



FEDERATION OF YOUNG
EUROPEAN GREENS

POLITICAL PLATFORM

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◆ Introduction

We, the Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG), are the Green youth voice on the European level. As part of a wider movement, and composed of diverse member organisations uniting their collective voices and aspirations, we agree: our way of living needs to change.

Our individual and organisational backgrounds lie in social and environmental justice movements, Green party organisations, various single-issue campaigns, as well as gathering previously non-politicised youth. Our similarities are much stronger than our differences of opinion, and our diversity is a strength, it makes us explore and discover the concrete things and changes we fight for, together.

Through our shared struggles and aspirations we come to understand that no single one of our topics is a lone priority but that the connections between us are connections between issues. We refuse to choose between either the survival and well-being of our shared planet, our personal liberties and freedoms, or social welfare. To us, a Green perspective encompasses all of these demands, as described in this document.

To bring about the survival of the planet, amelioration of personal liberties and sustainable development, as well as global social justice, we must find the channels, political arenas and tools to succeed. Policy making based on peer-reviewed science and evidence is an effective tool to achieve these goals. The institutions of formal politics are spaces where many decisions that affect our lives and our politics are made. We must work to be present and heard at all these stages and make clear the urgency of green politics in order to establish support for our political positions.

But we know that politics does not begin nor end at the doorsteps of these institutions. We have learned from history about the brutality and harshness of the struggles for rights we take for granted today.

The challenges lie not only in victories within institutional politics, but also in the changing of the playing field of politics. We have seen how the environment, animal rights, the rights of minorities and other neglected causes have been brought into the centre of the institutions through the dreams and actions of, sometimes, a small number of committed individuals and movements. This, to us, is part of what it means to be committed to the ideal of social and environmental justice, democracy in general and Green politics in particular.

◆ Democracy

Our Green ideals can only be reached through participatory democracy, an ongoing process that we should never stop developing. It is not just about voting, but about fundamental rights and participation in every area of life.

Direct Democracy and Participation

Democracy must be more than simply a periodical procedural issue. Citizens must be able and encouraged to engage and participate actively as much as possible in the political decision-making process in order for society to be genuinely democratic.

FYEG stands for the right and responsibility of every citizen to be informed and involved in all political, economic and social processes that are directly or indirectly concerning their environment. We therefore call for direct democracy at all levels of society to enable people to directly influence all the political decisions which affects their society's development and enable them to hold governments to account.

Democracy needs a strong protection of the rights of minorities, individual liberties and human rights. No majority decision may be possible to reduce these rights and liberties.

We support the implementation of grassroots methods such as participatory budgets, local decision-making and regional parliaments as well as limiting mandates by number and time in order to prevent the accumulation of power.

We call for democracy in all institutions which affect human life. Thus, pupils, students and teachers should take decisions in schools and universities and workers should decide about the future.

Citizenship must be available to all, regardless of origin or nationality. A residency citizenship is a fundamental condition for democracy, so that everyone has an equal opportunity to engage in the society which affects them.

The right to vote and stand for election at all levels must be guaranteed on the basis of residence.

We do not support monarchy or any other non-elected system of governance. These models are directly opposing and undermining values and practices of direct democracy and must be abolished.

On the local level, we promote and support community activism and volunteering as a form of human solidarity and a way to engage in participatory rights and responsibilities. This mustn't be an opportunity for authorities or individuals to exploit free labour but a

way of building strong, resilient local communities. The experience and contributions of activists and volunteers to the labour market must also be recognized and valued.

As an organisation of young people, we support youth participation in institutional politics as well as activism. We encourage others to join us in demanding better education and opportunities for young people to participate in all political activities.

We consider every single citizen as an essential part of our integer society and therefore we demand the ban of a fixed voting age. We think that broader participation could introduce a lot of new energy. Furthermore, political stakeholders would focus not only on one specific group of people but rather all society.

We believe e-democracy¹ and e-participation can improve access and participation in political processes, strengthening grass-root democracy.

Information and Openness

FYEG considers both transparency and accountability as vital for the functioning of democracy. Without these governments tend towards corruption and nepotism and citizens lose sufficient means of control of their governments.

We see communication as a fundamental social process and a pillar of democracy. Everyone must have equal access to the media and the tools for its exchange.

Information within public bodies must be open and accessible. Public and private information of public interest must be easily available to everyone with simple, short and transparent procedures of procurement. Specifically, the data of governments and related institutions must be accessible to civil society, with the exception of personal data.

Freedom of thought, expression and speech must be respected. However, rhetoric calling for violence and discrimination in public speech, marketing or information needs to be recognized as hate speech and banned.

We emphasize the social value of Internet use in particular and demand free access for all. Free software and Open source² and related technologies, which boost the exchange of information and also counter existing monopolies of information, should be the standard. Public funding and subsidies should be targeted at open source technologies to offer viable alternatives where they do not exist yet.

¹ See glossary 1

² See glossary 2

The Internet is a public space that should not be dominated by certain groups, companies or governments, and the same rights and liberties that are expected offline must be guaranteed online. Therefore, we believe that net neutrality³ is crucial for a democratic society.

In a society where more and more of our lives take place online, it's crucial that personal privacy is protected. Legal authorities must only be able to access citizens personal data if there is a court injunction. Nevertheless there must be strict and transparent regulation procedures to void fraud.

We believe in the public domain and strongly support limitations of intellectual property rights and patents. Thoughts and ideas evolve more creatively and serve humanity better when they're shared.

European Union Institutions

FYEG believes there is a significant democratic deficit within EU institutions. In order to remedy this we must transfer power from the Commission and Council to the European Parliament. Furthermore, European Commission need to be directly elected by EU citizens in order to close the gap between citizens and the EU institutions. Transnational lists for the EP are needed in order to develop the concept of pan-European citizenship.

To prevent member states using their veto to defend their own narrow interests, we demand a European Council based on majority rule as opposed to consensus. The voice of the Union must not be monopolised by any single member state.

The process of integration and harmonisation must not lead to a race to the bottom between member states. On the contrary, there must be a guaranteed high standard of public services and environmental protection and member states must not be economically disadvantaged for unilaterally increasing these standards.

We strive to improve EU citizenship as a step towards a Social Europe. Free movement of people and the respect of human rights must be guaranteed and integral to the concept of EU citizenship. Their voice should always be heard, and thus direct participation at the European level shall be enforced and respected by institutions. Tools like the European Citizen Initiative should be reformed to make possible for citizens to actually have a say in European decisions. But we also recognize that direct participation should not be only related with signing petitions, and therefore we encourage.

³ See glossary 3

Regionalism

FYEG believes borders, such as national boundaries, are artificial social constructs imposed on inhabitants. States must recognise the dynamic interaction of people, cultures and identities, thus the life and development of regions and municipalities has to overcome national borders.

We support the organising principle of subsidiarity whereby matters are deliberated upon by the most competent authority, starting from the lowest or least centralised level. We see regionalism as a way to bring about more direct democracy in the spirit of subsidiarity, to strengthen local communities as well as their economy through devolution and to embrace cultural diversity.

Regionalism, however, must never become a vehicle for nationalistic or ethnic segregation but rather help to better enable communities and their cultural self-determination. Though this can not undermine interregional solidarity.

Civil Society and Justice

FYEG believes that no democracy can function without a critically involved and active civil society. Unions and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are vital in holding governments to account. We deplore the attempts of business interests to disguise lobby groups as grassroots initiatives. Lobbying must be transparent and strictly regulated, free of disproportionate influence of profit oriented organizations.

For all holders of political office, there needs to be a waiting period before they can accept a new job from the business sector. Lobbying for commercial interests while in office has to be ended.

