

# THE PATH TO THE FAIR HANSA

For more than 600 years, a unique network of merchants existed in Northern Europe.

The cooperation of this consortium of merchants for the promotion of their foreign trade gave rise to an association of cities, to which around 200 coastal and inland cities belonged in the course of time.

## THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE IN THE MIDDLE AGES

These cities were located in an area that today encompasses seven European countries: from the Dutch Zuyderzee in the west to Baltic Estonia in the east, and from Sweden's Visby / Gotland in the north to the Cologne-Erfurt-Wroclaw-Krakow perimeter in the south.

From this base, the Hanseatic traders developed a strong economic influence, which during the 16th century extended from Portugal to Russia and from Scandinavia to Italy, an area that now includes 20 European states.

## HONEST MERCHANTS – FAIR TRADE?

Merchants, who often shared family ties to each other, were not always fair to producers and craftsmen. There is ample evidence of routine fraud and young traders in far-flung posts who led dissolute lives. It has also been proven that slave labor was used.



◀ Trading was conducted with goods that were typically regional, and sometimes with luxury goods: for example, wax and furs from Novgorod, cloth, silver, metal goods, salt, herrings and grain from Hanseatic cities such as Lübeck, Münster or Dortmund

## CHRONOLOGY:

### 12th–14th Century - "Kaufmannshanse".

Establishment of Hanseatic trading posts (Hanseatic kontors) with common privileges for Low German merchants

### 14th–17th Century - "Städtehanse".

Cooperation between the Hanseatic cities to defend their trade privileges and enforce common interests, especially at the locations of the kontors, secure trade routes and exert political influence

### 17th–18th Century - Hanseatic community

Merchants from different cities in different countries formed convoys and partnerships.

*"An interesting model emerged in the course of the 14th century: reciprocal trading. Two merchants in different towns would conduct transactions for each other, but without charging a fee for the services. So if one merchant lived in Lübeck and the other in Riga, the Lübeck trader would send his goods to Riga and his partner would sell them there. And because the merchant in Riga understood the local market, he would use the sales proceeds to buy new goods for his partner in Lübeck and send those in return. He didn't charge anything for this, instead sending his own goods to Lübeck, which his partner there sold in the same way. And both would benefit."*

(Excerpt from an interview with Prof. Dr. Rolf Hammel-Kiesow, European Hansemuseum catalogue)





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**LEGENDE • KEY**

KÖNIGREICH	KINGDOM	ALLE WASSER	ON WATER
Wippen Lübecker Kaufmannskompagnien	Emblems of merchant companies from Lübeck	FISHGRÜNDE	FISHING GROUNDS
VORORT der Drittel oder Viertel	PRINCIPAL Hanseatic city	Getreide	CEREAL
Wichtige Hansestadt	Important Hanseatic city	Honig	HONEY
Hansestadt	Hanseatic city	Woll	WOOL
Teilhaber des letzten Hanseartages 1669 sind unterstrichen	Participants of the last Hanseatic Day in 1669 are underlined	Landholz	HARDWOOD
HANSEKONTOR	HANSEATIC KONTOR	Nadelholz	SOFTWOOD
Niederlassung	Small branch	Textilindustrie	WEAVING INDUSTRY
Große Stadt	Big city	Woll	WOOL
Kleine Stadt	Small town	Flachs	FLAX
PIRATEN, KAPERER	PIRATES, PRIVATEERS	Glasverarbeitung	GLASS-MAKING
SCHLACHT	BATTLE	Wein	WINE
FRIEDENSVERTRAG	PEACE TREATY	Brauereien	BREWERIES
MUSEUM	MUSEUM	Metallwaren	METAL GOODS
Festung	Stronghold	Pech, Terp	PITCH, TAR
Meeresstraße	Fair town	Salzgewinnung	SALT PRODUCTION
Seeweg	Sea route	Bernstein	AMBER
Binnenwasserstraßen	Inland waterway	Silber	SILVER
Postweg	Postage	Gold	GOLD
Landweg	Overland	Kupfer	COPPER
Handelsperre	Embargo	Eisen	IRON
Heutige Grenzen	Present day borders	Zinn	TIN
		Blei	LEAD
		Kohle	COAL



The merchants enjoyed protection and special rights from the local rulers.

