



**IFOAM**  **EU GROUP** **MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC**

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**2015**

# IFOAM EU 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT & DIRECTOR

In 2015, IFOAM EU continued its work across many areas of organic in Europe: from tirelessly advocating for an organic regulation that meets the needs of organic farmers, processors, traders and consumers to putting organic forward as part of the solution to feeding the people; from safeguarding farming in the EU from GMOs to positioning and demonstrating the role of organic farming in mitigating climate change; and from protecting biodiversity in seed to ensuring that the EU research agenda takes up the needs of organic.

At the core of our work is representing the organic movement and preserving its role as the driver of change towards innovative and environmentally-friendly food and farming systems, across EU policies and regulations. In 2015, the Council of the European Union (Council) and the European Parliament (Parliament) debated the European Commission's (Commission) proposal for a new organic regulation. IFOAM EU and its members met with many Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), Commission and Council representatives to inform them about the implications of the dossier and the impact it might have on organics. The work done both by the Council and the Parliament on the initial text put the proposal for a new organic regulation closer to the needs of the European organic movement and introduced some innovative aspects and solutions. Under the Luxembourgish Presidency in 2015 the last phase of the legislative process – the trilogue negotiations – kicked-off. This process is still ongoing at the moment of publication of this report (September 2016). Our expertise regarding the organic regulation was acknowledged by an invitation to an IFOAM EU delegation to attend the informal AGRIFISH Council meeting in Riga on 1–2 June. Invitations to the informal Council meetings are highly exclusive and it was a great honour for the president and the director of IFOAM EU to be invited to participate.

Also in 2015, IFOAM EU was present at the 2015 edition of Expo Milano – dedicated to “Feeding the Planet”. The [Organic Action Network](#), which brought together organic actors including IFOAM EU, hosted many interesting events, culminating with the delivery of a manifesto and political declaration to the Italian Minister of Agriculture Maurizio Martina on 29 September. As a contribution to the debate, IFOAM EU published the well-received report “[Feeding the People – Agroecology for nourishing the world and transforming the agri-food system](#)”, providing expert perspectives from diverse disciplines on the challenges of how we are feeding the people of the world.

In addition, IFOAM EU was present at another major 2015 event: COP21. IFOAM – Organics International and IFOAM EU attended the United Nation's climate change conference to put agriculture on the map of the negotiations and lay out the groundwork for agroecology and organic farming to be promoted as solutions for both climate change mitigation and adaptation.

2015 was also a successful year for organic research and innovation: through extensive work on the EU research and innovation schemes for agriculture, organic farming is mentioned in the legal texts of Horizon 2020. For 2016-2017, about 33 million euro is directly allocated to organic topics and about 174 million euro goes to calls explicitly mentioning that organic farming should be addressed. Whilst this is a first step towards a successful implementation of the Commission's European Organic Action Plan, more ambition is needed to significantly support growth for an innovative organic sector.

You can find more detailed information on our other activities and achievements from 2015 in this annual report.

Enjoy the read!

Christopher Stopes  
IFOAM EU President



Eduardo Cuoco  
IFOAM EU Director<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> In April 2016, [IFOAM EU Director Marco Schiüter officially stepped down](#) and Eduardo Cuoco was appointed as director.

## Organic in Europe

Europe is a front-runner when it comes to organic agriculture. There's agricultural support enshrined in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), an EU organic regulation – entailing labelling requirements and legal protection – strong consumer demand, a well-developed organic sector with strong institutions, private organic standards and labelling and some Member States have national and regional organic action plans in place.

With 27% – or 10.3 million hectares – of the world's organic land, Europe is the second largest region when it comes to total land area dedicated to organics

In the EU, 5.7% of farmland is organic. The percentage of organic land area differs significantly per Member States. Following the USA, the EU market is the second largest single market, accounting for 23.9 billion EUR. Between 2013 and 2014 organic retail sales increased by 7.4% whilst between 2004 and 2014 the market grew by 115.7%.

In 2014, 10.3 million hectares or 5.7% of the EU's agricultural land were managed organically by more than 257,000 producers.

## ABOUT IFOAM EU

### On top of every aspect of organics in the EU

#### Who are we?

Since 2003, IFOAM EU is the European umbrella organisation for organic food and farming. We fight for the adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems based on the principles of organic agriculture – health, ecology, fairness and care.

With more than 180 member organisations our work spans the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy bodies. Our office is located in Brussels, where we also host the secretariat of TP Organics – the European Technology Platform for organic food and farming – playing a key role in highlighting where the focus of research and innovation funding should be placed.

IFOAM EU has ties with key agricultural, environmental and technical decision-makers at local, national and European level and is recognised by the EU institutions as the leading advocate for organic food and farming on EU policy.



Cass Sunstein, Professor at Harvard Law School, Jon Parr, Chief Operating Officer at Syngenta, Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU President and Johan Schnürer, Pro Vice Chancellor at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences at the 8th Forum for the Future of Agriculture 2015 session 'Innovation for jobs and growth through circular economy in agriculture'

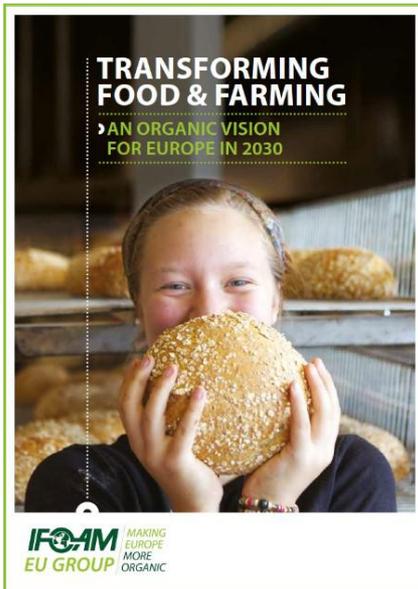


IFOAM EU President Christopher Stopes at the informal AGRIFISH meeting in Riga, Latvia (June)

### What topics are we working on?

IFOAM EU covers the diversity of policies relevant to organics at EU policy and regulatory level. Not only do our members span the entire organic food chain, we're also actively working on the following topics:





Where does the organic sector aim to be in 2030? What are the critical future framework conditions that could limit or speed up the development of the organic movement? [Transforming food & farming – An organic vision for Europe in 2030](#) provides an answer to these questions

## VISION 2030

### Leading a vision process to transform food and farming in Europe by 2030

Organic has moved beyond a niche and the organic movement needs to take stocks of what organic has become and what the future holds for us all. As a movement committed to lead the change in the food and farming system and achieving ambitious organic growth, IFOAM EU initiated a participatory vision process to guide the sector into 2030 to help us prepare for future political developments, environmental challenges and market trends.

The aim of this process was to define where the organic sector and movement want to be in 2030 and what strategies are needed to get there. Simultaneously, the movement also prepared itself for the future through shaping its vision on a global level – [Organic 3.0](#).

In the next stage IFOAM EU will facilitate discussions aimed at fine-tuning the strategies needed to turn the vision into reality. From 2016 on these strategies will be implemented, a next step on the way to making our vision a reality.

