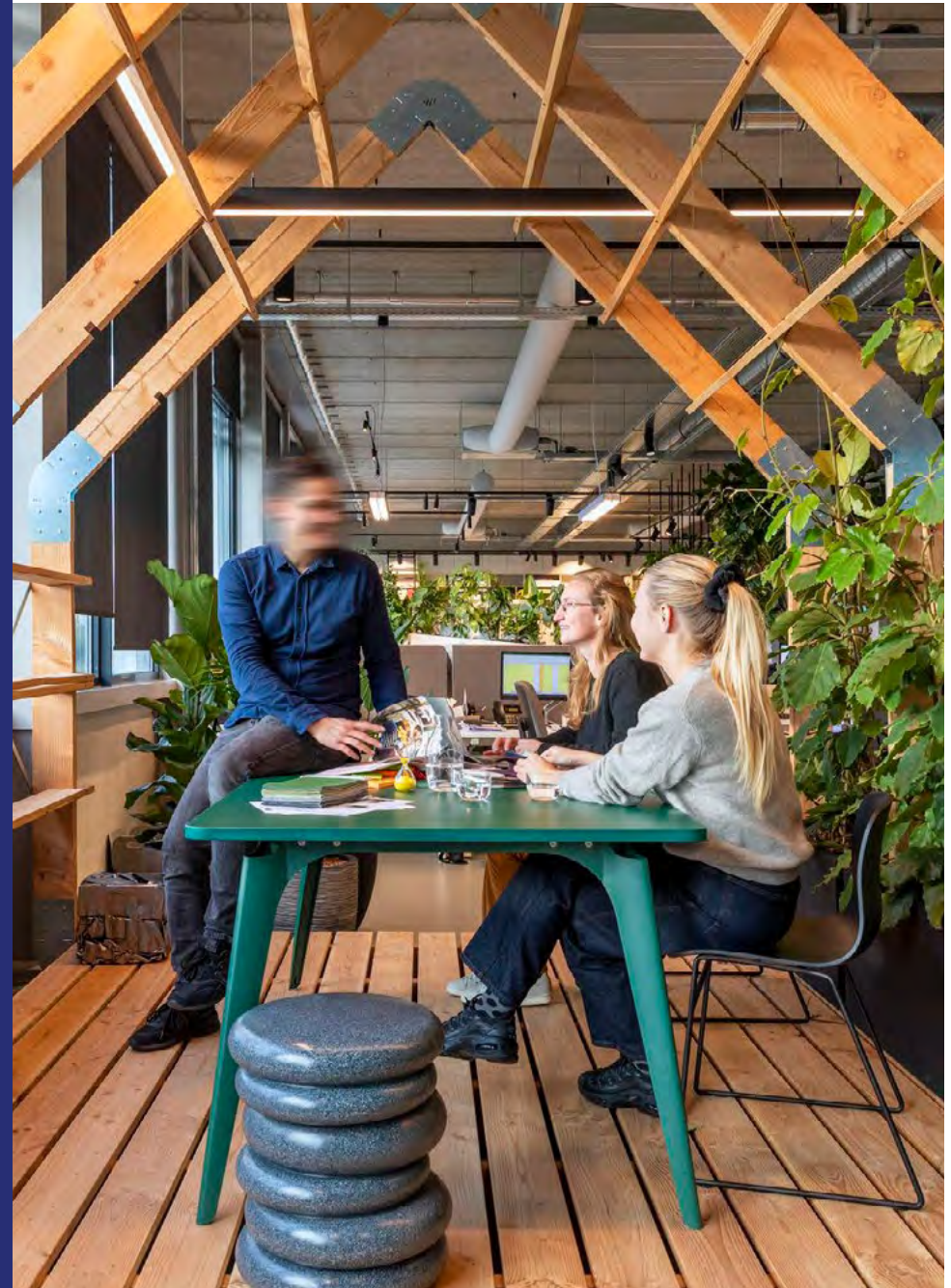
Re-felt a second life for textiles.

Hemp the most sustainable chair in the world.

Plastic Whale by Vepa collection of furniture made from plastic from the Amsterdam canals.

Together we complete the circle

It is quite obvious: the Fair Furniture Group wants to be a leader in circular business practices. Not because it is trendy, but because for us it is the ultimate way to have a positive impact on the world around us. What circularity means to us: not creating residual flows but rather using them as raw materials, reusing materials, using sustainable energy, cooperation in the production chain and putting people first. That's quite a tall order. And, we're not there yet, but we are well on our way. Together we complete the circle.





Together we complete the circle

In the 'old' linear economy, companies make products by extracting raw materials and processing them into things that are thrown away after use. By doing business in a circular way, we want to prevent pollution and exhaustion of the earth and fight for social equality. In short: contribute to a better world.

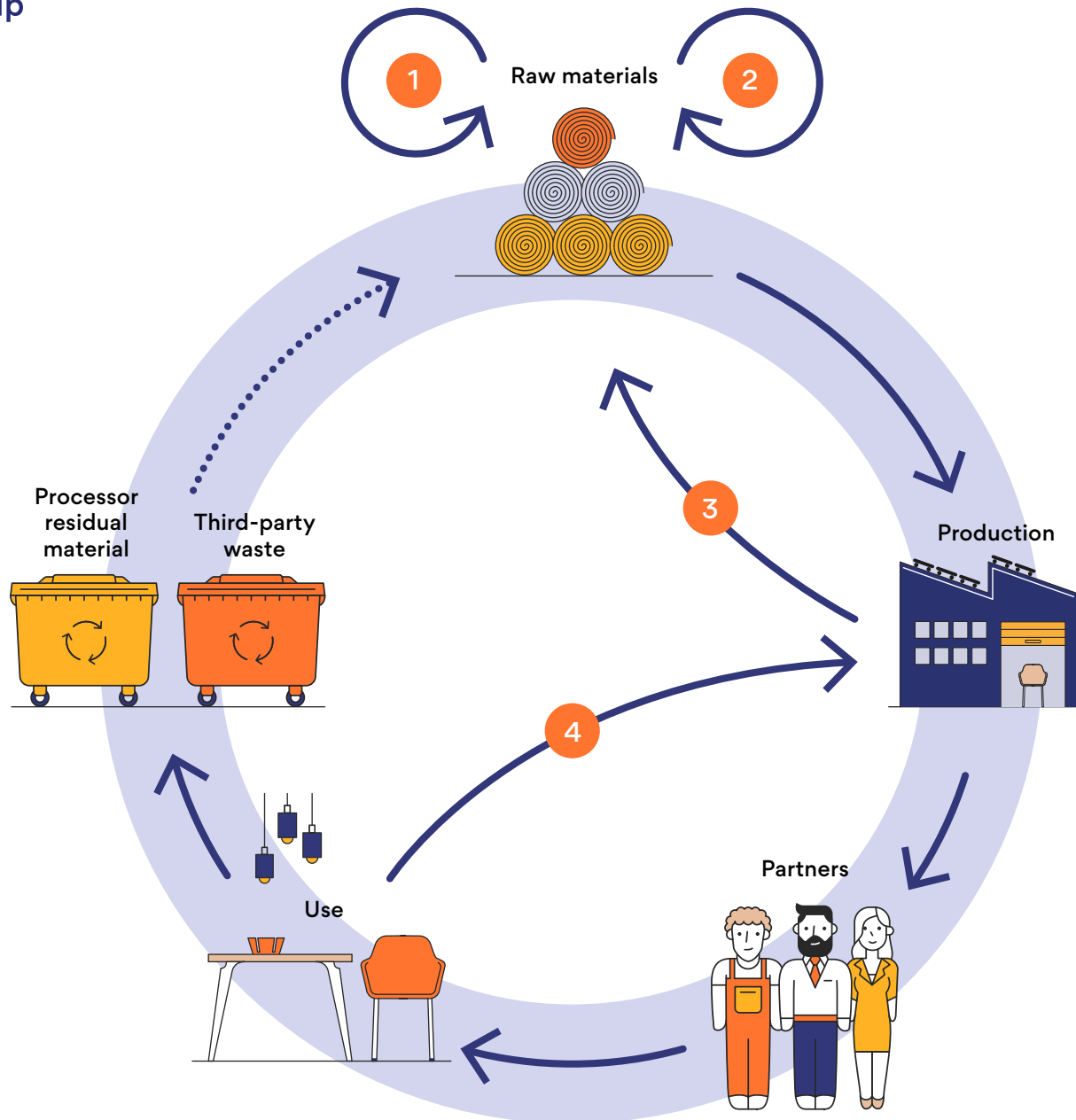
Smart design

The degree of circularity of a product is largely determined in the design phase. We want to close the production chain, so we try to avoid creating waste during production or after use. Our designers have a keen eye for the reusability of (residual) materials and used furniture. We transform them into attractive new products. With a new design, we give a new life to furniture that has seen better days. In our research lab, our enthusiastic craftsmen are constantly looking for new, more sustainable materials to use in our production and our products.