No democracy can be conceived without an independent judicial system, which operates free from political pressures and interference. FYEG strongly believes that in a conflict with economic or political interests, strong and independent courts must effectively protect civil liberties and human rights.

◆ Economy

FYEG identifies the root causes of social and environmental crises in the current economic model. In order to bring an end to environmental destruction and human deprivation, a system change is urgently needed. We believe a Green Economy can achieve the necessary radical change through democratisation of the economy, redistribution of wealth⁴ and social and environmental justice.

Capitalist Economic Model

The current economic system, with its social division based on who owns the means of production and its prioritisation of wealth accumulation⁵ at the expense of people and environment, causes and aggravates many of the social and environmental problems we see today.

This social division has become a coercive hierarchy, the root cause of social domination through inequalities of wealth and power and involuntary wage labour⁶ relations. In theory, a capitalist economy and politics are separate spheres, but in reality wealth, corporate or individual, has a huge influence on governments, policies and politics.

The influence of wealth on politics grossly distorts democracy, decreasing the influence of and excluding most citizens. This is directly opposed to our belief in direct democracy - the empowerment and engagement of all citizens.

Individual and national wealth increasingly determines access to education, healthcare, housing and other vital services and assets. Inequality of wealth therefore leads to an inequality of access, which in turn leads to social deprivation (also see 'Social Classes').

Economic growth based on material consumption is neither possible nor desirable as it is both socially and environmentally unsustainable. If the link between economic growth and environmental destruction cannot be broken, a controlled recession is a better alternative.

Therefore, FYEG is opposed to capitalism on the grounds that it intrinsically entails social domination and long-term growth based on material consumption, which inevitably leads to the exploitation of people and the environment.

We also oppose the exponential expression of capitalism - the global neoliberal⁷ system - where corporations and the market prevail over human needs.

⁴ See glossary 4

⁵ See glossary 25

⁶ See glossary 5

⁷ See glossary 6

Green Economy

FYEG thinks beyond materialism⁸ and consumerism⁹. We strive for a system change, for a new socio-economic system to guarantee social and environmental justice and the utilization of natural resources under public stewardship and the precautionary principle¹⁰ of long term sustainability¹¹.

We strive for a system which values equality and cooperation instead of material and monetary profit maximisation¹² as the driver for economic activity. We strive for a system which places people and the environment before profit. Such a system also understands human activity as part of a rich yet finite, interdependent and fragile ecosystem. For this, we need a Green Economy and to understand the economy as a tool and not as an objective in itself.

We therefore conceive Green Economics under this new paradigm of analysis: the elimination of the unlimited growth goal, the end of excessive capital accumulation and a redistribution of wealth and production factors¹³.

Through the green economy we strive for gender equality and the destruction of the gender work division. Intergenerational¹⁴ and intragenerational¹⁵ equity are also fundamental social values for a Green Economy.

We must redirect and reduce production, promoting new forms of social relationships and trade based on environmentally and socially sustainable activity. As a society we must be less intensive and more efficient in our use of natural resources.

We reject the commodification of the environment and the privatization of common goods such as water resources, the climate system, earth's genetic heritage, knowledge. We reject the systematic privatization of the commons. We call for political and economic systems that emphasize an equitable and sustainable access to material and immaterial common goods. A Green Economy is an economy that encourages sustainable technological and social innovation.

In order for economics to be ecologically sustainable¹⁶, all the factors damaging the environment have to be included into the production costs. The gains must be invested in appropriate funds and be used for positive action towards environmental restoration.

To achieve these goals we must utilise new economic indicators to help us understand our progress. We must go beyond GDP (Gross Domestic Product¹⁷) and incorporate invisible work forces - health and happiness and the real environmental costs and benefits.

⁸ See glossary 7

⁹ See glossary 8

¹⁰ See glossary 45

¹¹ See glossary 13

¹² See glossary 9

¹³ See glossary 10

¹⁴ See glossary 11

¹⁵ See glossary 12

¹⁶ See glossary 13

¹⁷ See glossary 14

We strive for everyone's right and possibility to seek happiness. A good life is far more important a goal than economic growth, full employment or maintaining a welfare state – although all of these have their part in reaching the goal of a happy society. It's not up to politicians to decide what makes a person happy. Political decisions can however affect people's possibility to seek happiness and prevent problems which lower happiness. Politics should create possibilities for happiness to grow instead of worrying about GDP.

To conclude, the green economy requires a revolution of our social and economic system to reduce production and material consumption and increase human well-being through the implementation of new values and priorities.

FYEG understands the concept of the Green New Deal as the first step towards a Green Economy aiming to reduce the intrinsic crisis of capitalism. The GND emphasises sustainable energy, Green jobs, moving towards a more service focussed economy, the reduction of working time and the redistribution of wealth while reducing our ecological footprint.

Labour and Use of Time

Disadvantaged groups are often forced to take up degrading jobs for low wages. This inequality often persists for generations.

FYEG believes that work must be fulfilling mentally, physically and socially and ensure fair wages. Working conditions must provide good health and safety, equal treatment between genders, different sexual orientations, class, ages and origins, career prospects and possibilities for further training. Thus, the labour market must recognise workers as holistic human beings, taking into consideration all their needs.

Everybody must have the right to organize their work in the most suitable manner for themselves. We strive for a reduction of working hours. This way we can create more jobs, reduce consumerism¹⁸ and recognize the time necessary for social interaction and care work. However, the reduction in working time should not lead to a disproportionate reduction in purchasing power¹⁹.

We strive to change our understanding of work; from working for wages in order to fulfil short term consumerist desires to a balanced life of work and free time which enables us to live fuller, more sociable and enjoyable lives. The role of work must also be seen as a way of meaningful participation in society, and every person must have the right to participate and find suitable work.

¹⁸ See glossary 8

¹⁹ See glossary 15

The cooperative²⁰ business model can be the first step towards the systemic reorganization of the labour market and production factors. Cooperatives are also integral to democratising our economy, vital if we are to transform our society towards a fair and sustainable world.

Fiscal and Monetary Policy

We want a fair fiscal system²¹ with three main goals: to support a strong welfare state, reduce social inequalities and incentives for green and sustainable investments. We stand by the principle of progressive taxation on wealth, which also needs to internalize environmental costs to make polluters pay.

Fiscal and monetary policies²² are basic economic instruments. Debt, deficits²³ and surpluses²⁴ are important tools for equalizing macroeconomic trends²⁵, through a systematic increase in structural debt undermines intergenerational solidarity. Especially during a recession, fiscal and monetary policies should be used to reactivate the economy, invest in meaningful assets and hence create jobs.

FYEG opposes budget cuts without a socially inclusive debate. Knowing the danger of high inflation²⁶ for the whole economy, measures must be responsible and carefully considered. Nevertheless, interest rates must not be managed simply in terms of limiting inflation without consideration for jobs and the impact on income distribution.

At the European level, we believe tax harmonisation²⁷ is necessary to avoid a race to the bottom regarding the lowering of corporate and income taxation. Additionally, fiscal systems must work together to eliminate fiscal fraud, tax evasion and tax loopholes. We demand a new structure to regulate financial markets and the implement a financial transaction tax to reduce speculation and produce positive incentives for investment in the real economy²⁸.

Regarding the Euro-zone, we cannot expect it to work efficiently or at all without a political union, which involves common social and economic policies. Therefore, we need a real fiscal union, with a Eurozone Treasury and a suitably substantial budget in order to apply effective fiscal policies.

