

European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ)

Address: Mundo Madou, Avenue des Arts 7/8, 1210 Brussels, Belgium.

Project Coordination: Iva Petkovic. Contributions by ECCJ members. Final oversight by Claudia Saller.

Design and layout: © Familia and Iva Petkovic

Icons by Alex Muravev, Hassan Ali and Adlama Fila from NounProject.com

This Annual Report can be downloaded on the ECCJ website.

Brussels, April 2022

Contents

Foreword	5
A year in review	6
2021 in numbers	11
Achievements around Europe	12
Publications	14
Videos	15
New website	16
Impact in the media	17
A day in the life	18
Team	19
Board	20
Finances	21
Funders	22
About ECCJ	23



Foreword

Dear members and friends of ECCJ,

Over the past decades, many decision makers and companies said that binding rules are out of the question. Today, we have a legal proposal for a Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive. This breakthrough has taken many years of collecting evidence, sharing legal expertise and speaking with one voice at the European level.

The proposal for an EU directive on corporate due diligence includes the main elements our coalition has been asking for — including full value chain reach and a civil liability regime — and it is linked to the new Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, which will for the first time set reporting standards for impacts on people and the planet.

While this is a big success, we now need to get stuck into improving the proposal — and we can expect tough debates. But these negotiations will be taking place in a new context. Both the pandemic and the war in Ukraine have raised new questions around the role of corporations. Working against this dramatic backdrop, legislation on corporate accountability needs to protect those who are most vulnerable and suffering the consequences of greed, negligence and short-termism that too often define corporations' strategies.

We are in a new era for corporate accountability in Europe thanks to the enthusiasm and hard work of our members. Last year, Germany and Norway followed France with their own national laws. Governments in the Netherlands, Finland, Belgium, Austria and Spain committed to a national law, whilst in other countries, our coalition members campaigned in favour of the European initiative.

Our work has reached the tipping point. We have an unprecedent opportunity to realise our vision of a sustainable world where companies respect human rights and the environment. Let's make it count.

Filip Gregor, Chair of the Board Claudia Saller, Director General

A year in review

January

January - 8 February

The European Commission launched a public consultation on how to design new corporate due diligence rules. ECCJ and partner organisations campaigned to gather as many civil society, trade union and citizen responses with a one-click precompiled form in five languages. The campaign collected more than 145,000 submissions.

28 January

ECCJ <u>responded</u> to the adoption of an important report by the Legal Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, calling on all lawmakers to support the report at the March plenary. We also released a <u>joint civil society statement</u> calling on the EU Commission to put forward an even more robust, coherent and ambitious legislative proposal.

February

16 February

ECCJ <u>amplified</u> the concerns of its member Germanwatch over fierce lobbying by German business associations and lobbyists following the government's announcement of a draft supply chain law. ECCJ called on the EU to use the German announcement as a springboard for a Europe-wide framework.

26 February

Johanna Kusch and Claudia Saller wrote an op-ed for Social Europe calling Germany's proposed supply chain law a glass half-empty.

© Frame China / Shutterstock.



March

5 March

ECCJ and 8 other NGOs released a joint statement asking lawmakers to pave the way for an EU law requiring companies to protect human rights and the environment in their global value chains.

8 March

On International Women's Day, ECCJ published an article by Sylvia Obregon and Karolin Seitz of Global Policy Forum arguing that the future EU law must treat <u>gender</u> as a cross-cutting issue.

11 March

ECCJ <u>reacted</u> to the European Parliament's adoption of MEP Lara Wolters' report on corporate due diligence. A large majority voted in favour, sending a strong signal to the European Commission on what key elements the parliament expects in the legislation.

12 March

ECCJ <u>shared</u> its member MVO Platform's release on the submission of a bill on responsible and sustainable international business conduct in the Dutch parliament.

16-21 March

ECCJ joined 200 organisations to urge brands to #PayYourWorkers in response to millions of garment workers worldwide losing their jobs without compensation, or receiving much less than their regular poverty wages, due to COVID-19.

18 March

ECCJ delivered the submissions of <u>over half a million</u> <u>people</u> and 700 civil society groups, trade unions and academic institutions from around the world to EU <u>Commissioner Didier Reynders.</u> The submissions were collected by two separate campaigns, one co-led by ECCJ.

23 March

As part of the reform of the EU Non-Financial Reporting Directive, ECCJ contributed to and signed the <u>civil</u> <u>society statement</u> calling on policymakers to define meaningful supply chain reporting requirements.

