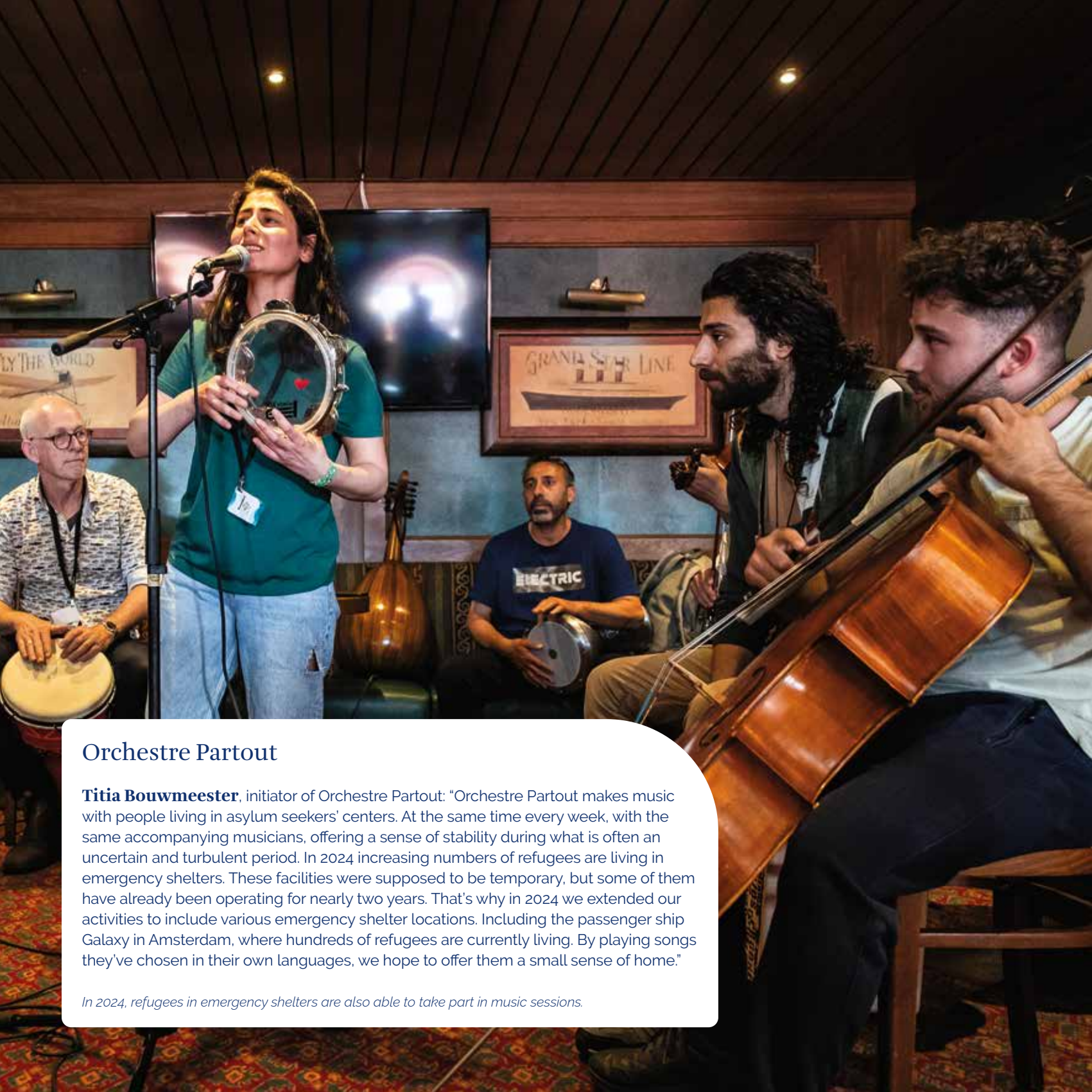






More room for nature in the Netherlands (page 36): expanding wetlands creates new habitats for bird species like the crane (pictured), black stork, and bittern.





Orchestre Partout

Titia Bouwmeester, initiator of Orchestre Partout: "Orchestre Partout makes music with people living in asylum seekers' centers. At the same time every week, with the same accompanying musicians, offering a sense of stability during what is often an uncertain and turbulent period. In 2024 increasing numbers of refugees are living in emergency shelters. These facilities were supposed to be temporary, but some of them have already been operating for nearly two years. That's why in 2024 we extended our activities to include various emergency shelter locations. Including the passenger ship Galaxy in Amsterdam, where hundreds of refugees are currently living. By playing songs they've chosen in their own languages, we hope to offer them a small sense of home."

In 2024, refugees in emergency shelters are also able to take part in music sessions.



Stichting Rechten van de Natuur

Jessica den Outer, director of Stichting Rechten van de Natuur: "It's not just people that have the right to life. Nature has this right too. In March 2024, we launched our brand-new foundation, in which we defend those rights. Our aim is to build a broad citizens' movement and show politicians that this is an issue many people care about. All over the country, people are already defending the rights of nature. We help them to make their voices heard. How does the principle of the rights of nature get raised at local council meetings? In 2023, the topic 'rights of nature' was on the political agenda in just one municipality. In 2024, it was already being discussed by eleven municipalities. Together, we can ensure this number increases significantly."

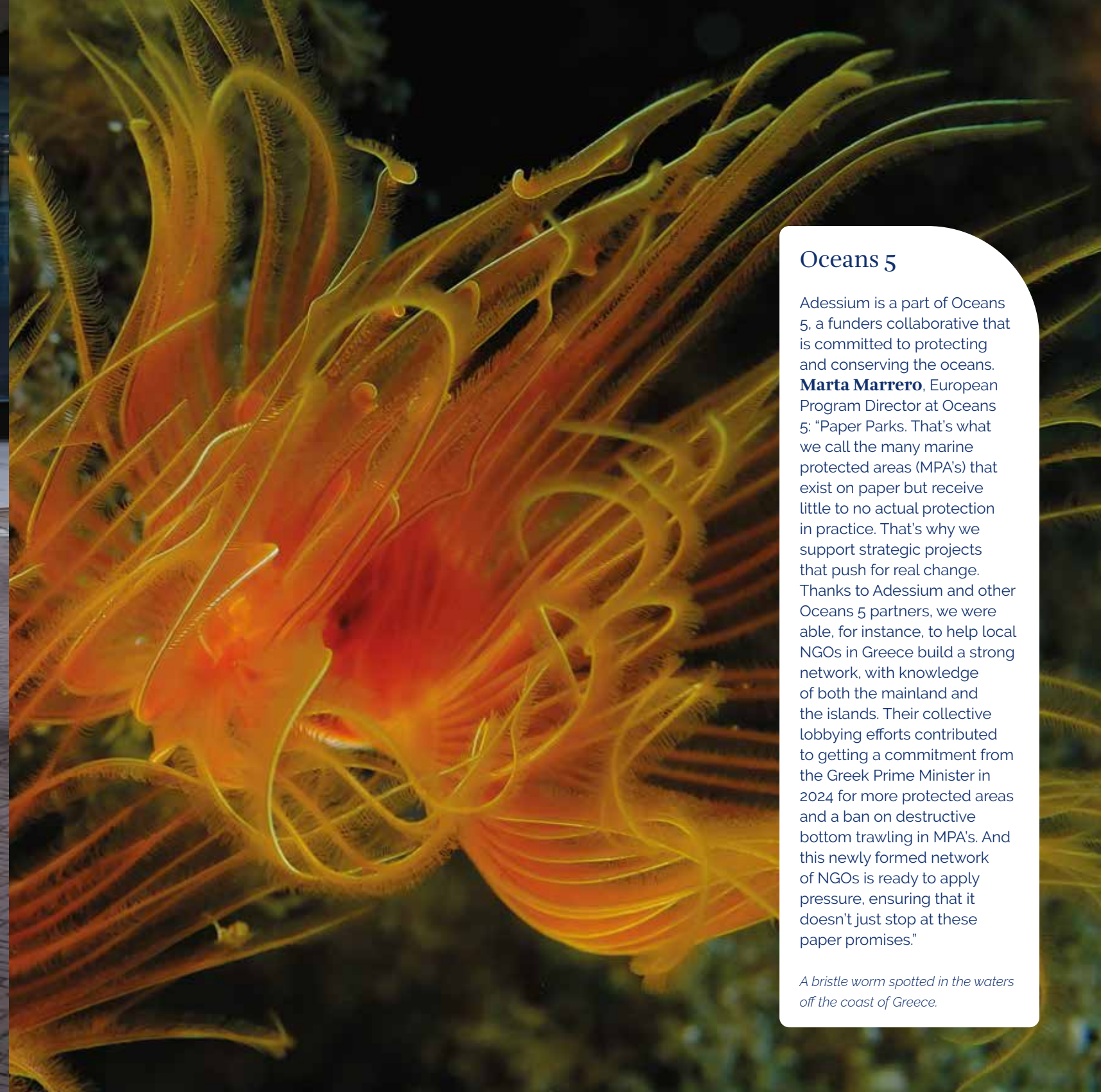
An Eurasian eagle-owl in the Netherlands – one of the largest owl species in the world.



Het Bouwdepot

Marleen van der Kolk, co-initiator and director of Stichting het Bouwdepot: "Time to catch your breath and start working on your future. That's what the Bouwdepot offers vulnerable young people. Through this program, they receive a fixed monthly amount from the municipality for an entire year. This provides them with some financial stability, as they've got enough to worry about. They generally grew up in extreme poverty, with parents who struggled with addiction or neglected them. We also collaborate with local health and welfare organizations, who mentor the young people during the Bouwdepot year. This approach works – within a year many participants start school or work again. Their mental health improves as well. Despite this, the laws and regulations don't make it easy to offer the Bouwdepot program. We are actively lobbying for change. One of the ways we did this in 2024 was the 'Lottery of Life' at the Dutch House of Representatives. Because what if you've been dealt a bad hand from the start? We see the realization growing among politicians: these young people deserve a bit of luck too."

The 'Lottery of Life' at the Dutch House of Representatives.



Oceans 5

Adessium is a part of Oceans 5, a funders collaborative that is committed to protecting and conserving the oceans.

Marta Marrero, European Program Director at Oceans 5: "Paper Parks. That's what we call the many marine protected areas (MPA's) that exist on paper but receive little to no actual protection in practice. That's why we support strategic projects that push for real change. Thanks to Adessium and other Oceans 5 partners, we were able, for instance, to help local NGOs in Greece build a strong network, with knowledge of both the mainland and the islands. Their collective lobbying efforts contributed to getting a commitment from the Greek Prime Minister in 2024 for more protected areas and a ban on destructive bottom trawling in MPA's. And this newly formed network of NGOs is ready to apply pressure, ensuring that it doesn't just stop at these paper promises."

A bristle worm spotted in the waters off the coast of Greece.



Investigate Europe

Alessia Cerantola,
 Editorial Director at Investigate Europe: "Secret price deals, medicines approved without scientific evidence, misleading 'discounts.' In our 2024 investigation Deadly Prices, we exposed the secret process for deciding drugs' pricing. A global issue like this – with consequences stretching across European borders – calls for an approach like Investigate Europe's. With a team of 30 journalists spread across 23 European countries, we uncovered the controversial role played by big pharmaceutical companies. Dozens of media outlets reported on our findings. Thanks to this massive international attention, the issue is now higher on both national and European politicians' agendas. This will benefit patients all across Europe."

The medicines that Milda from Lithuania needs have finally become available.