Central transshipment points of this trade were the trading stations ("Kontor") of the Hanseatic League in Novgorod (Northwest Russia), in Bergen (Norway), Bruges (Flanders) and in London (England). In addition, the Hanseatic League, from Russia to Portugal, also had numerous smaller outposts across Europe.

From the middle of the 14th century until 1669, representatives of the Hanseatic cities met from time to time on Hanseatic Days to make economic and political decisions.



In its heyday, the Hanseatic League was so powerful that it imposed economic blockades against kingdoms and principalities to enforce its economic interests and, in exceptional cases, even waged wars.

Society and trade evolved dramatically over the centuries. The Hanseatic League was constantly in a state of change, until it lost its importance during the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648).



The FAIR HANSA project group is committed to reviving the idea of mutual support and cooperation between trading partners by promoting Fair Trade worldwide – as a contribution to global justice, to safeguarding human rights and peace.



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# HANSEATIC DAYS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

In the second half of the 14th century, the cities transformed their existing cooperation into a more formal organization. The central body was the "Hanseatic Day", when the designated councilors of the Hanseatic cities discussed the problems at hand and tried to find joint solutions.

## **THE HANSEATIC DAY, THE HIGHEST DECISION-MAKING BODY IN THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE (1356 - 1669)**

As Lübeck was the most centrally-located of all the Hanseatic cities, most of the Hanseatic Days were held there - including 43 of the 67 conventions held between 1356 and 1407. Once the seating arrangements for the delegates had been established in accordance with the ranking of the towns and cities, the convention was opened. The Mayor of the host city would chair the meeting and grant the speakers the floor. Resolutions had to be adopted unanimously, which sometimes proved extremely difficult in view of the widely-differing economic interests of the mostly up to 15, sometimes even around 50 towns and cities represented.

The delegates to the Hanseatic Day, often individuals acting as both merchant and councilor, decided

on all questions relating to the relationship between merchants and cities. The same applied to relations with trading partners abroad, diplomatic activities, new admissions or exclusions of members, or decisions about war and peace.

Hanseatic Days sometimes lasted an entire month. The last historical Hanseatic Day took place in Lübeck in 1669. Delegates from six cities attended, and three additional cities were represented.

In 1764, the last Kontor in Bergen, Norway, dissolved. Hanseatic cities remaining since the 18th century are Bremen, Hamburg and Lübeck.





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# THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE TODAY

International Union of Cities THE HANSA

In 1980, the international Union of Cities THE HANSA was founded in the Dutch city of Zwolle. Members are cities which historically belonged to the historical Hanseatic League or were in trade with these cities. With over 190 cities in 16 countries, today's Hanseatic League is one of the world's largest voluntary associations of towns.

