



**fyeg**

**COMMON MANIFESTO**

for the 2014 elections to the European Parliament

## FYEG Common Manifesto

### 1. Social Europe

For a social Europe towards solidarity and against unfair austerity politics!

Europe is currently facing the consequences of a flawed economic and social model with unregulated financial markets, an uncontrolled banking system and the dominance of private profit over public well-being. Until now the only answer has been the implementation of unjust and destructive austerity measures, from which people and the economy are suffering. We cannot bail out the banks but then ignore the much more urgent bailout needed by European citizens' social standards! One of the biggest failures of Europe today is the enormous youth unemployment rate in many EU member countries. At the European level FYEG stands up for the Youth Guarantee. However, this Youth Guarantee is not enough. We need to tackle the root causes of the huge unemployment rate, which can be found both in the severe austerity measures and in the systemically unstable and harmful economic model.

European unification stems from the people in Europe standing for each other. The disregard of the basic principle of European solidarity and the common social security plays a central role in the current crises. Faced with a widening gap between Europe's rich and poor it is not sufficient to act on a national level. Today, a race to the bottom on low wages, taxes and social standards is found amongst EU member states.

FYEG stands for a common good quality labour legislation. Employment is a basic right, not a privilege; tackling unemployment, specially among youth, but also guaranteeing quality jobs, should be a top priority in the EU. A social Europe needs common minimum social standards such as a minimum wage, affordable rents and the right to quality and free healthcare and education, without ending in the lowest possible compromise. We need a roadmap to a social Europe with both short term measures and long term goals. Tax havens, tax dumping and any kind of tax competition between countries have to be stopped. In order to get a real economic union, a united fiscal system with common tax standards is needed in the EU. The banking system also needs a deep reform: FYEG demands an effective regulation of the European banking sector. High risk financial assets and activities must be banned to reduce destabilising speculation.

We need to tackle the root causes of the huge unemployment rates, which can be found both in the severe austerity measures and in the systemically unstable and harmful economic model.

FYEG demands:

1. Stop austerity politics immediately. It hits those in vulnerable positions (such as young people, the elderly, unemployed, especially women, or migrants) the hardest, is unjust, damaging for the economy and forces the citizens to suffer the consequences of corporate greed and irresponsibility. Citizens' audits of public debt should be carried out to identify what parts are illegitimate and refuse to repay that part. FYEG strives for an alternative model of

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the European economy and proposes alternative instruments to tackle the multiple crises. We want a Europe of solidarity, where those who own more and benefit more from their privileged positions, also contribute more to the common good. We want a Europe of solidarity, where banks cannot blackmail governments and we oppose a Europe, where profits are privatised, whereas losses are socialised. FYEG demands a green transition to a fair, equal and socially sustainable economy.

2. Economic solidarity through a green and progressive fiscal union. This way the European Parliament could decide how to manage the European taxes. We stand up for a high taxation on damage to nature and use of resources, and for protection of those with the lowest incomes. We demand an economy where it is not a luxury to be environmentally friendly – and the ecological transition should be financed by those who can afford it!

Fight against tax evasion by creating a European fiscal authority. Fight against tax havens, fiscal dumping and any kind of tax competition between countries, including setting EU-wide minimum taxes such as corporate tax and tax on high fortunes and heritages. Moreover the EU needs a common corporate tax base, setting the same profit-taxing rules for all companies. These measures are necessary to implement solidarity in the EU by demanding a fair share from those who can afford it to the financing of a European social model, reducing the gap between these companies and those affected by the economic system.

3. We need to protect workers' rights throughout the EU: high level common minimum working conditions, wages and employment safety standards need to be established at the EU-level to protect the workforce from exploitation for the sake of a country's "competitiveness". Promoting a stronger voice for unions and workers' representatives, giving them real weight both within companies and in political decision-making.

The founding of worker-owned businesses and cooperatives, and cooperatisation (the conversion of companies into cooperatives) must be supported and facilitated by favourable legal conditions.

4. Invert the current trend of cuts to and systematic privatisation of public services – which has proven to be a fiscal and human disaster – and support state and regional investment in fundamental public services such as education, health, housing, social services or first job programmes, to combine efficiency with high quality public services and to boost employment. Support the fact that public services such as water, energy, transportation, waste treatment, post services and communication must be brought back into public ownership and/or prioritising cooperative companies and social businesses.