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Just and Equitable Society

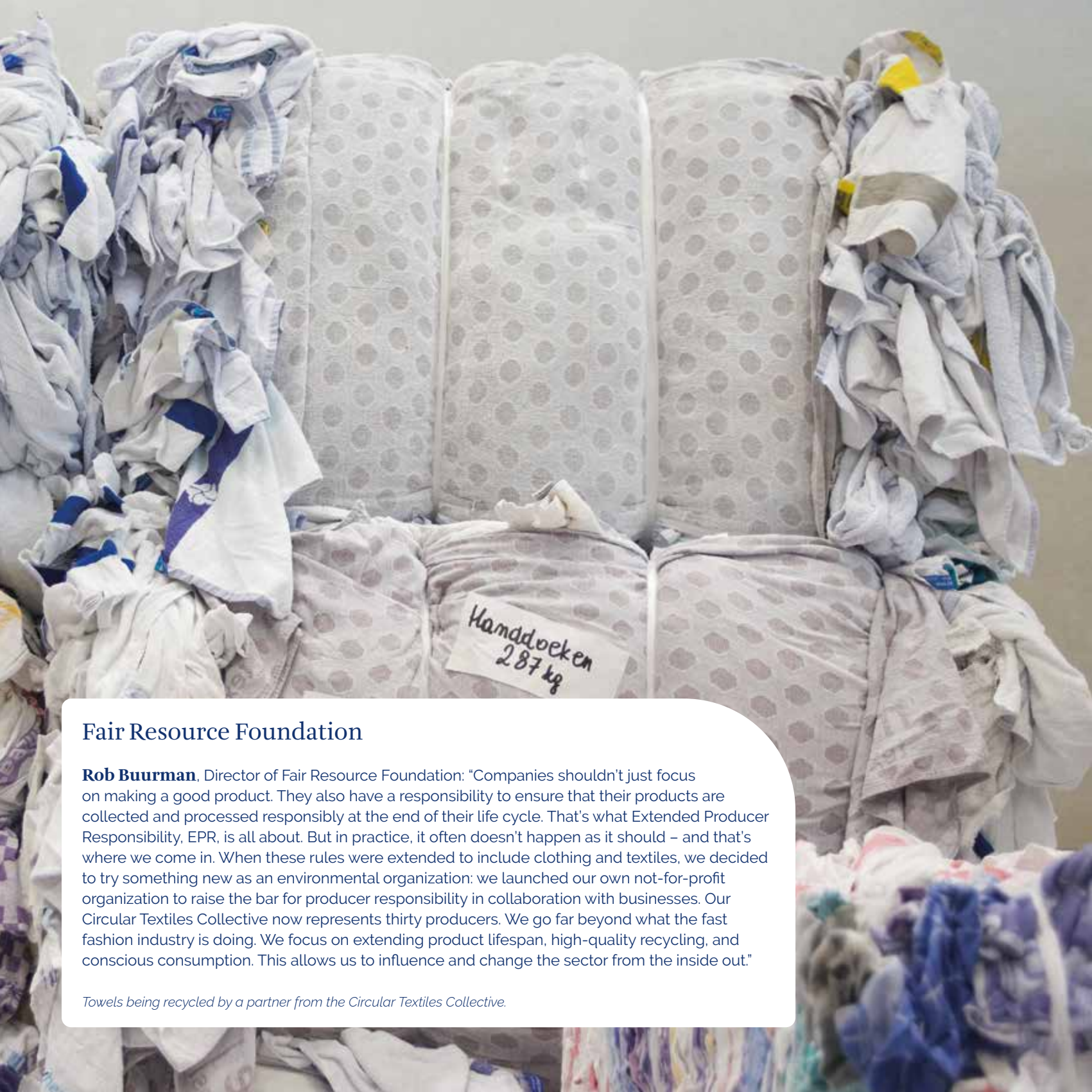
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Our mission

The basis of our activities

Adessium Foundation works towards an open society where everyone can participate fully and rights and freedoms are protected. A society that will ensure a livable, compassionate world for future generations.

We support not-for-profit organizations and empower them to drive lasting positive change.

Fair Resource Foundation

Rob Buurman, Director of Fair Resource Foundation: "Companies shouldn't just focus on making a good product. They also have a responsibility to ensure that their products are collected and processed responsibly at the end of their life cycle. That's what Extended Producer Responsibility, EPR, is all about. But in practice, it often doesn't happen as it should – and that's where we come in. When these rules were extended to include clothing and textiles, we decided to try something new as an environmental organization: we launched our own not-for-profit organization to raise the bar for producer responsibility in collaboration with businesses. Our Circular Textiles Collective now represents thirty producers. We go far beyond what the fast fashion industry is doing. We focus on extending product lifespan, high-quality recycling, and conscious consumption. This allows us to influence and change the sector from the inside out."

Towels being recycled by a partner from the Circular Textiles Collective.



“This Annual Report demonstrates what can be achieved when ideals are matched with determined action”



The more you know, the more you realize how much there is still to learn. And in the work we do at Adessium, we see this becoming clearer every year. The issues that we're committed to – ranging from the protection of democratic values and the health of our natural environment to safeguarding human rights – don't diminish in importance over time. On the contrary: they grow more urgent.

Our involvement doesn't just make us better informed, it also deepens our understanding of the complex, multi-layered nature of the challenges we face. That can be overwhelming. In a world that seems increasingly turbulent, it is tempting to look away. To hope that if we just wait a bit and do nothing, things will just get better on their own.

But hope is not a strategy.

It's precisely in times like these, when public confidence is under threat and the call for steady engagement is greater than ever, that we at Adessium believe in the power of structural commitment. In partnerships that don't shy away from difficult conversations, but make us roll up our sleeves and seek solutions – with head and heart.

This Annual Report demonstrates what can be achieved when ideals are matched with determined action. It's an invitation to get involved by contributing ideas, taking action and continuing to search for solutions. Because even though the challenges are great, that positive change is always possible.

Together.

Rogier van Vliet
Chairman



Rogier van Vliet: "This touching drone photo of a mother dolphin and her calf was taken during a boat trip between Ibiza and Formentera. The image is a powerful reminder of the fragile beauty and remarkable biodiversity of the Mediterranean Sea – and of how important it is to protect it."

Navigating in a changing world

The year 2024 marked a period of significant shifts on the global political stage. In the Netherlands, Europe and the United States, we witnessed new political dynamics emerging. These were characterized by growing nationalism, influenced by populist, and in some cases, anti-democratic tendencies. A common explanation for this is a broadly supported sentiment that the existing liberal-democratic order fails to provide adequate answers to the many major challenges that our societies are grappling with.



Rogier van der Weerd
Managing director

The impact of the shifts on the global stage has turned out to be enormous. Transatlantic relations have changed fundamentally. The United States is setting a course veering away from the international order established after the Second World War. This is putting pressure on international stability. Many are describing these times as a historic turning point: a time when long-held certainties are no longer self-evident and a new order is being sought.

Joining forces

For Europe, this means that, more than ever, it needs to join forces and stand up for its own interests. This offers opportunities for reducing excessive dependence on others. At the same time, it also brings challenges. The explosive increase in defense spending puts greater pressure on social security and public goods. Calls for deregulation and lowering of environmental standards are becoming louder, in an attempt to remain competitive. Added to this, it's becoming increasingly difficult to steer further digitalization of society



Martijn Meijer
Director of programs



Rogier van der Weerd: "We work on large themes and societal challenges. Yet everything we do ultimately revolved around the well-being of people and our environment."

and the AI revolution in a responsible way. European values threaten to be reduced to stakes in an economic and geopolitical power game.

What does this mean for us?

As a philanthropic fund, driven by the core values of solidarity, the right to a dignified life and the importance of a healthy natural and living environment, this situation calls for both reflection and determination. At this time, it is crucial that we stand firm. We remain committed to strengthening a well-organized civil society that defends citizens' rights, holds governments and markets accountable, and promotes solutions that emerge from society itself.

Twenty years of Adessium Foundation

In 2025, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of our foundation. Having

started with a broad, curious, and open perspective, we have since grown into an established fund with corresponding structures. This milestone reminds us of the importance of maintaining a sharp eye on societal developments and the agility to respond by strengthening initiatives that can truly make a difference. Over the years, we have learned that genuine impact requires commitment and a long-term vision. We have also seen that a strong civil society is capable of offering solutions to persistent challenges such as poverty, environmental pollution, and disinformation. Much has been achieved over the past twenty years, but we feel we are only just getting started. This year, we reflect on what has been achieved, but above all, we look ahead. The challenges we face are significant, and the need to work towards a fair, sustainable, and just society is more urgent than ever. That remains our unwavering point on the horizon.

New multi-year strategy in this Annual Report

The programs of our our new multi-year strategy are presented in this Annual Report. This strategy reflects our constant values in a changing world. We are sharpening our focus on three key areas:

1. For a just and equitable society

We put more emphasis on combining direct support interventions with strengthening the representation of groups that are disadvantaged in the Netherlands. In this way, we contribute not only to immediate relief but also to the structural improvement of the situation of people in vulnerable positions.

2. For an informed society

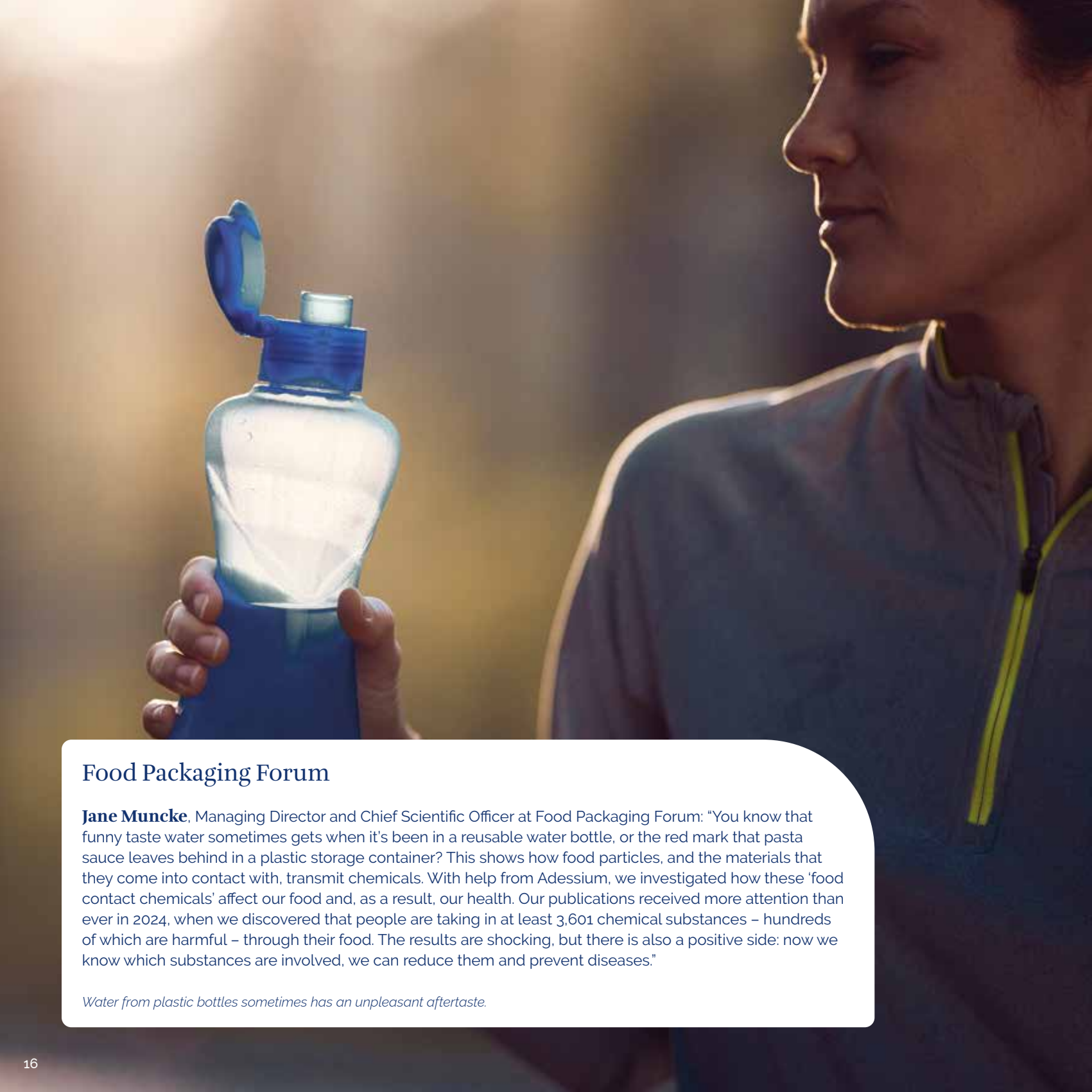
We focus more explicitly on the importance of reliable information. This includes support for quality journalism, but also initiatives that expand the reach and circulation of this information. Safeguarding a shared understanding of reality is essential in a world where algorithms and language models increasingly determine what we see – and what we don't – and where we encounter a flood of AI-generated information.

3. For nature and our living environment

We see nature not just as something we need to protect but also as a source of solutions. We embrace the constructive and regenerative power of nature for societal challenges such as climate adaptation, water management and biodiversity. This requires the courage to take considered action to allow space for nature and for initiatives that restore our natural environment, so that nature can do its work.