#### What did we do?

- Initiated a participatory vision process to prepare the movement to proactively face the future
- Launched a Europe wide stakeholder consultation and several workshops leading to a vision for the EU organic movement
- Launched the Vision 2030 at the 9<sup>th</sup> European Organic Congress in Latvia on 11 June

#### What did we achieve?

A major achievement during 2015 was the launch of the organic Vision 2030 [Transforming food and farming](#) at the 9<sup>th</sup> European Organic Congress. This event launched our coherent and viable mid-term strategy development to propel the organic movement in Europe to 2030.

#### THE VISION: TRANSFORMING FOOD & FARMING

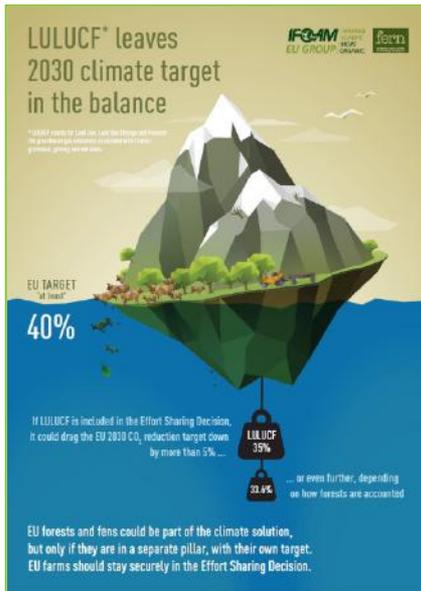
Our vision for food and farming is of a fair, environmentally conscious, healthy and caring system widely adopted in Europe. The European organic movement continues to lead change, believes in holistic approaches and thrives on interactions with other like-minded initiatives, including fair trade, agroecology and urban agriculture.

Driven by the support of citizens and by building bridges with other stakeholders in the food and farming system, we are committed to achieving more than half of Europe's agricultural land managed according to organic principles of health, fairness, ecology and care, providing fresh, seasonal, fairly priced as well as minimally and carefully processed organic food to every European home, workplace and institution.

The European organic movement stimulates and rewards the further development of organic systems, improving the resilience and environmental performance of organic production systems, while innovative tools for upholding the integrity of the supply chain promote trust. Policy makers and citizens widely recognise and value the contribution of organic farming to the delivery and support of vital ecosystem services to society.

As we move forward towards our goal of being a model for sustainable farming and food systems, we support a culture of innovation based on holistic principles leading to more resilient and productive farming systems, greater biodiversity, better food quality, more appropriate processing and fairer supply chains. New and indigenous, locally adapted varieties and breeds suited to organic farming practices and local conditions are encouraged and preserved. Farm animals are healthy, live in stress-free conditions and contribute to the sustainability of organic farms.

European farmers and all workers in the organic supply chain are fairly remunerated for their contribution to the health of the environment, communities, local and rural economies, and for providing flavourful and abundant food to contribute to the welfare of our planet and the quality of life of all people. The organic movement works towards a paradigm shift in education and learning to strengthen the connection between environmentally and socially responsible food choices. People reconnect to food production by actively engaging with short supply chains.



Fern & IFOAM EU's report by the Öko Institute, [Impacts on the EU 2030 climate target of including LULUCF in the climate and energy policy framework](#) addresses the impact of merging the ESD and LULUCF greenhouse gas emissions



Eric Gall, Policy Manager at IFOAM EU, comments on issues related to [land use and agriculture](#) in the COP21 negotiations  
© Video by IFOAM – Organics International

## CLIMATE CHANGE

### Demonstrating the role of organic farming in mitigating climate change and in addressing international climate related policies

Heads of states from all over the world gathered on 30 November - 13 December in Paris to launch the 21st Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Agriculture in itself was not a major topic in the COP21 negotiations, but was addressed as part of the “land” issues. In the official UN accounting system, the agriculture sector represents 10% of emissions. But its share in worldwide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is much higher according to other estimates. If emissions linked to the production of synthetic fertilisers and the indirect impact of agriculture – such as deforestation linked to feed or palm oil production – are taken into account, the share rises to up to 33% of emissions. Agriculture, and the globalised industrial food system, are therefore a big part of the problem. It is clear that this system needs to be transformed if the world wants to avert disastrous climate change.

At COP21, IFOAM – Organics International’s and IFOAM EU’s advocacy and coalition building activities contributed to putting agriculture on the map of the UNFCCC negotiations and laid the groundwork for agroecology and organic farming being promoted as solutions for both climate change mitigation and adaptation.

At EU level, IFOAM EU advocated in favour of maintaining a high level of ambition for the EU’s agriculture emission reductions by 2030 in the upcoming Effort Sharing Decision proposal and of keeping the land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector separate from the Effort Sharing Decision (ESD) accounting without any flexibility options between the different pillars.

#### What did we do?

##### CONTRIBUTED TO THE EU’S INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE ACTIVITIES

- A delegation of six staff members of IFOAM EU and IFOAM – Organics International raised awareness on the relevance of organic agriculture for climate change mitigation and adaptation by participating to COP21
- Positioned organic farming practices in the Subsidiary Body of Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA)’s work as key solutions for mitigation and adaptation of agriculture, improving food and nutrition security and livelihoods of farming communities worldwide
- Developed a [briefing paper on soil carbon sequestration](#)
- Communicated regularly about organic agriculture’s climate change mitigation potential in the run up to COP21

##### STRENGTHENED IFOAM EU’S ADVOCACY CAPACITY AND IMPACT ON EU CLIMATE POLICY AND LEGISLATION

- Launched an IFOAM EU Task Force on Climate Change
- Together with [Fern](#), IFOAM EU commissioned a report on the impact of merging ESD and LULUCF GHG emissions called “[Impacts on the EU 2030 climate target of including LULUCF in the climate and energy policy framework](#)”
- Mobilised our experts and members to draw up [a reply to the Commission consultation](#) on LULUCF emissions addressing the agriculture related aspects of the EU climate package for 2030
- Sent a joint NGO letter and position paper on LULUCF to Environment ministers before the Council meeting and another one to the Commission
- Participated to two workshops organised by DG CLIMA and DG AGRI and two DG AGRI Civil Dialogue Groups ‘Environment and climate change’, where we highlighted the benefits of organic farming for climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Engaged in the revision of the National Emission Ceilings (NEC) Directive to limits different types of air pollution, in particular reducing methane emissions and 95% of ammonia pollution from agriculture through the uptake several farming practices



#### What did we achieve?

- The Paris agreement explicitly mentions that mitigation and adaptation activities should not compromise food security, and the long-term objective of the Paris agreement gives room for action in the agriculture sector to increase soil carbon sequestration through techniques inspired by organic farming
- The focus of the SBSTA is now better balanced between mitigation and adaptation, and the work programme on agriculture has started being implemented
- The Commission now states in its presentations on the next Climate and Energy package that the agriculture sector will have to be part of the effort to reduce GHG emissions, and that this will also be the focus of the next CAP reform
- Increased the visibility and relevance of the organic movement in the climate change debate



## Making Europe more climate-friendly by applying innovative farming practices

The [SOLMACC project – Strategies for Organic and Low-input farming to Mitigate and Adapt to Climate Change](#) – demonstrates that, by applying optimised farming practices, organic farming can be climate-friendly.