²⁰ See glossary 16

²¹ See glossary 17

²² See glossary 18

²³ See glossary 19

²⁴ See glossary 20

²⁵ See glossary 21

²⁶ See glossary 22

²⁷ See glossary 23

²⁸ See glossary 24

Financial Markets

FYEG opposes the development of an unrestrained financial sector in recent decades. This sector has hijacked the process of accumulation²⁹, creating new financial instruments and innovations which undermine the value generated in the real economy. The deregulated financial sector also continues to have a very disproportionate and tyrannical influence on our democracies.

The financial market, the banking system and the qualification agencies³⁰ must therefore be strictly regulated and preferably democratically owned through cooperatives to put finance at the service of the economy and the people, not the other way around.

We believe the financial system must recover the coherence between production and consumption. We need a new global financial architecture to break down the logic of growth based on the growing debt of central countries accompanied by the creation of a semi-periphery³¹ which produces manufactured goods and a periphery relegated to provide raw materials. We must break with the logic of unequal development and with the neo-colonial exploitation and conditions it imposes.

Energy

The insatiable extraction and consumption of fossil fuels for energy has underpinned the evolution of our capitalist economic system since the industrial revolution. However, our continued dependence on fossil fuels now threatens society itself. Burning these fuels releases greenhouse gas emissions, the principle cause of anthropogenic³² climate change which now threatens the stability of global society putting hundreds of millions of people at risk.

Furthermore, we are simply running out of conventional oil. Resource scarcity will result in rapidly increasing prices and economic shocks disproportionately affecting vulnerable groups and the Global South³³. The economic, political and hegemonic structure of our energy system promotes increasingly extreme extraction methods, such as mountain-top removal, fracking and coal-to-gas, in order to utilise dwindling fossil fuel resources. These methods and products should be banned entirely.

Therefore, we urgently need to revolutionise our energy system over the next decade, transforming fossil fuel infrastructure into a green, socially equitable renewable energy system.

In doing so, we must be aware of false solutions, both technologically and systemically. Nuclear power, with its risk of considerable harm and pollution, must be decommissioned, as it has no part to play in our energy future.

²⁹ See glossary 25

³⁰ See glossary 26

³¹ See glossary 27

³² See glossary 28

³³ See glossary 34

Carbon capture and storage³⁴, geo-engineering³⁵ and other technological 'solutions' which perpetuate the burning of fossil fuels, conveniently without challenging the status quo and with considerable risk to society, are no solution and hence must not be prioritised and considered with caution. Measures must be taken to fight the causes of the problems like too high emissions, unsustainable consumption of natural resources and not simply the consequences.

FYEG proposes not just technological solutions but a transformation of our energy system as a whole, re-conceptualising how we produce, consume and own one of the most fundamental resources of society. Renewable energy technologies such as wind turbines and solar photovoltaics enable the decentralisation of our energy supply.

But decentralisation must also be a social priority; enabling communities to better understand and decide how their energy is produced and profiting from energy production. This can help strengthen the role of communities in society and help to progressively challenge the centralised corporate dominance of our energy system, which continues to create significant obstacles to transforming our energy supply.

A European institution must coordinate our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, ensuring increases in efficiency, the most effective immediate step, are not simply matched with an increase in consumption resulting in ongoing unsustainable levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

We must also hold Europe fully accountable for the products we consume and the impact these have on people and the environment globally. Moving polluting industries to other countries with less strict regulations enabling continued pollution must be fully accounted for and Europe must take full responsibility for these emissions. The EU must also become a leader in renewable energy research, development and installation and must also lead politically at international climate negotiations. The EU must provide access to its gained knowledge and developed technologies and offer support in international climate negotiations to bring forward the energy revolution globally.

We have a diminishing window of opportunity to address climate change. We must act immediately to address not only the technological but importantly also the socio-economic causes of and solutions to climate change. This means transforming our energy system through decentralisation of supply coordinated at a European level but benefiting the communities who produce the energy and challenging the current outdated centralised system of supply.

³⁴ See glossary 29

³⁵ See glossary 30

❖ Social Europe

FYEG wants an inclusive Social Europe in which social justice prevails. Thus, we demand social policies to guarantee citizen's emancipation. Basic Income³⁶, progressive taxation, public pensions, free education, public health care and guaranteed access to housing are the main elements to achieve a redistribution of wealth³⁷ and a more equal society. The implementation of a basic income system must not result in an abolition of existing social rights and benefits. We see basic income as a crucial and important complementation of existing social benefits.

Welfare State

FYEG opposes the model of global neoliberalism³⁸ which destroys the presence of the state in the economy and does not recognize socio-economic rights. We recognize socio-economic rights as the basis for the existence of social policies. All members of society should have equal rights. Thus, we believe in the concept of a social citizenship. Every individual has the right to live a life independent from family and the market.

The welfare state must guarantee citizens emancipation and must be based on the principles of universalism. Rights must be de-commodified and must be of a high social standard. De-commodification of the status of individuals vis-à-vis³⁹ the market means to ensure emancipation of individuals from the market and entails citizens to opt out of work with the life-long approach, without losing their job, income or general welfare.

We believe that the first step is the implementation of a basic income scheme, which recognises the fundamental value of every person in society and also the value of unpaid work. It allows people to make decisions independent of economic factors and to engage in socially useful activity outside of the monetised economy such as caring and volunteering. Moreover, it gives workers more bargaining power within the labour market.

The welfare state must also cater towards the needs of certain groups in order to avoid social exclusion and poverty. Poverty is more than the lack of financial resources and income; it encompasses vulnerability, precariousness, the lack of opportunities and the denial of rights. It can be described as a state of limited social, cultural and political participation. The rules of competition and the free market must not be applied where they collide with socio-economic rights.

³⁶ See glossary 31

³⁷ See glossary 4

³⁸ See glossary 6

³⁹ See glossary 32

State ownership of social services means these services are democratically accountable. Therefore the privatization and outsourcing of social services is unacceptable. We also believe that a functioning welfare state generates more good than a narrow budgetary view can indicate, a financial deficit⁴⁰ being more bearable than unanswered social needs.

Employment and Labour Unions

Employment policies setting out the parameters for working conditions and relations must be deliberated over by all concerned stakeholders. We recognise this dialogue as a crucial step to improving workers' rights and we recognise the role and importance of strong labour unions and legislation in creating and maintaining high labour standards.

FYEG strives for a European Welfare State which enables disadvantaged group's emancipation and access to a labour market which guarantees decent work.

We see Green jobs not only as those created in renewable energy and recycling sectors, important though they are. Our concept of Green jobs also includes those jobs which fulfil our concept of a Green economy as previously described. Green jobs therefore must increase equality between classes and close the gender pay gap. They must also eliminate precarious contracts and involuntary part-time employment.

We denounce the weak position of youth in the European labour market and the disproportional effects of economic crises on young people. Despite being the most educated generation ever, we find it increasingly difficult to get a decent and stable job. Young people need a stronger lobby in Europe. FYEG advocates youth rights especially when it comes to labour policy.

A strong legal framework guaranteeing the formation and action of labour unions is needed in Europe and at the EU level. We call for the ratification and implementation of all provisions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)⁴¹.

Finally, the creation of Green jobs and reduction of unemployment and discrimination in the labour market must be overcome by an alliance of labour unions, worker cooperatives⁴² and social and political movements. We strive to build strong relationships with the aforementioned organisations and movements as part of our role in creating a fair, sustainable society.

⁴⁰ See glossary 19

⁴¹ See glossary 33

⁴² See glossary 16

Pensions

FYEG believes access to a pension must be a social right. Pensions must enable the elderly and certain dependants to have a decent standard of living. States must provide a decent, public and universal pension scheme for all citizens, based on progressive income taxation which also guarantees future generations access to decent pensions.

Pension funds must be publicly owned reducing risk and enabling the state to make socially useful investments. Over and above compulsory pension commitments, further and unlimited voluntary investments in public pension schemes must be allowed. The financial benefits of a public pension fund must not be applied to the private sector.