Across all areas, we examine critically the impact of technology on our society. After all, this affects all the themes that we work on. We seek to achieve a clear understanding of the real risks – from social injustice and dependence on Big Tech to cybersecurity and misinformation – and find effective ways to increase our collective defenses against those risks. At the same time, we want to help our partners in a responsible way to grasp the opportunities that this technology offers: how can civil society use technology to operate more efficiently and effectively?





Approach & method



Flexible and multi-year funding

Adessium Foundation believes in the power of long-term partnerships. We support organizations with flexible, multi-year donations and strategic advice. This enables us to work together to build impactful initiatives that accelerate and boost social change.

Our mission

Adessium Foundation works towards an open society where everyone can participate fully, and rights and freedoms are protected. A society that will ensure a livable, compassionate world for future generations. We support nonprofit organizations and empower them to drive lasting positive change.

Key principles on how we provide donations

In short, we stand for:

- **Constructive partnership with the organizations we support.** Based on mutual trust and openness.
- **Multi-year support.** Because you can't achieve impact in a single day.
- **Flexibility.** We live in a fast-changing society, and we respond to these changing needs.

Our approach to philanthropy

Adessium Foundation is a philanthropic fund that has been supporting civil society organizations in the Netherlands and Europe since 2005. We offer financial support, advice and access to our network, to boost initiatives that contribute to a better society. We operate independently, without religious or political affiliations. This position gives us the freedom to put funds to work where they will have the most impact. That freedom brings with it a responsibility. That's why we focus on long-term solutions and support innovative ideas that won't always get implemented by government or the market but have real value for society.

How we help organizations to become stronger

We believe that strong organizations achieve effective results. Most of our donations can be broadly deployed within the grantee's mission. We jointly consider where extra assistance is needed, for example to obtain strategic advice or an external assessment. We want our support to bring about positive social change. So we carefully analyze what works and what doesn't. We learn from the organizations we support and use this knowledge to refine our methods and strengthen the sector.

Adessium proactively explores opportunities

As a strategic philanthropic fund, we formulate objectives within selected focus areas and develop an approach to achieve these objectives. Based on this strategy, our team proactively approaches civil society organizations to explore partnership opportunities and invite them to submit a funding application. Our budget is limited and there are many more organizations and initiatives corresponding to our mission than we can support. So we make conscious choices and actively seek out funding opportunities that align with our priorities. We carefully research the organizations that we support and aim to be respectful of people's time. For that reason, we don't accept unsolicited proposals.

Food Packaging Forum

Jane Muncke, Managing Director and Chief Scientific Officer at Food Packaging Forum: "You know that funny taste water sometimes gets when it's been in a reusable water bottle, or the red mark that pasta sauce leaves behind in a plastic storage container? This shows how food particles, and the materials that they come into contact with, transmit chemicals. With help from Adessium, we investigated how these 'food contact chemicals' affect our food and, as a result, our health. Our publications received more attention than ever in 2024, when we discovered that people are taking in at least 3,601 chemical substances – hundreds of which are harmful – through their food. The results are shocking, but there is also a positive side: now we know which substances are involved, we can reduce them and prevent diseases."

Water from plastic bottles sometimes has an unpleasant aftertaste.



Program

Informed Society

Reliable information is one of the cornerstones of a well-functioning democratic society. Adessium invests in independent investigative journalism and press freedom. We also support initiatives that make the internet safer and fairer, so that high-quality information isn't just produced but also actually reaches the general public. By doing this, we further the public debate and promote an open, informed society.

Themes:

- Spotlight: local investigative journalism Pages 20-23
- Technology and information Page 24
- Reliable information Page 26



Large photo on the left: a gold miner displays a nugget found in the Amazon region. Green Blood by Forbidden Stories is a project aimed at continuing the work of journalists who had to abandon their investigations into mining due to threats.

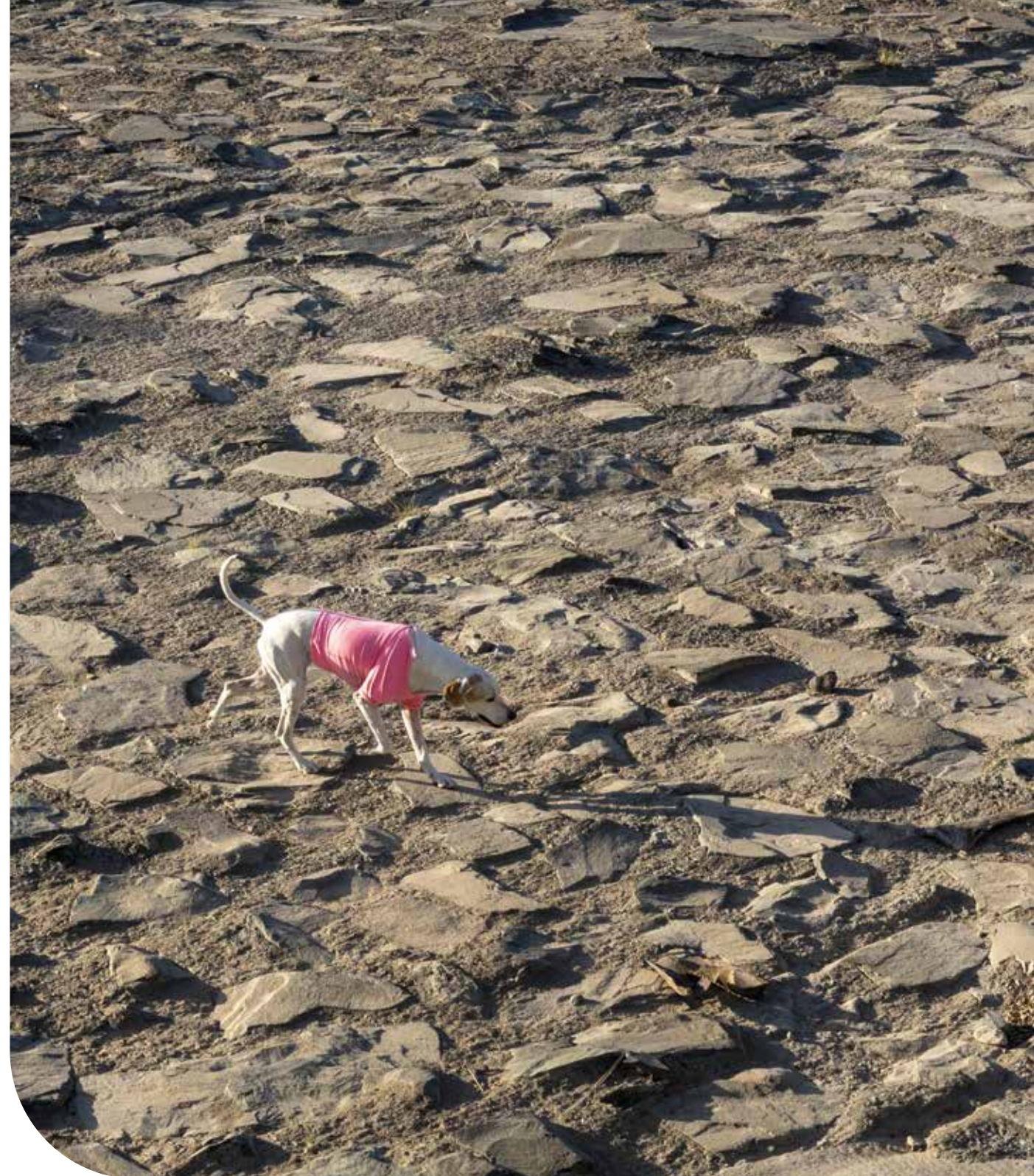


320 journalists

The number of local
journalists who were part of the
CORRECTIV.Europe network in 2024.

Joanna Krawczyk, managing director of CORRECTIV.Europe: "We support and connect **local investigative journalists across Europe**, enabling them to expose wrongdoing on a larger scale and cover societal issues within their communities. Like our research on rising temperatures in Europe: people are using more air conditioning, placing immense strain on our power grids. Without investment in infrastructure and sustainable energy, maintaining a stable energy supply will only become more challenging."

Left: a dried-up river in Spain. Climate change is causing extreme drought there. CORRECTIV.Europe conducted research on rising temperatures in Europe.



“People were angry because even the cheapest butter got more expensive”

Nonprofit media organization CORRECTIV, through its network CORRECTIV.Europe, is dedicated to strengthening local investigative journalism across Europe. Local media play a crucial role in keeping societies well-informed, yet they are under increasing pressure. Through collaboration, research, and support, CORRECTIV helps local journalists uncover cross-border issues and tell stories that truly resonate with their communities.

For CORRECTIV, 2024 was a year of deeper engagement with the public. A major turning point was their groundbreaking investigation into a secret gathering of far-right extremists, where plans for mass deportations of German citizens — including migrants and people with migration backgrounds — were discussed. David Schraven, editor-in-chief and co-founder of CORRECTIV, explains: "Coordinated efforts attempted to discredit our publications, while social media was flooded with disinformation, amplified by algorithms. Our response was simple: we fought back with facts. We published two books on the investigation and took them on the road. More than 150 events later, we had spoken with thousands of citizens and listened to what was really happening in their lives."

Looking for a scapegoat

The conversations led to surprising insights. David continues: "What we discovered was that negativity about migration often wasn't about migration itself. Instead, people were struggling with rising costs of living and looking

for someone to blame — either the government or migrants. We also found that young people are increasingly shifting toward right-wing ideologies, and that young voices are largely absent from media coverage."

Listening to the public

Joanna Krawczyk, managing director of CORRECTIV.Europe, adds: "These public discussions were essential. As investigative journalists, we had become disconnected from our audience. Digital bubbles have replaced face-to-face interactions, and people no longer know who produces news or how it's made. The second election of Trump was a wake-up call: many in the media, and in civil society, wanted to believe Kamala Harris would win. They were wrong because they hadn't been out on the streets of small towns, listening to people. We've gone back to the basics, rebuilding our connection with the public. Our German network of over 2,000 local journalists plays a key role in this. Now, we're applying these lessons to CORRECTIV.Europe, a newsroom and network for local media across the continent."

Recipes for local journalism

CORRECTIV.Europe was founded to strengthen local investigative journalism in Europe and foster better connections between journalists and their audiences. Joanna explains: "We support and connect local investigative journalists across Europe, enabling



Across Germany, hundreds of thousands of people are protesting following CORRECTIV's revelations about secret plans by AfD party members and far-right activists to deport migrants.

them to uncover wrongdoing on a meta level and cover socially relevant issues in their communities. More than 320 local journalists and news organizations are part of our network. Together, we develop 'recipes' for local stories with a pan-European angle — these can include datasets on specific topics, innovative research methods, ideas for community engagement, access to expert sources, media conferences to learn and meet peers, specialized training sessions or — soon to be introduced — tools for crowdsourced local investigations."

The pancake index

Journalists in the network collaborate on stories that matter to their local audiences. Joanna notes: "As a member of our newsroom, you can connect with journalists from across Europe, exchange ideas, and receive support from the CORRECTIV.Europe team for your investigations. One of our recent projects

focused on local pollution. Using the data we provided and expert interviews, local journalists were able to identify those responsible in their regions." David adds: "Listening to local journalists often brings unexpected insights. For example, the price of butter turned out to be a hot topic everywhere. This led to the creation of the 'Pancake Index', a metaphor for comparing the cost of living. Pancake recipes vary across European regions, but ingredients like butter, oil,

Why we support CORRECTIV.Europe

Ebru Akgün, our program manager for Informed Society, explains why we support CORRECTIV.Europe: "We believe in the power of local investigative journalism. Local journalists have an unmatched understanding of their communities and report on issues that directly impact people's daily lives. A well-functioning democracy requires power to be held accountable from the ground up, ensuring that citizens are well-informed. CORRECTIV has extensive experience in building strong journalistic networks and developing innovative investigative methods that can be applied internationally. With CORRECTIV.Europe, they are now bringing this approach to a local level across Europe."

and flour are universal. By analyzing their prices, we can better understand the economic situation in different areas. Local media can then translate this into stories that directly impact their audiences."

More relevant to readers

Joanna stresses that the clock is ticking for local media. "Local news outlets across Europe are facing an existential crisis. Yet they remain a cornerstone of democracy. Nearly half of Europeans read local news at least once a week. Our local focus brings journalism closer to people, step by step bridging the gap between news producers and their audiences."



The impact of digitalization

Adessium focuses on how digitalization affects access to information and public debate. Social media and AI have led to an overwhelming flow of information that is difficult to verify. We support initiatives that help mitigate technological risks and promote access to trustworthy information – such as the European AI & Society Fund and EDRI.