5. The EU must investigate and make concrete steps in terms of wealth redistribution policies leading to an EU-wide basic income and maximum wage, without the removal of existing social benefits but as a complementary measure. We demand the abolition of bonuses and increasing the scope of structural funds in order to fund mechanisms such as unemployment insurance, parental allowance, pensions, public healthcare and innovative social investments (co-housing, agricultural cooperatives...).

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A European-wide basic income is not only a tool for more fiscal and economic independence but first and foremost a measure for neglected social groups to have access to a dignified life. Basic income is also a measure for a transition towards a real human-centered economy where the needs of the people are at the core of a non-coercive economic system.

6. Reform the banking system. For instance, the ECB needs to become a democratically controlled public bank allowed to lend money directly to the Member States or the European Commission.

Separation of retail banking from risky investment activities, and limiting the size and maximum debt levels for banks to prevent them from becoming “too big to fail”. The banking system needs a deep reform to redirect capital away from speculation and toxic financial products and towards social entrepreneurship, cooperatives and the financing of the ecological transition, with measures including the Financial Transaction Tax and the promotion of cooperative, environmental and socially friendly banks.

Furthermore, shareholders and investors should be accountable to the extent of their investments, for insolvency of a bank or company, instead of them being bailed out with taxpayer money. In addition FYEG calls for a genuine banking union, responsible amongst others for effective banking resolutions in case of insolvency. Transparency and accountable results are crucial to restore confidence in the banking sector.

7. The right to housing must be ensured in the EU. European-wide investment in affordable and social housing, providing more mobility and security for young people and greater inclusion for people from different backgrounds. Provision of legal support framework for families unable to keep up with mortgage payments for their first home and declaring their eviction illegal.

8. A European education system fit for the 21st Century: increasing investment in education and developing an emancipatory understanding of education, empowering the youth rather than creating serial employees, and supporting non-formal education, intercultural learning, human rights- and citizenship education.

The curriculum of member states' education systems should be able to provide similar levels of diversity and specialisation and should have a common European element and be fully recognised in the rest of the EU.

Reform of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) to make it more flexible, less restrictive and to guarantee the possibility of switching universities. A system that gives space to individual choices, enables the mobility of students and intercultural exchanges should be promoted.

Erasmus opportunities need to be boosted with more places and applicable subject areas to allow young people to experience Europe firsthand, and be more accessible for citizens from less favorable social backgrounds, expanded to apprenticeships and offer more opportunities to young entrepreneurs.

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9. Prioritisation of fight against Youth Unemployment at the EU level. As a transition measure before real system change is achieved the Youth Guarantee must be reinforced with appropriate funding of at least 8 billion Euros per year. The availability of formal employment, paid apprenticeships or training opportunities for young people not only in their countries of origin but across Europe must be ensured. Youth entrepreneurship-social and sustainable enterprises and cooperatives needs to be supported and strengthened.

10. The promotion of employment creation by pushing the economy towards a social-ecological transition. This can be achieved by investing in green sectors such as renewable energy, low-carbon mobility, transport and infrastructure, research and education, development, public services and housing. Small-scale economy and local production should be supported as well in order to promote energy efficiency and find pathways towards increased sufficiency. Working hours must be reduced to distribute work more equitably. Public support should not be directed towards Multinational corporations, but small and medium sized enterprises. Restructuring our economy is crucial to create a more equal, social and ecological Europe.

11. Transcend the idea of economic growth as the main economic target of economic policy. It is neither the GDP nor the "3% deficit" Maastricht criteria which tell us anything about the well-being of the people, the state of the environment or the fair distribution of time and wealth in a society. Therefore FYEG demands to turn away from these indicators as orientation factors for political decisions. We want a more social, equal and ecological society and not certain numbers – alternative indicators such as the GINI coefficient can help us to detect inequalities but should not be adhered to in a dogmatic way.

## 2. Democratic Europe

The ability of European institutions and the decision-making architecture to be democratic and participatory will determine on the future of the European project. For every common political institution, trust is essential for the interactions of people within and with the institutions. The system of the EU, with its lack of transparency and little power for directly elected bodies was so far not able to build this trust – that's why we need substantial changes in the set up of the EU institutions to base the EU on democratic participation and accountability. Europe is still perceived as a project of elites. FYEG wants to make it a project for the people living in Europe.