Modular = circular

Modularity is key in our sustainability ambition. Modular design means that parts are interchangeable and that we can easily replace broken parts of a product. The support tubes of our desks, for example, are designed to be modular. We have been using the same frame structure for every desk, in every size, for 20 years now. In addition, the seat frames are modular and interchangeable. This means that we can easily replace a broken part instead of having to replace the entire product. Quite a sustainable solution.



We are our own raw materials supplier and that is how we complete the circle

- 1** Wood, textiles, steel and recycled plastic from local suppliers.
- 2** Development of new materials in our GreenField and Research Lab.
- 3** Reuse of wood, textiles, steel, plastic and cardboard.
- 4** Maintenance, reuse, relocation, disassembly, recycling, renovation, storage.

Sustainable knowledge and inspiration

Whenever possible, we also help others to take circular steps. In addition to sharing the knowledge we gain from our projects, we also offer recommendations, tools, workshops and training courses to accelerate the transition to a circular economy. More and more of our customers are, like us, committed to the reuse of materials, renewable energy sources and working on a human scale. We offer smart tools to these sustainable entrepreneurs to promote circularity and reduce costs. Anyone who wants to know the ins & outs of sustainable and responsible design, production and advice on furniture is welcome at our Fair Furniture Academy. Here, furnishing consultants, (interior) architects, facility managers, buyers and occupational health & safety consultants come to gain inspiration, knowledge and insights and to interact with fellow professionals.

Whenever possible, we also help
others to take circular steps.

Science is the foundation

At the Fair Furniture Group, we are constantly working towards our ideal of completely circular design and production. Not by proclaiming how sustainable we are or by greenwashing, but by measuring, examining, analysing and double-checking. In 2008, Professor Han Brezet of Delft University of Technology gave us the first push in providing a scientific basis for our initiatives by means of a life cycle analysis (LCA) in the report: 'An exploration towards sustainability'. We continued along this scientific path and subsequently entered into successful collaborations with NEN, NIBE, the University of Amsterdam and Plantics.

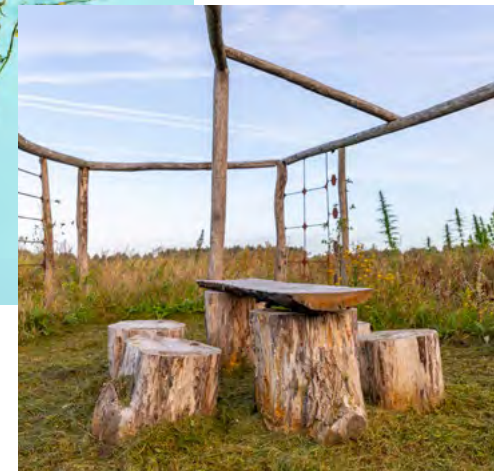
Securing sustainability

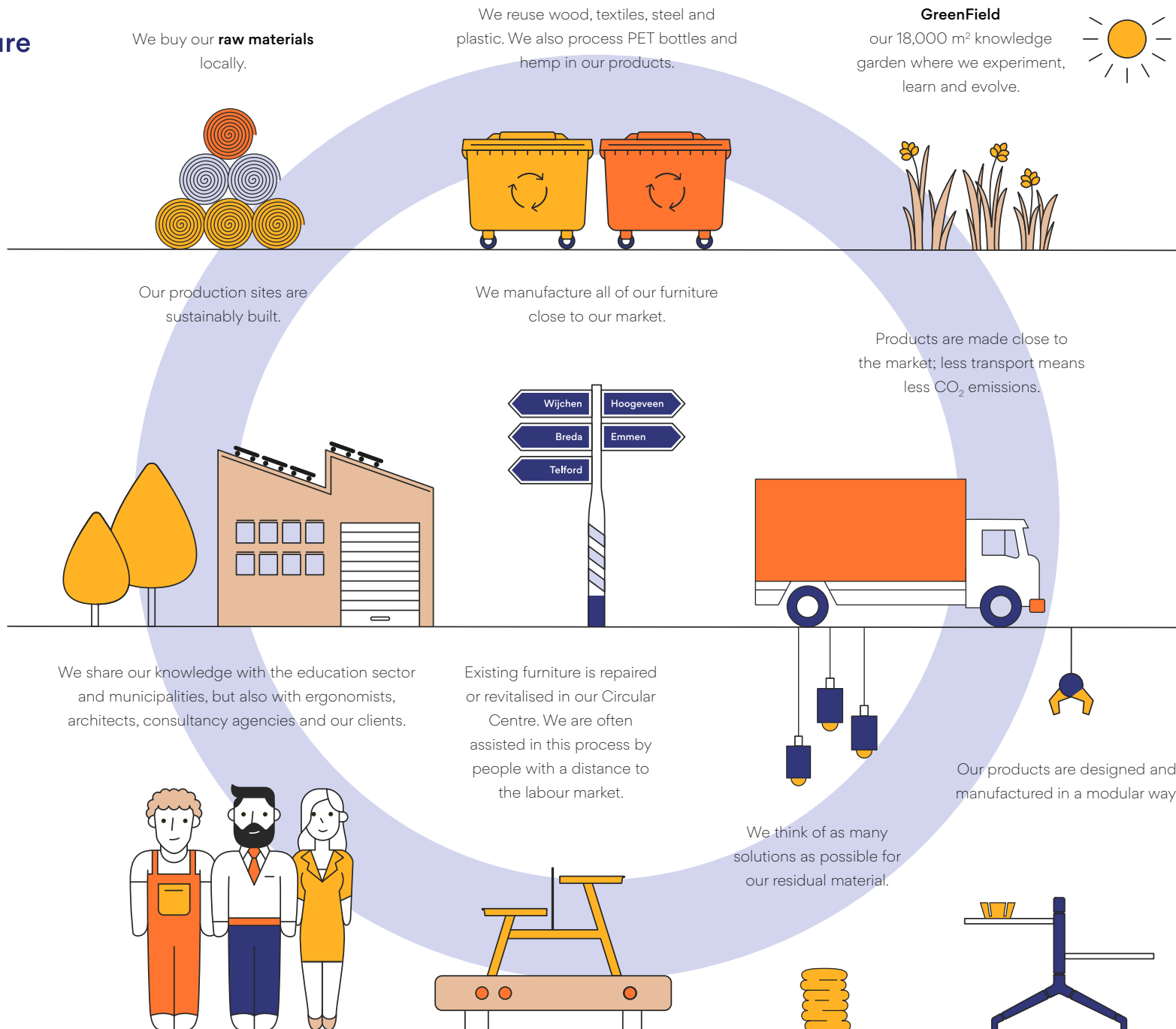
We measure the environmental impact, circularity and health of all our furniture; together with the industry and the Dutch Institute for Building Biology and Ecology (NIBE) we have created a handy online platform for this: INSIDE/INSIDE. This allows us to translate sustainability into a life cycle analysis (LCA) or: the total environmental impact in euros. The methodology helps us to make the best choices when it comes to circular procurement, development and production. We use the method to monitor and guarantee the circularity of our furniture over the years. This enables us to optimally inform our customers about sustainable materials and furniture and gain valuable knowledge that we are happy to share with the education sector, developers and manufacturers.

Circular knowledge garden GreenField

The GreenField, the 18,000 m² circular testing ground behind our factory in Emmen, is the ultimate place to see, feel, smell and taste what we at the Fair Furniture Group consider important: sustainability, reuse, waste reduction and recycling. Respect for the planet, for people and nature. Here, you are at the heart of the of the circular economy.

It is not without reason that the GreenField is listed as 'best practice' among the Circular icon projects of Nederland Circulair (The Netherlands Circular). It is the ultimate knowledge garden, the place where we think big and start small. Where we experiment with forgotten raw materials and get creative with waste. Where we make bees, butterflies, birds and flowers happy and grow healthy food for the Food bank. Where we learn so much and where we, as well as our visitors, are continually amazed by the power of nature.







Timeless and long-lasting

Circular design also means that we create products made from sustainable materials with a timeless design. Our chair 400 for example; designed in 1968 and still part of our chair collection. The back and seat are made of sustainable and certified wood and the frame is made of recycled steel. The chair exudes nostalgia, but is often used in contemporary and sustainable project furnishings.

Raw materials and resources

Being a leader in circular business practices. A healthy and sustainable future for people and for the planet. These are the things that matter to us. That is what we represent and what we are committed to with the Fair Furniture Group. This means that we make sustainable choices when it comes to raw materials and the materials we use for our furniture, to maximise their contribution to our ambition. We find solutions for our own waste and that of others. This is how we ensure that as little as possible ends up in the trash.