European AI & Society Fund

Adessium supports the European AI & Society Fund, a pooled fund dedicated to achieving responsible AI policies and applications. The fund works on legislation for artificial intelligence, monitors its social impact and reports potential risks, such as unjust consequences for citizens and environmental damage due to technology. A specific example of this is the work of Homo Digitalis. Executive Director **Eleftherios Chelioudakis** of Homo Digitalis: "Thousands of refugees and migrants are being held in Greek 'closed control access centers'. As a border country, Greece receives money from the European Commission for these camps. Little is known about what happens there: journalists and even lawyers rarely have access. We discovered that the Greek authorities monitor the camps using drones and AI software. The investigation that we carried out together with human rights watchdogs and refugee agencies revealed that this was seriously infringing the privacy of people in the camp. The Data Protection Authority in Greece issued the ministry of Asylum and Migration with a fine of 170,000 euros for this – at that time the highest fine ever imposed on a Greek ministry. The investigation brought this issue into the spotlight and created a little more insight into the policy in these hermetically sealed-off camps."

A heavily guarded, isolated camp on the Greek island of Samos.

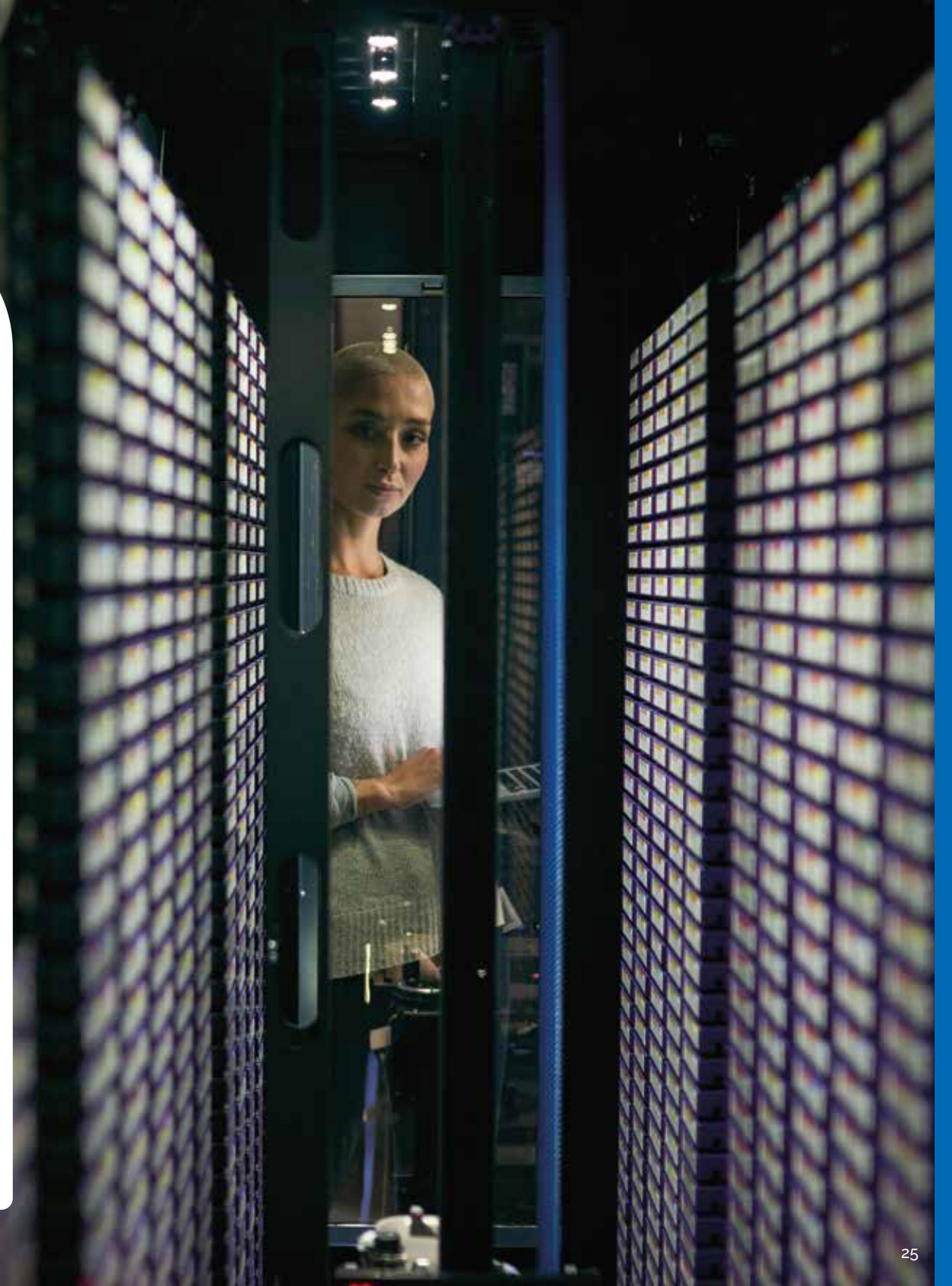


EDRI

Claire Fernandez,

Executive Director of EDRI: "Technological developments like AI and algorithms have a huge impact on our economy, society, democracy and on the planet – and not always in a good way. Consider even just the way an algorithm incorrectly classified thousands of people in the Netherlands as childcare allowance fraudsters. And it's hard to get justice when your opponent is an algorithm. Following the 2024 European elections, trade interests threaten to take priority over protecting citizens. I hope that society will provide a counterbalance to this. An example of this was the very first European Tech and Society Summit. At this summit, we joined forces with forty civil society organizations to work towards just, safe and sustainable use of technology."

Data centers are responsible for approximately the same emissions as global aviation.



The power of stories

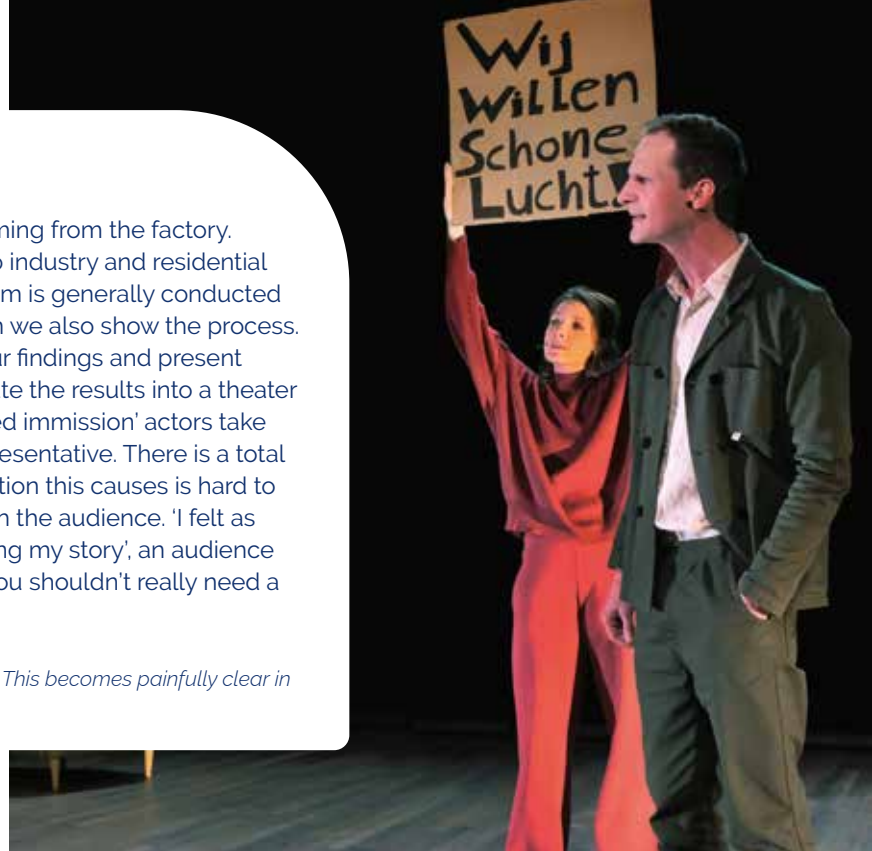
Adessium supports investigative journalism, strengthens press freedom, and helps journalists in Europe develop independent sources of income. This ensures that quality reporting continues to have impact in the digital age and reaches a broad audience. Live Journalism and Forbidden Stories are two examples of initiatives we support under this theme.



Live Journalism

Zara Toksöz, Live Journalism project manager: "A nasty smell coming from the factory. This report from local residents led us to start our investigation into industry and residential development in 2024. Can they go together? Investigative journalism is generally conducted with the ultimate goal of publishing an article. With Live Journalism we also show the process. During the investigation we meet with those involved to discuss our findings and present them to one of the politicians responsible. In the end, we incorporate the results into a theater performance. For one of the scenes in 'What you breathe in is called immission' actors take on the roles of a concerned resident, a regulator and a factory representative. There is a total disconnect: the conversation grinds to a total standstill. The frustration this causes is hard to describe, but easy to portray. At times, it resonates emotionally with the audience. 'I felt as though no-one heard what I was trying to say and now they're telling my story', an audience member explained. That's really nice, but also very sad. Because you shouldn't really need a theater performance to achieve that."

The frustration that arises when local residents and companies fail to connect. This becomes painfully clear in 'What you breathe in is called immission.'



Forbidden Stories

Laurent Richard, Executive Director at Forbidden Stories: "You can silence the journalist, but not the story. That's our motto and, as we publish more and more stories by threatened journalists, this realization is growing. For example, more than forty of our journalists from various countries are continuing the work of Azerbaijani journalist Sevinc Vaqifqizi and her team. They investigated the misuse of European subsidies in Azerbaijan and as a result they ended up in prison, where they're sadly still being held today. Another high-impact investigation concerned the murder of Palestinian journalists during the war in Gaza. This was one of the few projects in the world where Israelis and Palestinians were still working together. Just focusing on the facts, as journalists do, makes this possible. Unfortunately, the world is becoming ever more hostile for journalists. Western politicians also openly describe them as the enemy with increasing regularity. That makes Adessium's support for independent journalism more important than ever."

Journalists in Gaza show their torn vests.





Program

Nature and Living Environment

Clean air, fresh water, and fertile soil are essential to the well-being of people, plants, and animals. Adessium Foundation supports initiatives in the Netherlands and across Europe that promote a healthy living environment and work to restore nature. Together, we're building a hopeful future — for people and for the planet.

Themes:

- Resilient Mediterranean. Spotlight: the importance of protected areas Pages 30 – 31
- Healthy living environment Page 34
- Making room for nature in the Netherlands Page 36



Large photo on the left: scientific research has shown that otters, dolphins, harbor porpoises, fish, and birds have toxic 'forever chemicals' in their tissues and organs (Source: Cardiff University).

Spotlight



8.33 percent

Only this percentage of the Mediterranean Sea is under official designation of a protected statute – and even fewer areas are effectively managed.

By 2030, according to UN goals, 30 percent of the ocean must be protected, limiting activities such as **destructive fishing, shipping routes, and offshore wind farms**. Within this 30 percent, 10 percent must be strictly protected, prohibiting all human activities. The Mediterranean, however, is still far from reaching these goals – only 0.04 percent is under effective strict protection (source: MedPan 2021). Members of the Med Sea Alliance collaborate to compile scientific and economic evidence, advocate for stronger protection, and engage with local, regional, and national governments, as well as international bodies like the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM).

Left: an octopus on the seabed of Sa Dragonera, a protected marine area near Mallorca.



A thriving sea for all

Marine Protected Areas in the Mediterranean Sea provide a chance for fish, marine mammals, corals and seagrasses to return. But why are these sanctuaries essential for marine life? And how are our partner organizations working to expand them? We speak to organizations during a Med Sea Alliance meeting. "Whales have even been spotted again in areas where they hadn't been seen for years."

"Look, you can see dozens of sandbar sharks swimming around in this bay," says Zafer Kizilkaya, director of the Turkish marine NGO Akdeniz Koruma Derneği, as he points to underwater camera footage. "They've found their way back to the bay and are breeding here." Where there was once an underwater desert, a vibrant nursery of seagrass, plants, fish, and marine mammals has emerged in just a few years. Life has returned to what is now a Marine Protected Area, or MPA. What used to be a barren seabed with only lifeless white stones is now a thriving green landscape underwater. Zafer adds with a smile, "Invasive fish species that were grazing the macroalgae now face natural predators again. It's a beautiful example of the sea's resilience."