For this project – coordinated by IFOAM EU and running from 2013 to 2018 – 12 demonstration farms across Europe have been selected. Farmers on these farms have adjusted their agriculture techniques and continuous modelling will allow for predictions about the long-term impact of the used techniques on soil, biodiversity and climate. At the end of the project the results will be used to develop transferable approaches for other farms, be they organic or conventional.

### What did we do?

- The SOLMACC steering committee met in Rome where project partners shared information about the farms in Sweden, Germany and Italy and discussed the next steps for the ongoing implementation of the project
- A SOLMACC farmer spoke on a panel of ‘Why soil matters: A European perspective’, an event organised by the European Parliament in Brussels
- Issued two SOLMACC newsletters

### What did we achieve?

The contributing farmers started implementing best practices and organised open field days. One of the farmers implementing innovative practices was invited to speak in the European Parliament at the conference ‘[Why soil matters: A European perspective](#)’, demonstrating the innovative character of the organic movement to various policy-makers and organic practitioners.

The best practices are being shared and are contributing to making Europe more effective in addressing the challenge of reducing agriculture’s greenhouse gas emissions.



Hans-Joachim Mautschke, SOLMACC farmer from Gut Krauscha, participates in the panel discussion on healthy soils at ‘Why soil matters’  
© CC Greens/EFA; European Union



The SOLMACC project steering committee in Rome



## Lowering greenhouse gas emissions from organic farming through on-farm biogas production

To help reach the European target of 20% renewable energy by 2020 – as stated in the 20-20-20 target in the 2020 climate and energy package – IFOAM EU and partners launched the [SUSTAININGAS project](#). This project ended in 2015. Its aim was to enhance sustainable biogas production in organic farming and help to turn the EU in a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy.

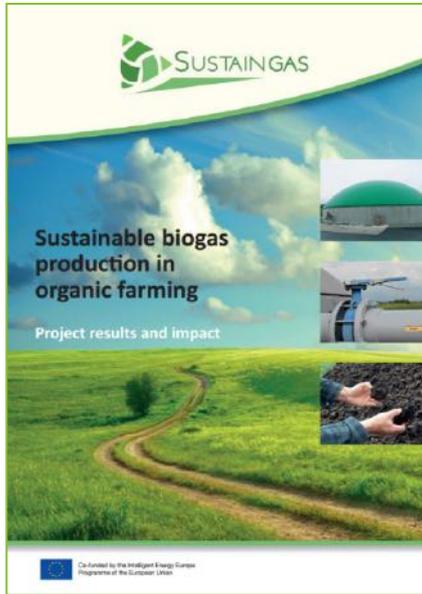
### What did we do?

IFOAM EU and its partners engaged and informed various stakeholders between January and March 2015 by:

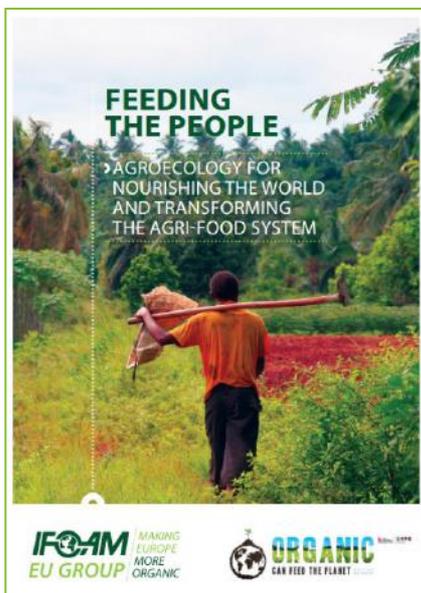
- Organising a workshop on sustainable biogas production at BioFach 2015
- Organising the project's final event 'Organic biogas: generating green energy in our regions' in the Committee of the Regions in March 2015
- Publishing the project overview '[Sustainable biogas production in organic farming: Project results and impact](#)'
- Publishing the last [project newsletter](#)

### What did we achieve?

The SUSTAININGAS project was a great success and attracted interest from a wide range of stakeholders. By presenting the benefits of organic biogas production, discussing and raising awareness on the project results it showed the opportunities and barriers to sustainable biogas production on regional and EU levels. The partners of the project came from seven different European countries and this gave a wider scope to the project and its success. A number of farmers have installed biogas plants on their farms.



[Sustainable biogas production in organic farming: Project results and impact](#) offers an overview of the accomplishments of the SUSTAININGAS project, set up three years ago in response to the lack of standards and information for the production of biogas on organic farms



[Feeding the People – Agroecology for nourishing the world and transforming the agri-food system](#) clarifies that organic farming is a significant part of agroecology and explains how to transition agriculture towards agroecology

## FEEDING THE PLANET

### Profiling organic and agroecology as part of the solution to feed the planet

To feed the global population sustainably – without jeopardising future generations – organic and agroecology are valuable alternatives to feed the planet. IFOAM EU and other NGOs have advocated for recognition of these sustainable methods of food production. By delivering tools to improve advocacy work and communications IFOAM EU’s members and other civil society groups raised awareness, namely of policy-makers and participants in Expo Milano as well as policy-makers at regional and EU level too.

At EU level, IFOAM EU also placed strong emphasis on good implementation of the 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme (EAP). For this we actively engaged with EU policymakers on the need to promote a holistic approach to food production and consumption using organics. This work was set in the context of the EU’s circular economy policy agenda and the need to highlight a systemic approach to sustainable food consumption and production with special attention to regional and national organic action plans and the links between production and consumption by mainstreaming organic produce in Green Public Procurement (GPP) policies.

#### What did we do?

FEEDING THE PEOPLE: AGROECOLOGY AND ORGANIC ARE PART OF THE SOLUTION TO FEED THE PLANET

- Gathered a team of leading experts on agroecology and developed a chapter-based report [“Feeding the People – Agroecology for nourishing the world and transforming the agri-food system”](#) that was presented at Expo Milano
- Used the report at several high level events, advocating that agroecological solutions can feed the world
- Supported the “Organic Can Feed the Planet” action network
- Participated in four conferences at Expo Milano, organised by the Commission
- Co-organised an NGO strategy workshop with Corporate Europe Observatory on 29 September, the day of the release of the report. During the workshop participants discussed how to better position agroecology in the ‘feeding the world’ narrative

PROMOTED SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

- Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU President, gave a high level speech at the Forum for the Future of Agriculture to highlight to key policymakers the link between the principles of organic farming, food production and the circular economy;
- Conducted research on the development and implementation national and regional organic action plans in the Europe (EU-28 and EFTA) as means to support the development of organic food and farming systems and meet environmental objectives;
- Developed factsheets demonstrating best practices in the prioritisation of organic food in green public procurement policies. These factsheets were used to target EU politicians and to better position organic farming and agroecology;
- Presented recommendations for sustainable production and consumption to the European Parliament’s Sustainable Food Systems Group and the Commission’s Civil Dialogue Group on Quality and Promotion;
- Participated in research consortium in partnership with key universities and research institute to address existing gaps in sustainable food and farming research.