EU pension schemes must be harmonised to enable the free movement of workers. Any pension negotiations must be undertaken with suitable dialogue and conditions for workers.

Education

The universality of public education is at risk and is increasingly becoming marketized. Formal education is becoming a process simply to prepare people for the labour market. We believe education and self-cultivation have an intrinsic value and are always to the benefit of society and therefore must not be viewed or practised in these narrow terms.

FYEG believes education must be a basic social right, free, plural, equally accessible to all, gender-sensitive, of high quality, and meet the individual developmental needs of each person. Education should be holistic and inspire a hunger for academic and non-academic learning. Formal, non-formal and informal education is the preparation for a complex world and must provide knowledge and skills needed to fully participate in society.

We believe the current education model should be radically democratized, creating collegial instead of authoritative relations. This is important not only for knowledge and creativity, but even more for understanding non-hierarchical and democratic values at early ages.

Schools, universities and non-formal education centres must be intercultural and non-discriminatory; they must not be divided by age, sex, religion, ethnicity, origin, disabilities or legal status.

We seek real alternatives to higher education. There must be greater support for apprenticeships and employment oriented training for young people, especially women, including lifelong training and learning programmes.

We value the advantages of non-formal education. We are against the categorization of people based on formal qualifications. Non-formal education has to be supported by the state by providing resources and time and by labour markets by recognizing its value as one form of education.

Health

FYEG believes that access to healthcare is a human right and must be free.

Health begins with a healthy lifestyle. Prevention and education on healthy lifestyles must be the cornerstone of all healthcare policies.

Healthcare systems must be based on prevention, be accessible, non-discriminatory and adjusted to every individual's needs. Healthcare must also consist of psychological and social care. Treatment must be free of religious, cultural or traditional limitations.

Pharmaceutical corporations are not transparent and often profit at the expense of public health, especially in the Global South⁴³. Therefore, we demand a fair, publicly owned pharmaceutical sector to compliment the private sector.

We strongly support the donation of organs and urge for an international transplant system.

Sex education, including education on contraception and reproductive health care must be introduced from an early age in formal education and respect different genders and sexual orientations. We oppose prejudices and discrimination, such as zerophobia, towards people living with sexually transmitted diseases.

We support the demystification of drug issues as it leads to a more open and realistic debate on drug policies. By legalising drugs, health risks will decrease and drug-related crimes will be reduced. Drug policies should be based on the principle of damage minimisation and rehabilitation must be provided within the public healthcare system. Rehabilitation methods need to be developed to become more effective, and must not include practices which endanger human freedoms.

All human beings have the right to make decisions about their own bodies and life. Women must have the right to decide about their own bodies without economic restriction. Thus, abortion needs to be legally defined and freely provided. Assisted suicide should be accessible to everyone suffering from unbearable physical or mental suffering.

⁴³ See glossary 34

Housing

FYEG believes housing is a basic human right and that housing should not be treated simply as a commodity. The housing market must fulfil people's needs and not be reduced to profit maximization. We deplore financial speculation on people's homes and believe that people must not be left without decent accommodation under any circumstances.

As a consequence of the unregulated private market, many people have been made homeless or are often subjected to low quality, temporary, overcrowded housing which has adverse psychological and physical effects. We are committed to fighting homelessness, which represents one of the most brutal and blatant forms of poverty and exclusion in European societies.

Gentrification is also a problem that affects many European cities. The phenomenon of mass tourism, together with the before mentioned unregulated housing markets, evict people from their own homes. Such a problem affect especially young people, who cannot fulfill our life projects as independent persons if we cannot have a place to live in with dignity.

Social housing must be made available, offering a long-term quality solution. We oppose processes of gentrification, which increases house prices and produces socially homogeneous neighbourhoods, forcing people to relocate often against their will.

Homes must be affordable to those who most need them, ecologically sustainable and provide quality amenities to foster community cohesion. We also believe housing cooperatives must be strongly encouraged and have access to adequate financial resources. In this way, new models of housing ownership like cohousing should be encouraged and made available to citizens. Tools that break the constant struggle between privatization and public ownership must be put forward. The only way that such changes can last in time is to build a community that can defend and act by itself.

Urban planning must be utilized to suitably increase urban density, and reduce urban sprawl. This is both ecologically and socially beneficial.

Transport

People have a right to mobility and the use of transport. It is necessary to invest in, expand and promote public transport and to guarantee free access for everyone. There is a need for improved infrastructure and a shift to sustainable and eco-friendly forms of mobility and to think of mobility as a complex concept, involving different vehicles and ways of travelling.

All the external costs of private transportation have to be included to show that it is extremely expensive and occupies a lot of our space. Schemes for sustainable transport should be supported by economic incentives like eco-taxes on fossil fuel.

Local and regional consumption of goods should be encouraged. Transport of living animals, waste and dangerous products must be kept as short as possible and eventually discontinued. In industrialised countries road traffic, harbours and airports must not be extended.

We believe in a democratic and open planning system which we believe would reduce the need for transportation.

Cities are expanding and the principle of urban mobility must be respected. Car free cities open possibilities for urban mobility around pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and the reoccupation of public space by people. In this way, cities play their role in genuine ecological and democratic change.

Public Space

FYEG conceives of public space as a place of meeting for reflection and casual and formal socialising. Public space provides places for public audiences, for street art and expressions of protest all of which are fundamental to democracy and community well-being.

Unfortunately public spaces are being sold off to create high street shopping centres or are having measures put in place limiting people's right to meet and gather. We must immediately stop this destruction of public spaces, our squares, streets, gardens and town centres.

Therefore we demand an immediate stop to the transformation of public space into private spaces.

All arbitrary restrictions of civil liberties in public space are unacceptable and such legislation must be repealed. Further, we deplore and seek to limit the visual pollution of public space by excessive presence of ad-campaigns.

Access to Culture

FYEG believes that free access to culture is a basic right of the people. The abusive economic exploitation of culture through restrictive systems such as marketisation and copyright, are an impediment to free access. As a solution, we propose new models based on free sharing.

States must also provide free access to all cultural content in their possession. Social centres must be freely available and under the democratic control of local communities.

◆ Global Justice, Peace and Human Rights

The current neoliberal⁴⁴ institutions protect large corporate interests but not people or the environment. We believe that another world is not only possible but also urgently needed. We demand Global justice!

Neoliberal Globalization

FYEG stands for global justice and equality between countries. We oppose the current neoliberal globalisation promoted by the World Trade Organisation (WTO), World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), whose model continues to enrich major multinational corporations and financial institutions at the expense of the Global South⁴⁵, certain social classes and the environment.

Neoliberalism supports the privatization of national industries, deregulation and enhancing the role of the private sector while restricting or eliminating the role of the state. It undermines local decision-making and exploits local populations. Under neoliberalism restrictions on corporations and capital are removed, while boundaries are maintained for local and other communities.

Neoliberalism leads to high levels of social exclusion, destruction of labour unions, large disparities in income, increased poverty, poor and unequal education, poor healthcare and high rates of crime and incarceration. It reinforces the North-South divide and maintains neocolonialism.

This stems from a long history of exploitation especially by European powers. The industrialisation of Europe was based on the slave trade and mass atrocities by the colonial powers who extorted raw materials through force. Most of the raw materials necessary for the continued material growth of our economies still comes from the Global South, but the companies extracting them are based in the Global North⁴⁶.

Following the end of colonialism, neocolonialism now prevails. Global institutions like the United Nations Security Council, WTO, WB and IMF do not represent the population of the world.