FYEG demands real democracy now. Without assuring strong civil rights through comprehensive access to information online and offline, free and high-quality education, implementation of digital rights, minority rights, free speech and media, a lively civil society, accountable and transparent institutions and active citizens who feel empowered to be part of debates and decisions, a society can never create a sphere of equality, solidarity and inclusion.

FYEG believes that Europe will only be able to solve the European crises if it dares to overcome its structural democratic deficits and includes its people better, restrict power of lobbies, engage people to participate directly in decisions for example through the European Citizens' Initiative and take decisions on the lowest level possible, as well as introducing the principle of democracy in companies and in the educational system. We need a European-wide discussion about the democratic renewal not only of the European Union. This will affect political institutions and benefit all parts of society including the economic sector with more control over banks, a strong workers representation and more cooperative businesses.

FYEG demands:

1. Decision-making processes must be open, transparent, and participatory.

We need to democratise all levels of society including public institutions, schools, universities, banks, cultural institutions and companies. All major governing and representatives positions of public institutions must be democratically elected, including heads of states.

Decision-making on all levels must allow people participation, including opening up the parliamentary process, the provision of digital participation and consultation mechanisms and direct democracy tools such as popular legislative initiatives, binding referendums and local participation programs.

Decision-making processes must be transparent. The relevant documentation and policy drafts of EU institutions should be publicly available. In the case of risk to individual integrity or public security, courts should decide which parts can be made public. To limit the influence of large corporations in the democratic decision-making processes, all decision-makers should publicly disclose who they meet and how often. We need to fight the high levels of political corruption.

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Legislation and its impact on different societal groups should be validated in a participatory process with an appropriate representation of authorities and the concerned groups, including ethnic minorities.

Democracy needs an informed society which is aware of its rights and where people are willing and able to take responsibility for each other.

2. Implement and ensure the principle of subsidiarity: Decisions need to be taken at the lowest level possible, as long as this is the most efficient level of action.

3. We need an institutional reform of the EU: The European Parliament is currently the only EU institution directly elected by the citizens. Therefore, the European Parliament, together with a second chamber, should have the legislative power on the EU-level. The European Parliament should have the right to elect and dismiss individual members of the EU-Commission, and have a vote on all different EU budget lines.

The Council, currently representing member states' governments, should become a genuine, elected Second Chamber, co-deciding with the Parliament and representing the regional and national diversity of Europe. It should also allow small countries to have a voice and play an important role in the democratic process.

The Commission must be democratically accountable, not to be composed of national representatives and get a two thirds confidence vote of the European Parliament.

4. Pan-European transnational lists: 50% of seats of the European Parliament should be allocated to pan-European transnational lists, with an entry threshold of 3% of the vote.

5. Work towards lowering of the voting age. Voting age should be reduced in each member state, starting with voting age 16 for the European parliament elections.

6. FYEG supports the right to self-determination of the peoples of Europe such as Friesland, the Scottish, Catalan and Euskadi referendum processes and the Northern Ireland Peace Process.

7. FYEG wants to strengthen the European citizens' initiative (ECI): there is a lot of space for improvement. The ECI should be better promoted to ensure full awareness among citizens about this tool for participatory democracy and the signature collection and other bureaucratic processes need to be simplified. The ECI should have a binding character - meaning that the Parliament should always draft a legislation proposal after a successful ECI, and citizens should have the opportunity for European wide referendum on it.

8. New Convention on the Future of Europe: A new, open, transparent and inclusive European Convention is the way to democratically reform the institutional basis of the EU and provide a common vision for the future of the Union. This Convention must be open to civil society and citizen proposals, work on the basis of open meetings, and be able to democratically decide on the scope of the reforms and the way out of the economic, financial, ecologic and social crisis in Europe, and consider the needs of minorities.

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In the Convention process FYEG advocates a Federal Europe which is financially independent from member states. The Convention must result in a new Constitution ratified by an EU-wide referendum.