How wood lasts longer

Wood captures CO₂ instead of emitting it. The wood we use to produce our furniture is sourced regionally and sustainably. We only work with FSC® (FSC®-C028807, FSC®-C117140, FSC®-C113118, FSC®-C028817) and PEFC (PEFC/30-31-043, PEFC/30-31-675, PEFC/30-31-042) certified wood from Germany, Belgium and Austria. With relatively little energy, our suppliers process this raw material into solid wood furniture parts, MDF panels or chipboard panels (which consist almost entirely of waste wood). Wood has the benefit of being a renewable raw material, fully recyclable and - after going through the cycle several times- it is still suitable as a sustainable fuel for certified green energy. We also have various circular solutions for our own residual wood.

Obviously, we do not throw away any leftover wood from production. We use it as the basis for new products, such as our “Seat, Meet & Storage” units, train benches and poufs, right down to the last piece. Whatever is left, is shredded and goes back to the supplier, or is used to research how we can make new panels or it goes to our waste disposal company which uses it to generate certified green energy. We try to avoid the latter as much as possible in the chain, with the aim of 100% reuse.

Obviously, we do not throw away any leftover wood from production. Right down to the last piece, we use it as the basis for new products.



Fair Furniture steel, a strong example

We make our furniture with recycled and recyclable steel. Steel can be reused almost infinitely and it fits perfectly with our sustainability ambition to use raw materials as consciously as possible. State-of-the-art CNC-controlled laser machines and intelligent programming ensure super-efficient use of tube and sheet metal.

Processing steel waste locally

The scrap trade is a global trade that involves many logistical movements and transport. This can and must be done differently. This is another reason why we choose to make our production chain fully transparent and have our own steel waste processed locally into new products such as frames for chairs or tables.

As with processing wood, the use of steel in our production process results in having leftover pieces. We collect them. We turn the steel waste into new parts and home accessories for Zooi. We also give part of it to the social employment agency WerkPro, which turns it into new products as part of their social projects.



Down the block

The residual material is collected and pressed into blocks. Iron foundry Rademakers melts and casts the blocks - within walking distance of our location in Emmen - into new parts for our furniture. Reusing local raw materials and collaborating in the region: that's what makes us very happy. The frame of the chair from our Plastic Whale by Vepa collection and the corner piece of the Loft tables are made from our own residual material. Strong products that also look very good. And the best part: at the end of its lifespan we'll just use the material again for something else. We don't throw anything away.

Efficient upholstery



We also make conscious choices when it comes to our range of fabrics. Not just about the quality, but also with respect to sustainability. That is why our standard fabrics are OEKO-TEX certified and/or provided with standards that prove the sustainability of a product.

All furniture is upholstered as efficiently as possible in our upholstery. The large rolls of textile are hung on a special CNC cutting machine, which unrolls the fabric to the right length and pulls it to create a vacuum. This eases the cutting and ensures that the material cannot shift. The most efficient way of cutting is then calculated, with the aim of leaving as little residual material as possible. We cannot produce without any residual material, but all our residual material is collected and reused. We also have sustainable solutions for our textile waste. Larger pieces of cloth are used for new bags by Zooi. Little scraps are felted into mats of Re-felt.

Re-felt: acoustic filling from residual material

Residual material from our upholstery is the perfect raw material for our acoustic filling. The residual material is felted together with other fabric scraps into mats. We use these Re-felt mats as acoustic absorption material for new products, for example in our InBetween acoustic screens. And the best part is: the acoustic value exceeds that of polyether and after use we turn it into new Re-felt mats again. That way, nothing is ever wasted.

Clothing as a resource for a new product

What we can do with our own textile waste, we can also do with other fabric leftovers, such as discarded company clothing. Clients can order acoustic screens into which we incorporate their own worn-out corporate clothing. If that isn't circular, we don't know what is.



Plastic fantastic

We try to avoid the use of fossil raw materials and consequently, the use of plastics in our products. We only consider the use of plastics to be justifiable if, by reusing plastic waste streams, we contribute to reduction of the waste mountain and at the same time create value.

All plastic parts of our furniture must of course be safe and recyclable. We therefore only use parts of which the material, origin and potential for reuse and recycling can be fully traced. Because we produce everything ourselves, we can switch easily and without delay to better alternatives as soon as they become available. As a result, almost all of the plastic parts we use have already been exchanged for alternatives containing as much recycled material as possible. Our production process is ultimately structured in such a way that we only have plastic waste in two places: the cutting waste from the foam used in the seats of chairs and office chairs, and the powder residue from the powder coating of metal. An ongoing process that is moving closer to 100% every year.



From drawer to chair

We ensure that the plastic parts returned by our clients are reintroduced into the cycle as raw materials for new products. For example, a plastic drawer from a discarded school desk, no matter how old, can come back in shredded form in a cool Wybelt stool. Nowadays, that same drawer is already made of 100% recycled materials, just like the Finn chair by Eromesmarko. In 2021, we have saved about 80,000 kilos of virgin plastic by using post-consumer recycled plastic (PP) for new products.



Quality labels and standards

We only use certified raw materials and materials that are verifiably better for people and the environment than the industry standard. The standards we use are preferably universal, non-commercial quality labels that can be verified objectively.

Researching new materials

The Fair Furniture Group has its own circular research lab. Together with educational institutions, companies and the government, we investigate the possibilities of reusing residual materials and develop entirely new sustainable raw materials, products and services based on the circular philosophy.



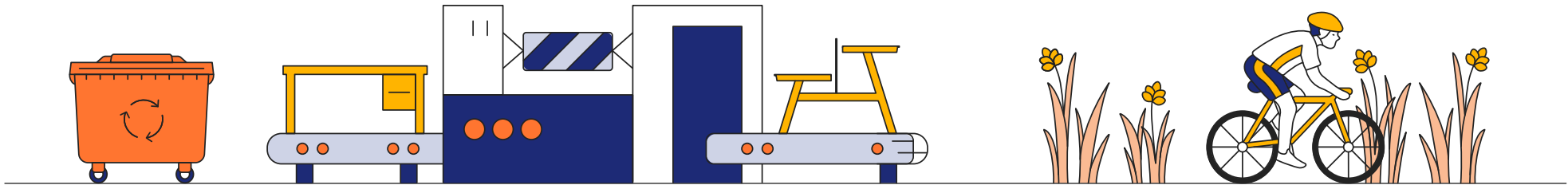


Table tops of old furniture

The research lab in Emmen is trying to find an solution for all those solid wood and chipboard panels of, for example, old cabinets and desks that seem to be in offices everywhere. The old chipboard cannot be recycled to high-quality standards yet and often ends up in an incinerator to generate energy. We want to change this. By shredding and then pressing it with our newly developed Plantics bio-resin, we think we can solve this problem. The time will come when we say: Old furniture? Bring it on, we'll make it into something brand new!

GreenField: the ultimate circular knowledge garden

In the GreenField, the 18,000 m² circular knowledge garden behind our factory in Emmen, we can experiment together with educational and knowledge institutions to our heart's content. Here we get creative with waste and we come up with new natural raw materials for our furniture. We grow our own research crops in the GreenField as well, such as hemp, flax and grasses. The new basis for the materials of our furniture.

Roadside grass front runner group

Together with our partner Plantics and the Dutch Department of Public Works, we are developing furniture made from roadside grass. The collaboration is a logical sequel to the collaboration with the Gebiedscoöperatie Zuidwest Drenthe. They started the research into a solution for roadside grass back in 2017. We have now established a production line in our Research Lab in Emmen where we test this material and apply it in new products.

What else are we researching?

We are currently testing the feasibility of sustainable locker doors made from recycled PET waste and whether plastic waste from hospitals can be used in the Finn chair. Positive developments resulting in an attractive and sustainable product. We are also developing table tops with hemp from our GreenField. These are all steps along the way to what we want most: reuse all raw materials for beautiful and functional products that do not burden the environment.



Circular product development

We are co-initiator of the Dutch practice guideline NPR 8313 for a circular office and learning environment. An important part of this guideline is the circular design. Our furniture is designed to be as circular and sustainable as possible. Among other things, we ensure that we use sustainable raw materials, avoid loss of material and make furniture that lasts as long as possible. This applies not only to new products, but also to making the existing collection more sustainable.





Hemp

the most sustainable chair in the world

Sustainability is in our DNA; in the way we think and act, everywhere. Thanks to this enormous passion, our team achieved the greatest circular success to date with the Hemp chair: the most sustainable chair in the world.

With the Hemp, we are the first company in the world to launch a collection of chairs with a seat shell made of a unique bio-material: a mixture of hemp and resin from existing waste streams. The materials used are completely biological, plant-based and endlessly recyclable in the same form. That has never been possible before.