Another Globalisation is Possible

FYEG fights for global justice. We believe that an alternative form of globalisation based on global justice, cooperation, democracy, engagement and the free flow of information is possible. We are in solidarity with the global marginalised majority and press for fairer global structures and institutions, which need to be reflected in the economic system.

There needs to be democratic ownership of natural resources by the people.

⁴⁴ See glossary 6

⁴⁵ See glossary 34

⁴⁶ See glossary 35

We support grass-roots organisations, indigenous people's movements and democratic leaders in their efforts to push for global justice. We thus support institutions such as the World Social Forum (WSF) and the United Nations Economic and Social Council (UNESCO). The WSF seeks to develop an alternative future through the global engagement of civil society, social movements and NGOs. We are part of a decentralised debate, exchange of experience and knowledge and coordinated action working towards a fairer and sustainable world as a legitimate and democratic alternative.

The United Nations

The United Nations was born out of the terrible experiences of the world wars. However the nations governing the UN did not succeed in creating a safe, secure and fair world. With its organisations and its Human Rights Conventions it aims at ensuring freedom and well-being for all. The UN aim of development must not be reduced to abstract millennium goals, a policy of global justice can only be achieved with a fair distribution of wealth⁴⁷ and power.

In order to be strengthened, the UN needs to be democratised. We demand the dissolution of the UN Security Council. We call for a democratically elected UN Parliamentary Assembly, which should elect an executive committee giving fair representation to different global regions and legitimacy to the decision-making bodies of the UN.

The UN General Assembly must implement economic and social policies so as to achieve global justice, opposing the hegemonic policies of the WTO, WB and IMF.

Human Rights

FYEG demands human rights to be universally recognized and respected. To achieve this goal we need a strong global network of civil society, supported by education and training instruments. International conventions are an important tool, as are the internal workings of the United Nations to enforce them, by naming and shaming, international pressure, and sanctions. However, human rights go beyond international agreements; they begin from the needs of each person, within each society.

We condemn the practice of abusing human rights in international politics as an argument to pursue own national interests. Human Rights, which essentially evolve and develop, need to be transversally included on all institutional levels, along with corresponding monitoring mechanisms.

⁴⁷ See glossary 4

We acknowledge that the basic rights, dealing with civil liberties and participation in political life, are still causes that need to be fought for, in Europe as elsewhere. This however should not hold us back from participating in the struggle for new human rights.

We are in favour of a stronger international human rights regime working in cooperation with regional human rights courts. We support the establishment of effective possibilities to judicially prosecute breaches of human rights on the global level, since there is currently a wide gap in internationally concerning the real implementation of human rights. We strive for an impartial institution to bring perpetrators of the Global South and the Global North to justice, if justice cannot be implemented regionally.

Peace

FYEG is committed to the vision of a world without weapons, armed conflict and war. We understand peace to be more than the absence of war and pacifism as a necessarily transversal concept, which affects different areas of policy. Peace has to be built every day by reducing sources of conflicts such as poverty, injustice and discrimination. To achieve this, all actors must take responsibility and promote human rights.

Everybody has the responsibility to prevent the outbreak of violence using all legitimate means available. Therefore we support the responsibility to prevent and demand its institutionalisation on the UN level. The use of violence can only be the very last resort of political action. Decisions that lead to the use of military force must be transparent, fully accountable, democratically legitimized and reasonably justified.

We maintain a high degree of suspicion with regards to the "Responsibility to protect", due to the potential for abuse. It has too often been used to legitimize actions beyond protection of civilians. However, we are not inherently opposed to "Responsibility to protect", as it may provide a means of last resort for the international community to protect civilians against abuses on a mass scale.

Military intervention must require a UN mandate. Intervention should only be mandated to stop mass atrocity crimes and must be strictly limited in mandate and action.

We oppose the maintaining of large military forces which we see as a waste of resources that should go to other priorities and aggressively provocative towards other groups and nations. Therefore we support the continued reduction of arsenals by destruction of obsolete material and material swapping between nations. Furthermore, we demand the end of all weapon production under profit logic, retaining only that necessary to comply with the international community's responsibility to protect. All subsidies to the armaments industry must be ended.

In this context nuclear weapons must be highlighted. Development and testing of nuclear weapons must be banned globally and the process towards total nuclear disarmament must continue with increased urgency.

We believe that structures such as NATO⁴⁸ go against the fundamental aim of European construction that is to spread peace. By its historical purpose, narrow militaristic outlook and fundamentally undemocratic structures, it should not be a model for the future. We therefore think that NATO must be dismantled.

For the EU to truly represent its ideals and values in foreign politics, non-violence and co-operation policies are powerful tools and must be utilised. Therefore we demand the creation of a European Civil Peace Corps, as a non-military structure, in charge of creating and preserving peace. Members of this Corps should be trained in the skills of non-violent conflict resolution, and should be employed as both a preventive and a curative measure.

We oppose the state's right to force participation in military training and activities. Any forced service must be abolished.

Migration and borders

FYEG believes that freedom of movement is a human right, migration is not a crime and no human is illegal. We demand legal protection and residency status for migrants and respect for their human rights. We strive for the complete abolition of borders and the unquestionable right for everyone to choose a place of residence.

The current EU border policies institutionalize racism and social stratification. Militarized agencies are not a viable way of meeting neither the challenges of global migratory flows nor the needs of migrants and refugees. Europe has become a fortress while migrants are exploited as a cheap labour force on the basis of their vulnerable status. As such FYEG is convinced that FRONTEX⁴⁹ must be abolished.

We are against externalization of European borders. These policies are interfering in migration patterns which are beyond EU borders and as such are implemented outside of any legal and legitimate context, representing a direct attack on human rights. European policies need to focus on mitigating the actual reasons of forced migration and offer substantial help.

Though the European Union supports the free movement of goods, capital, services and people, these freedoms end at its borders. We demand the immediate implementation of a common European border policy respecting fundamental human rights. The EU must harmonise asylum procedures reflecting the principle of solidarity and inclusive Europe, while actively supporting the UNHCR⁵⁰ resettlement programme for refugees.

⁴⁸ See glossary 36

⁴⁹ See glossary 37

⁵⁰ See glossary 38

A fair and humanitarian asylum system must be based on understanding of and respect for the needs of asylum seekers.

❖ Identity, Equality and Inclusion

Through identifying links between multiple levels of discrimination, we are able to fight for an equal society. We must smash patriarchy, class division, racism, fascism and every other system of oppression.

Identity

FYEG stands for an open, intercultural and fair society where individuals are free to express themselves and pursue happiness. The division of people into groups based on various personal attributes limits and is in opposition to the concept of identity. The different norms that societies implicitly or explicitly rely on are not only subject to change throughout history, but also often constitute a form of violence against those who do not fit these norms.

Ideas and stereotypes that are labelled and justified as natural are usually socially constructed norms. The concept of normal has been built on the social values, rules and institutions dominated by rich senior white men. This discourse has been imposed on all of society and needs to be deconstructed.

The practice and acceptance of this concept oppresses not only women but all individuals with a different identity. Further, different forms of oppression⁵¹ often interlink to form multiple oppression on certain groups and individuals. These interrelated structures of oppression degrade society as a whole.

We believe that humans should not be forced to choose between identities as if they were mutually exclusive choices. We welcome movements that break up old norms and stereotypes. Any discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, class, appearance, age, disability, religion, political ideas or any other category is unacceptable. To us, society must be open and inclusive and not demand mono-cultural adaptation⁵².

Equality and Non-Discrimination

FYEG sees discrimination and repression as a form of violence. Too often, injustice is taken as natural and constructed norms remain unquestioned. Knowledge, experience and exchange with people who experience discrimination can weaken existing stereotypes and open the path towards a better society for everyone to enjoy.