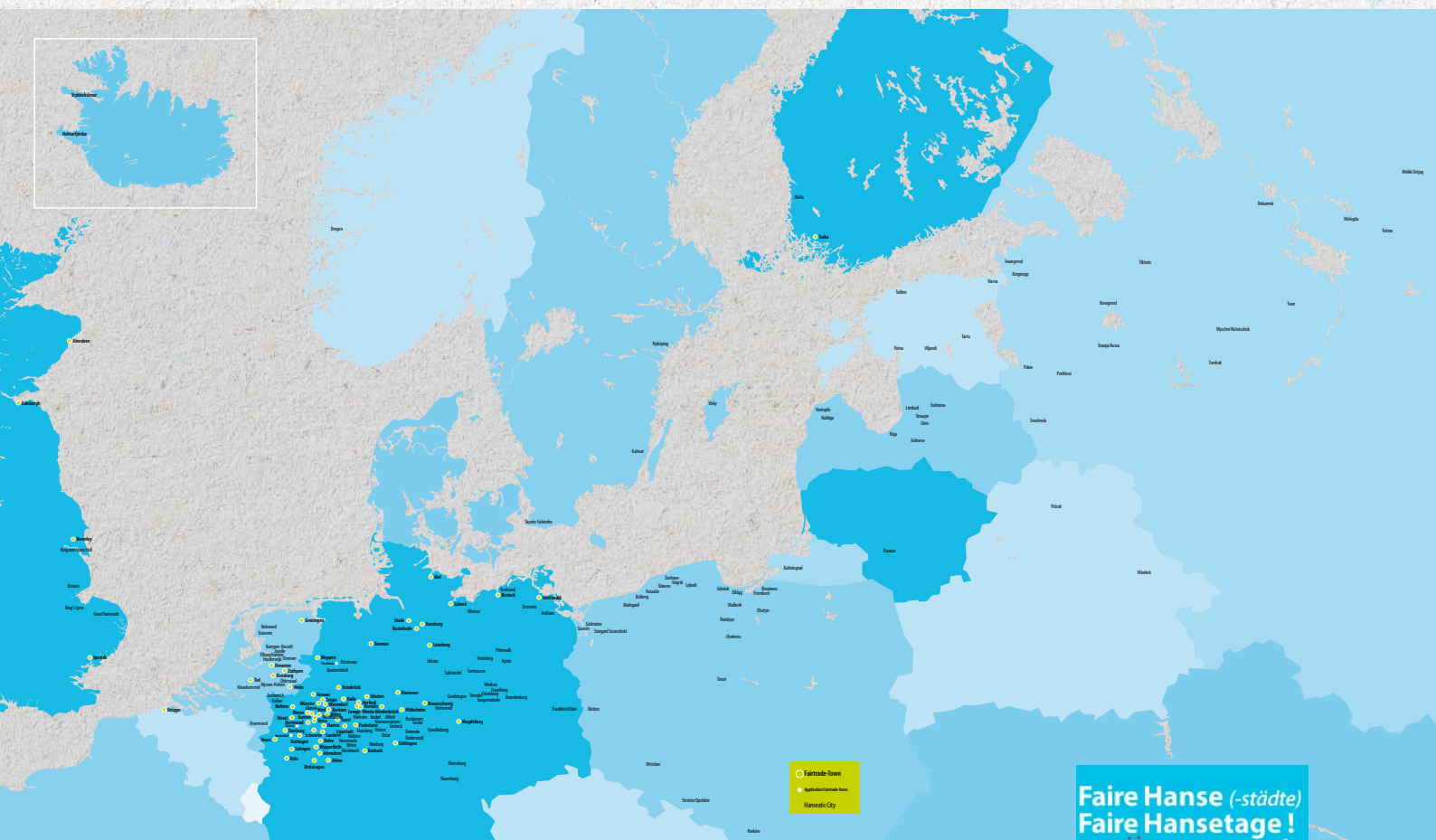
## AIMS

THE HANSA has set itself the task of making a contribution to the economic, cultural, social and national unification of Europe. By expanding the statutes in 2020, the Fair Trade idea has also been taken into account.

These aims are brought to life during the annual International Hanseatic Days, regional Hanseatic festivals and cooperation in project groups.

The following aims and activities of THE HANSA were adopted in the statutes:

- Campaigns in the field of public relations that highlight the common features of the Hanseatic towns
- Exchange of culture and traditions
- Knowledge, social and information transfers
- Strengthening business and trade contacts, taking the Fair Trade idea into account
- Inclusion of the youth (youthHansa) in the further development of THE HANSA



Current list of member cities  
<https://www.hanse.org/en/hanseatic-cities/>



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# FAIR TRADE

## What exactly does Fair Trade mean?

Justice, equality and sustainable development are the basis of trade structures.

„Fair Trade is a trading partnership that is based on dialogue, transparency and respect and strives for more justice in international trade. Through better trading conditions and the safeguarding of social rights for disadvantaged producers and workers – especially in the countries of the Global South – Fair Trade contributes to sustainable development.“



◀ The International Fair Trade Charter

◀ The World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) is a worldwide association of more than 400 members in over 70 countries who are 100% committed to Fair Trade.



<b>1 OPPORTUNITIES FOR DISADVANTAGED PRODUCERS</b> 	<b>2 TRANSPARENCY &amp; ACCOUNTABILITY</b> 	<b>3 FAIR TRADE PRACTICES</b> 	<b>4 FAIR PAYMENT</b> 
<b>5 NO CHILD LABOUR, NO FORCED LABOUR</b> 	<b>6 NO DISCRIMINATION, GENDER EQUITY, FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION</b> 	<b>7 GOOD WORKING CONDITIONS</b> 	<b>8 CAPACITY BUILDING</b> 
<b>9 PROMOTE FAIR TRADE</b> 	<b>10 RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT</b> 	<b>TEN PRINCIPLES OF FAIR TRADE</b> 	



# THE INTERNATIONAL HANSEATIC DAY



With the "International Hanseatic Day of Modern Times," THE HANSA is reviving the old Hanseatic tradition. Since 1980, there has been a multi-day gathering of the member cities, welcoming thousands of guests every year. Each year a different Hanseatic city plays host, inviting people to celebrate their common

cultural heritage and international understanding. The Hanseatic League comes to life in numerous activities, markets and exhibitions. And, as before, the decisions of the Union of Cities are also made at the annual meeting on the Hanseatic Day.



## THE DAY OF THE HANSEATIC LEAGUE

Every third weekend in May, the Union of Cities celebrates the "Day of THE HANSA". Exhibitions, city tours and activities related to the Hanseatic League take place in many cities that weekend. On this festival day, people are invited to immerse themselves in the Hanseatic history of their city and at the same time to experience how they are still part of a European network.



# FAIR TRADE AT THE 34TH INTERNATIONAL HANSEATIC DAY 2014 IN LÜBECK



The Hanseatic League took up the topic of Fair Trade for the first time at the 34th International Hanseatic Day in Lübeck. On one hand, Fair Trade products were served at the Lübeck Hanseatic Day and major events were conducted, including a fair coffee chat with over 230 Lübeck families, a fair + organic + regional market, various workshops on the subject of Fair Trade and a large open-air Hanseatic

brunch. On the other hand, Fair Trade made it onto the proposal agenda and the Board of THE HANSA passed a resolution in favor of promoting the Fair-trade Towns campaign.

## FAIR TRADE FIRMLY ESTABLISHED

In 2015, another proposal from youthHansa was voted on at the 35th International Hanseatic Conference in Viljandi in Estonia.

The assembly of delegates of the Hanseatic Day in Viljandi decided on the following proposals:

*"The assembly of delegates at the Hanseatic Day in Viljandi recommends that its member cities incorporate an official program point / workshop on the subject of Fair Hansa – Fair Trade at the respective International Hanseatic Days. Hanseatic Commissioners, city marketing and Fair Trade participants from the member cities should recognize the opportunities for cooperation and benefit from each other's knowledge in a new network. During future International Hanseatic Days, the organizing Hanseatic city should set an example for Fair Trade at official meetings and appointments by serving fair coffee and tea."*



# FAIR HANSA PROJECT GROUP

The FAIR HANSA project group was founded as an official HANSA project in 2015 in Hamburg. The aim of the project group is to advise and support member cities of THE HANSA in advocating Fair Trade and participating in the international Fair-trade Towns campaign.



## UNION OF CITIES THE HANSA AND FAIR TRADE

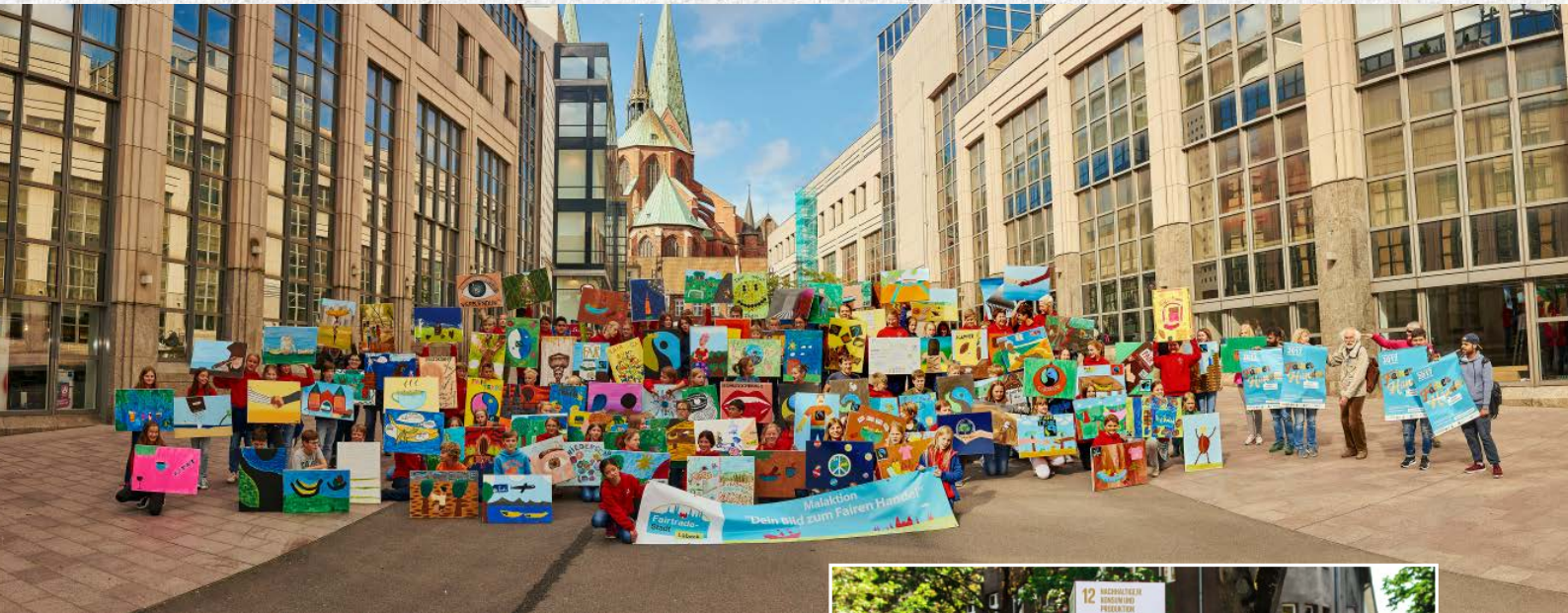
Excerpt from the FAIR HANSA guidelines, adopted at the International Hanseatic Day in Rostock 2018