9. A secure, free and open web: Access to the Internet as a basic human right needs to be protected. An open and neutral web plays a key role in processes of public debate and democratic changes. Specific instruments of digital participation in political processes need to be promoted; security of personal information and freedom of expression, including the protection of whistle-blowers needs to be guaranteed and open licenses particularly in the public administration should be promoted.

10. FYEG demands the EU to ratify the European Convention on Human Rights and Liberties.

11. The EU has a strong international responsibility towards conflicts. The EU should focus on conflict prevention, stop arms export and weapon production, ban nuclear weapons, act strongly against international weapon trade and attempt all non-military instruments and channels for the prevention of conflict escalation, always taking into account the country's holistic socio-political context.

Immediately after conflict, the EU must play a strong role in peace building and peace-keeping processes as well as rebuilding societies. This will need to include HR and peace education for everyone. We also need to ensure that all marginalised groups, including women and young people, are empowered to have a pivotal role in this process.

Development cooperation should be coordinated at EU level. It should focus on local organisations and strive for a true ownership of projects and processes by the people themselves. Multinational corporations should not have an influence on these processes of cooperation. Global solidarity work should not be used as a "Trojan horse" for neo-colonialism.

It is important to promote an understanding that global inequality is caused by an unfair and undemocratic international system and that the main policies to end global poverty need to focus on policy sectors outside of the formal development sector, which includes international trade, agricultural subsidies, and international cooperation in taxation issues.

NATO is a nontransparent and undemocratic relict of the Cold War and provides no answers to current global insecurities. Therefore it must be abolished.

No armies, no wars. An EU militia, not an army, can be formed as an unwanted temporary but necessary defense mechanism for providing local safety to Europeans.

Any long range imperialistic army vehicles and weapons should be abolished and not kept even under the excuse of defense needs. UN should be an institution without army and its decisions should be taken in a very democratic way and they should be superior to any national decisions.

The UN should solely use diplomatic, judiciary and economic measures other than humanitarian products blockades to deal with conflicts in the world. Obligatory military services should be abolished. That military service is not obligatory should be an criteria for accession of candidate countries to the European Union.



### **3. Gender and LGBTQ+**

(Lesbian, Gay, Transgender & Transsexual, Queer and everybody else who doesn't fit into the dominant sexuality and gender norms)

Smash Patriarchy – it isn't going to smash itself!

FYEG is a feminist organisation since we identify patriarchy as the dominant matrix of values which is discriminatory and violent towards women, LGBTQ+ people, socially disadvantaged people, and migrants.

Thus FYEG demands:

1. Discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity must end. Anti-discrimination laws, with concrete measures, programs and effective punishments must be introduced and implemented in member states and at EU level. Particular attention needs to be paid to fight intersectional discrimination, such as double discrimination on the basis of people's ethnicity and/or race, gender, gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

2. Hate crimes and violence based on sex, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity must be recognised in criminal codes and such crimes must not stay unpunished. Court processes must be sensitive and leave no space for double discrimination and the victimisation of the survivors of such crimes. The state and its representatives must never tolerate any acts of violence committed out of homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, racism or any other group-related misanthropy and should send strong messages about it to the public.

3. Concrete measures must be taken to combat the under-representation of women in politics and the economy to ensure that a certain proportion of seats are occupied by women in parliament, corporate management boards, government and other levels of political and social life,. Quotas themselves do not solve the root cause of gender inequality, but are a vital step in tackling the male-dominated spheres of politics and the economy. They challenge patriarchal norms and can provide different role models. Such quotas need to go hand in hand with programs and campaigns for enhancing gender equality in all social spheres. To overcome the very significant gender pay gap, different problems must be addressed. One of them would be to sanction companies which can't justify why they pay smaller wages to women than to men in the same positions. Another would be a social re-evaluation of those jobs mainly done by women, such as care work, where wages must increase. The huge amount of unpaid housework must be taken into account to be as valuable as wage-dependent office or factory work.

4. Ensure choice of work-family balance for all EU citizens regardless of gender. Taking care of children must be equally distributed in families, arranging parental leave according to the 6+6+6 model where each parent gets six months of parental leave and the remaining six months are shared freely between the two. Equal models must be found to accommodate the diversity of contemporary families – the same support must apply to those who divert from the 'traditional' mother-father-child pattern of a family. Provide economic support to families for childcare and free of charge nurseries and kindergartens should be available to every child

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in the EU by 2020. Employers and EU funds need to contribute to parental leave and economic support.