Back to our ancestors' era

Cabrera Island lies off the coast of Mallorca and is one of the oldest protected areas in the Mediterranean. Pep Coll was deeply involved in the monitoring of fish populations in this MPA in the early 1990s and he has contributed to the development of other protected areas in the region. Today, he still monitors fish stocks within MPAs for the local government. "Cabrera has been a huge inspiration for creating new

protected areas. In just seven years, the biomass — the amount of flora and fauna — has increased tenfold. This is crucial. We essentially need to go back to fish stocks from about 70 years ago, when my grandfather was fishing here. Creating more MPAs like Cabrera is the answer, as they act as nurseries where fish and other marine life have time to recover. This not only benefits biodiversity but also fishing itself, which is why we need to involve fishermen."

Real-life examples

"Exactly. Entire families and fishing communities depend on the sea, both for food and livelihood," Mariagrazia Graziano, EU/Mediterranean Senior Manager at Global Fishing Watch, responds to Pep's insights. "You can't separate marine life and biodiversity protection from the people dependent on it."

Global Fishing Watch uses advanced technology to make global fishing activity visible, and they believe that solid science and transparent data are the real catalysts for informed decision-making. Mariagrazia explains: "Coastal communities are tired of endless talks about potential protected areas without real action. We've found it is most useful to simply present concrete examples. For instance, we use interactive maps to reveal what's happening at sea — where potentially destructive or illegal fishing occurs and how it affects local, small-scale fishers. Our tools and data



Protected areas allow fish and other marine species to recover, which supports biodiversity and, in the long run, benefits fisheries as well.

empower communities and decision-makers to call for stronger protections and support more sustainable management."

Divers take action

When establishing an MPA, it's important not only to involve local communities but also other stakeholders, like divers. "COVID was a turning point for divers. We noticed that with the sea being quieter — fewer boats, fishing, and tourists — the fish returned. Whales were even seen in areas where they hadn't been for years," shares Ian Campbell from the PADI AWARE Foundation. "This shifted our community's mindset. Before COVID, divers would typically ask each other: how many dives have you logged? Now

they ask: what have you done to protect the ocean?"

Divers are essential advocates for ocean conservation and push governments to take action. "Globally, there are about 28 million divers connected to the diving organization PADI. Mobilizing this group captures the attention of governments, especially since economic interests like tourist revenues are also at stake."

Economic benefits

"Money talks when it comes to ocean conservation," agrees Aniol Esteban, director of the Marilles Foundation. He always has economic arguments ready when meeting with local and national governments. "Investing in MPAs pays off. Marilles has commissioned research on this, showing that for every euro

invested in the Llevant MPA near Mallorca, 10 euros are returned to the local economy and community. Just the recreational benefits alone are impressive, generating over 3 million euros annually. Local fishermen also benefit from protected areas, as we see fish populations recover faster within and around strictly protected zones." Aniol is optimistic but acknowledges the work ahead. "Around the Balearic Islands in the Mediterranean, about 20 percent of the sea is protected, but only 0.07 percent is strictly protected, closed to fishing. According to UN targets, at least 30 percent of the seas should be protected by 2030, with at least 10 percent of these protected areas strictly protected. And keep in mind, the situation here is relatively good — the Balearics are the best student in a failing class."

Joining forces in the Med Sea Alliance

Akdeniz Koruma Derneği, Global Fishing Watch, the PADI AWARE Foundation, and Marilles Foundation are all members of the **Med Sea Alliance**, an alliance of nearly 20 organizations dedicated to preserving the Mediterranean Sea. One of their key goals is to meet a crucial UN target: by 2030, 30 percent of the ocean must be protected, limiting activities such as destructive fishing, shipping routes, and offshore wind farms. Within this 30 percent, 10 percent must be strictly protected, prohibiting all human activities.



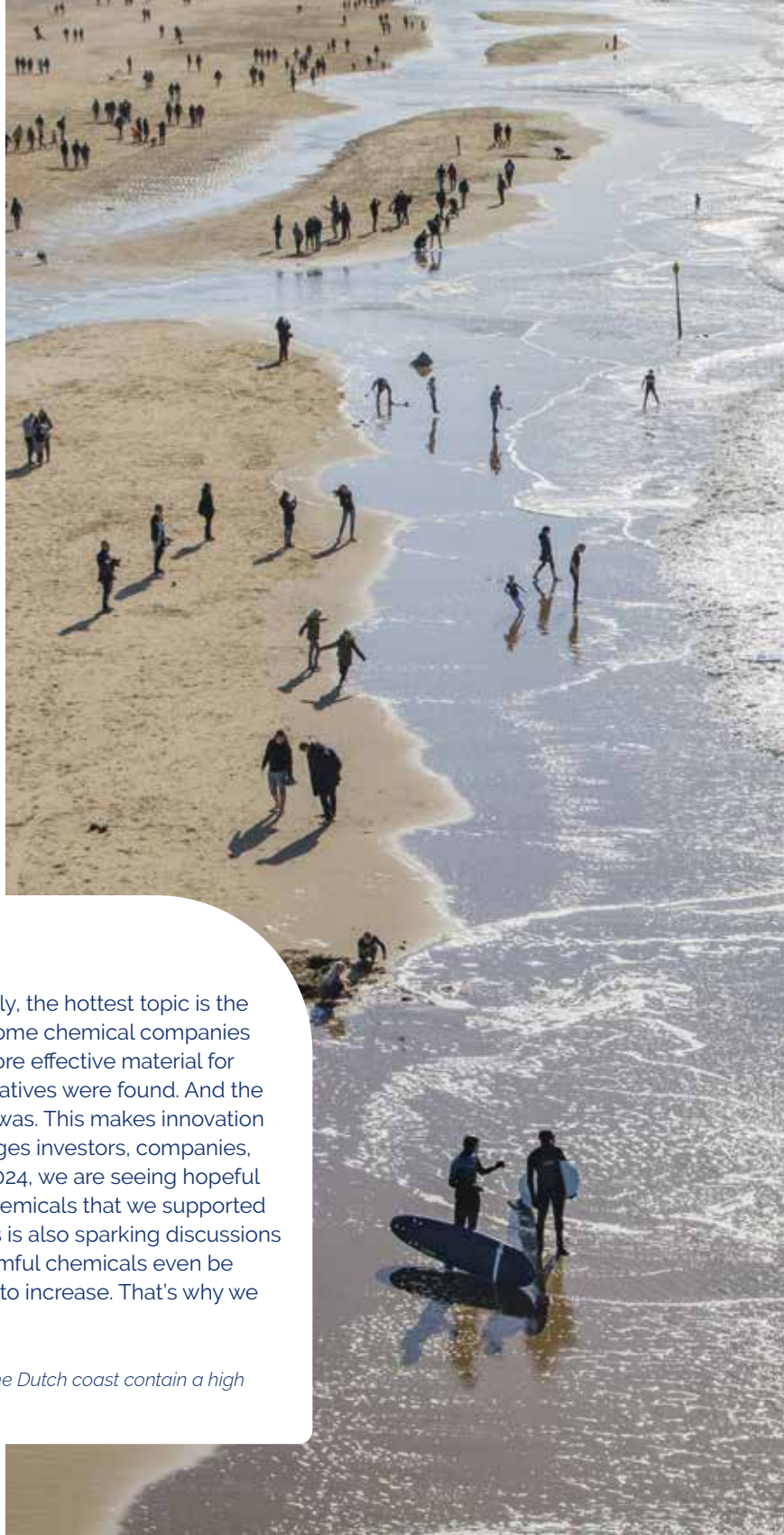
Rising awareness of toxic chemicals

Pollution and harmful substances threaten our health, biodiversity, and a livable future. Adessium Foundation supports initiatives that reduce pollution and limit the use of and exposure to hazardous chemicals. ChemSec and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) are two examples of initiatives we support within this theme.

ChemSec

Sonja Haider, Head of Sustainable Finance at ChemSec: "Currently, the hottest topic is the PFAS pollution crisis. "PFAS have incredible essential properties!" some chemical companies will emphasize to investors. Well, so did asbestos. There was no more effective material for extinguishing fires. But, once we realized how harmful it was, alternatives were found. And the PFAS crisis is much larger and more persistent than asbestos ever was. This makes innovation and sustainable alternatives even more crucial. ChemSec encourages investors, companies, and policymakers to take action against hazardous chemicals. In 2024, we are seeing hopeful developments. For example, the Investor Initiative on hazardous chemicals that we supported grew to the astonishing figure of 70+ members. Growing awareness is also sparking discussions in other areas. For instance, can companies that knowingly use harmful chemicals even be insured? We are making some progress, but the pace really needs to increase. That's why we keep pushing to make that happen."

PFAS are everywhere. Also in the oceans. The thick layers of foam formed on the Dutch coast contain a high concentration of PFAS.



European Environmental Bureau

Patrick ten Brink, Secretary General of EEB: "PFAS isn't somebody else's problem – it affects all of us. We showed the members of the European Parliament this in 2024 with our blood test campaign. Many of the politicians who took the test discovered that there's PFAS in their blood, too. The European Commission is now asking companies for 'clarification' on the use of harmful substances such as PFAS, but we believe that word is much too vague. We want to see action: for example, strict rules on the use of PFAS. So that the 185 environmental organizations from 41 countries that are members of our network can do their work even better. We also published our European Pact for the Future on their behalf in 2024. In it we show how a sustainable world and a healthy economy can go hand in hand. One of the pact's recommendations was given by our youth members: make sure that policy also takes account of the specific consequences of climate change and harmful substances for minorities, such as the Sámi in Scandinavia."

Marja and her son are Sámi, an Indigenous people from northern Sweden. Like many other Indigenous communities, the Sámi are increasingly experiencing the effects of climate change and pollution.



Flourishing nature, flourishing future

The Netherlands urgently needs more space for nature — to protect biodiversity and adapt to climate change. Adessium Foundation supports initiatives that use nature-based solutions to tackle societal challenges. National Dashboard for Biodiversity and Stop the Foodfight are two examples of initiatives we support within this theme.

National Dashboard for Biodiversity

Caspar Verwer, Senior Expert Nature Conservation at the International Union for Conservation of Nature: "What is the current state of Dutch nature? There is plenty of data available on this. With the National Dashboard for Biodiversity we bring all that data together. This enables citizens, policymakers, politicians and businesses to see the current situation at a glance. For example, in terms of water quality or nitrogen deposition, but also how bees and other pollinators are getting on.

It took intensive preparation to process the data and subdivide it into fourteen goals for nature. We involved universities, research institutions and civil society organizations in this. Ensuring that when we launched the Dashboard in 2024, the overview it provided wasn't just clear but also broadly endorsed.

The Dashboard is currently showing orange and red colors: the challenges we face are huge. Two sections are still colored grey due to a lack of data. Despite this, 'abolishing harmful subsidies' and 'investing in nature' have still been included, as they play an essential role in improving nature. Earlier efforts, such as creating more space for rivers, not only achieved better flood protection but also led to significant gains for nature. So progress can be made, where there is the will to take action. If we can achieve this then we can slowly turn the Dashboard green."

The floodplains of the Rhine. Earlier efforts led to significant gains for nature, such as greater biodiversity in the floodplains.



Stop the Foodfight

Joris Lohman, co-founder of Stop the Foodfight: "The food system is outdated. Its impact on our environment is too great. But what's the right approach? This debate is highly polarized: either you think the solution is organic, nature-inclusive agriculture, or you believe in technological innovations and highly productive agriculture. Our view is that it's time to stop arguing and work together to decide which direction we should take. Time for a 'new story' about food. In 2024, we got as many parties as possible involved in discussing this, such as farmers, fertilizer companies, supermarkets and the Rabobank. Research reveals that they agree on more things than they disagree on. For example, everyone believes that it's important for farmers to earn a good living and for nature to be protected. So why don't we get started right away? We took the initiative in December, when we shared our story as part of the Agriculture roundtable at De Balie in Amsterdam, in the Dutch House of Representatives and in the media. Launching a new story takes patience and persistence. Over the past year we built a solid foundation, so that we can keep telling this story."

Agricultural entrepreneurs in conversation. They're participating in a program aimed at building a future-proof business model.



Program

Just and Equitable Society

Everyone deserves a fair chance to participate in society. Adessium supports initiatives that improve livelihood security for families and young people in vulnerable situations. We also aim to provide relief for the immediate needs of people with no fixed address. This way, we work together to build a just and equitable society.

