



I am now ending the second year of my mandate with FYEG as the Sec-Gen. I hope during these two years I was able to deliver and live up to the expectations of our Member Organisations who have elected me unanimously for this position.

For me (and I guess for most of us) 2020 doesn't exist in my memories. It is still hard for me to grasp that we are in 2021, I still double check if this is real and what happened to 2020? It all feels like a dream. 2020 was too long and short at the same time. So bear with me while I try to remember what happened in 2020.

Looking at where we are now, I am proud that we are still here. Everyone in the Executive Committee is an absolute hero. The hours of work they have put in FYEG in these really dire times is mind blowing. I am also in awe of the Political Platform Committee, they did a tremendous job of rewriting our political platform. They were amazing in coordinating and facilitating their work, which made my job very easy. And of course I am proud of and thankful for the FYEG Office. I am thankful that none of them burned out, I am proud that they did great work even when it was very challenging.

Managing the Office

This role is not an easy role. I have been in coordinator and managerial positions before, but I was never responsible for managing 4 full time and 2 part time staff members. When I first started working, I thought facilitating and supporting the Executive Committee was the hardest part of my job. This year it was definitely managing the office - partly due to working from home.

When I started my role, I wanted to manage the FYEG Office with feminist leadership principles. I am not sure if I succeeded in this. It is a challenge to continue delivering and achieving goals, while also keeping the work-life balance. Realising this, we took new steps and started working with a consultancy on organisational change, which you can read more about in our Activity Report.

We have been raising the Office salaries and investing in improving working conditions of the office. I am very happy to announce that now FYEG provides a comparable salary for the youth sector for entry level office staff. Moreover we are

making real progress in reducing the over hours.

This year we are better adjusted to working from home, even though we have a very nice office space in our new location that waits for us. We invested in our new office space to make sure that each staff member has a decent workstation at the Office. Moreover, usually we work with desktops but because of working from home, we provided our staff members with laptops that they can use.

Office Manager

Caroline Mathieu has been working with FYEG since 2017. Caroline brings high-level professionalism and expertise to FYEG Office. In 2020 we have been working together on our office and EC Guidelines, Strategy and Human Resources. We are also working on fundraising and diversifying the funds we receive from institutions.

I felt very lucky to have Caroline in the office to have short brainstorming sessions and also to consult on various issues regarding office management, finances and work with partners even.

Project Manager

We have been working with Cristiana since January 2020. Cristiana has worked on planning, replanning and then re-planning FYEG's educational activities in 2020 and 2021. On Just Transition Work Plan Cristiana and the "FYEG's longest ever prep-team" did a great job of moving the activities online. In 2021, she is successfully coordinating the 2021 work plan on democracy. Cristiana is overseeing our MO Training sessions. Cristiana is also line managing the project intern.

Cristiana is very strategic, able to work independently and deliver the task 100%. Especially as she got used to FYEG Office, it was a great relief to know that she can take on the tasks and deliver it fully without any need of micro managing.

Campaigns and Communications Officer

Kelsey DePorte has been working with FYEG since February 2019, first as the freelance campaigner on EGP and FYEG election campaigns and afterwards as FYEG Communications





Officer. In November Kelsey announced that she was not planning to extend her contract for another term.

We therefore started a recruitment process in December for a new Communications Officer. We received 60 applications and invited 4 applicants to an interview. In February the EC selected Chris McFadyen. Chris started working with FYEG in mid-March 2021.

Chris brings a fresh perspective to FYEG communications and amazing Scottish accent to the FYEG Office. Even though it has only been a month and a half, he showed his “doer” attitude and I am looking forward to his contributions to FYEG communications.

Project Assistant

We hired a Project Assistant to support the “Young Green Recovery” project coordination and administration. The vacancy was announced in July. We received 25 applications. Former EC (EC 2019-2020) made the recruitment decision to hire Luka Gudek for this role. Luka had a 9 month contract with FYEG where he was responsible for implementation of the Young Green Recovery grants and also designing and implementing an online course on young green recovery.

Luka was a great support to FYEG Office and he did an excellent job in coordinating the Young Green Recovery project.

EGP/FYEG Projects Coordinator

We recently started a Projects Coordinator position together with EGP. This is an EGP Staff position who is responsible for coordinating projects with FYEG and works both with FYEG and EGP Offices. The vacancy was announced in February. We received 20 applications and invited applicants to an interview. In mid-April Cinta Gonzalez Sentis was recruited for this position. Cinta was a former FYEG/Greens-EFA intern for a year.

Interns

Since the previous GA four Greens/EFA - FYEG interns worked or are still working in FYEG Office.

Cinta Gonzalez Sentis (JEV) started her internship in February 2020. When the European Parliament was closed due to the pandemic, the Green group offered an opportunity for interns to stay one more term, so Cinta did a full year of internship in 2020. Between September 2020 - February 2021 Anja Perushkina (ViNo) did an internship.