April

7 April

Following the submission of a resolution on a supply chain law in Austria by the SPÖ political party, ECCJ and its member NeSoVe <u>published an op-ed</u> calling for binding rules for companies.

22 April

ECCJ signed a <u>civil society statement</u> on the European Commission proposal for a new Directive on sustainability disclosures.

23 April

Eight years after the Rana Plaza factory collapse, ECCJ <u>published an op-ed</u> with Anti-Slavery International and Clean Clothes Campaign to explain how the EU must seize the chance to stop such tragedies in the future.

May

10-11 May

As part of our Annual General Meeting, ECCJ invited colleagues and allies to join <u>discussions</u> on the latest hot topics in the rapidly evolving field of corporate accountability in Europe, from due diligence to trade to climate.

The 2021 Annual General Meeting.



12 May

ECCJ and other civil society organisations outlined why and how <u>environmental protection</u> must be integrated into companies' due diligence requirements alongside respect for human rights.

13 May

ECCJ called on the EU and its member states to allow the United Kingdom to accede to the <u>Lugano</u>
<u>Convention</u>, a cross-border legal cooperation treaty, on grounds concerning access to judicial remedy for victims of corporate human rights abuses.

25 May

Following opposition from some business associations and Nordic governments, ECCJ and other NGOs reaffirmed their support for new obligations for company directors to ensure that corporate governance is more sustainable and responsible in the future.

26-28 May

In a historic case, a Dutch civil court ruled on Wednesday, that by 2030 the oil giant Shell must reduce its CO2 global emissions by 45% compared to 2019 levels. ECCJ provided a brief analysis of the court's reasoning.

June

3 June

ECCJ co-organised an <u>event</u> with Friends of the Earth Europe and the RBC Working Group of the European Parliament to present recent judicial proceedings against European companies and to discuss the barriers to justice that victims face in bringing cases.

9 June

As the fate of the proposals on deforestation and sustainable corporate governance hung in the balance, ECCJ <u>raised concerns</u> together with other civil society. We urged the European Commission to ensure ambitious and timely action on these important initiatives.

11 June

ECCJ reacted to the <u>adoption of the German supply</u> <u>chain act</u> by the Bundestag, noting that it's a good start, but victims must have easy access to German courts for human rights violations by German companies.

14 June

Following the adoption of the transparency act by the Norwegian parliament - a massive win for civil society - ECCJ shared the full analysis of its member ForUM.



Our report 'Off the hook?' featured in Domani newspaper in Italy. Photo by journalist Francesca De Benedetti @FrancesDiBi.



ECCJ helped Saeeda Khatoon, Chair of the Ali Enterprise Factory Fire Affectees' Association, to send a letter to EU Commissioners.

16 June

Corporate Europe Observatory, Friends of the Earth Europe and ECCJ <u>released a report</u> exposing how corporate lobbies tried to dilute ambitions of European lawmakers on the future law to hold companies accountable for human rights abuses and environmental destruction.

16 June

ECCJ marked the <u>10-year anniversary</u> of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the globally recognised and authoritative framework for preventing and addressing the risk of adverse impacts on human rights linked to business.

21 June

ECCJ supported the development of <u>recommendations</u> on <u>directors' responsibilities</u> to oversee sustainability based on existing company law and corporate governance frameworks across Europe.

July

6 July

ECCJ joined more than 400 environmental, climate, development, consumer, union and youth organisations to ask the EU to <u>leave the Energy Charter Treaty</u> and stop pushing its expansion to the Global South.

8 July

ECCJ helped Saeeda Khatoon send a <u>letter to EU</u>
<u>Commissioners</u> Breton and Reynders to demand better access to justice for victims of corporate abuse. She has been fighting to hold those who are responsible for a fatal fire at the Ali Enterprises garment factory to account.

16 July

ECCJ and other organisations asked the EU Commission to <u>ensure responsible purchasing practices</u> by businesses to guarantee decent work conditions for workers in producing countries.

September

13 September

On the ninth anniversary of a fatal fire at a factory that had been certified as safe, 15 organisations including ECCJ, urged EU policy-makers to address systemic issues related to the <u>social auditing industry</u>.

28 September

ECCJ released a report analysing <u>22 civil cases against</u> <u>EU companies</u>, revealing serious and systemic barriers, which prevent victims of business-related abuses from accessing judicial remedy in the EU.