5. Reproductive rights must be guaranteed for all people in Europe. Sexual and reproductive health must be improved and promoted with educational program in schools and to everybody who requests it. Free and available contraceptives must be provided.

The right to abortion must be ensured and paid by public health care. The state and religious norms, should not interfere with women's sovereignty over their body, sexuality and reproduction.

6. We demand Gender Budgeting for the EU-Budget. All budget related decisions have to be examined beforehand with regards to the potential effects on gender relations. In addition a thorough evaluation of the budgeting needs to be conducted in the aftermath.

7. Oppose repressive policies to LGBTQ+ people within and outside of the EU in cooperation with Human Rights organisations such as the Council of Europe as well as local and regional NGOs. We demand strong diplomatic action on countries hostile to LGBTQ+ people through sanctions of repressive governments who penalise and prosecute citizens based on gender identity or sexual orientation, or full embargoes to countries which punish LGBTQ+ people with death penalty. We demand the combination of diplomatic sanctions and protection policies to support LGBTQ+ people, especially in Eastern Europe. Political asylum for LGBTQ+ activists and people prosecuted by LGBTQ+ hostile governments must be provided.

8. We must overcome gender binaries. Recognition and promotion of gender diversity must be promoted; and necessary infrastructure, financial support and empowerment opportunities must be provided. The binormative dichotomy forcing people to identify with either a male or female identity must be transcended. As the first step in the identification document, an option for a third gender must be added. In the long run, in an identification document the category 'gender' should not be obligatory.

The binary gender system of our societies causes substantial problems, for example for intersexual people. Society and law must recognise that there are more than two genders. Intersexual people must not be forced to undergo surgery. Forced surgery must be punished.

9. We demand equal marriage and equal right of family life: Marriage laws in all EU member states should be made gender neutral. In the interim, all EU member states should recognise marriages from all other member states and ensure access to same sex marriage in other countries for people living in countries where it is currently not recognised.

There is no favored type of relationship. That's why FYEG demands that all privileges and special rights for married partners are abolished.

Adoption rights need to be guaranteed for all forms of partnerships and families.

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Forced testing, for HIV/AIDS and other STIs, on any individual should be prohibited. We also demand that trans-individuals are given adequate protection from current practices which demand that post-transition individuals are sterilised.

10. Educational institutions such as schools perpetuate heteronormativity on a daily basis and contribute to heterosexuality being accepted as the eternally valid norm of sexuality. Education in Europe generally must become sensitive towards questions of gender, sexual orientation and gender identity. Sexual education in schools should be inclusive towards gender diversity, should combat gender stereotypes, homophobia and transphobia and promote respect towards LGBTQ+ families- but not as part of religious education.

Ensure that LGBTQ+ topics, feminist and queer theory and history are part of the school and university curriculum in all member states.

All relevant institutions need to implement programs and effective response to school bullying of LGBTQ+ people and sexism.

11. Increase the visibility and dialogues in the public space of gender and LGBTQ+ issues, and the problems that gender and sexually diverse people face (in particular when it comes to communication with governments and official institutions).

## 4. Energy, Climate Change and Agriculture

The young generation will have to deal with the consequences of the environmental crises we are currently facing. The fast rate at which we are depleting nature, making species extinct and polluting our environment needs to be stopped. The depletion of our environment is continuing every day in many different forms, but this diversity of problems is not reflected in EU policies. Market based and half hearted instruments like the European Emissions Trading Scheme or emission targets are not sufficient to deal with the wide range of environmental problems our society is facing today. Old fashioned ways of generating energy have to be banned in Europe and subsidies for fossil energy sources such as nuclear need to be stopped. We need to generate our energy within the European Union in an ecological, social and local manner. By investing in renewable energy and developing a European energy network, green jobs can be created. In order to minimise emissions and to avoid dangerous global warming, energy efficiency and a reduction in the use of energy should have a higher priority in EU environmental policy.