Right now Marie Stadtler (Scottish Young Greens) and Igor Skorzybot (Polish Young Greens) are doing internships with FYEG and Greens/EFA.

Interns are the backbone of FYEG Office and in these times where it was not possible for us to meet our Member Organisations, having interns from our Member Organisations was a great addition to FYEG. They always bring fresh ideas and different perspectives to our work and I am grateful for their work.

Administration

It is the Secretary General's responsibility to manage the administrative grants. I have successfully applied for the European Youth Foundation (EYF) of the Council of Europe and Erasmus+ Grants. The EYF Grant is approved for two years 2020-2022 and the Erasmus+ for three years 2019-2022. I also submitted the interim report of EYF Admin Grant for the year of 2020 and the Erasmus+, which were approved.

Normally applying, managing and reporting of the administrative grants are not a challenging task for me, as I have extensive experience on this. However, this year the European Commission has been very bad with deadlines, not adhering to the deadlines that they have set themselves, which is consuming a lot of time from my side as I need to pursue their communications constantly. It is very disappointing to see that an organisation like the European Commission, instead of supporting the work of the youth sector, is giving additional burden by not following deadlines that were communicated. It has been a frustrating experience to say the very least.

Moreover we had our own challenges with the Belgian bureaucracy and our bank and even though Caroline has been doing an excellent job in managing this, unfortunately this still





consumes a lot of capacity of the office.

Statutory Meetings and Activities

Firstly, I suggest that we never do summer General Assemblies ever again. September-December are the busiest periods for the Office and it is not easy to onboard a new EC while the rest of the Office is busy with other deadlines and requirements.

Having said this, the online General Assembly of 2020 was a success. We were able to bring most of the Presidency to Brussels and it was a very smooth operation thanks to the Presidency and the EC responsables for the GA. I also coordinated the Member Organisations Forum in March 2021, which took place online.

Representation and Partnerships

All the representation opportunities took place online in 2020. During my mandate I represented FYEG at GEF General Assemblies.

In line with our agreement now FYEG is invited to attend the Group meetings of the Green Group in the European Parliament, however, following these meetings take tremendous time. Therefore I seldom attend those meetings, only when there are political discussions where FYEG can provide input or receive input. In 2021 I attended a lot of Group Communications meetings to take over some of the tasks of the FYEG Communications Officer, however, I plan to leave this to our new Communications Officer, Chris.

Mostly the Co-Spokersperson are responsible for representing FYEG at EGP Committee meetings but I also took part when my support was needed.

I attended the Online EGP Council in December to support the FYEG delegation. I also attended European Youth Forum's Conference of Members where FYEG put forward a candidate for the Advisory Council on Youth. I was a delegate to support our candidate. I am very happy to see that Henry Winckle was elected to this important position.

Support to FYEG Executive Committee and other FYEG Bodies

I have attended almost all of the FYEG Executive Committee meetings both online and offline but I haven't been very closely involved with the Working Groups or the Ecosprinter Editorial Board due to lack of time and more independent nature of these bodies. I tried my best to support and facilitate the work of the Political Platform Committee but it was great help that they were extremely motivated and organised themselves and didn't need much of my help.

4 out of 8 members of the EC were in the EC in the previous year too. At times, it was a great relief that I could rely on the more experienced EC members to "run the show" but also due to never meeting in real life, I felt that my presence and my coordination skills were still needed and useful.

I think this year it was much easier for me to support and facilitate the work of the EC. Definitely there were times that I felt short but it was mostly due to lack of capacities from my side. Each EC and each EC member is very different and they have different approaches to work. I think I made the mistake of sometimes "assuming" some things would go a certain way because that was the case the previous year. I sometimes relied too much on the other EC members stepping in for me, or taking over some of the coordination work and at times felt short.

Conclusion

Last year facilitating and supporting the EC was the hardest part of my job, this year it was definitely managing the Office. Besides interns, I oversaw recruitment of three full time positions and it was three very challenging processes.

This role is not an easy role. I have been in coordinator and managerial positions before, but I was never responsible for managing 4 full time and 2 part time staff members. In fact managing the Office and overseeing the Office work made me at times fell short on supporting the Executive Committee or Political Platform Committee.

However, I am not too hard on myself. I know that I tried my





very best, I worked my ass off by all measures, I poured my heart and my best intentions to this job knowing that whatever I do won't be enough but I had to try anyway. I always felt the amazing support of the FYEG Executive Committee, each and every one of them. I am so grateful. I always knew I could rely on our great staff with my eyes closed.

Sometimes I feel like this job is jumping over an abyss. You try, you exercise, you run at your fastest and when the time comes all you gotta do is close your eyes, cross yourself and jump, hoping you will land on your feet or someone will be there to catch you. I would like to imagine our whole young green family is there to catch us.