ECCJ Director Claudia Saller speaking at the French National Assembly in September 2021.

28 September

ECCJ Director, Claudia Saller, <u>spoke</u> at the French National Assembly to urge the French government to be the champion of sustainable corporate governance in 2022.

October

13 October

ECCJ released the results of a <u>YouGov poll</u>, which found that over 80 percent of citizens from across multiple EU countries want strong laws to hold companies liable for overseas human rights and environmental violations.

25-29 October

ECCJ participated at the UN negotiations on the third revised draft treaty on business and human rights, and published <u>daily blog posts</u> to summerise key developments.

November

3 November

As the <u>COP26 UN Climate Conference</u> unfolded, ECCJ called on the EU to uphold human rights in the negotiations and acknowledge that corporate obligations are needed to tackle climate change.

9 November

ECCJ joined other NGOs in urging European Commissioners to make sure the proposal on corporate due diligence contains the provisions required to address the human rights abuses against people from the Uyghur region in China.

26 November

ECCJ Director Claudia Saller and ETUC's Isabelle Schömann published an <u>op-ed in EU Observer</u> about the hidden costs of Black Friday for people and the planet.

29 November

On International Women Human Rights Defenders Day, ECCJ and 60 civil society groups demanded a <u>gender-responsive law on corporate due diligence</u>.

December

6 December

ECCJ <u>welcomed</u> the announcement that the government of Netherlands will introduce a national law on human rights and environmental due diligence.

8-21 December

ECCJ sent a series of letters to the EU Commission President von der Leyen to <u>express concern</u> that the law had been delayed for the third time, to <u>request full</u> <u>transparency</u>, and to demand the <u>closing of sustainability</u> <u>gaps</u> in due diligence and corporate governance.

2021 in numbers



15

Years of ECCJ



14

Reports and legal briefings published



805

European policy-makers and officials engaged



49

News articles published on our website - an increase by 400%



34

Number of times ECCJ spoke at high-level meetings and events



52 k

Visits to corporatejustice.org



87+

Number of times ECCJ was mentioned or quoted by media - an increase of 600%



22 k

Number of video views across all channels

Achievements around Europe

Forum Citoyen pour la RSE/Sherpa

France

Sherpa initiated a case against Casino for its failure to prevent deforestation and human rights abuses in its beef supply chain. It filed a criminal complaint against four textile companies alleged to benefit from Uyghur forced labor. Sherpa also helped to set key judicial precedents. In the Lafarge case, the court rendered a historic decision regarding corporate accountability for complicity in crimes against humanity. In the case against Total, courts rejected Total's attempt to refer the case to a commercial court.

Germanwatch

Germany

As part of the 'Initiative Lieferkettengesetz', an alliance of more than 130 organisations, Germanwatch increased public pressure for a strong law with countless events, petitions and press releases. Despite massive lobbying from business associations, the Parliament finally passed the German Supply Chain Act - the first law in Germany that makes it mandatory for companies to take responsibility for human rights in their supply chains.

Swiss Coalition for Corporate Justice

Switzerland

Following the rejection at the ballot box of the Responsible Business Initiative (despite gaining 50.7% of the popular vote), member organisations of SCCJ continued their work to improve the weaker counter-proposal, which entered into force in 2022.

MVO Platform/SOMO

Netherlands

In November 2021, the government published the 'building blocks' of the future national legislation on corporate due diligence. The following month, the minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation committed to developing the law, after repeated delays by the European Commission to release EU-wide legislation. This was also reflected in the coalition agreement.

Corporate Justice Coalition

UK

In March 2021, the UK Supreme Court allowed the case Okpabi et al. v Royal Dutch Shell to proceed in UK courts - a major step forward for those seeking access to justice for corporate abuses in the Niger Delta and around the world. The Coalition submitted a legal brief to the Supreme Court. In July 2014, almost 30 organisations joined forces to call for the UK to introduce corporate accountability laws.

Irish Coalition for Business and Human Rights

Ireland

In October 2021, the Coalition launched the 'Make it Your Business' report, which reached 1.9 million people across TV, radio, online and print. The launch also promoted the new coalition website and videos.