A unique and infinite chair



- 1 The most sustainable chair in the world
- 2 Negative CO₂ footprint
- 3 Infinitely reusable material

All local = less CO₂

From Dutch and North German raw materials we make resin in the province of Gelderland, the chairs are produced in the province of Drenthe. The hemp mats are made in the province of Groningen.

Waste as raw material

The basis for Hemp is bio-resin, made from the residual flows of sugar beet and vegetable cooking oil, which would otherwise end up in the trash.

The other main raw material is hemp fibres that are left over after the processing of hemp plants (e.g. in food).

Resin + hemp becomes a mat

The 100% plant-based resin is mixed with hemp fibres, which are then pressed into mats.

The shell takes shape

Voilà: a 100% plant-based, timeless shell!

Beautifully modular

Of course, all parts can be reused or recycled separately.

Hemp is 100% formaldehyde free, MDI free and free from any other toxic substances.

Chair of the future

Every Hemp is a valuable raw material for the future!





How did we succeed?

Prof. Gadi Rothenberg and Dr. Albert Alberts from the University of Amsterdam ‘accidentally’ discovered a highly adhesive 100% plant-based resinous substance. A ‘sticky goo’ with such unique features, that the researchers founded the company Plantics especially for the development of this invention. At Plantics, CEO Wridzer Bakker worked on the further development of this exceptional material. The Fair Furniture Group is always looking for new materials and techniques, as well as for partnerships to make an impact in the field of circularity. We immediately hit it off with Plantics, and two years and over 200 tests later, we are extremely proud of the results!

The Fair Furniture Group is always looking for new materials and techniques, as well as for partnerships to make an impact in the field of circularity.

‘Resin’ from waste

The resin is made from residual flows of, among other things, sugar beets and leftover plant-based cooking oil. No waste of food! This is how a unique bio-resin with four worldwide patents was created. The first resin in the world that is 100% plant-based, without any added chemicals. We added hemp fibres from the North of the Netherlands and North Germany as raw material to make the shell of the chair.





Why hemp?

Hemp is processed in food and food supplements. We use fibres from the residual flow that are leftover after processing. This is not at the expense of valuable agricultural land. The advantage of hemp is that it grows in the North of the Netherlands and North Germany, without fertilizer or pesticides, it hardly needs water, it is super-strong and it absorbs CO₂. As a result, the production of the chair with a wooden base has a negative carbon footprint. Meaning that more CO₂ is absorbed than is emitted.

Infinite reuse

The individual parts of the chair are designed in such a way that, after use, they can be easily separated and reused. Although they are completely biodegradable in nature, we prefer not to break them down. That is a waste and unnecessary. A used shell is shredded and then pressed again in the desired shape. The same quality, repeated over and over again, without any additional chemicals and without adding new raw materials. We are the only company in the world where this is possible.

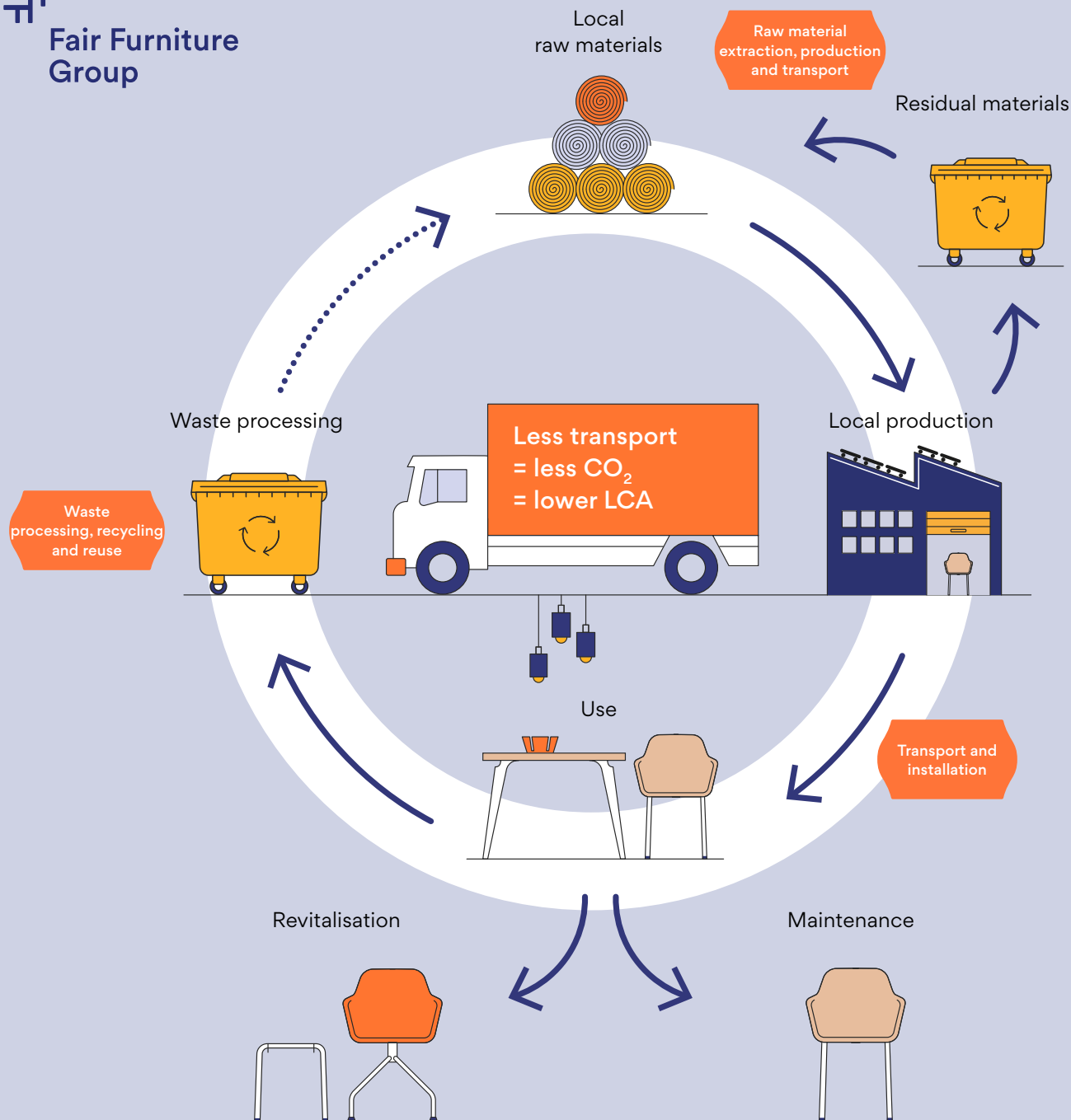
We developed both the product and the production. In doing so, we have also made the process scalable so that it can actually have an impact. In addition to chairs, the process can also be used for tables and tops, but also for applications outside the furniture industry.



Measuring environmental impact

INSIDE/INSIDE is the leading independent tool for a sustainable interior. An independent platform that provides insight into how sustainable, circular and healthy an interior is: that is what the Dutch Green Building Council, NIBE (independent party for measurements of environmental impact) and Ex-Interiors (interior Architects) committed to in 2018. Through Vepa, the Fair Furniture Group is founding partner of this online platform 'INSIDE/INSIDE', which makes it possible to compare products and make conscious sustainable choices. A clear overview shows the environmental impact of the total interior and which parts of the interior affect it.





Measuring environmental impact with a life cycle analysis

A life cycle analysis (LCA) is a method to determine the environmental impact of a product and provides insight into the environmental impact of products and processes across the entire value chain. The LCA shows where cost savings can be made by identifying and improving inefficiencies in the product, the process and the chain.

There are numerous factors involved which can make the compilation of an LCA confusing. This is why an LCA uses (international) guidelines and frameworks to measure the impact of a product. The current European EN 15804+A2 standard describes the LCA process.



Measuring environmental impact with R<THINK

The NIBE customised the online calculation tool R<THINK for Fair Furniture Group. The tool shows the environmental impact, circularity and health of our furniture. We use this tool to make sustainability measurable and we translate it into a life cycle analysis (LCA), i.e: the total environmental impact in euros. We monitor this environmental impact of all our furniture over the years. The NIBE application R<THINK has been transformed by INSIDE/INSIDE into an accessible platform with a wide reach.

INSIDE/INSIDE provides the opportunity to compare products and to make conscious and sustainable choices.

Pure win-win

Mantijn van Leeuwen, director of NIBE and LCA specialist, outlines what INSIDE/INSIDE offers members and their clients. “For all participating parties, we measure the environmental impact of the furniture and accessories they put in the system. This is a major advantage because it gives those parties an immediate incentive to make their office furniture as sustainable as possible. The system itself is independent; the competition lies in the contest between the participating parties. Obviously, you want the client to choose your furniture! That means in this case not only producing the most beautiful, but also the most sustainable. I consider that to be pure win-win.”