Society must acknowledge discrimination. We advocate the creation of awareness-raising and monitoring institutions on discrimination.

⁵¹ See glossary 39

⁵² See glossary 40

Information should be collected to expose existing injustices and must also have influence on the policy-making process.

We demand all necessary instruments and policies to eradicate all kinds of discrimination and move towards an equal society. To reach this, all policy areas must integrate the idea of inclusion.

Social Classes

FYEG recognizes social class as the main obstacle to an equal and fair society. Classes are the social stratification due to power relations in the labour market and the economic system. People with the same social, economic and educational status belong to the same social class.

Social class often determines the possibility of a person to participate in society, particularly in decision making processes. Culture, education, economic background and social contacts reinforce stratification and power structures.

FYEG strives towards the elimination of social classes creating a society of genuine equal opportunities.

Gender

FYEG recognizes gender as a social construct and a product of patriarchy. We believe that all roles and divisions based on gender hide a relation of power. Therefore we oppose the binary gender system and demand neutralization of gender based differences in society. This power relation and the norms it establishes oppress both woman and men.

This powerful system affects human beings in the most intimate areas of life. Patriarchy imposes a false dichotomy on societies: a masculine domain, which centralizes political, social and economic power, and a female domain of the private sphere. Activity in the female sphere, such as care-taking within families, is not recognised as socially or economically valuable and thus renders the contribution of women invisible.

Moreover, our economies take advantage of this model by externalizing care costs to families and thereby effectively to women. All those who are capable should equally share care work. We support measures that give people, regardless of their gender, possibilities for care taking without being penalized in their careers.

Language and symbolic expressions in society perpetuate and reinforce gender discrimination in an almost invisible way. We ask for a gender sensitive language, still bearing in mind that gender is not a binary concept.

We demand that sexual harassment and gender violence be considered violent, criminal acts and that they are legally prosecuted. The victim should not be blamed for

having been assaulted. Instead, adequate resources for helping the victims of sexual assault both in their legal fight and psychologically, must be made available.

Feminism

FYEG declares itself a feminist organization. Feminism, to us, refers to both the fight against patriarchy and the desire to go beyond binary gender divisions. We see discrimination against women as a form of violence present in politics, the labour market, our education and private life. We identify queer theory⁵³ as a promising intellectual framework to go beyond gender structure. In order to reach a gender neutral society we support the use of quotas in favour of women as a first step towards equality. We therefore advocate quotas as a transitory measure to empower women.

We acknowledge with grave concern, that women* and girls are often exposed to serious forms of physical violence such as domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape. Thus we demand the legal definition of rape to respect everyone's self-determination. Rape is generally defined as sexual intercourse with a person by forcible compulsion; or sexual intercourse with a person who is incapable of consent by reason of being physically helpless or mentally incapacitated; or sexual intercourse with an underage person. We demand it to be defined by lack of consent, not by the threat of violence.

We acknowledge gender-based discrimination of women in the labour market. Thus we demand equal pay for equally valuable work and an end to discrimination based on pregnancy and parenthood.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Intersexual, Transgender and Queer

FYEG opposes any discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Everybody should have the right to freely express their sexuality. We advocate the recognition of sexual minorities, and their rights as lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersexual, transgender and queer⁵⁴.

Sex and sexual orientation must not be registered. Legal recognition of gender identity should not be a reason for a violation of physical integrity. Education and information on sex, gender, sexual orientation and identity, especially on intersexuality and transsexuality, needs to be introduced, supported and included in curricula and the public domain.

We demand the same rights and responsibilities for all despite their sexual orientation. We demand legalization of same-sex and transgender marriage, adoption of children, artificial insemination and the entire legal framework to guarantee equality. Jurisprudence must not impose a model of family.

⁵³ See glossary 41

⁵⁴ See glossary 42

The definition of one's sexual identity should be in each individual's own hands. Everybody must be free to change sex. Right and access to sex reassignment must be guaranteed and paid for via public health care. We deplore the practice of requiring individuals to undergo sterilization before a sex change and we strive to abolish such requirements in European countries. Receiving legal recognition of gender identity must not require any medical intervention.

We particularly deplore homophobia and transphobia. We demand the de-pathologization of homosexuality and transsexuality.

We demand that the EU, its member states and civil society support and defend LGTBQ rights and LGBTQ movements in other countries.

Disability

A fair society is based on equal rights and equal access. FYEG supports people with disabilities in their fight for equal rights and access. Society has historically marginalised people with disabilities by creating special areas and by not adapting public space to everybody's needs. This denial of equal access to social, political, and economic life must end.

We demand that urbanism and architecture integrate the needs of people with disabilities and contribute to the creation of an inclusive public space for all. Accessibility benefits not only people with disabilities but everybody.

Access to braille, communication aids or sign languages must be broadened as well as access to information, media and interaction facilities for people with disabilities.

Age

FYEG is opposed to age discrimination. The description of young people as essentially immature and unreasonable is the basis for underrepresentation in decision-making processes. It is crucial to promote the participation of youth to shape the social, economic, cultural and environmental decisions, which affect them. We refuse to be "youth for youth" and seek to participate in all decision making processes as equal and respected stakeholders.

We are aware of the need for intergenerational⁵⁵ solidarity. The discourse that excludes the elderly from active participation and secludes them into designated areas is driven by the same mechanisms we denounce in the case of youth. Thus, we refuse to believe in the stereotype of senile, disillusioned and necessarily conservative seniors. Youth and the elderly are linked by an assumption that both groups are outside the economy as active labour and are therefore of lesser value, a concept contrary to all our beliefs.

⁵⁵ See glossary 11

Intercultural Society

FYEG acknowledges that European populations do not fit the idea of monolithic cultural entities at all. Europe is a diverse continent and we need to draw inspiration from this fact. Nation states were never and are not identical with any kind of coherent, static and closed culture.

To us, ideas of national identity make no sense. European policies require an intercultural perspective in order to overcome hate and discrimination towards groups that do not correspond to these nationalist norms. We also oppose the view that migrants need to go through a process of assimilation, which often includes a rejection of their own identity. This leads to institutionalised racism on a European and national level. Societies should accept complex identities and personal histories.

The institutions of our societies do not reflect their diversity. Hidden barriers and obstacles, as well as structural racism in institutions, need to be addressed and fought, especially in politics and the media, which often create a tense atmosphere with unbalanced and destructive coverage of migrant issues.

Language, as one key tool in an intercultural society, has great practical, social and cultural value. Therefore, we believe that learning foreign languages must be promoted at all levels of society. Empowering individuals to learn from others and increasing communication between people from different backgrounds is a vital first step to overcome boundaries and divisions.

Religion

For us, no religion is better or worse than others. Churches⁵⁶ must be separated from the state and no religion should have privileged status. In an intercultural society it must be possible for everyone to live in a climate of peace, mutual respect and tolerance regardless of their individual view of life in general.

In many countries this means that existing privileges need to be abolished. We stand for a secular state where religious laws are not considered as above or outside civic law. With respect to diversity, traditions and customs, religious laws, structures and procedures need to respect state laws as highest reference. This is crucial for the preservation of human rights and equality. Governments need to stay away from amalgamation of state and religious affairs.

⁵⁶ See glossary 43

Anti-Fascism

FYEG is opposed to nationalism. We reject the idea that membership in a constructed entity gives people certain traits and realise the divisive and blinding nature of such an idea.

Fascism has played a terrible role in European history, imposing monolithic identities and turning its invisible violence into open violence. The fascist attack on personal freedom and diversity as well as its crimes against humanity are the reasons we define ourselves as anti-fascist and are in solidarity with the anti-fascist movement.

◆ Ecology

Ecology is present throughout this document, and is the basis of our Green thinking. The earth has limited resources, and we have to plan our sustainable social model based on those limits.