Themes:

- Spotlight: the migration helpdesk of Defence for Children Pages 40-43
- Livelihood security Page 44
- People with no fixed address Page 46



Large photo on the left: more and more often, people experiencing homelessness are seeking shelter in non-traditional living spaces — such as garden sheds or camper vans.



5 years

Hundreds of children in asylum-seeking families have been living in the Netherlands for five years or more, but still do not have a residence permit.

Due to **long waiting times with the government**, more and more children have been living in the Netherlands for five years or longer without a residence permit. Scientific research shows that both the fear of deportation and actual deportation pose a serious threat to a child's development (Source: University of Groningen). Martin Vegter, legal advisor at Defence for Children: "We don't know exactly how many children have grown up in the Netherlands without legal residency. In October 2024, we submitted a Woo request (editor's note: request for the disclosure of figures) to the Dutch Immigration and Naturalization Service. The number 421 came up. However, we estimate that the actual number is higher."

Left: children in emergency shelter for asylum seekers.



“Children have nightmares about the vans”

Are the rights of the child being respected? That's the crucial question that the staff of Defence for Children's legal helpdesk always ask. Sadly, with increasing regularity the answer is 'no'. Despite this, these lawyers work tirelessly to achieve justice. We talked to legal advisor Martin Vegter and youth ambassador Ruzanna from Defence for Children Netherlands about this.

"I don't have my own room. It's so difficult to concentrate with my parents and my three brothers all around me. How can I do my homework like this?" Martin Vegter has been working at Defence for Children Netherlands as a legal advisor on the Migration helpdesk for more than eleven years. But phone calls like this from children still get to him. "The situation has only got worse in recent years. Asylum seekers' centers have grown in scale and the people living there have less and less space. At family centers for people who have had their asylum applications refused and have no further right to appeal, families sometimes live in crowded conditions for years."

Growing up in an asylum seekers' center

Ruzanna (24) lived in many different asylum seekers' centers. When she was thirteen, she and her mother fled from Russia to the Netherlands. "I often had to move. That made me sad, anxious and distrustful. I felt incomplete, as if I wasn't allowed to be here, even though at the same time I was just going to school and trying to join in with my classmates. During that period, Defence for Children

Netherlands really helped me, with the legal side, but also emotionally. I could talk to them and I felt understood and protected. When I turned 18 and stopped being entitled to education, they supported me as well. They wrote a letter to the college and within a few weeks they had organized everything, from my registration to the tuition fees."

Children who grew up here

Martin receives queries not just from lawyers and care workers, but also directly from people living in family centers or asylum seekers' centers themselves. He mainly deals with legal issues, for example when a family is threatened with deportation. "Children living in family centers have nightmares about the 'vans' that pick people up to be deported. Recently, a family with four children was taken in one of these vans to the detention center in Zeist, the last stop before being deported. They had been living in the Netherlands for seven years and the children had grown up here."

Just in time

Sometimes Martin only has a few days to work with the family's lawyer to prevent the deportation. "First, I need to get all the facts straight. I get the legal papers from the lawyer and discuss the strategy. Dealing with the family with four children was particularly hectic. On the day when they were scheduled to be deported, the judge decided to have a hearing. The Dutch Immigration and Naturalisation



Ruzanna fled to the Netherlands at age thirteen. After seven years of uncertainty, she was granted a residence permit.

Service, the IND, said the decision needed to be issued before the plane departed, as otherwise they would no longer be able to prevent the deportation. The flight was due to leave just after six in the evening. In the end, the decision came around four o'clock, just in time to stop the deportation." For Martin, it's incomprehensible that children who have lived here nearly all their lives should be deported: "Deporting children after they've been in the Netherlands for a really long time is harmful to their development. Several scientific studies have shown this. Moreover, the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that countries that have signed this convention are required to do everything they can to protect children's development. But forcibly sending children back to a country they hardly know, when you know this is bad for their development, is exactly the opposite."

Last day in the Netherlands

For seven years, Ruzanna lived in a state of uncertainty, scared that she too would be taken to the detention center. "When someone wasn't at school, I immediately

knew what had happened that morning. They always wake you up early and you have no choice but to go. I heard that, once that van arrives, you only have ten minutes to get your things together. Every day you ask yourself: is this my last day in the Netherlands?" When she was twenty, she and her mother heard that the uncertainty was over – finally, they were getting a residence permit. "At first, I couldn't believe it. I must have read the letter giving us the news at least six times." Now she's a youth ambassador for Defence for Children Netherlands. "I want to make a difference for children living in difficult circumstances. No child should ever be allowed to wake up in fear. When you end up in another country, there's

Defending children's rights

Defence for Children Netherlands has been working for forty years to protect and promote children's rights, both nationally and internationally. The organization works to defend children in vulnerable situations, with a focus on migration, youth care and child abuse. Besides offering direct assistance through their children's rights helpdesk, which provides legal support for children and their families, they also lobby politicians in The Hague for better legislation and policy. The Migration children's rights helpdesk is partly funded by financial support from Adessium Foundation.

so much you have to deal with. Adults often think that children aren't aware of anything, but they actually pick up a lot of what's going on."

No way out

In the past, the law sometimes offered a way out, as in the case of Ruzanna, who was granted a residence permit in the end. But that option no longer exists for these children. Martin explains: "Children put down roots in the Netherlands due to the procedures taking too long and the IND appealing against almost every court decision that's in a child's favor. The government does everything it can to prevent parents gaining better rights to residence through their children. That's why they hold children accountable for their parents' actions and refuse to grant residence to the children. Even in the most distressing cases, for example where there are medical problems. The child's interests aren't taken into consideration in the decisions. When I think of all those children who've been living here for years, sometimes even 15 years... it's just heartbreaking."



Building trust

More and more people in the Netherlands are struggling to keep up with society. We support initiatives that help them move forward and work toward long-term solutions. Our focus is on families and young people in vulnerable situations. Our goal: a society where everyone has a fair chance to participate and grow. PILP and SchuldHulpMaatje are two examples of initiatives we support within this theme.



SchuldHulpMaatje

Director/administrator **Peter Rijdsijk** from SchuldHulpMaatje: "On average, it takes five years before people seek help with resolving their debt problems. Shame and anxiety – and many other worries – often prevent them from doing this. In the meantime, their debts continue to grow due to collection fees and final demands. That's why early support is so important. To do this, we first need to find them.

In 2024, we started organizing more low-key walk-in sessions in neighborhoods where financial struggles are most common. People can drop in to these 'paper cafes' without an appointment, bringing their forms, bills or complicated letters, or just for a cup of coffee. We notice that people are often wary of organizations and government. By just having a coffee together, we start working on building up trust. One woman visited six times before she asked my colleague: 'So, you're really not going to take my children away?' It was only after this that she started to open up about her situation."

A conversation at one of SchuldHulpMaatje's 'paper cafes'.



PILP

Director and co-initiator **Jelle Klaas** from non-profit law firm PILP: "Children are no longer allowed to have their drinking water supply cut off. For us, that court ruling forms one of the absolute highlights of 2024. This was one of the first cases we initiated ten years ago when we started PILP, a law firm that supports communities, movements and activists in their fight for change. We don't go to court with cases involving just one situation or just one person; instead we start cases that have an impact on a whole group of people – cases in the 'general interest'. No-one wants children in the Netherlands to go without water. And yet, the system allowed it to happen. When parents fell behind on their water bills, their children suffered – often in families already living in extremely vulnerable conditions. It takes a lot of effort to thoroughly prepare a case like this.. Support from Adessium gives us the time to lay a solid foundation, so that we end up with a clear ruling, like in this case."

Mariska (37), a victim of the Dutch childcare benefits scandal (toeslagenaffaire), was so deep in debt that her water was shut off.



From surviving to looking ahead

Many people in our society live in vulnerable situations, facing uncertainty about the future and lacking stable housing. We support organizations that offer direct assistance and work to create long-term perspective. De Regenboog Groep and ROS are two examples of initiatives we support within this theme.



ROS

Maarten Goezinnen, coordinator at Stichting Rotterdams Ongedocumenteerden Steunpunt (ROS): "People we help often find themselves in a very complicated situation. They've lost their residence documents, or they never had them. Being 'undocumented', they can't just go to the doctor, study, work or rent a home. That makes them vulnerable to being exploited. Despite this, most people manage to cope. And if they really can't manage anymore, they can turn to us. For advice or – for the most vulnerable – shelter. In 2024, the Dutch cabinet abolished the regulation on minimal legal facilities for shelter for this group. Many municipalities are keeping them going using their own funds. Rotterdam isn't. With a petition and a demonstration, we showed that many people in Rotterdam do think we should continue to provide a safety net. We also published a cookbook, made by undocumented cooks. Bing from the Philippines and Jennifer from Cape Verde are just two of the cooks sharing their recipes and their story. The stories help to foster more sympathy and understanding. Who knows, maybe this will make politicians in Rotterdam a little less scared of these people. I'd really like that for the city."

What is it like to live without legal papers? (Former) clients shared their experiences on the Dutch KRO-NCRV television program Keukengeheimen (Kitchen secrets).

De Regenboog Groep

Marijn van der List, strategic policy advisor at De Regenboog Groep: "The number of economically homeless people is growing. They lose their home, for instance after a divorce. And because they're not vulnerable enough for a place in a shelter, they end up on the street. We believe this has to change. That's why we always take a creative look at the possibilities offered by existing real estate. For example, we actively approach real estate owners, vacant property managers, public housing agencies and the municipality: do they have vacant properties that are suitable as temporary housing? This approach led to 170 people being housed in a former nursing home. We also encourage people to rent out a room in their home. We act as an intermediary for rentals and help with the administration and contact with organizations such as the tax authorities and the municipality. So far 250 people have found a room this way. Other municipalities are showing interest in the approach we've been taking in and around Amsterdam and asking how we're managing to achieve this. Similar projects are starting in several places, including Haarlem and the Amstelland region. We're sharing our knowledge and experience: if everyone wants this, then we can make it happen."

Gerard (below) was economically homeless. He now has temporary housing in a former nursing home. Above: through the 'Onder de Pannen' project by De Regenboog Groep, you can rent out a room to fellow city residents who have lost their housing due to unforeseen circumstances.





Program

Flexible Funding

In addition to Adessium Foundation's three programs, the budget also includes flexible funding. This allows us to respond to unique opportunities, urgent social issues or current events.

Theme:

- Spotlight: emergency aid in disaster areas Pages 50 - 53



Large photo on the left: a Doctors of the World staff member provides mental health support to a young victim of the earthquakes in southeastern Turkey.

“Aid workers lost their homes and loved ones too”

When a catastrophe occurs, local aid workers are the first to reach the scene. How do you get this emergency aid started, in the middle of total chaos, and how do you scale it back down again? Organizations working in Gaza, Türkiye and Syria explain. “When the situation is changing from day to day, the emergency aid needs to change with it.”

“Tents with metal poles or portable solar panels – suddenly all kinds of relief goods weren’t allowed to enter Gaza anymore. Anything that could possibly be used as a weapon was prohibited from crossing the border. Aid workers had to act fast to come up with a new plan. How were they going to provide shelter and electricity now?” Yasmine Colijn, head of emergency programs at Choose Love, can provide many examples of developments that suddenly got in the way of providing aid to people in Gaza. Choose Love is an organization that funds emergency relief in disaster zones all over the world. “We’re used to being flexible and inventive”, Yasmine points out. “But what’s happening in Gaza is on a different level in every aspect.”

Whenever a catastrophe occurs, Choose Love makes a decision within twenty-four hours: are we going to help and, if so, how? Yasmine: “The situation in Gaza met our criteria: the humanitarian emergency was unprecedented and governments and institutions weren’t providing nearly enough money to fund the emergency aid needed.” This last aspect was particularly complex in Gaza, due to the political situation. Of course, we were aware of this. But not helping wasn’t an option.”

Decisive video call

In principle, Choose Love works with small, local aid agencies that are run by local people. “But it soon became clear that getting funds to Gaza that way would be impossible”, Yasmine explains. “The list of due diligence requirements for aid agencies was so long that it was scarcely possible for ‘new’ agencies to satisfy them. At least not in the short term, and certainly not in the present circumstances. I’ll never forget being on a call with a partner explaining that one of our minimum requirements was an anti-money laundering declaration, when just at that moment a grenade went off in the courtyard at the hospital. ‘We’ll draw one up!’ she managed to yell, just before we lost connection.”