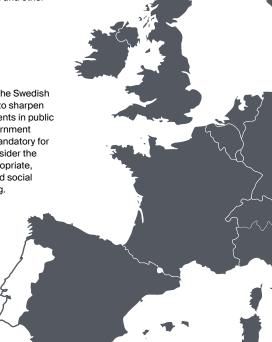
Friends of the Earth Europe

International

For the first time in history, a judge has held a corporation liable for causing dangerous climate change in May 2021. As a result of legal action brought by Friends of the Earth Netherlands (Milleudefensie) and co-plaintiffs, the court ruled that Shell must reduce its CO2 emissions by 45% within 10 years. This historic verdict has enormous consequences for Shell and other big polluters globally.

Diakonia Sweden

In the autumn of 2021, the Swedish government proposed to sharpen sustainability requirements in public procurement. The government suggested making it mandatory for public procurers to consider the climate, and when appropriate, other environmental and social aspects when procuring.



Frank Bold

Czech Republic

In April 2021, the European
Commission published its proposal
for a Corporate Sustainability
Reporting Directive with an enlarged
scope, the disclosure of targets in
line with the Paris Agreement, and
reporting on adverse impacts
across the entire value chain. Frank
Bold played a leading role in
amplifying the role of civil society in
this debate.

Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment

Norway

In 2021, the parliament voted through the <u>Transparency Act</u> after years of campaigning and advocacy from civil society. ForUM successfully lobbied parliament to demand that the government review the law when it has come into effect, opening up space to improve it in the future.

Finnwatch

Finland

Finnwatch revealed human rights abuse in the operations of companies, including <u>Outokumpu</u>, <u>Vale</u>, <u>Hydro</u> and the <u>IOI Group</u>, in Brazil and Malaysia. The Finnwatch report on the carbon credit market fueled political debate on the need to regulate the market. Finnwatch also provided input in parliamentary hearings and continued its work to close loopholes in tax legislation.

International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)

International

In 2021, FIDH worked with 49 local civil society groups and 490 human rights defenders affected by the negative impacts of companies. Through documentation, litigation and advocacy, FIDH put pressure on 72 companies, 26 investors, 138 banks, and 19 international financial institutions.

CNCD-11.11.11

Belgium

CNCD-11.11.11 produced a memorandum for a Belgian law on corporate human rights due diligence, which was used as a basis for drafting a law proposal, which was tabled in the Federal Parliament in April 2021.

Polish Institute for Human Rights and Business

Poland

2021 saw the first structured series of activities on human rights due diligence in Poland, starting with an event organized jointly by the European Parliament Office in Poland. PIHRB also raised awareness on social media and encouraged the general public to sign a petition asking the Polish government to participate constructively on corporate due diligence.

Observatorio de Responsabilidad Social Corporativa

Spain

The 'Plataforma por las Empresas Responsables' received support from 50+ organisations. Several ministries included the proposal of a Spanish law on human rights due diligence as part of the 2022 legislative agenda.

Mani Tese

Italy

Mani Tese launched its national campaign 'Impresa 2030. Diamoci una regolata', which has received wide attention, including mentions in 15 articles in magazines and on radio. Members of Impresa 2030 participated in stakeholder consultation meetings, which resulted in a new Italian National Action Plan with human rights and environmental due diligence as a key priority.

The Danish 92 Group – Forum for Sustainable Development

Denmark

The Group submitted a response to the European Commission consultation on deforestation-free products regulation and corporate sustainability reporting directive.

Corporate Europe Observatory

Europe

Ahead of the French Presidency of the EU Council, CEO exposed the close collaboration with French corporate interests. It also covered the UN climate talks in Glasgow and published research on 71 revolving door cases involving six Big Energy firms and their lobby groups. It campaigned to end the climate-killing Energy Charter Treaty.

ASTM

Luxembourg

To build support for national legislation on due diligence, the coalition organised <u>a march</u> in front of the offices of five companies allegedly involved in human rights violations, as well as the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs.

NeSoVe

Austria

NeSoVe projected their messages 'Supply Chain Act now' and 'Human Rights Need Legislation' on the buildings of the Austrian Federal Chancellery and the Ministry of Justice, and presented its campaign at 20 events. In March 2021, two MPs from the Social Democrats introduced in parliament a draft proposal for a supply chain law, which seeks to cover the entire supply chain, addresses human rights and environmental impacts, is cross-sectoral and includes civil liability.