Value of Nature

FYEG believes that nature has an intrinsic value. All conflicts between society and nature are products of an unhealthy, unsustainable and unethical perception of nature. Long-term sustainability⁵⁷, preservation of local ecosystems and stability of ecological cycles have to be prioritized and set as “necessary conditions” for any exploitation of any natural resource.

All ecological issues must be understood and solved in a holistic and interlinked way, rather than downplayed as technical issues within the field of environmentalism to be solved by technological improvements.

Since nature is a very complex system of life cycles, we have neither reason nor rationale for having blind faith in technology for fully understanding all the ecological crises, much less solving them through technical means rather than comprehensive social change.

Climate Change

Climate change is one of the greatest and most urgent crises of our current society. Without immediate radical action on a global scale humanity faces likely catastrophic climatic changes. Extreme climate and weather patterns not seen during the development of civilisation will become the norm, having potentially drastic adverse effects on humans, animals and plants.

The scientific world is unsure exactly how soon we may tip the delicate climate balance into positive feedback loops which would then leave us on an all but unstoppable path to several degrees of catastrophic global warming. We therefore urgently need sufficiently ambitious global legally binding agreement to reduce CO₂e emissions in line with scientific recommendations.

Such an agreement has to be prepared and underpinned by ambitious strategies and measures on national, regional and local level. The agreement has to be built on principles of global justice and resisting countries must be brought to a common playing field through climate tariffs. Countries in the Global North⁵⁸ must acknowledge that the largest share of global CO₂ per capita emissions originated in their countries and currently continue to do so, resulting in a widening gap with the Global South⁵⁹.

⁵⁷ See glossary 13

⁵⁸ See glossary 35

⁵⁹ See glossary 34

Therefore they must agree a suitable fund to help other countries mitigate and adapt to climate change.

FYEG demands the implementation of an international carbon tax to mitigate carbon emissions and to reduce global inequalities. Considering vested interests at play within international markets, we do not believe market mechanisms alone can adequately mitigate emissions.

All countries must increase their efforts in order to ensure atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations are rapidly reduced to ensure we do not exceed a temperature rise of 1.5°C. This figure of 1.5°C must always remain consistent with the most recent scientific recommendations with consideration to the precautionary principle⁶⁰ as described by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is fundamental to healthy ecosystems and of great importance to our well-being, both physically and psychologically. As well as being integral to the economy, biodiversity provides irreplaceable natural services; it is also a vast medicinal resource and for many also plays an important spiritual and cultural role.

We are currently facing the simultaneous ecological disasters of climate change and biodiversity loss, both of which are directly related to our society's unsustainable economic system, overconsumption, use of toxic chemicals and the related unsustainable practices and habits.

One of the most devastating aspects of biodiversity loss is the current mass extinction of species, caused by a number of serious, deep-rooted problems such as habitat destruction, climate change, land use changes, the introduction of invasive species, genetic pollution, monoculture and overexploitation.

FYEG believes wide-ranging measures are necessary to deal with these problems, including fundamental changes to our economic system and our way of life. As well as rapidly reducing our exploitation and wastage of land and other natural resources we need to ban unsustainable practices for example genetic modification of animals and plants and strictly regulate the use of various chemicals.

Immediate radical action must be taken at all levels of society from local to global and we believe Europe is financially well set to lead the way. Europe's role is especially important considering the historic damage Europe has inflicted on global ecological systems. The European Union must switch to a holistic approach to biodiversity, recognizing the direct links with climate change, agriculture, pollution, transport and energy issues. These aspects should be taken as principles in all foreign policy and development cooperation of the EU.

⁶⁰ See glossary 45

Any implementation must be taken with full cooperation of those communities affected and all stakeholders must be fully involved in the long process to address this issue.

Agriculture, Food and Rural Life

The “Green Revolution”⁶¹ brought us energy intensive agricultural practices, known as industrialized agriculture, which has destroyed ecosystems, seriously harmed biodiversity and led to the loss of fertile land which is becoming a serious problem. It brought us a centralized seed market, with high performance seeds, which need high input of chemicals and fertilizers to grow and are not able to adjust to changing conditions and diseases.

The change of agricultural practices all over the world goes hand in hand with the globalization of food markets, which set the focus on cost efficiency over sustainability. In order to compete in this market wages are reduced and working methods mechanised. This leads to monocultures and loss of work leads to unsustainable urbanisation.

Food processing and distribution has been monopolized creating significant obstacles for small farmers who don't have the money to invest in the machines they need to match the standards of big food companies.

Since the most basic and important livelihood of billions is falling apart and the food security and safety of the rest of society is under severe threat, FYEG demands immediate action: to stop unsustainable, unfair, energy-intensive, centralized practices and policies on the one hand, and to implement sustainable, fair and energy-efficient, decentralized, democratic and local practices and policies on the other hand.

There are many positive trends working towards sustainability, fairness, energy-efficiency and decentralization. Financial support for agricultural activities should be directed towards ecologically and socially sustainable practices. Organic farming must become the standard form of food production. Other forms of bringing food production closer to consumers and making it visible in everyday life in cities is also important. Community gardening and urban farming, while usually small-scale, helps us re-think our relationship to food, as well as being a positive form of reclaiming unused urban space.

Our growing need for both food and living space must be solved without large-scale expansion of either cities into rural areas or of agriculture into especially biodiverse areas.

Local seed production is needed, not GMOs and high performance seeds. The right to store and sow seeds should not be limited, and seed patents should not be allowed for human as well as for animal feeding.

GMOs are no solution to the food crisis and should be banned. They can have a harmful impact on local ecosystems and support multinational seed companies, who take away the freedom of the farmers with unfair contracts. We are however, not inherently against publicly funded research into GM products.

The unsustainable fishing practices of the EU is a serious problem for food security and biodiversity. Overfishing in European waters has led to an unsustainable amount of fish, which in turn leads to socially unacceptable fishing agreements. This leads to overfishing and destroys the livelihood of local fishermen.

Fish farming currently is a threat to biodiversity and wild fish, and massively pollutes oceans, seas and lakes. If fish is farmed, it must take place either on land or with suitable mitigation measures.

In the European Union, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is the most important tool to influence agricultural practices. Today it serves to support industrialized agriculture and export-orientated farming.

This has to be ended. Public money should go towards public goods. The CAP should support farming styles and agricultural practices which ensure biodiversity and a sustainable environment. It should support rural areas through the support of regional markets and small-scale farming, allowing local communities to be autonomous in relation to food. A change in the CAP could offer an opportunity to fight climate change by encouraging farming of edible crops instead of meat for consumption.

Bioethics

FYEG sees value also in life itself. In addition to the obvious value of ecosystems and consciousness, living beings in general must be treated with respect. We strongly oppose any misuse, abuse and objectification of living beings.

Vegetarianism and veganism are preferable over other diets, not only for their environmental benefits, but also out of respect for life itself. Lifestyles using few or no animal products should be made possible and supported at all stages of life, including public institutions. We support legislation and the distribution of public resources to reduce animal consumption.

In the life saving medical and physical sciences we strongly encourage the development of alternatives to animal testing. In all other branches of industry and science animal testing must be banned. Furthermore, we call for pain-free husbandry, especially agricultural animal farming and the introduction of adequate regulations. We want to abolish the keeping of animals for circuses. Zoos and other areas where animals are simply for people's entertainment need to be abolished and large zoos need to be transformed into parks. Hunting as a hobby must be discontinued. We need more nature reserves and programmes for the preservation of endangered species.

Conservation efforts must be decoupled from entertainment using animals such as zoos and circuses, which we see as denigrating and often abusive.

