

Subject: Vision on the role of FYEG as a European political youth organization 2022-2023

In my previous vision letter I wrote that the next five years will be more challenging and exciting than the last five years. I am not sure if it will be exciting per se, but it will definitely be challenging for all of us, especially young people.

In this letter, I will outline my vision for FYEG internally and externally. I would like to highlight that the Secretary General serves the Executive Committee and the Member Organizations, therefore this vision should be read as merely an intent to work more with ECs and MOs on these issues that are aligned with FYEG's strategy.

## 1. Growth and Resilience

Sometimes a tree grows from its branches, sometimes it grows from its roots. FYEG had different waves of growth. As a FYEG boomer, I have been active with the organisation since 2015. During this time I saw FYEG grow from its roots, expanding the office and increasing the financial resources. I saw FYEG grow from its branches, making amazing campaigns and communications. When I first started as the Sec-Gen, I thought my role was to make sure FYEG extends its branches even further, to make it even bigger. However, a tree needs strong and healthy roots.

In mid 2020, we started a change within the organisation. The aim of this change is:

- More focused strategy: Identify the key areas where FYEG can make a real difference and bring added value
- Effective decision making and support the EC: Define the roles and tasks of EC members more clearly, taking over the "mundane" and non-political tasks from the EC to make sure they can spend more time in doing politics and hopefully stay in FYEG for longer terms as this would decrease the workload.
- Support to Secretariat: Give clear, ambitious but also achievable tasks to each office member and track the progress. Build an environment of constructive feedback in the Office.

## 2. Support its Member Organisations

My vision for FYEG is for every member organisation to understand the benefit of being a member, and to reap those benefits equally. I would like to invest in increasing the capacities of Member Organisations and work with them on a one to one basis. In 2020 and 2021, together with the EC we have drafted a comprehensive Member Organisations Strategy. This will also serve as institutional memory on the FYEG-MO relations and the information will not be lost with each generation.

Moreover we started providing one to one training to our Member Organisations. I would like to continue this in 2022 and 2023 and expand it where possible. Providing individualised training

proves to be much more beneficial than a two-day gathering in a city with a limited number of delegates.

There is still a lot we can learn from each other. In Western Europe we see the effectiveness of going back to the streets as we saw in the last election results. Policy making is not enough, we have to be more active and grassroots to build the Europe that we want. On the other hand in Central and Eastern Europe being in the streets is not enough, we need more political representation and we need to encourage our MOs to do more institutional politics. I envision more MO exchanges within the network to learn from each others' experiences. I also imagine FYEG to take a more hands-on role, to train Western MOs to be activists and to train Eastern and Southern MOs to take political positions.

### 3. Justice

In 2019 I wrote "We have to get ready for what will happen after climate change". In two years I am writing "We have to get ready for what will happen after Corona".

Of course there will be many scientific reports as to why and how COVID-19 originated but for me it is simple: human encroachment on wildlife habitats and the fundamentally broken relationship between humans and nature is the reason for this pandemic.

Years of destructive globalisation, exploitation and the neo-liberal economy, together with the COVID-19 virus are the reasons for today's full blown crisis.

As young people today we were already a pretty fucked up generation to begin with. Young people were hardest hit in the 2008 global financial crisis, which 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 no job". That left us with unpaid internships, gig-workers, and 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.

In the 1990s, trade unions were fighting for 35 hour work weeks but this came to a halt as the financial crisis hit and austerity followed. And those austerity measures and neo-liberal market solutions to economic and financial crises force young people today to work at zero-hour contracts or at bullshit jobs that pay hourly without any sense of security.

When we went into lockdowns a lot of people started valuing and appreciating the work of teachers, stay at home mothers, caretakers, baby sitters, delivery people, supermarket employees, farmers, nurses. In many countries, they are forced to work part-time, paid hourly, denied pensions, parental benefits, health insurance and work-related accident insurance--meaning workers either are obliged to work when sick, or must receive no income during the illness.

And if you look at the occupation statistics of these job lines, these people are poor, they are women, they are Black and People of Colour, they are migrants, they are underpaid, they are overworked, they have no security.

The Corona crisis is the climate crisis. How Corona affected us will be how climate affects us. And how the governments reacted to this crisis will be the way governments will react to climate. And it is shameful.

We, young people, poor people, women, trans, gays and lesbians, black people, brown people, Asian people, Roma people, Muslims and Jews, disabled people... Everybody outside of the 1% we have been deprived all our lives. And I want justice for all of us. No, justice is not enough. I actually want goddamn reparations. Not in 20 years, not in 5 years, not tomorrow but today.

I want justice for all those young people that were worried about finding a job after uni, trans kids that were deprived of healthcare, racialized people that were targeted by the police, gay guys that couldn't hold hands with their boyfriends, migrants without papers...

I see FYEG fighting and demanding for justice for all of you, all of us that are deprived from a good life. We all deserve a good fucking life. We will keep fighting till then.