



# TOWARDS A EUROPE THAT WORKS FOR ALL

ADOPTED AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF FEDERATION OF YOUNG EUROPEAN GREENS

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After the shockwaves of the global financial crisis swept through Europe, indicating the unsustainable nature of lax neoliberal economic policies, the answers ruling decision-makers gave to the crisis further deepened wealth inequalities through austerity measures. These measures, coupled with other factors, such as climate change, new technologies, demographic changes, and globalization, have not only led to very high youth unemployment rates in Europe (especially in Southern and Eastern European countries) but also to a stance among political decision-makers that “any job is better than none.” But we need to focus on qualitative indicators of young people and other vulnerable groups’ work experience, instead of having a fixation merely on quantitative indicators. The current generation of young people is worse off than their predecessors, pillars of European welfare states are gradually being deconstructed and labour deregulations coupled with new technologies are taking us even further away from a labour market equally benefiting employers and employees.

Young people struggle with a multilayered challenge of making ends meet, finding affordable housing, studying and gaining experience, and finding meaningful work that strengthens their skillset while making it easier for them to navigate the labour market. In certain European states wage growth only slowly follows the growth of productivity, or outright stagnates, making the gap between the level of productivity and wage levels high. This means that while economic growth is continuous, the benefits of the prosperity of said growth are not fairly redistributed in society - the producers of the increased output see little benefit of their increased production. Meanwhile, income inequality remained high in most European states in the last years, putting young employees, usually at the lower end of the wage table, into precarious situations.

We need labour policies that take young people seriously, do not discriminate against youth, support the development of young people’s skillset, personality and responsibilities, and that consider megatrends that impact work realities such as climate change, globalization, demographic changes and automation. And we need a Europe that treats its citizens on the basis of equity and advances social mobility.

**In order to combat the negative effects of the deregulation of the labour market, of the downward wage competition of European states and the precarisation of working youth, FYEG calls upon the EU, the governments of EU member states and other European states to:**

- Support young jobseekers by providing information and courses on different types of contracts to avoid widespread exploitation by employers.
- Implement the 2013 European Council recommendation on Youth Guarantee which serves as a basic guideline to assure a quality job, a quality traineeship or a quality internship to every young person after their studies.
- Ban zero-hour contracts.
- Pay workers for every hour they are required to be available to work (regardless if they get called to work or not) and have a fixed maximum number of hours they are required to be available for work written in their contract. Above this number, they can refuse to work without any risk to their employment status.
- Research and promote initiatives that would put in place a maximum amount allowed between the highest and the lowest salary within companies, organizations and corporations in the private sector.
- Ban all unpaid internships.
- Not allow internships to replace regular employment contracts and to last longer than six months (with the option of one prolongation).
- Harmonise internship standards across the EU.
- Allow trade unions or intern unions to bargain on behalf of interns.
- Put in place anonymous complaint systems for employees within independent local or national labour authorities.
- Put legislation in place that requires employers to provide new workers their contract on the first working day at the latest.
- Recognise platform workers as employees rather than self-employed workers.
- Obligate transnational and international companies and corporations to respect the national legislation on the human and social rights of their employees.
- Put in place legislation that platform workers receive a compensation that aligns with the national minimum wage (if such a minimum wage exists).
- Require platform companies to insure their workers and their equipment necessary to carry out the work.
- Require platform companies to provide access to the national social security system, including the pension system to their employees.
- Require employers not to pay women\* employees less.
- Require employers not to pay young people (including minors) less if they perform the same work as their older colleagues. Union-supported and regulated wage increases based on the number of years working in a field or at a workplace will still be permitted.
- Extend mandatory parental leave to both parents to incentivize a more equal share of childcare activities.
- Introduce an EU-wide minimum income that differs between member states based on factors such as cost of living, median income and existing social benefit systems.

- Work toward replacing the minimum wage with a Universal Basic Income system that is added on top of other social service and benefit systems to separate work from income. This has to be coupled with strong efforts to shut down tax havens and stop tax evasion and avoidance.
- Promote the idea to not raise the limit age of retirement/pension.
- Promote a decrease of the average working hours per week