- THE HANSA strengthens Fair Trade by supporting the International Fairtrade Towns campaign and by emphasizing Fair Trade during the International Hanseatic Days.
- The host cities of the International Hanseatic Days ensure that Fair Trade products are used in catering, as much as possible and subject to availability.
- At least one market stand for providers of Fair Trade, ecological and regionally-traded products should be an integral part of every Hanseatic Day.
- The Hanseatic city organizing the International Hanseatic Day should aim to organize official forums, workshops, seminars or conferences on the subject of Fair Trade.
- The subject of Fair Trade should, if possible, become part of the youthHansa projects during an International Hanseatic Day.





# FAIRTRADE TOWNS – INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN



Over 2000 cities in 36 countries around the world are part of the Fairtrade Towns campaign. Of the more than 190 Hanseatic cities, 63 are already Fairtrade Towns.

Fairtrade Towns promote Fair Trade at the local level and are the result of successful networking between representatives of the community, politics and business. Together they stand up for Fair Trade. The commitment of so many people shows that change is possible and that everyone can make a difference.

The Fairtrade Towns campaign provides impetus for the topic of sustainable procurement and shows options for action for the concrete implementation of global development strategies such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



<https://sdgs.un.org/goals>



The FAIR HANSA project is committed to ensuring that cities of THE HANSA become part of the Fairtrade Towns campaign and work together as part of an existing network for Fair Trade.



◀ Further information on the Fairtrade Towns campaign in Germany



Fairtrade Towns International: ▶

Young people can also get involved in the Fairtrade Schools or Fairtrade Universities campaign.

# COMMITMENT TO FAIR TRADE – IT'S WORTH IT!

Fair Trade at Hanseatic Days and city festivals



## PROPOSALS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Information desk on Fair Trade, Fairtrade Towns, FAIR HANSA
- Implementation of a fair + organic + regional market in cooperation with city marketing, tourist information or similar outlets
- Use of fairly traded products (coffee, tea, wine, juices) at receptions and events, in hotels, youth hostels
- Cooperation with local organizations such as one world groups, church groups, schools...
- Exhibitions, lectures, workshops in schools, adult education centers, churches, town hall ...
- Church services focused on Fair Trade
- Fair cooking show, fair fashion show

## SUPPORT OFFERS AND INFORMATION MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE FROM:

- Forum Fairer Handel, Engagement Global, Weltladen-Dachverband, Transfair e.V., Project Group FAIR HANSA ...
- Financial support can be requested from TransFair e.V., Engagement Global, Foundations (German Cities only)

How Hanseatic cities can plan sustainably and fairly. Here you will find suggestions for planning and organizing parties and events:



◀ Handbook "Sustainable Event Planning"

Gefördert durch



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