Publications



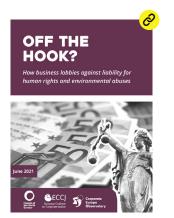




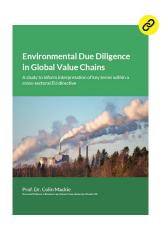


















Videos















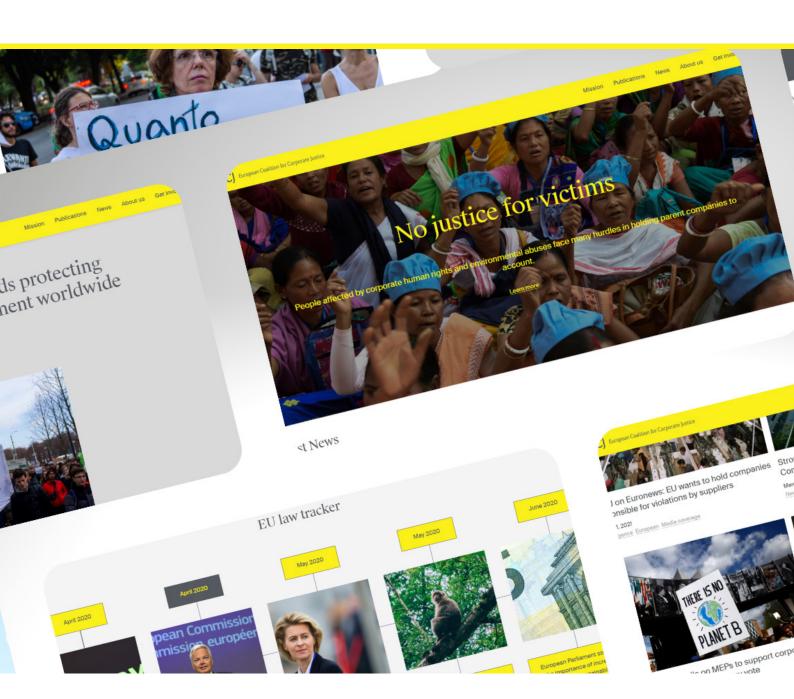






New website

In 2021, ECCJ launched its new website with a modern look and feel, and easy access to our news articles and publications. As the website is our main communication tool and the first point of contact for many audiences, it was important to have cohesive design, a compelling hook on the homepage, clear text describing who we are and what we do, and an easy-to-use navigation system.



Impact in media

Media reporting on the EU legislative process on corporate due diligence and accountability started to pick up in 2021. With a Communications Officer on the team, ECCJ increased its media coverage six-fold. Our views and positions have appeared in Politico Europe, Euronews, and EU Observer — but we have also been featured in national press in Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, Slovenia, Romania, Hungary, Czech Republic and Finland. Our work has also recieved attention in expert policy media and prominent blogs.

In 2021, engagement and the number of followers on Twitter continued to grow steadily by 26%, while on LinkedIn it more than doubled.

POLITICO

EU's soft approach to China puts it at odds with US

Brussels looks a long way from following US down the path of import bans from China $\overline{}$

LE SOIR

Droits humains et environnement: les Belges veulent responsabiliser les entreprises

SEURACTIV

NGOs ask von der Leyen to intervene on delayed corporate human rights law

Social Europe

People v Shell: from 'corporate social responsibility' to legal accountability

euronews

Responsabiliser les entreprises sur l'ensemble de la chaîne de production O DECUSSION

DELO

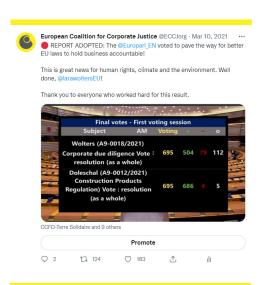
Nič več skrivanja podjetij za dobavno verigo

euobserve

Big corporations' fresh lobbying push for a new EU legal regime



EU-burger wil bedrijven aansprakelijk zien voor wantoestanden in productieketen





European Coalition for Corporate Justice

A day in the life

I started my traineeship in July 2021 while completing the last semester of my LLM in public international law. I have a background in international relations, sustainable development, and law, and I was seeking work experience in an organisation that shares my interest in business and human rights.

As ECCJ's project assistant, I supported policy with research, and I was tasked with ensuring the successful re-launch of the 'Business and Human Rights in Law' (BHRinLaw) website—a joint initiative of ECCJ and NGOs in the United States, Canada, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The website aims to track legislative and judicial developments in the field of corporate accountability. I helped to find ways to display technical legal information in visually engaging ways and ensuring that all project partners deliver the content relevant to their jurisdictions in a consistent format.

Drafting content for this project allowed me to put into practice the writing and analytical skills I gained during my studies while giving me in-depth knowledge of corporate human rights and environmental due diligence laws and cases around the world.