‘Everything has to fit like a glove’



Jasper de Bruin, head of product development at Vepa, sometimes spends the night tossing and turning in his bed when his colleague account manager Raphael Souhuwat had been at his desk during the day with an interesting assignment for a new design.

‘Sometimes there is a gap between a customer’s brief and what is actually possible’, Jasper laughs. It is up to us, as product developers, to build bridges at those moments and meet the wishes of the client. It can be difficult, but we always find a solution in the end.

‘Architects usually have a fairly strong opinion about what something should look like’, says Jasper. They often come up with designs that are exceptional and innovative, but not necessarily easy to produce. It is up to us to implement the design or - in co-creation with the designer - come as close as possible to it. We are ready and willing to take



on that challenge. That is what makes our work so much fun. You see a design and you go for it. Puzzling, shifting, measuring, calculating. We also involve our clients in this process, working together towards the best solution. Form is the norm, sustainability is the starting point. Everything has to fit like a glove and when it does, it feels good. Our production department is extremely flexible; we can make any design you want.



WELL-being

When developing our products, we feel responsibility for the health and well-being of our clients. That is why we use the WELL Building Standard as a guideline. It focuses on the health and well-being of users in a building - something we are also committed to.

WELL involves, among other things, guidelines in the following areas:

Air quality: e.g. by preventing volatile organic substances and using environmentally friendly materials.

Noise: e.g. by making optimal use of acoustic solutions.

Comfort and ease of use: e.g. by intuitive control of sit-stand furniture.

Vitality and health: e.g. by chairs that stimulate movement.



Co-creation

Co-creation is probably the most intensive method of cooperation. The client, their consultants and we combine knowledge with one common goal: to create a sustainable, tailor-made interior in which people can work with a sense of well-being. Below, we would like to give you an idea of how this works.

Co-creation à la Fair Furniture Group

Standard solutions for furniture and design are not always sufficient, sometimes more is needed. Custom-made and innovative - that's what we're all about at the Fair Furniture Group. In fact, we put our factories, our knowledge and our resources, at the disposal of our customers and their consultants, to work together on creating precisely those products that will ensure the optimal working environment in terms of job satisfaction and productivity. And we go to great lengths to achieve this: from the development of a two-person prison cell to a collection of designer furniture made from Amsterdam Canal plastic, which has already made its way into the boardrooms of the largest companies in the Netherlands and abroad.

A fantastic challenge

Janwillem de Kam is director of Vepa. He considers co-creation to be a great challenge that ties in perfectly with the experience, the expertise and the technical capabilities of the Fair Furniture Group. 'I consider it a beautiful and important development that the design of the working environment is receiving more attention these days. It is not only more enjoyable for the people who have to work there, it also leads to better results.



Today's office environment can in no way be compared with the often uniform, sterile furnishings of the past - and fortunately so. Achieving the best possible design together with all those involved is a development that suits us perfectly. We are perfectly qualified to meet design and functionality requirements in a way that not only boosts job satisfaction and productivity but also the sustainability of the space.

We like to be challenged to create the best possible design.

According to Janwillem, a project usually starts with a client who has a wish and an architect who has something in mind and creates a design. 'We are there to see whether the ideas are feasible and whether the design can be made in the right way. These worlds have to intersect somewhere. The form is decisive, the function and technology are our concern. Ultimately, you want to come as close as possible to what the client and the designer have in mind. At the Fair Furniture Group we have adapted our working methods accordingly. Our entire team also thinks in terms of customisation, and our account management brings customers, architects and product developers together to create the required solutions. That is not always easy, which is why our motto is: "if it were easy, anyone would be able to do it". With our know-how, we can find a solution for every design. That sets us apart, we call it co-creation à la Fair Furniture Group.'



Circular production: one step at a time

By choosing sustainable (raw) materials, we have already taken a major step towards what we desperately want for the preservation of our planet: circularity. Now, of course, it is a question of what comes next. How do we ensure that our production is as sustainable as possible?

Closing the production chain

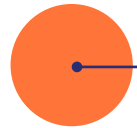
Production that is as sustainable as possible means that we close the production chains as much as possible and therefore:

- 1 Use raw materials as efficiently as possible
- 2 Produce as little waste as possible
- 3 Reuse furniture and materials optimally

No matter how much we want to and how hard we work, we cannot achieve a completely closed chain from raw material to waste stage on our own. We therefore involve our raw material suppliers, as well as architects, consultancies, governments and educational institutions, as much as possible, in our sustainable ideas and solutions. We have set up the Fair Furniture Academy to share this knowledge. Together we get things done!

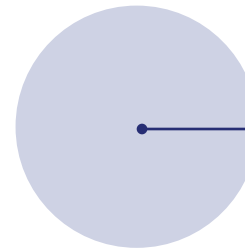
The impact of raw materials and production site

The carbon footprint in kg CO₂ equivalent for cabinet production (incl. transport)



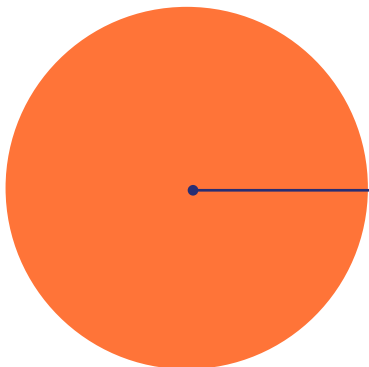
54 kg CO₂

Wooden cabinet
produced in
the Netherlands



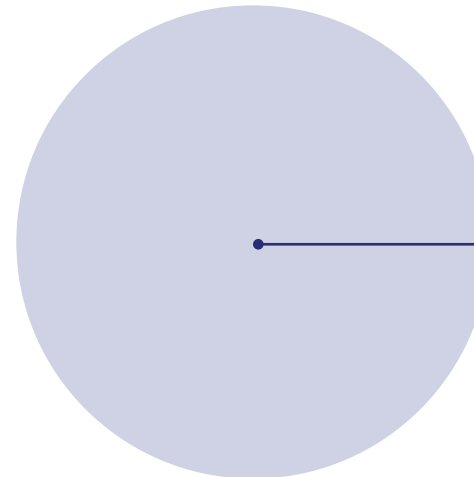
107 kg CO₂

Wooden cabinet produced
in Asia (incl. transport to the
Netherlands)



160 kg CO₂

Steel tambour door cabinet
produced in the Netherlands



209 kg CO₂

Steel tambour door
cabinet produced in Asia
(incl. transport to the
Netherlands)

Source IVAM, sustainability research agency, formed from the Interfaculty
Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Amsterdam

Fair Furniture Factories

All of our furniture is manufactured in our own factories in Breda, Emmen, Hoogeveen, Telford and Wijchen. That makes perfect sense to us; we've always done it that way. We also know that a complete production in our own countries is quite exceptional nowadays.

Visitors are often pleasantly surprised when they see our extensive and state-of-the-art production methods and the scale on which we make sustainable furniture in our own country. We enjoy showing them around our factories where our craftsmen proudly tell them about their trade. Everyone can come and see for themselves what sustainability and flexibility mean in practice and how we interpret our social responsibility. No brochure text can compete with that!

We work with local companies and authorities. Our raw materials are sourced locally as much as possible. If that is absolutely not possible, we opt for suppliers from Western Europe. Our sales market is Western Europe; we sell close to the production sites. This saves not only delivery time but also mileage, which is good for the environment.





Shop local, buy local

For us, that means:

Providing employment for more than 450 people in the region.

Responding quickly to demands from the market.

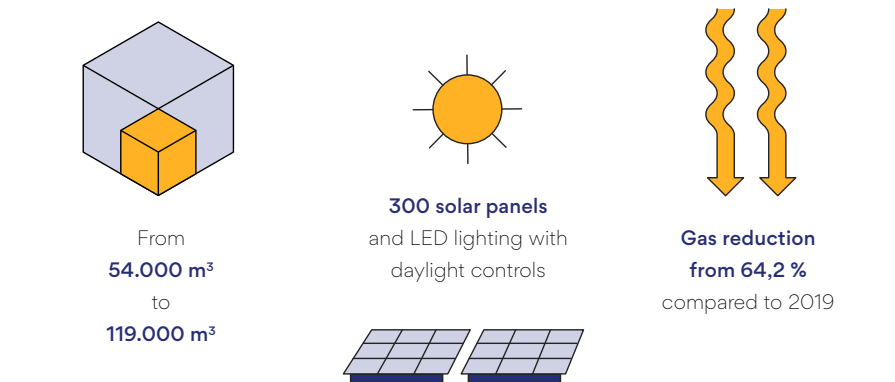
Being able to respond more quickly to deviations in the production process.