#### What did we achieve?

FEEDING THE PEOPLE: AGROECOLOGY AND ORGANIC ARE PART OF THE SOLUTION TO FEED THE PLANET

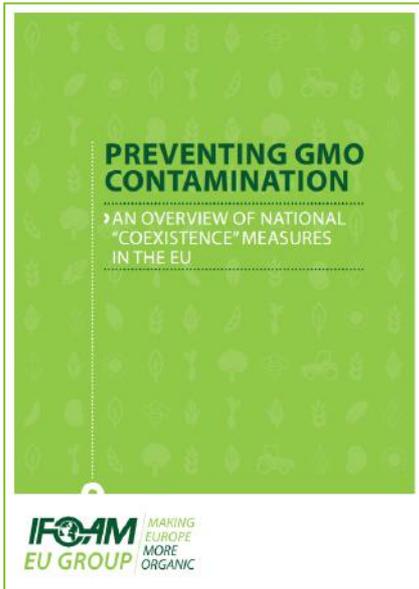
Our report positioned the organic movement as an important actor in the agroecology debate, towards other NGOs and the research community. It also provided NGOs and organic stakeholders with important arguments on how transitioning towards agroecology is necessary to feed the planet. The participation of IFOAM EU to several high-level events highlighted the benefits of agroecology to policy-makers and participants in Expo Milano.



PROMOTED SUSTAINABLE FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION

Through our efforts we increased awareness of policy-makers in the Commission and the Parliament on the need for the EU to develop a sustainable food policy to build support for a strong environmental and sustainability agenda in strong cooperation with other civil society organisations

Organic food and farming were highlighted to policymakers as a key driver for growth in the EU food sector, as way to decrease the environmental impact of agriculture and achieve EU environmental objectives for biodiversity, soil, water and climate. At BioFach 2015, Commissioner Hogan called organic farming “the star performer” of the food sector in terms of growth.



The IFOAM EU study on “co-existence” [measures in Europe](#) shows that, in many countries, they either do not exist or are clearly insufficient to prevent GMO contamination. A complete ban on GMOs is required to safeguard the EU’s genetic biodiversity and prevent GMO contamination



We shared [Beyond GM’s initiative](#) warning Europeans about the damage GMOs caused to the US food and farming

## GMOS AND PLANT REPRODUCTIVE MATERIAL

### Preventing GMO contamination in organics

Banning GMOs is the most effective way to prevent GMO contamination and to avoid extra costs for the food industry, public authorities and the organic sector. However, EU Member States are not obliged to put contamination prevention measures in place, nor to develop an effective liability regime to compensate victims of contamination. This means that non-GM growers are constantly under threat of GMO contamination and they have to carry the costs in case of GMO contamination. There is still a lot of work to be done to ensure the EU’s genetic biodiversity is safeguarded from GMO contamination.

Key debates about GMOs at the EU level focused on:

- [the ‘opt-out’ directive](#): a European directive providing Member States with new mechanisms to ban **GMO cultivation** on their territory
- President Juncker’s promise to make the EU approval system for GMOs more democratic. Sadly, the Commission limited this initiative to a proposal to create an ‘opt-out’ mechanism for **GMOs destined for the import of food and feed**

Our efforts to prevent GMO contamination in organics are coordinated through our project “[Keeping GMOs out of food](#)” (2014-2017). The project gathers different stakeholders of the GM-free sector to debate the current and future challenges regarding the prevention of contamination from GMOs. The stakeholders develop positions and coordinate advocacy work for a legal framework to develop new practical strategies and to strengthen the current legal frameworks to protect the GMO-free food chain against GMO contamination.

#### What did we do?

- Together with IFOAM EU members and NGOs we advocated for a democratic change to the GMO authorisation procedure, for GMO bans and for a review of the risk assessment made by the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA)
- Disseminated [a study on co-existence measures in Europe](#) highlighting that contamination prevention measures are costly, difficult to design and implement
- Held a workshop on keeping GMOs out of the supply chain at BioFach
- [Wrote a joint NGO letter to Commission President Juncker](#) urging him to keep his to make EU GMO decisions more democratic
- Attended and raised awareness at various events, such as the [GMO-free Europe conference](#) where we organised various workshops on developing a strategy to avoid contamination of unauthorised GMOs in our food, feed and seed
- The roundtable expert group of the ‘Keeping GMOs out of food’ project met to discuss strategic input on the impact of a possible harmonisation of the GM-free labelling scheme at EU level and the capacity of the food sector to increase the availability of GM-free processing aids and additives in Europe
- Held a workshop on possible synergies between the organic and conventional sector to increase the availability of GM-free feedstuff in Europe and the alternatives available to the GM-free sector to avoid contamination of the GM-free feed chain
- Promoted existing initiatives to keep Europe GMO free, e.g. [‘the letter from America’](#)

#### What did we achieve?

The directive granting Member States the possibility to enact a national ban on GMO cultivation – or the ‘opt-out’ directive – entered into force at the beginning of April. Even though the organic movement welcomed the right of Member States to ban GMO cultivation, governments unwilling to ban GM crops are not obliged to protect GMO-free farming from contamination. Since the entry into force of the directive, 19 Member States and regions have used the first mechanism and submitted requests to ban the cultivation of GMOs on their territory.

The ‘opt-out’ mechanism for GMOs destined for the import of food and feed was rejected by the Parliament and Council. Instead of an inefficient “opt-out” for GMO imports, the organic sector will continue to call for an urgent review of the current GMO authorisation voting rules

and the methodology used by EFSA to assess the risk associated with GMOs and the products linked to its use on environment and human health.

OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL MEASURES TO PREVENT CONTAMINATION\*

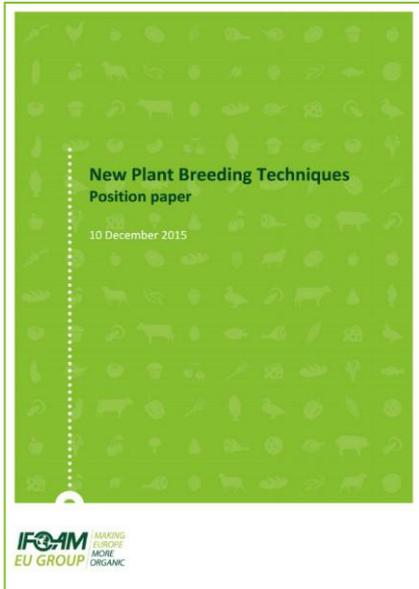
	AT (depending on region)	BE - Brussels-Capital Region (2013)	BE - Flanders Region (2010)	BE - Wallonia Region (2008)	BG (no info)	CZ (2010)	DE (2008)	DK (2008)	EE (2012)	FI - Åland region only (2012)	FR (2008)	HU (2006)	IT (2005)	LT (2007)	LU (2008)	LV (2013)	PT (2007)	RO (no info)	SI (2009)	SK (2006)	SE (2007)	
Ban on GMO cultivation	Maize MON810	All GMO crops	Maize MON810		Maize MON810		Maize MON810				All GMO maize	Maize MON810	Maize MON810		Maize MON810							
GMO-free regions**	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Technical measures																						
Information and training																						
Liability regime																						

\* Brussels-Capital Region, France, Latvia and Italy have submitted drafts but they are not in force.

