



FEDERATION OF  
YOUNG EUROPEAN GREENS

## 3-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Adopted by FYEG General Assembly at its meeting in June 2015 in Tbilisi

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### **1. Analysis**

#### **Political context**

In the past couple of years we have continued to experience multiple crises which affect our daily lives: Austerity measures are continuing to dismantle the welfare state throughout Europe, and high unemployment and substandard working conditions, especially among vulnerable groups such as the youth, continue to be widespread. Governments are continuing to turn inwards and compete against each other rather than championing European solidarity when it is most needed. The rise of right-wing populism and aggressive, xenophobic and nationalist political discourse creates doubts in the future of the European project and international solidarity at large. In the European Union in particular, the rise of Eurosceptic parties and international political tension is driving some countries close to exit.

Whether it's tackling increasingly-dangerous climate change, combating tax avoidance by large corporations or providing a strong foundation for international stability and support for the Global South, the need for a coherent, cooperative Europe is greater than ever. However, people - especially the youth - feel increasingly hopeless and apathetic towards politics, particularly when it comes to the European sphere. As a diverse but cohesive, progressive and active European movement, we Young Greens have the opportunity to push for a change of course.

#### **Organisational context**

In the last few years, FYEG has grown and developed both in terms of organizational capacity and political impact. From a revised political platform and the start of a strategic planning process to

support organisational development, to continued professionalisation of our Office capacities, FYEG has been setting the foundations for long-term success.

In the last two, the Federation has gained experience in:

- **Campaigning**; with the first coordinated EU election campaign which supported member organisations and young Green candidates across the EU, and the current climate campaign.
- **MO engagement**; which is no longer limited to annual GAs and has recently included closer cooperation for specific campaigns or the collaborative elections manifesto, regional summer camps which helped develop links between neighbouring organisations, MO conferences and the start of the Twinning Cities project to develop direct links.
- **Credibility with our partners**; including supporting the winner of the #GreenPrimary for the Green leading candidate in the EU elections, more active and closer cooperation with organisations such as the European Green Party, European Youth Forum and Green European foundation.

However, we still face plenty of challenges ahead. FYEG continues to be mainly volunteer-driven, both at the federation level and at the MO level - this, combined with the fact we are spread throughout the continent and sometimes beyond, it means a lot of extra time and energy is needed for successful coordination, and sometimes even to be able to channel the enthusiasm and creativity of our members. We carry out a large number of projects and events which reach hundreds of people every year, with most of the logistical effort resting on our limited office capacity. With public budgets tightening, we are likely to see continued reduction in funding opportunities as a political youth.

This document sets out a set of priorities to support the political and organisational work of the Federation over the next three years, so that FYEG can continue to improve the way it serves its member organisations, its activists and its mission.

## 2. Main aims

The main aims of FYEG over the next few years are:

1. **Consolidation of the organisation** - ensure that FYEG has the capacities and focus it needs to fulfil its objectives
2. **Strengthening the Young Green movement** - FYEG is nothing without its grassroots, and should adopt a strategic, proactive role to support Young Greens across the continent and especially where it is needed most
3. **Achieve political impact** - many are brought to the Green Youth by a desire to make the world a fairer, more sustainable place. An organisation needs to exist not for its own sake but as part of a greater objective.

### A - Consolidation of the organisation

- **Priorities** - The volunteer and part-time nature of FYEG means there are often many different, parallel and sometimes competing lines of work, all driven by very motivated and committed

volunteers. In this context, it is sometimes difficult to prioritise work - relative to each other, and relative to the capacities of the volunteers or the Office. It is therefore important that mechanisms are put in place to allow a more effective prioritisation to take place, so that the organisation can meet its expectations whilst avoiding the burning out or just overworking of volunteers and Office.

- **Goals** - to support this, FYEG needs to take a “SMART” goal approach: activity plans, projects and proposals should have aims which are Specific (so we know how they can best be carried out), Measurable (so we know if they have been met), Achievable, Relevant to our long term aims, and Time-bound. Plans should be presented clarifying how they help meet FYEG’s wider aims and with some detail on success criteria which can be evaluated at the end of the work.
- **Funding** - with increasing restrictions to political youth organisations and FYEG’s increasing range and quality of projects, it becomes necessary to have a longer term approach for funding. The EC should work on developing three-year rather than one-year activity plans, which will allow to apply for significantly larger admin grants. Additionally, developing new and creative avenues for funding (such as crowdfunding or new partnerships) will allow us to go beyond our traditional funding sources.
- **Volunteer management** - FYEG has access to thousands of motivated volunteers in several tens of countries, often with great talents which could be of use to the Federation - whether it’s social media, graphic design, training, political communication, software... This may also include former FYEG members who are now successfully carrying out activities interesting or relevant for current members. However, current structures and processes do not allow to easily tap into this potentially vast pool of resource. A clearer set of overarching priorities may free up time to allow for a more active form of volunteer management, allowing the organisation to benefit from people who want to contribute with their time and their skills. At the same time, a more structured approach to work will help to look after existing volunteers and staff, preventing burn-out and supporting motivation.
- **Office development** - In the last few years, fundraising has allowed to increase recruitment in the Office, but the staff is still over-worked. With improved funding capabilities, access to volunteer support, and a clear prioritisation of the year’s objectives will allow the Office to carry out their jobs more easily and hopefully within decent working hours. Additionally, time that has been freed up can be dedicated to improving current processes and the development of office capabilities. We strive for having at least 3 people working permanently at the office.

The role of the **EC coordinator** is crucial to ensure that the work of the organisation is coherent and that both the Office and the Spokespersons are able to work on their specific remits.