To be able to reach local aid agencies in this situation, Choose Love decided to make an exception and join forces with larger organizations that were better equipped to comply with the due diligence requirements and already had strong ties with local agencies in Gaza. Yasmine: “Shortly after this, we made our first commitment and a medical aid agency was able to start work.” In the months that followed, tens of thousands of Palestinians received water, food and medical and mental health support from hundreds of local aid workers.

Relying on local knowledge

“The knowledge local aid workers have is so incredibly valuable”, Yasmine explains. “They know better than anyone



Palestinian children survey the damage in part of a UN building containing a medical clinic, where displaced Palestinians were sheltering.





A baby doll lies on the rubble of heavily damaged buildings in Gaza.

what help is needed, and where. We rely on their knowledge and trust their decisions. Because in a region where the situation is changing from day to day, the emergency aid needs to change with it. Like the agency that switched from buying in medicines to distributing food parcels, because the food shortage was getting too severe. Or the children's aid workers who continued their program in the camps where they ended up after their central project location became inaccessible due to all the bombings and evacuations. "Are we allowed to do that?" they emailed us. But they really don't need that permission and they don't even need to ask for it."

Meanwhile, Yasmine and her colleagues provide assistance from England,

including raising as much money as they can. So that aid is available now, and in the future too. Because how do you keep providing aid when the next trouble spot flares up and takes over the world's attention?

The aftermath

Anja Holwerda, International Coordinator at Doctors of the World tells us about just that. This medical human rights agency had already been operating for years in Southeastern Türkiye. Including providing assistance to the Syrian refugees living there in poor conditions. But then the devastating earthquake in February 2023 plunged this region, and part of Syria, into a much deeper crisis. Tens of thousands of people lost their

lives in this catastrophe. Millions were injured and became homeless.

"All around the world, fundraising campaigns started up and aid agencies were given permission to come and help", says Anja, describing the weeks following the disaster. Doctors of the World also received extra donations - including funds from Adessium - to scale up its work in the region. This meant they could provide tens of thousands of earthquake victims with aid, including medical and mental health support.

It's now two years since the earthquake. "The government has lifted the state of emergency, which meant aid agencies had to leave the area. But the catastrophe is still a long way from being over."

Successive disasters

This vast region is still the scene of widespread devastation. "Scarcely any rebuilding has taken place and the continuing hopeless situation is bringing new problems with it", Anja explains. She mentions a whole range of worrying developments. "Contagious diseases broke out in overpopulated temporary camps and asbestos was released when buildings collapsed. The high unemployment in the region and the lack of regulation leaves people vulnerable to exploitation. Added to this, the widespread, and growing, anti-refugee sentiment makes it difficult to provide aid to some groups, such as Syrians and Afghans.

Increasingly, developments in the region necessitate a new approach from Doctors of the World and its local partners, but also from funders. Anja: "For example, we saw new remote villages emerging - people had tried to build something up themselves. We wanted to take our organization's work there too. But that requires extra resources and people: relief supplies, an ambulance, a driver, doctors. It's great that Adessium allows us the flexibility to respond to developments like these."

Solid base

While the problems keep mounting up, local aid workers were becoming exhausted. "The first few months they were working on adrenaline, but over time working and living in a disaster



A Doctors of the World staff member speaks with a family in southeastern Turkey. The organization provided both medical and mental health support there.

zone takes its toll", Anja tells us. "Don't forget: almost all aid workers are victims too. They too lost their homes and loved ones." So Doctors of the World decided to provide mental health support. First for their own aid workers and, if that is a success, they'll start a program to

provide this support to the management of local agencies. Anja: "This means that in lots of different ways we ensure a solid base from which local partners are able to continue their work. Especially now, when much of the emergency relief in the region is coming to an end."

Emergency relief for children

Adessium supports **War Child**, an organization that provides psychosocial support, education, and protection to children and communities affected by conflict around the world. In Gaza, War Child is currently delivering emergency aid together with international and local partners. The ongoing violence has left children deeply traumatized, and 90 percent of schools have been destroyed. With support from Adessium, War Child is improving access to mental health care and education, helping to support children's well-being and development. In addition, War Child strengthens the capacity of both teachers and aid workers. All assistance is continuously adapted to the situation on the ground.



Background

BEUC

Agustín Reyna, director-general of BEUC, the European consumer organization: "Manufacturers and companies have always known more about their products than consumers, or example, whether toys contain chemicals that could be harmful to children or the environment. Big Tech has added a new dimension to this: they also know more about the consumers themselves. That information is putting our freedom of choice under increasing pressure. Consider online services developed in such a way as to make it almost impossible to unsubscribe, or sensational content on social media designed to keep users online for as long as possible. Research that we carried out with support from Adessium confirmed our suspicions: current consumer legislation isn't equipped for the digital age. The results were a wake-up call for the European Commission: in 2024 president Ursula von der Leyen announced new legislation for better protection."

Social media platforms aim to keep users online for as long as possible.

Adessium Foundation was established in 2005 by the Van Vliet family, who have a background in asset management. The Foundation is recognized as a 'public benefit organization' (ANBI) by the Dutch tax authorities.

As stipulated in multi-year agreements, Adessium Foundation periodically receives donations from an affiliated foundation which oversees capital set aside by the Van Vliet family. The allocation of donations by Adessium Foundation meant for public benefit is strictly separated from its asset management. Adessium Foundation does not receive any other resources than what is gifted by the family.

Adessium Foundation is a member of the Association Foundation in the Netherlands (FIN) and the Philanthropy Europe Association (Philea). Adessium Foundation subscribes to the Philea code of conduct and meets the FIN criteria for good governance.





JINC

Jonna Wiersma, director of Research & Development at JINC: "A firm handshake, make eye contact, don't start by talking about the salary. There are all kinds of unwritten rules for job interviews. Many young people don't get these rules passed on by their parents or people they know. For them, our interview training sessions make a huge difference. 'What could I even say about myself?', they often say at the start of the training. We go on to talk about this. And then it turns out that, for example, someone helps out in their uncle's shop, so they know all about customer service and maintaining stocks. It's always special to see how they blossom and start to realize that they already have quite a lot to offer. In 2024, we reached a record number of young people in this way."

A JINC training on how to apply for jobs.

Board and Adessium team



Rogier van Vliet
Chairman



Jan Meijerman
Board member



Carst Joustra
Board member



Rogier van der Weerd
Managing director



Martijn Meijer
Director of programs



Nina Koopman
Program manager Nature and Living Environment



Lois Schotanus
Program manager Nature and Living Environment



Ebru Akgün
Program manager Informed Society



Boudewijn van Eerd
Program manager Informed Society



Job Rijnveld
Program manager Just and Equitable Society



Martijn Roos
Program manager Just and Equitable Society



Kim van Vliet
Program officer



Tamara van Doesburg
Communications manager



Lizzy Eilbracht
Manager strategic learning



DIVD

Chris van 't Hof, Director of the Dutch Institute for Vulnerability Disclosure (DIVD). The volunteer hackers actively track down vulnerabilities within companies and government organizations: "More and more homes have them: solar panels, EV charging stations or smart thermostats. These appliances are connected to the energy grid as well as the internet. That makes them vulnerable to hackers. For example, in 2024 our ethical hackers uncovered weaknesses in the security protection for millions of solar panels. If cybercriminals were to exploit these weaknesses, by rapidly switching the panels on and off remotely, it could disrupt the entire energy grid they are connected to. Potentially leaving an entire city, a province or even part of the country without electricity. As more and more examples of hybrid warfare become known, our work concerning the security of online energy appliances in people's homes is gaining significance and receiving more attention. That's why we ensured that we were able to expand these activities in 2024. The government doesn't have access to your meter cabinet, so they can't check the security of your appliances. But our volunteer ethical hackers can."

Harm is one of the 180 volunteer ethical hackers at DIVD. He demonstrates how you can hack an EV charging station.

Our finances

In 2024, Adessium Foundation spent a total of € 16.5 million in supporting organizations and projects. 2024 also saw the start of 8 new long-term partnerships, and the renewal of 24 existing partnerships. In total, across 98 organizations, there were 104 active grants at the end of the year.*

Amounts in thousands of Euros

	2024	%	2023	%
Overall grantmaking ¹				
Grants ²	16.516	90%	15.983	91%
Project-related costs + exchange results of grants	130	1%	19	
Operational expenses ³	1.629	9%	1.511	9%
Total	18.275	100%	17.513	100%
Distribution across programs				
Public Interest	4.855	30%	3.965	25%
People & Nature	4.669	28%	4.033	25%
Social Initiatives	4.617	28%	4.035	25%
Flexible funding	2.375	14%	3.950	25%
Total	16.516	100%	15.983	100%
Distribution by type of support				
Programmatic-institutional ⁴	14.886	90%	15.063	94%
Project-related	1.630	10%	920	6%
Total	16.516	100%	15.983	100%
Distribution by region / intended results				
The Netherlands	7.796	47%	6.873	43%
Rest of the European Union	5.814	35%	6.074	38%
Rest of the world	2.907	18%	3.036	19%
Total	16.516	100%	15.983	100%

¹ These data have been derived from Adessium Foundation's 2023 financial statements. ² This concerns the total amount of pledged grants minus cancellations (projects cancelled early). ³ Adessium Foundation's offices and meeting spaces have been made available to the foundation free of charge. ⁴ Programmatic-institutional support focuses on providing beneficiaries with the necessary means to achieve their long-term vision. *This number does not take into account any agreements for small and one-off grants.



Seas At Risk

Helen Willetts,

Communications Director at Seas At Risk: "It was a close call, but the Nature Restoration Law was passed in 2024. And that's important, because more than 80 percent of Europe's nature is in poor condition. There was still a lot of resistance to the law, with fake news about the economy being spread by big industry and the hard right. That's why we emphasized that it's not a choice between a strong economy or a healthy ocean – the two go hand in hand. After all, what use are jobs in fisheries if the ocean is depleted? One of the requirements under this law is for member states to restore twenty percent of the ocean by 2030. If they fail to follow the rules, we will make our voices heard – so that everyone knows what's happening on and beneath the waves."

Seagrass meadows in the Mediterranean Sea help keep the ocean healthy, but are being destroyed by bottom-trawling fisheries.

Our partners



We are immensely proud of the creativity and perseverance our partner organizations employ. Each and every day they work on the important issues of our time.

Informed Society

- Arena for Journalism in Europe
- ARTICLE 19
- Amsterdams Solidariteits Komitee Vluchtelingen (ASKV)
- Balanced Economy Project
- Bits of Freedom
- Bureau Burgerberaad
- Bureau Européen des Unions de Consommateurs (BEUC)
- Civitates
- Corporate Europe Observatory (CEO)
- CORRECTIV
- De Balie
- Digital Freedom Fund
- Dutch Institute for Vulnerability Disclosure (DIVD)
- EUobserver
- European AI & Society Fund
- European Centre for Press and Media Freedom
- European Digital Rights initiative (EDRI)
- Forbidden Stories
- International Consortium for Investigative Journalism (ICIJ)
- Investico
- Investigate Europe
- Journalismfund.eu
- Lighthouse Reports
- Lost in Europe
- Media Defence
- mySociety

- Open State Foundation
- PublicSpaces
- SOMO
- The Bureau of Investigative Journalism

Nature and Living Environment

- ARK Rewilding Nederland
- ChemSec
- CHEM Trust
- ClientEarth
- Commonland
- De 12 Reeuwijkse Plassen
- Environmental Coalition on Standards (ECOS)
- ENVIU
- European Environmental Bureau (EEB)
- Fair Resource Foundation
- Food Packaging Forum
- Friends of the Earth Europe
- Global Fishing Watch
- Health and Environment Alliance (HEAL)
- Internews Europe
- Marilles Foundation
- MedReAct
- Milieufederatie Noord-Holland
- Natuur en Milieu
- Oceans 5
- Plastic Soup Foundation
- Seas At Risk
- Stichting Rechten van de Natuur
- Tegengif
- Transitiecoalitie Voedsel
- Zero Waste Europe
- Med Sea Alliance