\*\* Only national and/or regional and local policy bodies are taken into account. Private land owners banning GMOs have been left out.

- Spatial isolation and/or buffer zones between all types of conventional crops and GM maize
- Spatial isolation and/or buffer zones between all types of conventional crops and GM maize
- Spatial isolation and/or buffer zones between all types of conventional crops and GM maize
- Spatial isolation and/or buffer zones between all types of conventional crops and GM maize
- Temporal isolation for sowing & growing of organic/conventional vs GM crops
- Other technical and physical measures taken during seed handling, cultivation, harvest, post-harvest, transport and storage
- Restriction of cultivation or any other measure in or near protected areas, e.g. Natura 2000 areas
- Mandatory procedures for informing authorities and/or neighboring farmers about the intention of growing GM crops
- Mandatory and voluntary training procedures on GM crop management and coexistence measures for GMO growers
- Public register of GM crops
- Specific liability regimes or legal provisions for GMO contamination cases
- Fines for GMO contamination and non-compliance

From [Preventing GMO contamination: An overview of national "coexistence" measures in the EU](#)



So called "New Plant Breeding Techniques" should fall under the scope of the EU GMO legislation

## Ensuring new genetic engineering techniques are considered GMOs

The Commission was expected to issue a legal interpretation on whether new genetic engineering techniques such as gene editing and cisgenesis fall within the scope of the GMO legislation. While the interpretation is expected in 2016, IFOAM EU started advocating for these techniques to be explicitly included in the scope of the existing legal framework on GMOs during 2015. Some plants bred using these new techniques have already been released into the environment through open field trials.

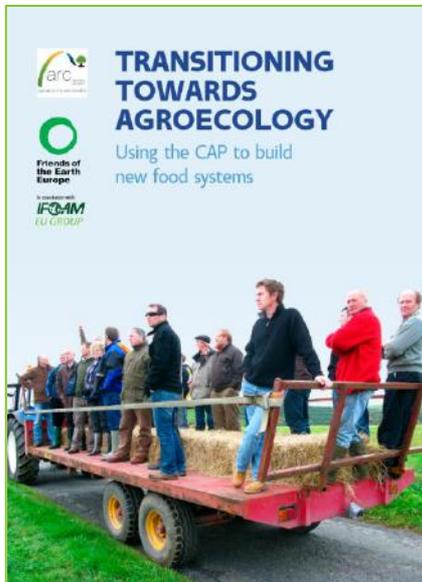
The biotech industry has been lobbying the Commission and the European Parliament to prevent these techniques from being governed by any specific regulation, in the hope of escaping a fate similar to other GMOs in Europe. IFOAM EU considers a number of these techniques – including oligonucleotide directed mutagenesis, zinc finger nuclease technology, CRISPR/Cas, meganucleases, cisgenesis and synthetic biology – to clearly be GMOs according to the EU's legal definition and therefore calls on the Commission to explicitly confirm that they fall within the scope of the GMO legislation.

### What did we do?

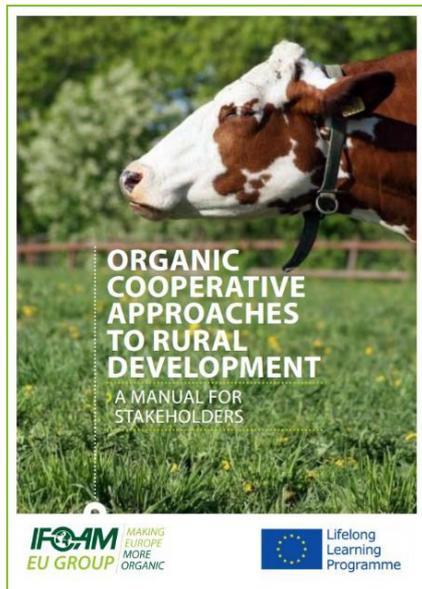
- Advocacy work for inclusion of new genetic engineering techniques in the scope of the GMO legislation at EU level, against their deregulation and in favour of risk assessment, traceability and labelling on the use of these techniques in food and feed production
- Held the annual IFOAM EU seed expert group face-to-face meeting in Brussels discussing the future of organic seeds and breeding, with a focus on seed legislation and new breeding techniques
- Adopted an [IFOAM EU position paper](#)

### What did we achieve?

With a position paper published in December 2015, IFOAM EU was the first organic stakeholder to take a clear and official position on whether these new genetic engineering techniques would be compatible or not with the principles of organic farming. IFOAM EU and its members also contributed to the expert work of IFOAM – Organics International on the topic. However, under pressure of third countries, the Commission has delayed the publication of its legal interpretation again.



[Transitioning towards agroecology](#) highlights ten inspiring best practices



A [manual for stakeholders on organic cooperative approaches](#) was produced together with organic farming practitioners



Marco Schlüter, IFOAM EU Director; Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries; Mario Salerno, Maltese IFOAM EU Deputy Council Member; and Eric Gall, IFOAM EU Policy Manager at their meeting in November

## THE COMMON AGRICULTURE POLICY (CAP)

### The CAP: greening agriculture and highlighting organic farming's contribution to the EU environmental objectives

As the implementation of the new CAP 2014-2020 intensified in 2015, IFOAM EU worked with member organisations to support work at national and regional level particularly with regards to Pillar 1 greening and the approval of Rural Development Programmes (RDPS). IFOAM EU also worked in partnership with other civil society organisations to support good implementation of new policy.

In addition, through our farmers group, we also worked on developing our approach for the CAP post-2020.

Additionally, IFOAM EU engaged in number of CAP related policy processes the environment and land use to demonstrate how organic farming can help to meet EU environmental objectives. We also provided input to the Commission's evidence gathering exercise and public consultation concerning safeguarding the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives and better implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 using the CAP.