The common agricultural policy as it is now, is not sustainable. Reforms must focused on developing more ethical and sustainable ways of production. This includes more locally and organically produced food, as well as funds for cultural projects. Quality of life projects for the countryside, preserving natural landscapes and wildlife should be part of the main focus when allocating agricultural funds. Agricultural funds should not harm the life of animals or people within or outside the European Union. Excess of production means waste of resources and energy, therefore the consumption and production of goods should be adjusted to the true needs of the people and the capacity of the planet.

Thus FYEG demands:

1. Drive Europe towards a 100% renewable electricity by 2030 model to combat climate change and ensure energy independence and self-sufficiency as part of the relocalisation of the economy. Active support for decentralised energy production and small-scale community-owned renewable generation, including a common standard for the commercialisation of small-scale generated electricity. Creation of a European Community for Renewable Energy and a European-wide energy network to allow the integration of high proportions of renewables. Convergence funds and European Investment Bank bonds should be used to fund the energy transition, and invest in green technologies and research.

Abandon energy generation based on fossil fuels: ban shale gas bores and fracking, and the extraction of oil from tar sands, end subsidies to fossil fuel extraction, import and generation, shut down of fossil-fuel power plants and ban false solution technologies, such as CCS and fusion. Aspire and take concrete steps towards a nuclear-free Europe.

Too many European countries are still relying on Nuclear Energy. Chernobyl and Fukushima have taught us how dangerous the commercial exploitation of nuclear energy is. We need a roadmap to phase out of Nuclear Energy instead of new subventions and more liberal laws on exploitation of Nuclear energy.

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Promote structural change of the production and consumption systems, prioritising sufficiency, energy efficiency and the reduction of absolute levels of energy consumption, including education on energy use.

Cut down the EU energy consumption by 50% for all sectors and all energy types by 2040 from the 1990 level. This measure would include actions such as a compulsory insulation for every building, energy efficiency for domestic needs and an increase in public transportation usage.

Promote heat grids to heat cities' cores powered by renewable energies such as bio-gas, hydrogen or biomass. The research should increase for the third renewable oil generation.

2. Develop a binding EU climate change treaty in 2015 which includes compulsory emission reduction targets - starting with a 40% reduction from 1990 levels by 2020 - and eliminates the carve-outs in the EU Emission Trading Scheme so that agriculture, forestry and other currently-excluded areas of the economy are included. The number of emission allowances under the ETS should be reduced and these should not be granted to companies free of charge. Externally, the EU should act as a global broker on climate change and provide leadership for an international binding climate change treaty. This international leadership should include a reform of international trading law through the promotion of a fair technology transfer and the decarbonisation of the economy worldwide.

3. Greenhouse gas emissions need to be taxed - minimum levels of taxation should be set at the EU level, but member states could be allowed to increase these above the minimum. These taxes should not be limited to transportation but should include all sectors.

4. EU environmental policy must be a binding minimum for all member states. Activities harmful to the environment, including carbon emissions, must be combated by EU-wide taxes, bans and regulations, which should be executed by an European environmental institution with the power to sanction states and companies who do not comply with directives or court sentences. A coherent and binding environmental policy could result in the EU becoming a visible and credible motor in the world on this subject.

5. Protection and rehabilitation of biodiversity and habitats, with measures including the connection of Natura 2000 areas, a greater push to set aside land for re-wilding, the re-introduction of disappeared species that were hunted by men - such as wolves, beavers, wild boar or bears, cullens, etc, payments for environmental services and mitigation and adaptation plans for climate change.

6. Reduction and reform of the agricultural subsidy system: end subsidies to fishing, factory farming, agricultural exports and other subsidies damaging to the small farmer in the Global South. Subsidies need to be redirected to smaller-scale farming, the preservation of natural landscapes, more ethical and sustainable means of production, such as organic farming and quality-of-life projects for the countryside and incentivising the re-ruralisation of the youth.

7. A coherent policy on land use in order to ensure food security, including avoiding the use of biofuels competing with food cultivation, and banning the clearing of forests and land grabbing (illegitimate purchase of land) by EU member states or companies.

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8. Declare seeds a common good and ban DNA patenting on existing plants. Ban GMOs in agriculture, including labeling products from animal fed with GMO. We need to guarantee the highest possible transparency in the food industry and strengthen consumer's rights.
9. Promote vegetarianism, veganism and food supplies that pay attention to regional, fair and seasonal production.
10. Promote the responsible consumption of goods and resources and fight against consumer society. We stand for a society based on culture, knowledge and services to people.