Ecology as the Fundament of Our Society

Reality has a Green bias in that there are objective limits to material growth and expansion. These restrictions set by our material reality are a frame that all politics has to work within, and the Green movement has been the first, though hopefully not the last, to recognize this.

The consumption of non-renewable resources has always been and remains a short-term option, whereas the values of nature that are destroyed by such short-term actions may remain indefinitely. All of society needs to recognize the long-term value which is being destroyed for short-term gains. Society must be re-structured to serve a long term perspective.

◆ Conclusion

This document outlines our basic political beliefs and stances. It creates a philosophical framework for action at a local level and enables the Federation to elaborate concrete topical policy papers and act politically in accordance.

Through creative discussion and debates we have improved our knowledge and established a mutual understanding across the Federation bringing our members closer together.

To bring about the much needed change in our fight for global social and environmental justice, we strive to build alliances with other political forces and actors. We shall do this on the basis of the ideas and concepts we outline in this political platform both inside and outside the Green Family.

A mandate for FYEG and its bodies is hereby established through our vision of a better future. Collectively we will fight for this future!

◆ Glossary

Democracy:

1. **E-democracy:** the use of information and communication technologies to engage citizens, support the democratic decision-making process and strengthen democracy.
2. **Free software and Open source:** publicly licensed and available source code, granting users the right to use, copy, study, change, and improve the structure or design of software.
3. **Net neutrality:** the principle that advocates no restrictions by Internet Service Providers or governments on users of the internet.

Economy:

4. **Wealth:** abundance of valuable possessions or money.
5. **Wage labour:** the socio-economic relationship between a worker and an employer, where the worker sells their labour under a formal or informal employment contract.
6. **Neoliberal:** relating to or denoting a modified form of liberalism tending to favour free-market capitalism.
7. **Materialism:** a tendency to consider material possessions and physical comfort as more important than other values such as social, cultural or spiritual.
8. **Consumerism:** the preoccupation of society with the acquisition of consumer goods.
9. **Profit maximisation:** the process by which a firm determines the price and output level that returns the greatest profit.
10. **Production factors:** factors of production (or productive 'inputs' or 'resources') are any commodities or services used to produce goods and services.
11. **Intergenerational:** between generations e.g. intergenerational equity means equality between generations not simply within generations (intragenerational equity).
12. **Intragenerational:** occurring or existing between members of one generation.
13. **Sustainability:** meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
14. **Gross Domestic Product:** the total value of goods produced and services provided in a country during one year.
15. **Purchasing power:** purchasing power is the number of goods/services that can be purchased with a unit of currency. For example, if you had taken one dollar to a store in the 1950s, you would have been able to buy a greater number of items than you would today, indicating that you would have had a greater purchasing power in the 1950s.
16. **Cooperative:** an organisation that is owned and run jointly by its members, who share the profits or benefits.
17. **Fiscal system:** of or relating to government revenue, especially taxes.

18. **Monetary policy:** monetary policy is the process by which the monetary authority of a country controls the supply of money, often targeting a rate of interest for the purpose of promoting economic growth and stability.
19. **Deficit:** an excess of expenditure or liabilities over income or assets in a given period.
20. **Surplus:** an excess of income or assets over expenditure or liabilities in a given period, typically a fiscal year.
21. **Macro-economic trends:** the behaviour of the aggregate economy, including economy-wide phenomena such as changes in unemployment, national income, rate of growth, gross domestic product, inflation and price levels.
22. **Inflation:** A general increase in prices and fall in the purchasing value of money.
23. **Tax harmonisation:** tax harmonisation refers to the process of making taxes identical or at least similar in a region. In practice, it usually means increasing tax in low-tax jurisdictions, rather than reducing tax in high-tax jurisdictions or a combination of both.
24. **Real economy:** The real economy generally refers to the nonfinancial economy—for example, manufacturing, farming, trade, and services.
25. **Accumulation:** the accumulation of capital is the gathering or amassing of objects of value; the increase in wealth through concentration; or the creation of wealth.
26. **Qualification agencies:** financial rating agencies which calculate how risky investments are.
27. **Periphery:** periphery countries (sometimes referred to as just the periphery) are those that are less “developed” than the semi-periphery and core countries. These countries usually receive a disproportionately small share of global wealth. They have weak state institutions and are exploited by more developed countries. By the exploitation of periphery country's agriculture, cheap labour, and natural resources core countries can remain dominant.
28. **Anthropogenic:** originating in human activity
29. **Carbon capture and storage:** Carbon capture and storage (CCS), (carbon capture and sequestration), refers to technology attempting to prevent the release of large quantities of CO₂ into the atmosphere from fossil fuel use in power generation and other industries by capturing CO₂, transporting it and ultimately, pumping it into underground geologic formations to securely store it away from the atmosphere.
30. **Geo-engineering:** Geo-engineering (or climate engineering) means proposals to deliberately manipulate the Earth's climate to counteract the effects of global warming from greenhouse gas emissions.

Social Europe

31. **Basic income:** income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without means testing or work requirements.
32. **Vis-à-vis:** literally 'face to face'. Often now used in the sense of 'in relation to'.
33. **International Labour Organisation (ILO):** is the international organization responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards

Global Justice, Peace and Human Rights

34. **Global South:** the collective title for states of South and Central America, Africa and most of the Asian states, considered as countries with a lower rate of “development”.

35. **Global North:** the collective title for the countries of Europe, North America and Australasia, considered highly “developed”.

36. **NATO:** the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an intergovernmental military alliance based on the North Atlantic Treaty, signed on 1949. It is a collective defence force whereby its member states agree to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party.

37. **FRONTEX:** the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union is the European Union agency for external border security. It is responsible for coordinating the activities of the national border guards in ensuring the security of the EU's borders with non-member states.

38. **UNHCR:** the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, also known as the UN Refugee Agency is a United Nations agency mandated to protect and support refugees at the request of a government or the UN itself and assists in their voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement to a third country.

Identity, Equality and Inclusion

39. **Social oppression:** the systematic, socially accepted mistreatment and exploitation of a group or category of people by anyone. In sociology, the tools of oppression include a progression of denigration, dehumanization, and demonisation; which often generate scapegoating, which is used to justify aggression against targeted groups and individuals.

40. **Cultural adaptation:** the sociological process of assimilation.

It is a socio-political response to demographic multiculturalism that supports or promotes the assimilation of cultural and ethnic minorities into the dominant culture. Assimilation usually involves a gradual change and takes place in varying degrees; full assimilation occurs when new members of a society become indistinguishable from older members and they are forced to abandon their own values, culture, history and identity.

41. **Queer Theory:** a field of post-structuralist critical theory that emerged in the early 1990s out of the fields of queer studies and Women's studies. Whereas gay/lesbian studies focused its inquiries into "natural" and "unnatural" behaviour with respect to homosexual behaviour, queer theory expands its focus to encompass any kind of sexual activity or identity that falls into normative and deviant categories.

42. **Queer:** an umbrella term for sexual minorities that are not heterosexual, heteronormative, or gender-binary. In the context of Western identity politics the term also acts as a label setting queer-identifying people apart from discourse, ideologies, and lifestyles that typify mainstream LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual) communities as being oppressive or assimilationist.

43. **Churches:** refers to all kinds of religious institution, not only Christian.

Ecology

44. **Green Revolution:** a series of technological innovations, transfers and research initiatives which rapidly increased agricultural production around the world between 1940 and 1970, but now recognised to have had negative social and ecological consequences.

45. **Precautionary principle:** Principle 3 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. Article 3.3 refers to the precautionary principle, which is widely reflected in environmental law and environmental agreements: “Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing such measures” – a statement which closely mirrors the wording of Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration.