



FEDERATION OF YOUNG  
EUROPEAN GREENS

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FYEG STRATEGIC PLAN 2020/2021

# INTRODUCTION

We are now in post-2019 European Elections Europe which stays turbulent and divided. The 2019 European elections brought substantial gains to European, progressive, liberal, environmentalists, but also to Eurosceptic and right-wing populists. And this is the Europe elected to deal with one of the worst crises of our lifetime so far. Since the first weeks of the COVID-19 outbreak in Europe until now we haven't seen any real solidarity between the European countries.

The COVID-19 Pandemic showed once again that there is something rotten in the state of the world. This pandemic disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in society. For COVID-19 this particularly includes the elderly and those with chronic illnesses, but an imbalance in access to medical care and social welfare also harms refugees, migrants and undocumented people, homeless people, people in prisons, lower income groups and unemployed people, women\* and LGBTQI+ people, people with disabilities, Black and people of color, and racialised communities. This pandemic also has revealed the essential role played by workers that are usually disregarded and exploited in the current neoliberal economic system. It is the most vulnerable demographics that make the essential workers as these jobs are considered "low-skill" and the value is not recognised, most often non-remunerated or not even considered "full employment".

Young people were hardest hit in the 2008 global financial crisis. That crisis has not only led to very high youth unemployment rates in Europe but also a stance among political decision-makers that "any job is better than none". That left us with unpaid internships, gig-workers, zero hour contracts. The current generation of young people are already worse off than their predecessors and now we are facing the biggest financial crisis since the Great Depression.

As we watch history unfold in front of our eyes, we catch an unexpected glimpse of what our future might hold if we don't stop the climate crisis. We are already in the midst of the global climate crisis and if we do not radically change our system, we will not be able to stop or even slow down the destruction anymore.

Yet again the European leaders are not acting while our house is on fire. They are putting forward plans for next generation Europeans, yet they are putting youth more in debt without even investing for a just, green transition. This crisis once again shows how willing the political decision makers are to postpone taking action in the face of a crisis to save the market and how easily they trade a good life for profit. The desperation and the climate crisis is alarming.

But we are also hopeful. Only a crisis produces real change and we are part of that change.

We need to fight for a better future that was promised to every generation. As young people we need to negotiate a better social contract. We need to demand a society where freedom of movement is a reality. We must be part of the fight to dismantle the racist systems in place. We will fight for a real democratic society where citizens can effectively take part in shaping decisions that affect them and where sharing our resources is the main tool for the emancipation of everyone. We are concerned about the increasing use of surveillance and police powers, which are rooted in prejudice and violence. The system is racist, and FYEG as a youth political organisation needs to help work to dismantle racist structures, to be antifa, anti-racist and call on our members to join. On top of that, we need to demand a global leadership that will ensure that one of the biggest shifts in society will happen in the near future: the shift to a zero-carbon society.

Our network of committed young people across Europe will work together with partners, policy-makers, and activists to actively come up and advocate for the solutions necessary for a bright future for all. We see an important role to play for the Federation of Young European Greens towards this effort:

1. Increase and strengthen Young Green impact everywhere in Europe by investing in our Member Organisations and supporting other progressive youth movements from all levels: local, national, regional and grassroots.
2. Come up with and promote solutions for the issues that our and future generations are facing.
3. Consolidate FYEG's educational work, improve our organisational structures and strengthen our partnerships.

## 1. INCREASE AND STRENGTHEN YOUNG GREEN IMPACT EVERYWHERE IN EUROPE

### 1. Invest in Our Member Organisations

FYEG represents 50 000 young Europeans. Our Member Organisations, big and small, play an important role in society, going beyond regular activism and politics to political activism. We understand the importance of linking the movements in the streets to the institutions, but also don't hesitate to be critical of both, dare to be bold and make changes when necessary. We all stand for progressive, outward looking, sustainable policies and cooperate with organisations that work on the same topics.

To increase our impact, we want to continue sharing best practices in our MOs and FYEG. How to recruit and manage an MO's membership, how to organise engaging activities, how to be a radical think tank.

In the next years we will focus on the following:

- A. Inter-organisational learning. Through an online platform and space during our statutory meetings, we will increase the sharing of best practices, manuals and resources of our Member Organisations and FYEG.
- B. Organising activities specifically targeting Committee members and staff of Member Organisations, especially those in finance and management/ human resources roles.
- C. Address discrimination within our own structures and develop practices that enhance inclusion and foster diversity.
- D. Visit regions and countries that are not yet represented in FYEG, encourage members of MOs that haven't been present in FYEG's EC to present candidates to the EC, and maintain a close relationship with CDNEE.

### 2. Support other progressive youth movements from all levels

We will stay in close cooperation with local and European movements. From Extinction Rebellion to Ende Gelände, Code Rood and Limity jsme my to Fridays for Future, the European climate movement

is alive and kicking. Moreover we are also seeing many young people in Europe organising around support to refugees, divestment from arms trade, gender issues, housing rights and so on. We expect many more similar initiatives to emerge in the coming years, on a European and local level. Their support and work on the ground will be crucial in order to further societal demand for change and allow us to push successfully for truly ambitious policies in the political institutions.

- A. We will keep motivating Young Greens to be the driving force in these movements and that in particular in societies where Green Parties are struggling or non-existent. In doing so, we will strive to take an approach of “backing not fronting”, giving a platform to these movements and amplifying their voices.
- B. We will ask which support is needed and welcome and we will be creative in filling the gaps, for example, by offering our elected MEPs as parliamentary observers during actions.
- C. We will always keep looking for and empowering activists who wish to enter the political sphere and will make sure they can easily find their home in the Green political family. At the same time we will refrain from self-promotion in situations where such is not welcomed by the movement and we will not take undue credit for other people’s actions.

## 2. COME UP AND PROMOTE SOLUTIONS FOR THE ISSUES THAT OUR AND FUTURE GENERATIONS ARE FACING

FYEG organises events where we analyse what is going on in Europe socially and politically and how young people are affected by these developments. Our Member Organisations on the ground do the same for their societies and make the link towards Europe. Similar discussions are carried out in a structured manner in our Working Groups which function as FYEG’s think tanks on specific topics. But they also emerge spontaneously on the different communications platforms we use for sharing and community building on a daily basis. They are important because they enable us to further sharpen the ideology of our political movement. Embracing the diversity and bringing everything together into one story of a better Europe is what binds us and makes us a strong movement. Through these activities, we can make sure that young people of different backgrounds are heard, learn about best practices from peers, and imagine pan-European solutions to issues affecting our daily lives.

In order to get the society as a whole on board behind ambitious climate action, we will always keep fighting for those who are the most marginalised today. We will be fighting for a just transition and while acknowledging the urgency of the climate crisis, we will keep focussing on promoting a positive vision for a sustainable Europe. We will uphold the recognition that the climate struggle is intertwined with other social justice struggles.

We will stay in solidarity with organisations and activists who are structurally marginalized in our societies. We recognise that people from the Global South will be increasingly forced to migrate due to the climate crisis and we will stand in solidarity with refugees. We recognise that activists in different regions of Europe have different opportunities for organising themselves. We will pay particular focus on supporting activists and movements in these regions, recognising and highlighting that climate activism is on the rise also in these parts of Europe. We also recognise that it is increasingly women\* who are at the forefront of the climate struggle. We will keep our work

on empowering trans and cis women, trans men and genderqueer activists to stand up for their future.

In the next years, we will focus on the following:

- A. Fostering our Working Groups and empowering them to come up with radical ideas for Europe to test within our Member Organisations.
- B. Organise educational activities with clear radical political ideas as an outcome.
- C. Facilitate more topical discussions on the policies and tools we need for a better Europe, together with Member Organisations.
- D. Promote our solutions online, through social media and give an important role to the Ecosprinter for this.
- E. Continue lobbying MEPs and other relevant political actors to fight for Young Green solutions.

### **3. CONSOLIDATE FYEG'S EDUCATIONAL WORK, IMPROVE OUR ORGANISATION'S STRUCTURES AND STRENGTHEN OUR PARTNERSHIPS**

Through our increase in office capacity and years of experience we have raised our standards for our educational events to a high quality. We strongly believe in non-formal education and want to strengthen our efforts here. To engage as many young people as possible we will diversify our educational activities and look for ways to reach out beyond the limited number of participants at each event.

At the same time, we don't want to stand still as an organisation but continue improving. Therefore we want to have a clear re-evaluation of our bodies and structures.

In the next years, we will focus on the following:

- A. Improve our non-formal education practices by setting up a Pool of Trainers together with CDNEE.
- B. Ensure that our educational activities empower new leaders, making every participant an actor for change who can share what they have learned and empower others to share this as well.
- C. Look critically at the way FYEG functions and redefine our internal structures and processes (e.g. hiring) to ensure they align with our political values and do not unnecessarily replicate external systems.
- D. Strengthen our bonds with our Green partners and European youth organisations with the aim of mainstreaming our political priorities as much as possible.
- E. Engage actively in the European climate movement and other social movements, including participating in actions of civil disobedience, when deemed necessary.
- F. Develop a framework to assess the achievements of and learning points for FYEG during each year, thus making impact measurement and annual comparison possible. Results indicators can be quantitative, qualitative, or both and can include, but are not limited to, data and info on

participants, news appearance, support provided to MOs, political agenda-setting, engagement with external organisations, and external people reached.

## CONCLUSION

We realise the growing power of progressive movements for change, be it on climate, feminism, worker's rights, migrants' rights, young people's access to social rights or other socio-economic struggles. With the climate breakdown becoming an everyday reality, with young people struggling to make ends meet, with right-wing extremists in the streets and, even more worryingly, in the institutions of power, with women\* being harassed in the streets, workers, especially from marginalised groups, exploited on a pushing.

With our strategy to invest in ourselves, to back up the youth movements, to build bridges between grassroots organisations and public institutions we will make change on all levels of political participation. We will continue to empower the youth to be agents of change both in civil society, and in political institutions.