

## ...sustainable purchases of FSV UK merchandise

Promotional items are an integral part of our faculty's presentation. The Sustainability Working Group has prepared tips for you on how to make sustainable purchases. Before ordering a product, always ask yourself the following questions: Does the item represent our faculty, its values, or the region? Is the product functional, and would I want to have it at home? Will it remind me of FSV UK in a positive way? Before making a purchase, it is essential to consider the target audience and how many items are really needed. It is often more effective and sustainable to invest in a smaller number of high-quality items for targeted distribution rather than purchasing a large number of inexpensive products that recipients may not use.

### General Principles for Selecting Merchandise:

- 1. Minimization** – We recommend ordering high-quality items in smaller quantities (define quality and sustainability/locality criteria in the procurement documentation or market research). To ensure quality, we suggest requesting product samples in advance and comparing them with the final delivery from the selected supplier.
- 2. Functionality and Durability** – Focus on useful and functional items. Avoid low-quality small electronics (such as flashlights) in particular, as they pose both environmental risks (toxic substances, batteries) and social concerns (manufacturing in unacceptable working conditions in developing countries).
- 3. Added Value** – The ideal items are creative and connected to the faculty, local products, or goods produced by sheltered workshops or social enterprises.

### Specific Criteria According to Type of Product

#### 1. PAPER AND PAPER PRODUCTS (notebooks, folders, calendars, brochures, books, etc.)<sup>[1]</sup>

##### 1.1 Material:

We recommend recycled paper with an eco-label (Environmentally Friendly Product, EU Ecolabel, Blue Angel, Nordic Swan) or FSC recycled paper. Alternatively, non-recycled paper should come from sustainably managed forests (FSC or PEFC certification).

##### 1.2 Printing:

Printing services (printed paper) can be certified with the Environmentally Friendly Product label or the EU Ecolabel. Some printing houses in the Czech Republic meet these standards. These labels require sustainable paper sources, non-toxic inks, and energy- and material-efficient printing processes.

##### 1.3 Production:

Sheltered workshops and social enterprises can be involved in production (it is also possible to apply facultative compensation under agreement with Account Office), see the [Directory of Social Enterprises](#). They offer packaging, bookbinding, custom work, and more.

#### 2. FOOD AND EDIBLE GIFTS

When ordering edible products, prioritize local and seasonal items and ethical food. Choose products certified with Fairtrade and Organic labels, as well as suppliers who uphold fair labor conditions, human rights, and environmental responsibility. Many regional sheltered workshops produce goods such as jams, honey, and syrups and also offer services like gift packaging. It is advisable to avoid mass-produced and animal-based products.

Always prioritize **organic food from the given region** with the appropriate eco-label. **Regional products** in the Czech market have various certifications, each with different standards. You can use the "[Regional Brands](#)" website for guidance. While regional products are not necessarily organic, purchasing them supports local producers, which is encouraged at FSV UK. For products such as coffee, tea, or chocolate, we recommend **exclusively choosing Fairtrade-certified items**.

#### 3. CONSUMABLE GIFTS AND SMALL ITEMS

These include items such as soaps, candles, cosmetics, wooden products, and other non-edible goods. General recommendations include reducing packaging and choosing energy-efficient packaging. We suggest selecting suppliers who follow ethical principles, provide regional products, and offer natural alternatives.

##### 3.1 Raw Materials:

Choose products made from local raw materials, such as beeswax or local herbs. In this category, eco-labeling is rarely applicable (except for organic certification of honey, herbs, etc.). For personal care products, we recommend eco-friendly variants that are safe for both people and the environment, with low levels of toxic substances.

Candles: These can significantly impact indoor air quality. We recommend prioritizing beeswax candles. Paraffin is derived from petroleum, and plant-based waxes (such as palm and soy) are often mixed with paraffin without clear sourcing or sustainability. Opt for candles without metal holders.

Soaps: Choose plant-based soaps without preservatives (check for INCI labeling – International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients).

*To be continued on the next page.*

**For more tips and information, follow us on the [FSV UK website](#) [2]**

[1] When printing publications, use the contracted company On-tisk, which offers printing on recycled paper.