Minimising transport of raw materials and end products.

Minimising CO₂ emissions from transport.

Sustainable new building in Wijchen

The production location in Wijchen - home of Eromesmarko - has been expanded and completely renovated in recent years. A gigantic operation, carried out in three phases so that Eromesmarko's production could continue as normal during construction. The renovation was necessary because the old accommodation had become too small. A great opportunity to make a significant contribution to sustainability with the new building!



GPR-score 8.0

Eromesmarko's new accommodation is more sustainable, in part through clever use of space. The floor surface has 'only' increased by a quarter to: 17,000 square metres, but the volume grew from 54,000 to 119,000 cubic metres. The building was given an attractive and sustainable appearance. The office area was expanded with an additional floor, production and logistics are very efficiently designed open spaces with a height of seven metres. In addition, solar energy is generated with 300 panels and the entire building is fitted with LED lighting, with daylight controls where possible. The heat from the welding work and the muffle kiln is reused through heat recovery. In combination with the excellent insulation of the façades and a number of other measures, this has resulted in a GPR score of 8.0. The most remarkable score is that the gas consumption in 2019 has decreased by 64.2 % compared to the old situation. Employees benefit from a healthy and pleasant working environment, in a building with a striking and attractive appearance.



Production location

In the Netherlands and UK
and according to the GPR8
guidelines

- Heating production: air-heat pumps and solar energy
- Energy-saving new powder coating installation
- Cooling production: adiabatic (air displacement and moisture evaporation)
- Low-maintenance building with long life span
- Ventilation production: welding fume extraction, CO₂ regulation and heat recovery
- Insulation: high RC-value façade
- 300 solar panels
- Façade slabs of compressed rock wool from basalt
- Office heating: air-heat CO₂ regulation pumps
- Office and production lighting: LED with motion detectors
- Water-saving taps, separate sewers, our own water collection

A masterpiece of ultramodern high tech in Emmen

Innovation = investment, as far as Vepa director Bert Top is concerned: 'The transition to a sustainable manufacturing industry offers plenty of opportunities to realise our sustainable ambitions. In addition to desks, tables, lockers and other office furniture, Emmen also manufactures parcel lockers for outdoor use. More than ever, we focus on smart designs and the use of sustainable - reusable - raw materials'.





Fully automated

The installation of a high-tech production line in the factory in Emmen also contributes to making production more sustainable. All metalworking operations have been integrated into the steel street and production is fully automated. Bert Top: All the machinery in this street is connected to each other by computer. They communicate with each other continuously and are fully integrated into our ERP system. This enables us to achieve even shorter throughput times and - very important - to minimise residual material.

‘We have made incredible progress in terms of sustainable production’.

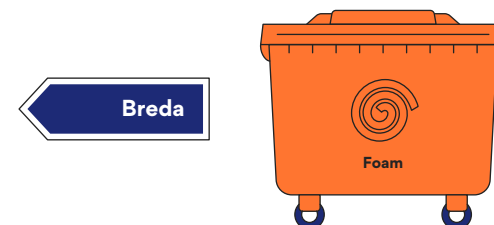
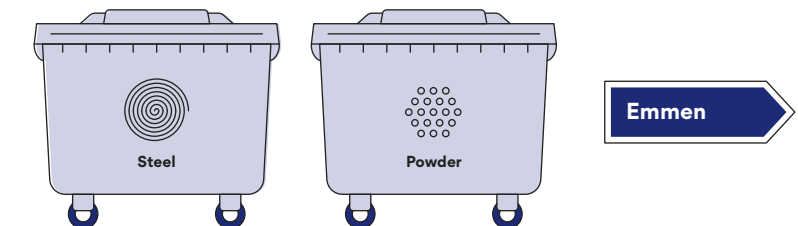
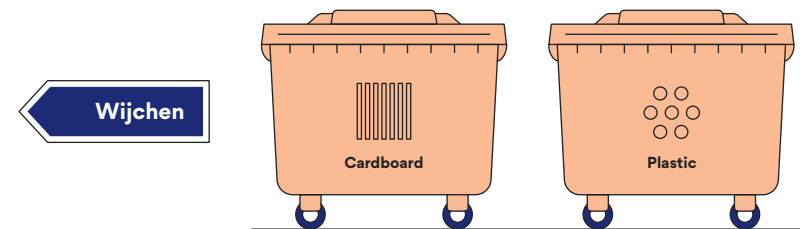
Lockers suitable for indoor and outdoor use

Production is not the only thing that happens in Emmen. De Lockerfabriek has opened a completely new showroom in October 2021. On the ground floor you'll find all possible locker solutions by De Lockerfabriek: wooden lockers, steel lockers, solid core lockers and lockers for outdoor use. And you can walk straight on through to the factory where you can see for yourself how the lockers are actually made. It goes without saying that we used as much furniture and materials from the old showroom as we could for the new interior, or we tried to find a new use for the old materials.

Waste: no waste

Production without waste? We're almost there. Hardly anything of what remains during production at Fair Furniture Group ends up in the trash. But unfortunately, producing without residual materials is not yet possible. It is, however, our ambition and we're working hard to make it possible, in all kinds of ways. Along the way to that 'no waste situation', we come up with creative solutions to make good use of our residual materials. Residual materials are used as much as possible for our own new furniture, and if we can't use it, we'll donate it to Siza or WerkPro. When they cannot use it, we collect the residual materials as raw materials at one of our production locations.

At each production location, we come up with new applications for this residual material together. That's how we gather knowledge and share our expertise. Collection is identical at all locations.



Each location is responsible for its own household and organic waste



Procurement

Our purchasers regularly consult with our professionals who operate and programme our machines. They know exactly what ‘their’ machines need in order to work super efficiently. The product developers and planners are also closely involved in the procurement process. That is how we are getting better and better at buying the right dimensions and quantities and minimising residual flows.

Along the way to that ‘no waste situation’, we come up with creative solutions to make good use of our residual materials.

Residual materials

Our colleagues at Zooi design and produce home accessories using our leftover materials. The social employment services organisation WerkPro also regularly drops by to pick up material to work with.

The statistics

In 2018, we announced our ambition to produce completely waste-free by 2025. That ambition has already been achieved at a number of locations and at other locations we are almost there. We are getting better at knowing what ‘works’ to reduce waste. In 2020, 15% of our residual material was directly reused as new raw material for other products. 2% of our waste streams is still classified as waste and converted into grey energy. An unparalleled achievement in the industry of which we are quite proud. But we want more: the percentage should be “0” by 2025.

Zooi

There is no such thing as waste

When you visit one of our factories, you might see someone hanging upside down in a bin filled with leftover material. Probably someone who is collecting new ideas. After all, the drive to create new design with leftover materials from the factory is very strong among our people. And where does one find inspiration? Exactly. In the waste bin. Or better still, the residual material bin. Because there is no such thing as waste here.

For every piece of steel, every pallet of wood, every chair seat we'll find a new function. For example, we turn them into home accessories with the label Zooi. The special colours of Zooi are created because even the the finish of the products is made by mixing residual powders from our powder coating installations. It doesn't get much more circular than that. That is something else, by Zooi!

Interior design items that contribute a
bit to a better future for mankind and
the planet.

Zooi is a 100% Dutch brand that's all about home accessories made of residual materials. A more sustainable way to create atmosphere in the home or office does not exist. Zooi creates and sells beautiful items with a meaningful story. Interior design items that contribute a bit to a better future for mankind and the planet. A little bit perhaps, but hey: little things can make big things happen.



An example?

Steel waste transformed into a new candlestick

In the production of a column table, small pieces of steel tube are left over. The dimensions of these pieces turned out to be the perfect basis for a sturdy candlestick.

The Robin bag is handmade by clients of Siza care organisation. They make this bag from residual textiles left over in our factories.

Zooi sells the candlesticks and the bags, along with many other accessories, through its website [zooi.nl](https://www.zooi.nl)



PET bottles & Plastic Whale

Stop talking. Let's start doing! With this in mind we have joined forces with Plastic Whale against the plastic problem. Plastic waste is polluting the world's waters to an increasing extent and with disastrous consequences. As much as 80 percent of all the waste that ends up in the ocean is plastic. More than 8 billion kilos annually.

Animals living in and near water get trapped in or choke on plastic waste. In addition, plastic slowly breaks down into very small particles that are swallowed by fish, birds and mammals, which often die as a result. The fact that plastic also ends up on our plates via the food chain is, of course, a great cause for concern.





Fair Furniture Group

High time to take our responsibility and do something about it. In collaboration with Plastic Whale, we have launched Plastic Whale by Vepa, to fight the plastic soup together.