#### What did we do?

CAP: MONITORED & SUPPORTED MEMBERS ON CAP IMPLEMENTATION AND WORKED ON THE NEXT CAP POST-2020 REFORM

- Participated in DG AGRI Civil Dialogue Groups on CAP, Direct Payments and Greening and Rural Development and the EU Rural Networks
- Produced a [manual on organic cooperatives approaches to rural development](#) (KSC4farmers) together with seven organic farming organisations
- Organised organic and rural stakeholder workshops on CAP implementation at [BioFach 2015](#), the [Central and Eastern European Organic Forum, Romania](#) and [Bio Domenica, Italy](#) and the [9<sup>th</sup> European Organic Congress](#)
- Co-organised the Good Food and Good Farming Conference 2015 with Friends of the Earth Europe. This included the launch of a brochure showcasing best practices on [Transitioning Towards Agroecology: Using the CAP to build new food systems](#)
- Organised four meetings of the Farmer Interest Group and farm walks in France and Italy with a special focus on CAP implementation and the reform post-2020

HIGHLIGHTED ORGANIC FARMING'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE EXISTING EU ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES, INCLUDING LAND USE

- Provided [input to the Fitness Check of the Birds and Habitats Directives and EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 mid-term review](#)
- Met with Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries to present the benefits of organic farming for reaching EU biodiversity targets
- Advocated on Air Quality package and promoted 2014 report on how to reduce ammonia and methane emissions from agriculture to Commission Officials and MEPs
- Called on the Commission to publish a 'Communication on Land as a Resource' in its 2016 work programme and the Parliament to act on addressing access to land for sustainable farming
- [Wrote several letters](#) to MEPs, national ministries and Commissioners highlighting the contributions of organic farming to the EU's environmental objectives and the need for ambitious targets on air, biodiversity and sustainable land use
- Advocated with the Commission, Parliament and European Social and Economic Committee on the need to address challenges of access to land for sustainable farming through EU environmental and agricultural legislation

#### What did we achieve?

Thanks to our support to organic farmers' associations and rural stakeholders and our advocacy work organic interests were recognised in Rural Development Programmes. IFOAM EU also enhanced organic stakeholders understanding of the opportunities available to support organic



IFOAM EU farming organisations meet in Galway, Ireland to discuss strategies for capacity-building and cooperation

cooperative approaches production under new RDPs as well facilitating discussions on the CAP reform post-2020

Through our partnership with civil society organisations – in particular environmental NGOs such as Birdlife Europe, the European Environmental Bureau and Friends of the Earth Europe – we advocated for ambitious targets and better implementation of the new and existing environmental legislation through the uptake of sustainable farming practices. Some ammonia and methane emissions reduction targets remained a part of EU institutional negotiations on the National Emission Ceilings Directive and the interest amongst policymakers to re-open the EU Nature Directives was significantly curtailed.

A [petition on the need to preserve and manage European farmland as our common wealth](#) which we tabled to the Parliament in cooperation with other civil society organisations was submitted accepted by the European Parliament's Committee on Petitions.



IFOAM EU maintains good relationships with Council Presidencies, key MEPs and Commissioners



IFOAM EU updated its position paper [A Roadmap towards sustainable growth of the EU organic sector](#) on 15 January 2015



Gillian Westbrook, IFOAM EU Council Member; Thomas Fertl, IFOAM EU Vice President; Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU President; Phil Hogan, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, European Commission; Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU Board Member; Sabine Eigenschink, IFOAM EU Vice President and Marco Schlüter, IFOAM EU Director at BioFach 2015

## ORGANIC REGULATION

### Representing the organic movement during the EU institutions' legislative process

Organic is regulated in all EU countries by regulation (EC) No 834/2007. The European Commission's Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) presented a legislative proposal for a new organic regulation to replace the current legal organic framework (EC 834/07) to the European Parliament (Parliament) and the Council of the EU (Council) in 2014. This review of the organic regulation has been ongoing since 2014. In 2015, the Council and the Parliament debated the European Commission's (Commission) proposal for a new organic regulation.

The work done both by the Council and the Parliament on the initial text put the proposal for a new organic regulation closer to the needs of of the European organic movement and introduced some innovative aspects and solutions. Under the Luxembourg Presidency in 2015 the last phase of the legislative process – the trilogue negotiations – kicked-off. This process continues in 2016. IFOAM EU and its members actively provided and continue to provide the European movement's input to the EU institutions.

#### What did we do?

##### REVISION OF THE ORGANIC REGULATION

- Continuously provided input and political pressure throughout the entire the process, from the Commission Impact Assessment to the trilogue negotiations between the three relevant European Institutions
- Organised an advocacy campaign regarding the new regulation towards Members of the Parliament, the Commission and the Member States
- Closely cooperated with the Latvian and Luxembourg Council Presidencies
- Were involved in all Civil Dialogue Groups (CDG) of EU Commission's DG AGRI, chairing the organic CDG
- Discussed the new organic regulation with sector representatives, key policy-makers and civil society at various events we organised, e.g. the 9<sup>th</sup> European Organic Congress and other events, e.g. the International Green Week, a special seminar '[EU Policy Day](#)' at BioFach 2015 dedicated to the organic regulation, a session at the Dutch organic trade fair Bio Beurs and the Italian organic fair SANA
- We issued [position papers](#), [press releases](#), [an official letter](#) and many advocacy letters to the Commission, Member States and Members of the Parliament

##### OTHER ACTIONS REGARDING THE ORGANIC REGULATION

- Organic food processing (mainly through the interest group on processing)
  - Organised events at BioFach, in Berlin and in Brussels
  - Held a joint IFOAM EU – European Organic Certifiers Council (EOCC) meeting on risk based inspection
- Held regular expert meetings on organic aquaculture in order to set the agenda for addressing problems with the provisions in the EU Organic Regulation concerning aquaculture and published a [position paper on the use of non-organic juveniles in organic aquaculture](#)
- Technical work and advocacy on the changes of Regulation (EC) No 889/2008, e.g. on Annexes II, VI and VIII

#### What did we achieve?

IFOAM EU President Christopher Stopes was invited to present during the informal AGRIFISH Council meeting in Riga on 1–2 June. Invitations to the informal Council meetings are highly exclusive and it was a great honour for the president and the director of IFOAM EU to be invited to participate.

IFOAM EU was very successful in bringing core elements into the opinions of the Parliament and Council: most of the IFOAM EU positions and proposals could neutralise the dangerous



IFOAM EU – EOCC meeting, 2 September  
© Anne-Claire Le Bodic

elements of the initial legislative proposal, and some innovative elements were brought in and will be discussed during the trilogue between the three EU institutions.



9th European Congress: Marco Schlüter, IFOAM EU Director; Gustavs Norkārkliis, ALOA Chairman; Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU President; Martin Häusling, Member of the European Parliament, Rapporteur for the Legislative Proposal for the New Organic Regulation; Jānis Dūklavs, Minister of Agriculture of Latvia; Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU Board Member; and Aivars Lapiņš, Head of Agriculture, Food, Veterinary, Forestry and Fisheries Division at the Permanent Representation of the Republic of Latvia to the EU © John Portelli

## RESEARCH & INNOVATION

### Contributing to the research agenda for tackling climate change in agriculture

Since 2008, IFOAM EU hosts the secretariat of the [European Technology Platform – TP Organics](#). TP Organics is a broad and strong coalition of civil society and environmental organisations, researchers, farmers and companies. In 2013 it has been recognised by the European Commission as one of 40 European Technology Platforms (ETPs) and it has been officially providing advice on the implementation of Horizon 2020 regarding organic, agroecology and low input food systems, as well as promoting these towards policy-makers. TP Organics has greatly contributed to enhancing Horizon 2020 in terms of environmental and climate challenges so it can better contribute to reaching the objectives of 7<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme as well as the EU adaptation strategy. This was achieved through dialogue with policy-makers, while widely involving members and other relevant stakeholders. These activities took place during 2015 and are ongoing.