[2] Full website link: <https://fsv.cuni.cz/fakulta/pracovni-skupiny/pracovni-skupina-pro-udrzitelnost>.

### Cosmetics

Although animal testing is banned within the EU, many companies find ways to bypass this regulation. However, there is an independent global standard for cruelty-free cosmetics (HCS) and household cleaning products (HHPs). Companies that meet these standards include the Czech brand Manufaktura and several international brands. Look for the logo featuring a leaping bunny with stars. Additional standards to consider include the BDIH eco-label and the Czech eco-labels CPK/CPK Bio, used by brands such as Nobilis Tilia.

### Wooden Products

Focus on products with certification. Choose those with strict forest certification, such as FSC, or the slightly less rigorous PEFC standard. FSC-certified products include pencils, colored pencils, and household items. Always ensure the product comes with the appropriate certification.

### Paints, Varnishes, and Coatings

Whenever possible, select products with minimal paint or varnish. We recommend water-based products or wood coatings/varnishes with an EU eco-label. A sustainable option is linseed oil varnish (linseed oil mixed with a solvent).

## **3.2 Production**

Always prioritize production in the Czech Republic or Europe. Additionally, we prefer products made in sheltered workshops and social enterprises (where the faculty's EO can arrange for facultative compensation if needed).

## **4. TEXTILES**

The most common textile items include T-shirts and fabric bags. Before ordering, consider whether the item will have continued use after being gifted or after the event it was created for. Based on this, it is advisable to carefully design prints, execution, and order quantities.

### **4.1 Material**

We recommend choosing organic cotton, linen, and hemp (unlike cotton, hemp and linen do not require organic certification due to their cultivation methods). Bamboo and Tencel fabrics are more resource-intensive to produce, so we suggest limiting their use.

Textile Certification – Look for GOTS certification (for organic cotton) or other certificates guaranteeing the organic origin of the raw material.

Toxic Substance Content – Choose materials certified under Oeko-Tex Standard 100 (Category II for textiles that come into direct contact with skin). Acceptable alternatives include compliance with GOTS 7.0 (Global Organic Textile Standard) or higher, which also regulates toxic substance content.

### **4.2 Fabric Weight (GSM)**

Fabric weight significantly impacts product durability. For T-shirts, a minimum weight of 160 g/m<sup>2</sup> is recommended, with 180-220 g/m<sup>2</sup> being ideal. Always request samples (printed or unprinted, depending on the order) and compare subsequent deliveries to the approved sample.

### **4.3 Production**

Suppliers must guarantee compliance with International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions listed in Annex X of Directive 2014/24/EU. If the products are manufactured outside the EU, particularly in the Global South, it must be ensured that they are fair trade products produced in accordance with European Parliament Resolution on Fair Trade and Development (2005/2245(INI)).

For products made within the EU, suppliers must confirm compliance through a sworn statement. For products manufactured outside the EU, compliance must be verified by an independent third party through one of the following:

- a) Fairtrade Certification – The supplier holds a Fairtrade certification from the Fairtrade Label Organization, either for specific products or the entire company (if the company is certified, all its products are guaranteed to comply with fair trade principles).
- b) WFTO Membership – The products are sold through World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO) members, which adhere to strict ethical trading standards.
- c) Fair Wear Foundation Membership – The manufacturer is a member of the Fair Wear Foundation and complies with its labor standards.
- d) Equivalent Fair Trade Certification – The manufacturer can demonstrate adherence to fair trade standards through other comparable certifications.

### **4.4 Printing**

Printing inks must contain less than 5% VOCs (volatile organic compounds), which are typically organic solvents. The manufacturer must prove this by holding The Flower (EU Ecolabel) for textiles (including printed fabrics), another comparable eco-label, or by providing technical documentation confirming compliance.

For further assistance or recommendations on best practices, do not hesitate to contact the Sustainability Working Group.

**For more tips and information, follow us on the FSV UK website [2]**

[2] Full website link: <https://fsv.cuni.cz/fakulta/pracovni-skupiny/pracovni-skupina-pro-udrzitelnost>.