Just and Equitable Society

- Amnesty International
- De Regenboog Groep
- De Vrolijkheid
- Defence for Children
- Dokters van de Wereld
- European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)
- European Philanthropic Initiative for Migration (EPIM)
- Fonds Bijzondere Noden Rotterdam (FBNR)
- Fondsencollectief Veilig en Gezond Opgroeien
- Federation for Innovation of Democracy Europe (FIDE)
- Herprogrammeer de Overheid
- House of Hope
- Human Rights Watch
- IMC Weekendschool
- JINC
- Justice & Peace
- Kansfonds
- Lab Toekomstige Generaties
- Landelijk Ongedocumenteerden Steunpunt (LOS)
- Leergeld
- Leger des Heils
- Nederlands Debat Instituut (NDI)
- Nederlandse Straatdokters Groep
- Nationale Jeugdgraad (NJR)
- OnsBank

- Orchestre Partout
- Pauluskerk Rotterdam
- PICUM
- Protestantse Diaconie Amsterdam
- Quiet Nederland
- Rotterdams Ongedocumenteerden Steunpunt (ROS)
- SchuldHulpMaatje
- Stek
- Stem in de Stad
- Sterk Huis
- Stichting Collectief Kapitaal
- Stichting Energiebank Nederland
- Stichting Move
- Stichting Movement on the Ground
- Stichting PILP
- Stichting Urgente Noden Nederland
- Stichting Zwerfjongeren Nederland
- Transparency International EU office en NL office
- Universiteit Leiden
- Vereniging Milieudefensie
- Villa Pinedo
- Young Impact

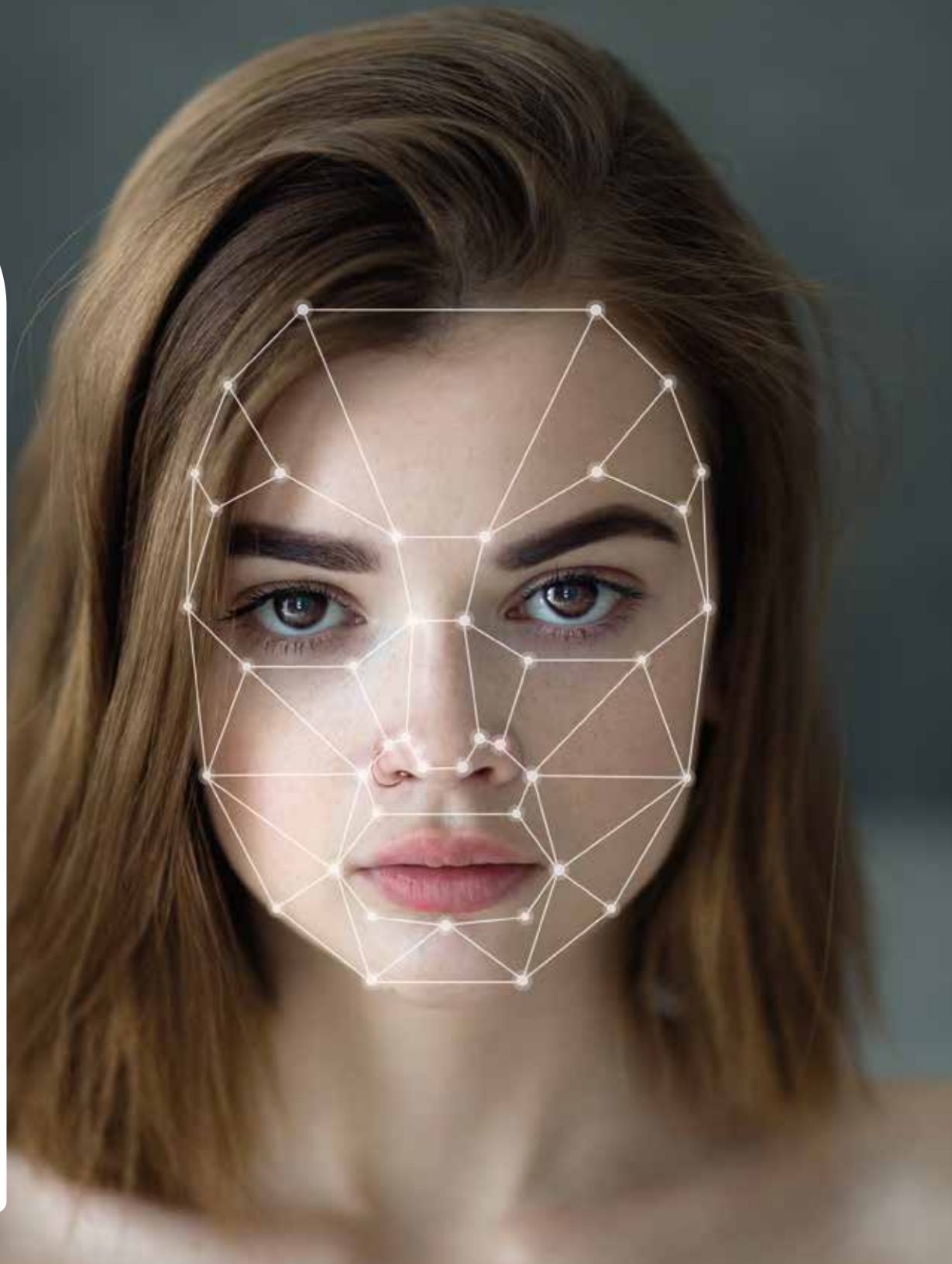
Flexible Funding

- Artsen Zonder Grenzen
- Choose Love
- Prinses Máxima Centrum
- Stichting TAAI
- War Child Holland

Bits of Freedom

Policy adviser **Lotte Houwing**, Bits of Freedom: "Sucking photos up like a vacuum cleaner, from every corner of the internet. And then selling that information on through a database. That's not allowed, but it happens anyway. At Bits of Freedom, we defend internet freedom and the rights of internet users. When we discovered this method was also being used in the Netherlands, we alerted the Dutch Data Protection Authority about possible measures to put a stop to this – especially since similar warnings and fines given in other European countries had been ignored. This development also put policymakers and regulators to work: this type of facial recognition is not allowed, but how can we make sure it really does stop?"

AI facial recognition can identify and verify a person instantaneously using facial features in an image or video from a database.



Nederlandse Straatdokters Groep

Lieke van der Heijden, project manager at Nederlandse Straatdokters Groep: "A man in a sleeping bag on a bench: the classic image of a homeless person hasn't been very accurate for a long time. In 2024, through a photo series and a podcast, we drew attention to the work of street care providers and the diversity of their patients. For example, street nurses and doctors are seeing a rise in the number of migrant workers and employees without insurance. When we identify signs like this, we bring them to politicians' attention. We also make recommendations for making healthcare accessible and ensuring it stays that way. This benefits not only those affected, but society as a whole – because providing the right care at the right time is both more humane and more cost-effective.

Street nurse Wendy talks to a homeless man.



Investico

Belia Heilbron, investigative journalist at Investico: "Is there class justice in the Netherlands? We deliberately chose to formulate a closed research question. We already had suspicions, but there was no data. As part of our investigation, we reviewed around 1.3 million cases. And guess what? Low-skilled suspects with a migrant background were, on average, three times as likely to end up in prison for the same offence as high-skilled suspects with no migrant background. What concerned me even more than our conclusions was the reluctance within the justice system to provide transparency. As a journalist, I've never experienced so much resistance. It was only after we published that the debate got going. 'I've been saying this for years', a judge told us. We're still getting invitations from professional associations to present our research. Now we know class justice exists, it's finally a discussion topic."

A cell in a women's prison in the Netherlands.

Bureau Burgerberaad

Eva Rovers, initiator and director of Bureau Burgerberaad: "The climate, the housing shortage, healthcare costs – the Netherlands is facing some complex challenges. Bureau Burgerberaad encourages government bodies to get citizens involved in discussions and decision-making via a citizens' assembly. We also give advice on how to do this effectively – from using weighted random selection to ensure a representative cross-section of society, to fostering dialogue-based discussions. Just as importantly, we encourage decision-makers to plan ahead for how they will act on the assembly's recommendations. Because ignoring them will destroy participants' confidence in the whole process. In 2024 we prepared for the first National Citizens' Assembly on Climate, which started in 2025. The Dutch Cabinet and the House of Representatives are closely involved and have committed to responding to every recommendation. In the meantime, interest in citizens' assemblies is growing. Citizens' assemblies have been held in dozens of municipalities. For example, in the municipality of Borsele, residents were invited to help shape the conditions under which new nuclear power stations could be built. And the State Commission on the Rule of Law has been asking 'disaffected Dutch citizens' the question 'how can we help you better?' The fact that these people – who distrust the government – took the effort to come really moved me."

How can we help you better? This is the question that the State Commission on the Rule of Law asked 'disaffected Dutch citizens'.



Credits

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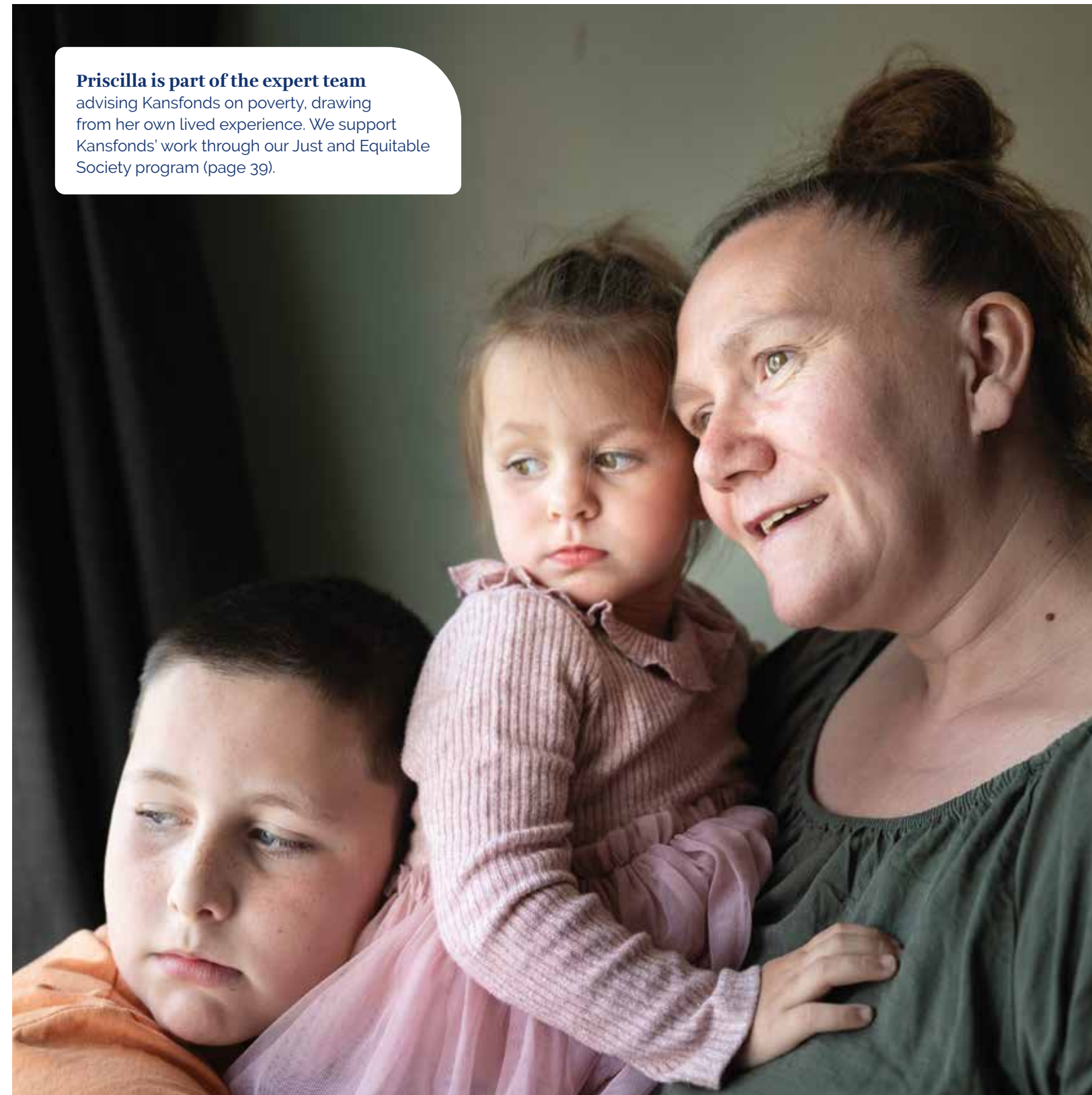
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Priscilla is part of the expert team

advising Kansfonds on poverty, drawing from her own lived experience. We support Kansfonds' work through our Just and Equitable Society program (page 39).





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