In 2015 IFOAM EU started leading a Horizon 2020-funded project, [OK-Net Arable](#). This project aims to improve the exchange of knowledge among farmers, farm advisers and scientists to increase productivity and quality in organic arable cropping all over Europe. The project started in March 2015 and will last for 3 years. The consortium consists of 17 partners, covering 13 countries from all corners of Europe.



In order to solve current challenges and generate a further drive in the development of the organic sector and strengthen its competitiveness, TP Organics published its [Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda](#)

#### What did TP Organics do?

- Established a new national branch in Sweden – [EPOK](#) – and strengthened cooperation with existing national branches by organizing a meeting for the leaders of the branches to discuss potential synergies
- Presented [the Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda](#) at BioFach Science day with the aim to influence funding priorities of the EU and national research programmes
- Spoke at the European Commission’s meeting on research and innovation in the organic food and farming sector at Expo Milano
- Attended the European Commission’s workshop on ‘launching the discussion on the future of European agricultural research and innovation until 2020 and beyond’ at Expo Milano
- Organised the [Organic Innovation Days](#) in Brussels, aimed at demonstrating the innovation potential of the organic food and farming sector
- Closely followed the work of and contributed to the Subgroup on Innovation of the European Innovation Partnership for Agricultural productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI)
- Wrote an input paper with 10 priority topics for the Horizon 2020 Work programme 2016/2017

#### INCREASED COOPERATION WITH THE ERA-NET CORE ORGANIC AND THE JOINT PROGRAMMING INITIATIVE ON AGRICULTURE, FOOD SECURITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE (FACCE-JPI) (THROUGH TP ORGANICS)

- Participated to various workshops on climate change and the Common Agriculture Policy
- Presented the research needs of the organic sector at the Governing Board meeting of CORE Organic thus contributing to shaping the 2016 CORE Organic call
- Increased TP Organics’ cooperation with the board of [FACCE-JPI](#)
- Participated in the meetings of the Stakeholder Advisory Board of FACCE-JPI
- Organised two events – an open session and a closed strategic meeting – in collaboration with FACCE-JPI at the 9<sup>th</sup> European Organic Congress to discuss the innovation potential of agroecological practices in agriculture to mitigate and adapt to climate change
- Organised a strategic meeting between experts and practitioners from IFOAM EU, the Round Table on Organic Agriculture and Climate Change (RTOACC) and key members of FACCE-JPI to identify how organic food and farming can best contribute to smart climate innovation



#### What did IFOAM EU do?

- Started to create a European network of farmer innovation groups that will exchange experience and test the education material developed in the project
- The [OK-Net Arable](#) project was presented as a good example of how farmers and researchers work together to share knowledge and identify the best ways to do so at a conference at EXPO 2015 in Milano
- Made an overview of [best methods for learning and knowledge exchange](#)
- Started [analysing constraints in organic arable cropping](#) and developing recommendations for overcoming them

#### What did we achieve?

When the Commission announced the Horizon 2020 EU working programme 2016/2017 on research and innovation this autumn, it was clear that IFOAM EU's strategic involvement in TP Organics paid off. Eight out of 10 priority topics from the TP Organics input paper were covered by 19 different calls in the Work Programme 2016/2017. This means that about 200 million EUR in the programme is dedicated to projects that deal with organic production. This is an important success for sustainable growth of organic in Europe.

On 16 October, the Brazilian Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and TP Organics signed a memorandum of understanding to start cooperating on nutrition security, agroecology and organic food systems. The signature ceremony took place at EXPO Milano 2015 during World Food Day and the memorandum will be followed by a three-year work programme in which specific action will be identified and implemented.

Moreover, agroecological research priorities have been taken up in the research agendas of FACCE-JPI, [Coordination of European Transnational Research in Organic Food and Farming Systems](#) (CORE Organic) and '[Modeling European Agriculture with Climate Change for food Security](#)' (MACSUR).



Marco Schlüter, Eron Bezerra, State Secretary for social inclusion of the Brazilian Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation and Eduardo Cuoco at the signature ceremony



Ralph Loges, Senior scientist, Kiel University; Aldo Longo, Director Directorate General Aspects of Rural Development and Research, DG Agriculture and Rural Development; Simona Caselli, Minister of Agriculture, Emilia Romagna Region; Eduardo Cuoco, Head of TP Organics Secretariat; Hans-Jörg Lutzeyer, Research programme officer, DG Research and Innovation; and Marco Schlüter, IFOAM EU director at the roundtable discussion during the session 'Boosting organic innovation in EU policies' at Organic Innovation Days



## GOVERNANCE

### IFOAM EU 2015 Board

The Board is the executive body that is elected by the General Assembly according to sector-related and regional criteria. In 2015<sup>2</sup> the board members were:

**Christopher Stopes**

President  
EcoS Consultancy

**Sabine Eigenschink**

Board Vice President (regulation)  
Austria Bio Garantie

**Thomas Fertl**

Board Vice President (policy)  
Bio Austria

**Bavo Van Den Idsert**

Board Member  
VBP Biologisch

**Jan Plagge**

Board Member  
Bioland

**Dominique Marion**

Board member  
FNAB

**Aira Sevon**

Board Member  
Luomuliitto ry

**Albena Simeonova**

Board Member  
Bulgarian Organic Products Association

**Lea Bauer**

Board Member  
BioKontroll

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<sup>2</sup> In April 2016 the IFOAM EU membership elected a new board at its 8th General Assembly

## IFOAM EU 2015 Council

The Council consists of nationally elected representatives and substitutes from 31 countries make up the IFOAM EU Council, which brings together national interests and specificities at the European level.

Austria	Sabine Eigenschink Board Vice President (regulation) Council Member Austria Bio Garantie	Thomas Fertl Board Vice President (policy) Deputy Council Member Bio Austria
Belgium	Lieve Vercauteren Council Member BioForum	Bram Fronik Deputy Council Member BioForum
Bulgaria	Albena Simeonova Board Member Council Member Bulgarian Organic Products Association	Stoilko Apostolov Deputy Council Member Bioselena
Cyprus	Savvas Mouzakis Council Member Green Network Trading Ltd.	
Czech Republic	Jiri Lehejcek Council Member Czech Technology Platform for Organic Agriculture	
Denmark	Sybille Kyed Council Member Organic Denmark - Økologisk Landsforening	Per Kolster Deputy Council Member Organic Denmark - Økologisk Landsforening
Estonia	Merit Mikk Council Member Estonian Organic Farming Foundation	Airi Vetemaa Deputy Council Member Estonian Organic Farming Foundation
Finland	Mikko Simola Council Member Kymi Organic	Marika Auersalmi Deputy Council Member MaBio Oy
	Erkki Pöytäniemi Deputy Council Member Kurmakka - Organic Food	
France	Juliette Leroux Council Member FNAB	Charles Pernin Deputy Council Member Synabio  Vianney Le Pichon Deputy Council Member GRAB
Germany	Peter Röhrig Council Member BÖLW	Kirsten Arp Deputy Council Member BNN  Antje Koelling Deputy Council Member Demeter
Greece	Kostas Dritsas Council Member DIO	Sotiris Bampagiouris Deputy Council Member Biohellas