One of the main challenges I faced in the early stages of my traineeship was maintaining a clear communication line between the website designers, the Secretariat, and the other project partners. Due to the project's complexity, deadlines had to be constantly adjusted, but I also acquired new skills: to effectively communicate, follow-up on meetings, provide constructive criticism, and swiftly adapt to unforeseen changes.

I gained insights into the workings of EU-level advocacy ahead of the release of the European Commission's proposal for a directive on Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence. I also had the unique opportunity of attending the United Nations negotiations for a legally binding instrument on business and human rights online.

While my traineeship was mostly remote due to the Covid-19 pandemic, I appreciated the flexibility of working from home and the opportunity to engage with a team that supported me whenever I faced difficulties. The team's passion for working toward corporate accountability is inspiring the next step in my career. I wish to further explore how corporations can be a part of an inclusive and just approach to sustainable development by working in an organization that has a strong social and environmental impact.

I am thankful for my time at ECCJ, and the insightful experiences over the past nine months.



"Due to the project's complexity, I acquired new skills: to communicate effectively, follow-up on meetings, provide constructive criticism, and swiftly adapt to unforeseen changes."

Dorothy PugaProject Assistant

Team

ECCJ brings together committed lawyers, policy specialists, communicators, and organisers with varied profiles and international experience.

ECCJ functions thanks to the commitment of its members and their working groups, whom we warmly thank. Our work also depends on the support of external creatives like copywriters, videographers, programmers, and graphic designers.

We are particularly grateful to our talented and committed trainee Dorothy Puga for her involvement.



Claudia Saller Director



Christopher PatzPolicy Officer



Alejandro García Esteban Policy Officer



Sylvia Obregon QuirozPolicy Officer



Iva PetkovicCommunications
Officer



Jan-Lars LagasFinance and
Operations Manager



Dorothy Puga Project Assistant

Board



Filip Gregor Frank Bold



Julia Otten Germanwatch



Mark Dearn Corporate Justice Coalition



Sandra Cossart Sherpa



Paul de Clerck Friends of the Earth Europe



Anu Kultalahti Finnwatch



Audrey Gaughran SOMO



Sacha Feierabend FIDH



Anina Dalbert Public Eye

Finances

Actuals 2020	Actuals 2021
3.3	5.9
248,404	445,930
43,030	79,482
4,845	4,147
5,263	414
14,522	-
1,889	1,450
14,000	60,911
1,578	46
30,307	-
-	4,008
363,838	596,386
21%	64%
	-
	255,596
-	255,596
363,838	851,982
21%	134%
+ 46,566	+ 32,976
77,913	110,889
60%	30%
	3.3 248,404 43,030 4,845 5,263 14,522 1,889 14,000 1,578 30,307 - 363,838 21% - 363,838 21% + 46,566 77,913

Funders

ECCJ warmly thanks the people and foundations that make these successes possible, including:

SIGRID RAUSING TRUST



















About ECCJ

The European Coalition for Corporate Justice (ECCJ) is a coalition of over 480 civil society organisations in Europe advocating for laws that guarantee corporate accountability and transparency, and ensure justice for people affected by corporate malpractice.

We are the only European coalition bringing together civil society, trade unions, consumer organisations and academics. We draw on their expertise and experience and provide a united voice.

We work with decision-makers in developing robust European and national policies and laws, while also building a strong corporate accountability movement.

Mission

We are changing the rules to make business accountable.

Our work is motivated by the express need to transform the European Union – home to a large number of corporations – into a global leader in corporate accountability.

Although the majority of our activities take place within EU borders, the ultimate beneficiaries are communities and workers affected by corporate abuse, both inside and outside the EU.

Vision

We are guided by a vision of a sustainable world in which corporations' drive for profit is balanced by the interest of society at large and respects human, social and environmental rights.

The change we want to see is robust corporate liability that holds business accountable; improved access to justice and remedies for victims of corporate abuse; and greater corporate transparency based on meaningful supply chain reporting that complements financial information with impacts on people and the planet.

© Roos Nya / Shutterstock.



Contact us



European Coalition for Corporate JusticeAvenue des Arts 7/8
1210 Brussels
Belgium

Contacts: corporatejustice.org/contact-us/

Connect with us

Visit our website to find out more about us:

corporatejustice.org

Follow our social media to stay informed about our latest activities and resources:

Twitter: @ECCJorg

LinkedIn: European Coalition for Corporate Justice