## **B - Strengthening the Young Green movement**

- **Improved consultation** - member organisations checking in with FYEG’s work simply once a year at the annual GA should be a thing of the past. The Federation has trialled and will continue to develop interaction opportunities for member organisations, including consultation on running projects or FYEG’s voice in external organisations.

- **Proactive MO inclusion** - with regular conferences of MO representatives and updates by MOs at each GA, it will be easier for FYEG and its members to understand what situation each member is in, organisationally and politically. This will also allow to identify early on if an organisation is struggling, either with FYEG work or with their political situation, and will allow FYEG to react sooner to provide the adequate support.
- **Capacity building** - understanding MOs situations and capabilities and a more fluid communication will allow to better plan capacity building events and projects and ensure the MOs' priorities are brought into account. Specific opportunities for sharing of best practice should be identified and carried out. The budding Treasurers' network is a first trial for this, which will both give FYEG a better visibility of MOs' fundraising capabilities and hopefully allow members to learn useful skills. We are also specially trying to support Eastern European and non-EU MOs. Therefore we will conduct at least one event every year in one of these regions.

### **Integrating the perspective of non-EU countries**

- **Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe:** We strive to work very close with our sister-organisation. They have succeeded in politicising many activists and organisation in Eastern Europe. In the next three years we will make real efforts to include more organisations from Eastern Europe in FYEG and include the Perspective from non-western countries and non-EU Countries in our policy-making. We will work closely with CDN to have a common approach to our work.
- FYEG is still lacking MOs in Russia and in the Balticum, we will try to investigate the possibility to start or connect with young green movements in these areas and hope to expand our network.
- To be more present outside of the European Union, we will investigate the possibility of opening up a second office in this area.
- **Reaching individual activists** - individual MO members can currently participate in FYEG working groups and specific campaigns, events and seminars. Two projects in current development will allow to engage local and individual activists on a more consistent basis: **Twinning Cities**, bringing together local groups, and **Politicising the Personal**, bringing visibility to local and individual struggles and showcasing the diversity of activities Young Greens are involved in throughout Europe.
- **Elections' support** - a lot of FYEG's member organisations take part in local, regional or national election campaigning either to support Young Green candidates or Green political parties. This often takes up the organisation's capabilities during most of a year with preparations and campaigning, meaning that organisation is less likely to engage on the European level. Having a year-in-advance overview of expected elections throughout the year will allow to identify this - FYEG can then either understand how to support the organisations appropriately (e.g. by organising training at a time suitable for several organisations, or providing online content), or plan for slightly lower participation from that MO over a certain period. This planning should be supported by the MOs themselves, bringing up their plans for

the year to the table at the GA.

- **Agile political collaboration** - we are seeing an increasing amount of current affairs which affect several countries at the same time. As a European federation, FYEG should be able to quickly react to national events with international repercussions, in collaboration with and supporting the relevant MOs. At the same time, MOs already carry out work on similar topics but are not always aware of this. FYEG has already carried out some work in both promoting topics and struggles which individual MOs are working on as well as bringing together existing work - for example for International Women's day -, but more agile channels of communication are necessary.

The **Membership Officer as part of the EC** will be a key role to supporting all of this and ensuring the overall effect is to provide the MOs with better support rather than reducing the resources they are able to dedicate to their ongoing work. Additionally, this will provide the foundation of improved cooperation in the face of the 2015 EU election campaign, ensuring an even better, more coordinated and inclusive campaign from a political and practical perspective.

### **C - Making an impact**

- **Goals** - more goal-oriented plans will allow to better understand current and planned impact of FYEG work - whether on MOs capabilities, internal political positions, or on the wider political sphere.
- **External visibility** - press releases, street actions and political opinions should be planned with a clear idea of the purpose, the target audience and the plans to maximise the external visibility. Not all documents and actions need to have a wide external audience and may be valuable in other ways - such as training, creating video resources or networking - but being clear with this from the outset will ensure plans are more efficient.
- **Voice in the European Parliament** - as young people and as members of a progressive European political family, we have access to a resource that has hardly been used so far in FYEG: the European Parliament. Young Green MEPs are often open (and very willing!) to incorporate questions, perspectives and demands into their parliamentary work: they understand the importance of our voice - and not only those of the lobbies - being heard. FYEG should be the one to provide the space for Young Greens, regardless of their origin, to raise their voices and stories into the decision-making centre of the EU. The exact mechanism would need to be developed with time in close cooperation with the relevant MEPs, but in the first instance could include a collaborative approach to get Young Greens' questions and points asked in the Parliament.
- **Common campaigns** - the 2014 EU elections campaign and the 2015 climate campaign have both included MO participation at the planning and the execution stage. The continuation of common campaigns will support MO-FYEG cooperation and allow to continue to improve best practices. Campaigns should be carefully evaluated and build upon previous experience.
- **Other youth organisations** - in our work we interact with the spheres of a lot of other youth organisations, from local to international level, from party-political to learning-based to

anything in between. FYEG should consider the value of potential cooperation, either bringing on board different types of organisations for broader campaigns (e.g. local social work NGOs for a European campaign on decent opportunities for the Youth), or using our position in the political sphere to pull other organisations towards more progressive and sustainable positions (e.g. resolutions and training in the Youth Forum, or cooperating with other political youth organisations on common topics). Again, these strategies should be planned with a clear set of objectives in mind.

- **Youth Green wing** - one of the many ways in which we may be able to work for a better world is through party politics. FYEG should continue to work as the youth wing of the European Green Party and ensure the diversity of the youth voice is heard. Better cooperation with MOs may identify if capacity building to be able to raise the youth voice within their relevant local or national parties is something FYEG should provide.

With specific people in the EC to take on the MO-support and organisational coordination of the EC, **the two co-spokespersons** will have additional capacities to carry out and coordinate external political work.