Hungary	Éva Sándorné Ács Council Member Kishantos Rural Development Centre	Éva Cellerné Daróczy Deputy Council Member Hungarian Biokultúra Federation
Iceland	Olafur Dyrmondsson Council Member BiRala Farmers Association Iceland	Stefán Gíslason Deputy Council Member Vottunarstofan Tun ehf.
Ireland	Gillian Westbrook Council Member IOFGA	Grace Maher Deputy Council Member IOFGA
	Eveline Gill Deputy Council Member Organic Trust Ltd.	
Italy	Antonio Compagnoni Council member ICEA	Riccardo Cozzo Deputy Council Member BioAgriCert  Livia Ortolani Deputy Council Member AIAB
Latvia	Gustavs Norkarklis Council member ALOA	Līga Lojina Deputy Council Member Ekoprodukti
Lithuania	Edita Karbauskiene Council Member Lithuanian Association of Organic Farmers – Gaja	Antanas Svirskis Deputy Council Member Lithuanian Association of Organic Farmers – Gaja
Luxembourg	Raymond Aendekerck Council Member Bio-Lëtzebuerg	
Malta	John Portelli Council Member Malta Organic Agriculture Movement – MOAM	Mario Salerno Deputy Council Member Malta Organic Agriculture Movement – MOAM
The Netherlands	Bavo Van Den Idsert Council Member Bionext	Marian Blom Deputy Council Member Bionext  Paulien Veerman Deputy Council Member Bionext
Norway	Gerald Altena Council Member DEBIO	Grete Serikstad Deputy Council Member Bioforsk Organic Food and Farming
Poland	Dorota Metera Council Member BIOEKSPERT Ltd.	Ewa Rembalkowska Deputy Council Member Faculty of Human Nutrition and Consumer Sciences
Portugal	Jaime Manuel Carvalho Ferreira Council Member Agrobio	Alexandra Maurer da Costa Deputy Council Member Agrobio
Romania	Marian Cioceanu Council Member Bio Romania Association	

Slovakia	Zuzana Lehocka Observer Research Institute of Plant Production	Marta Klimekova Observer Research Institute of Plant Production
Slovenia	Anamarija Slabe Council Member Institute for Sustainable Development	Boris Fras Deputy Council Member Biodar, Union of Slovenian Organic Farmers Association
Spain	Évelyne Alcázar Marín Council Member Ecovalia	Victor Gonzalez Council Member SEAE  Isidre Martinez Deputy Council Member SEAE
Sweden	Marianne Schonning Council Member Swedish Ecological Farmers Association	Kjell Sjudahl-Svensson Deputy Council Member KRAV
Switzerland	Barbara Früh Council Member FiBL	Hans Ramseier Deputy Council Member Bio Suisse
Turkey	Seda Orhan Defranceschi Observer Bugday Association	
United Kingdom	Christopher Stopes President Board Member EcoS Consultancy	Chris Atkinson Council Member Soil Association  Lawrence Woodward Deputy Council Member

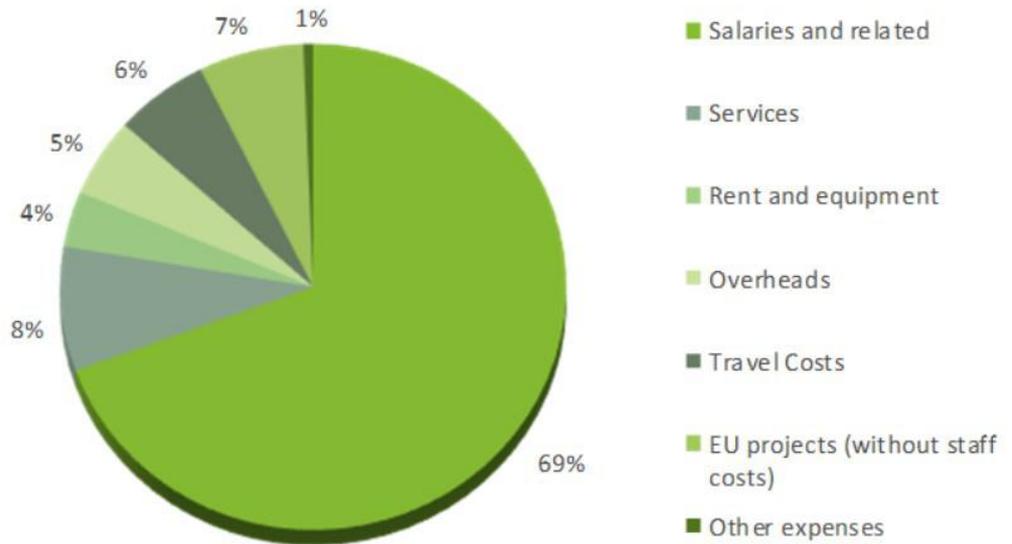
## 2015 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Total income: 1,306,039.37 EUR

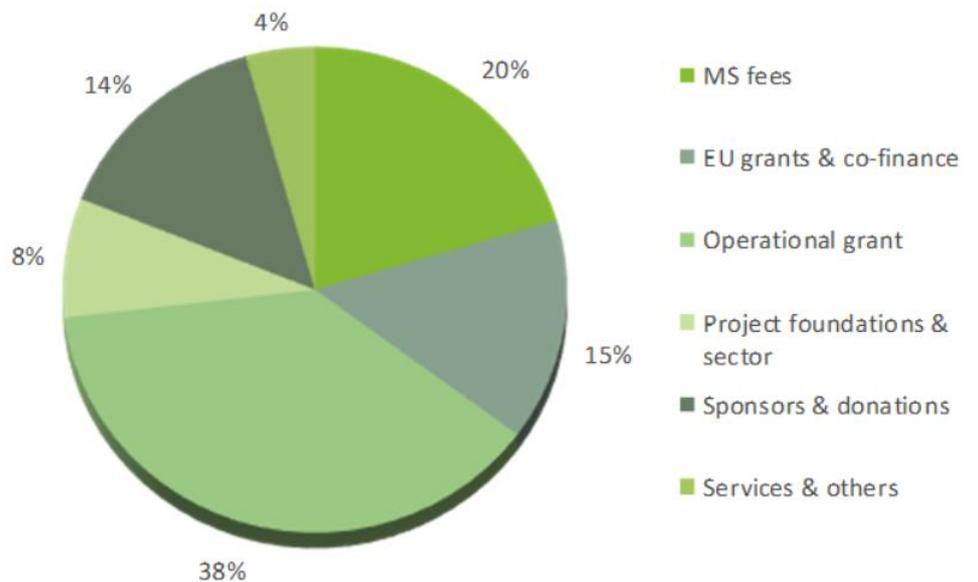
Total costs: 1,284,774.26 EUR

Result: 21,265.10 EUR

### IFOAM EU expenditure



### IFOAM EU income



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IFOAM EU  
Rue du Commerce 124  
1000 Brussels  
Belgium  
+32 2 808 7991  
[www.ifoam-eu.org](http://www.ifoam-eu.org)  
[communication@ifoam-eu.org](mailto:communication@ifoam-eu.org)

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