With the motto ‘Stop talking. Let’s start doing!’ we are teaming up with Plastic Whale to take action.

Plastic Whale by Vepa is circular office furniture made from recycled plastic. The Signature Collection is made from plastic that we fish out of the Amsterdam canals ourselves and with the help of our relations and Plastic Whale. The Signature Collection includes the Whale Boardroom Table, Whale Tail Chair, Barnacle Lamp, Whale Panel and Barnacle Side Tables. This collection is the signature of the extraordinary collaboration between Vepa, Plastic Whale and LAMA concept, which is why this collection has been named The Signature Collection. The other items in the Felt collection are made from 100% certified post-consumer PET felt.



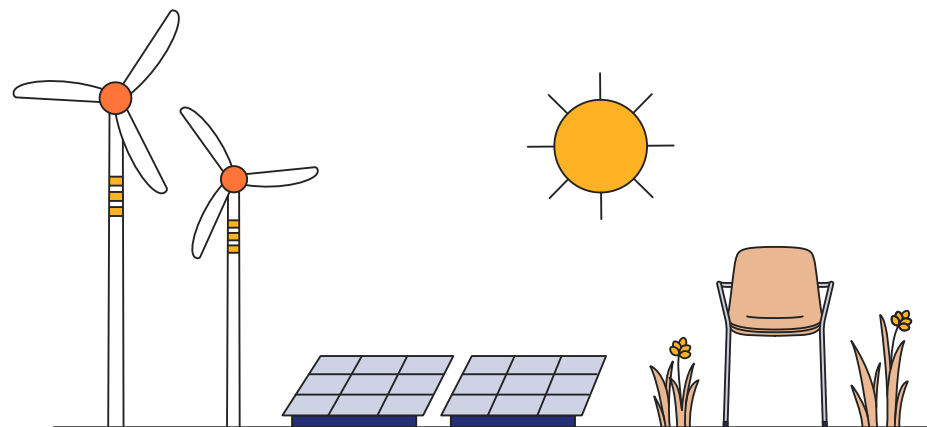
Plastic Whale

Like us, Plastic Whale is committed to a better environment. It is the world’s first professional plastic fishing company; a social enterprise with a mission to make the world’s land and waters plastic-free. They do this by creating social awareness for the plastic problem, but especially by taking action with as many people as possible and by fishing plastic from the Amsterdam canals.

Sustainable circle

Plastic Whale by Vepa is there for every company that wants to implement its sustainability objectives. We all want to make an impact worldwide and together we can. Purchasing the circular furniture also supports Plastic Whale projects. With this, we support the work of Plastic Whale, not only in Amsterdam but also in the rest of the world.

Energy transition and carbon footprint



Big ambitions

We have big ambitions when it comes to sustainability. One of the most important pillars is our approach to energy transition. For us, this means focusing on a zero carbon footprint, fully compensated environmental impact and the use of clean energy sources.

In 2021, we had the CO₂ performance ladder drawn up for our company for the first time. The CO₂ performance ladder helps us to identify and reduce CO₂ emissions. We are currently at level three of the ladder. Needless to say, we try to move up a level each year.

Green energy

At present, we use only green-certified energy from renewable sources and continue to invest in innovative renewable energy, innovation and development. Think of the many hydrogen pilot initiatives in the Northern Netherlands and the developments in wind energy. Heat recovery systems have been installed in our paint shops. Energy-efficient lighting has been installed and we use Ecopower energy.

Low CO₂ emissions and solar energy

A number of years ago, Delft University of Technology calculated our footprint. It turned out to be so low that we were not required to compensate for any CO₂ emissions. Nevertheless, we take our responsibility and we are making an additional contribution to climate change. In Breda, we will install an additional 210 panels to the current solar park, making Breda the first location in the group to become 100% energy-neutral. At that time, there will be 1,163 solar panels on our roofs, with a total capacity comparable to the annual electricity consumption of more than 100 families.

Less CO₂ and complete circular production

To further reduce our environmental impact, we are constantly looking for new and sustainable initiatives together with our chain partners. For example, together with Plantics we have developed a chair that absorbs more CO₂ than it emits. Hemp, the most sustainable chair in the world. This is how we contribute to the achievement of the climate goals.

Our own transport, that is unique!

Transport using our own fleet means minimal fuel consumption and an enormous reduction in CO₂ emissions. Our trucks comply with Euro 6, the most stringent emission standard at the European level. By using long truck combinations (LHV), or Ecocombis, we reduce transport movements and therefore fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions by 50%.



Minimal mileage

Transport movements are minimised at the Fair Furniture Group. Using raw materials from the region and producing close to the market avoids unnecessary transport. Outsourcing to low-wage countries may be cheap, but for us it does not outweigh the CO₂ emissions caused by the unnecessarily long transport to Western Europe. One of the reasons we do not source raw materials or components from Asia is the additional pollution caused by the container ships.

Assembly and turnkey

We deliver our desks fully assembled, which is really convenient since all you need to do is pull up a chair. For complete new build or renovation projects we take it one step further. For each project, we prepare a clear schedule. To do this, we talk to suppliers and other project stakeholders, such as: the interior designer, the contractor, the suppliers for floor coverings, window decoration, ceilings and walls, the fitters and, of course, your own facility management and IT department. This way, everybody knows what to expect.

Walls and elevators on site are covered with a protective layer when needed. The assembly crew is ready to go when the truck arrives on schedule. They will unload the truck immediately and walk the pre-assembled furniture to the right place according to the floor plans. The assembly and quality inspection has already been carried out in our factory. This is therefore no longer necessary on site. This is how we ensure short delivery times.

Packing blankets made of textile remnants

During transport, we protect our products as much as possible with packing blankets made from recycled textiles. After we have delivered the products, we take the blankets back with us for reuse. Quite eco-friendly.

Packaging material

In some cases, plastic is unfortunately still unavoidable for the safe transportation of products. We use recycled plastic that is recycled again after use. To prevent damage during transport, we also use cardboard. The boxes that Be by Beta uses for the transport of office chairs are 100% recycled. The fact that the used cardboard has a history is something we proudly state on the box. In addition, suppliers often deliver their parts to us in cardboard boxes. Whenever possible, we reuse these boxes for the transportation of parts between our production locations. Often, the cardboard can also be reused as packaging material for new products.

Our home accessory brand Zooi sells home accessories made from leftover materials to companies and consumers. The items from the online shop are sent by post. For protection during transport, we use padding material that is made with a 'packaging bulking machine'. With one simple action, this 'cardboard perforator' turns cardboard into filling material. In this way, we ensure that the cardboard is also used again.

Circular furnishing by revitalising

Every day there are schools, public authorities and companies that decide to revamp their interiors or replace furniture. Furniture is outdated, worn out, no longer suitable or the colour no longer matches the rest of the interior. In a linear economy, we tend to throw products away after use; in a circular economy, we do things differently. We look at which products and components we can revitalise. Like us, more and more of our clients are investing in the reuse of materials and working on a human scale.

Inventory

Before we start furnishing, we make an inventory of the existing situation. This gives us a clear overview of the quantity and condition of the furniture present. We use the inventory to determine which pieces of furniture can be reused, repaired or redeployed, and which parts can be used to make new furniture.

More and more of our clients are investing in the reuse of materials, renewable energy sources and working on a human scale.

From small to big; every step is a good one

Our goal is to reuse the existing furniture as much as possible. When you clean furniture thoroughly, it can often be taken straight to the new or renovated office. With a minor adjustment - such as a new paint colour or new upholstery - it blends in even better with the new interior, which we sometimes refurbish from floor to ceiling. Since we have all the machinery and production methods in our own factories, we regard your old furniture as valuable raw materials that we can always make into something beautiful.



Revitalising at Nationale Nederlanden

Early 2020, the interior of the Haagse Poort (The Hague) and Delfse Poort (Rotterdam) office buildings of Nationale Nederlanden (NN) was no longer in line with today's requirements. For a new - circular - office design, NN was looking for a partner to manage and complete this project: from project plan and approach to delivery and maintenance. Thanks to positive reviews and our intrinsic motivation, Nationale Nederlanden chose Vepa and the Fair Furniture Group.



NN's biggest building project ever!

Meanwhile, the conversion of two locations - together about 45,000 m² with a total of 24 floors - is almost complete. Everything was 'harvested' in phases and refurnished. In other words, everything that leaves the building will be repurposed in the new working environment. NN's biggest building project ever! The transformation has been completed within 2.5 years, while NN remained in business. That we are flexible as a partner has already been proven. Due to the pandemic, we deleted floors and redesigned entire wings over the course of the project in order to be ready for the 'post Covid-19' era. Thanks to the overwhelming success in The Hague and Rotterdam, we are now also being employed as a circular director for the revitalisation of properties in Arnhem and Amsterdam."

Everything that leaves the building
gets a new function in the new work
environment

Project director

What was different about this project was that we were brought in as consultants and director for the individual furnishings. The share of new furniture - for years our speciality - would be minimal. This mind shift fits in with our transition and the a-traditional organisation of the wonderful project Workspace. From the initial phase to the final design, we worked with various suppliers, movers, architects and project managers to come up with a design that was as circular as possible and to make maximum use of various ideas from the field.

Healthy and sustainable

Healthy and sustainable are the two key elements in the Workspace 2020 and a 'new' circular interior that is completely up-to-date and meets (Platinum) WELL standards is the result. With regard to sustainability, the following targets have been set: 100% circular, 0% waste and the lowest possible 'shadow price' or environmental cost indicator (ECI). Reuse was given preference over recycling furniture or purchasing new products. All aspects of the project, including products, services and logistics, were made measurable with LCAs translated into environmental cost indicator scores.

Revitalising with a smile

The driving forces behind this ambitious project are Pieter Lems and Peter Jansen, both employed within Facility Management at NN. We want to be able to show our colleagues that this project has been realised in a completely circular way. Even if we add any 'new' products, they will be made from waste. Think of a discarded refrigerator transformed into a fantastic conference table, or old chocolate moulds that serve as a raw material for unconventional lamps. If we can bring a smile to the faces of people, then we have come full circle and we'll have created a healthy and sustainable environment where people feel good.



Product as a Service

With 'Product as a Service' (PaaS), the focus shifts from 'possession' to 'use'. We as manufacturer remain the owner of the products and ensure that defective parts are repaired or replaced. As an organisation, you'll contribute to a sustainable world with as little waste as possible and optimum preservation of raw materials. Because circular furniture lasts longer, gets a second life and saves a lot of energy as well as raw materials, PaaS is much more economical!

Return

We have recently completed several PaaS projects. In these projects, we guarantee the return of the furniture at the end of the specified period, often between five and ten years. Organisations can choose to become owners of the furniture after the end of the specified period. Otherwise, we take the furniture back and store it in our circular stock. We inspect the furniture, carry out preventive maintenance and, where possible, revitalise it for a second life.

Development and inspiration: The Fair Furniture Academy

At the Fair Furniture Academy in Emmen we help others to do business with love for people and planet. Surprising aspects of sustainability and CSR, an inspiring place where our and also your interactive workshops can take place. A combination of indoor and outdoor activities in our GreenField. Sparring with colleagues, exchanging knowledge in the field of production, circular design and CSR.

Who is it for?

Our academy is for those who want to know all there is to know about sustainable and responsible design, production and advice on furniture. From furnishing consultants and (interior) architects to facility managers, procurement officers and health & safety consultants. The Fair Furniture Academy aims to be an inspiring, educational and unique experience for all of them.

Seminars & workshops

In the furnishing and furniture industry developments are following each other in rapid succession. Not only in the way organisations are housed and operated, but also in the area of circularity and new business models. All these developments have major consequences for practical matters such as design assembly, disassembly and recycling. Whether a company is well prepared for this can be decisive for attracting and/or retaining customers and staff. In our training sessions, we interactively work together to make the best choices.



Networking and partners

Our plans and ambitions are big, especially when it comes to what we as companies can do for a better future. We know that together we will always get further, even if we go faster on our own. That is exactly why our companies have joined forces in the Fair Furniture Group. Even as a group, we need others to be the best we can be when it comes to people, society and the planet. That is why we join valuable networks and connect with other sustainability supporters in all kinds of partnerships. A few are mentioned on the following page.





NEN we think together

Through the various Fair Furniture companies, we work together with NEN, the Royal Dutch Standards Institute, on standards for our own health, that of our customers and end users.

NPR 8313: Circular office and living environment

We want to move towards a transparent and honest industry, far removed from window dressing and green washing. The developments surrounding the sustainability of office and school furniture have gained momentum. Unfortunately, it is not always clear to everyone what is meant by commonly used terms on sustainable and circular materials, products and services. Many parties use their own definitions. In order to arrive at clear definitions and measurement methods, we are a co-initiator of the drafting of a Dutch Practical Directive (NPR 8313). In this way, we want to accelerate circular development.

Coordinating NEN committees

Through our brands Vepa, Be by Bèta and Eromesmarko our specialists contribute to the NEN committees. Janwillem de Kam (desks/tables), Toon Mampaey (office chairs) and Niels Juffermans (school furniture) are responsible within the Fair Furniture Group for the best ergonomic solutions.



Part 2 of the NPR 8313: the characteristics of circular design

Centrale Bond van Meubelfabrikanten Koninklijke CBM (Central Association of Furniture Manufacturers)

Royal CBM is the trade association for the interior and furniture industry. It promotes the interests of the interior construction and furniture industry and, together with its members, actively strives for a strong and creative manufacturing industry for living and working. Together, we often talk about the sustainable future of the industry. The CBM regularly sets up project teams to solve a joint problem or address a challenge. As Fair Furniture Group, we are happy to join this effort. Inge Wiekema, assistant to the management at Fair Furniture Group is a member of the Business Technical Centre of the CBM: the advisory body to the CBM Board in the area of business administration and technical matters.

Together with the CBM, all Fair Furniture locations have already implemented a number of important energy-saving measures. We are also working together on monitoring the indoor climate in our factories and are participating in a CBM pilot project (ThermIQ) to investigate the possibilities of infra-red heating to further reduce energy consumption. In the area of employees, we are participating in a project aimed at vitality and sustainable employability.

Circular hub Broeiness Rotterdam (Dutch for breeding nest)

Taking care of our planet: also for the next generations. That is our ambition and that is why we enjoy working with clubs like Broeiness Rotterdam; a creative incubator and materials library where architects can gain inspiration and knowledge in the field of (sustainable/ circular) construction and design. We have been a Broeiness partner since 2018. Architects and interior designers come here to gain inspiration for materials and products. They can get advice and borrow the materials and products.

Ifmec

In 2022, we are going to intensively cooperate with Ifmec. The main focus of the cooperation will be on sustainability in the facilities sector. Our key principles in this respect are the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As Fair Furniture Group, we have selected five SDGs that will benefit from our extra attention: quality education, dignified work and economic growth, responsible consumption and production, and life on water & land. Our joint effort will add value to organisations in one of these areas.



Koplopernetwerk (Frontrunner network) of MVO Nederland (CSR Netherlands)

Through Vepa, we are proud members of the Koplopernetwerk of MVO Nederland: the business network for the most ambitious and driven entrepreneurs in the new economy. Members of the Koplopernetwerk distinguish themselves with future-proof ambitions to work together across industries and determine the rules of the game for the new economy. For example, in 2018 Vepa was chosen as the most sustainable company and as company of the year in the province of Drenthe. In addition, through Vepa we are ambassador for Smart Industry and participant in the Smart Industry initiatives in the region. In 2021, we just missed out on the “gold medal” in the national Circular Awards, which went to NS (Dutch Railways). However, we were proud winner of the public vote for the Hemp chair.

C-Bèta Circular hub

Vepa is represented with a permanent ‘circular hub’ at C-Bèta in Hoofddorp; the inspiration spot for everyone who wants to contribute to the circular economy. We participate in events, workshops and presentations. In addition, there is room for brainstorming with our circular consultants about housing, reuse of products and materials and designing circular interiors.





To conclude

Take conscious steps every day

Don't just talk sustainably, but do sustainably. Always with the social, human aspect in mind. That is the essence of what we, as Fair Furniture Group, represent. Taking conscious steps every day towards a future in which we - together and with our partners and clients - close more and more circles.

We celebrate small and big successes, but we are also honest about what still needs to be improved. After all, there is still plenty of room for improvement if we want to achieve our ambition of being a leader in sustainable, circular and social business.

We have shown with this report that we are already well on the way to achieving our sustainability goals. In 2022 and in the years to come we will continue unwaveringly on the path we have chosen. It is certainly not always the easiest path, but ultimately it will lead to a sustainable future. And we, as a group, are 100% committed to this!



Every step counts!

Thanks to the efforts of all our colleagues, this Social & sustainable report is filled with powerful goals, great initiatives and positive results. As Fair Furniture Group, we work together every day for a better world. By searching for sustainable (raw) materials and processes, and by making a difference as an organisation to people and society. Every step counts, I am convinced of that.

Covid-19 made the past couple of years unforgettable. But, even in these confusing times we do not lose sight of our ambitions. On every level, I feel the solidarity and the desire to continue the work together in a creative way. To, despite everything, continue to look for ways to make social and sustainable entrepreneurship a top priority. I am immensely proud of that!

Frits Muijsen,
CEO Fair Furniture Group



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