## 5. Migration and Free movement

### No Borders – No Deportation

Freedom of movement is a basic human right. Borders and the implementation of strict border controls create restrictions to the right to move. That is why FYEG believes that all borders should be removed. We want to live in a world without checkpoints, visa restrictions and Frontex.

The European Union has created a space of freedom of movement for its citizens. However the original spirit of the EU has long disappeared. Neither for EU citizens and even less for third country nationals, the project has kept the promises once made. Instead it is being reversed and gets more restrictive for everyone. We need to come back to the original values of a Europe of solidarity and openness.

People should face no restrictions to study, work and live in other countries than their home countries. Mobility inside the EU should be affordable, fast, convenient and environmentally friendly. Migration should be seen as enriching and sustaining rather than endangering societies. FYEG demands that naturalisation and double-nationality procedures be more accessible and efficient. Citizenship must not be linked to nationality, but to the place of residence. It must include the access to social, economic and political rights. Political participation is the key to more social cohesion, that is why FYEG demands the right to vote for everyone living in the EU based on the place of residency.

The EU must fight the causes of forced migrations by a fairer trade policy, and a stronger development policy. FYEG demands an asylum regime that deserves its name. We need strong protection for people that are fleeing because of war, genocide, political, religious or any other form of severe discrimination, natural disasters and climate change, undignified living conditions and economic marginalisation in their home societies. Refugees should be welcome everywhere. We take the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by word when it states that "Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution" (Art. 14 (1)) and believe that European societies have the obligation to provide protection for those who need it.

Thus FYEG demands:

1. The total ban of detention centres for migrants and detention of individuals just for migration-related reasons. Deportation of migrants must not take place. (deletion)
2. We challenge the concept of assimilation, which implies the requirement for migrants to settle into an already existing and unchangeable society, to blend with the dominant culture. The concepts of inclusion and pluralism needs to be embraced. The goal has to be an ever ongoing dialogue between different kinds of lifestyles to commonly figure out how we can live together and accept diversity. Cultural, historical and linguistic diversity must be supported, minority rights must be defended and intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding must be reinforced. The social and cultural segregation of our societies must disappear.

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3. Freedom of movement is a human right and it must be respected, within Europe, across its borders and beyond. The EU must be a welcoming and friendly place. We cannot have border policies and undemocratic and non transparent institutions which violate the rights of migrants and refugees such as FRONTEX. As a first step, visa requirements for non-EU countries should be removed. Within the EU, the Schengen Treaty needs to be widened, and we must resist attempts to water it down and reinstate internal border controls. Our goal for the long run is world citizenship.

The ongoing militarisation of borders in the EU as well as the expansion of EU border control activities to the sea and the territory of third countries must stop! EUROSUR is trying to knit a tight net of surveillance of the whole EU border region using "state of the art" technology, the "Smart Borders" initiative would register all EU-entries and exits of third country nationals through an electronic system. These projects endanger the rights of all migrants and EU citizens. Any "border management" system must have as its main purpose the rescue and protection of migrants and not the prevention of "illegal migration".

4. Since the EU contributes significantly to environmental and economic conditions which force people in the Global South to migrate, it has the responsibility to rethink all its policies. Therefore the EU must globally strive to implement better social and environmental rules. One option would be the introduction of social and environmental taxes the EU commercial borders.

5. The EU must have a responsible asylum policy. Until this is achieved, the denied asylum seekers must not be returned to their country of origin in case there is any risk of inhumane treatment. Dignified living conditions for asylum seekers must be ensured. The EU must establish a common asylum authority and a new asylum system based on solidarity which shares responsibility between EU member countries; and abolish the Dublin treaty. Political asylum must be guaranteed.

6. The EU must accept all asylum seeking refugees from conflict areas such as Syria, and increase the scope of "legitimate" reasons for which refugees can flee their countries to include, amongst others economic hardship and environmental and climate refugees. The EU cannot on one hand sell weapons which cause refugee crises and on the other hand close the border to them.

7. The EU must ensure that basic rights are equally enforced for all people living in the EU, be it migrants or nationals of member states. Economic considerations should not govern migration policy.

8. Residence permits need to be free and easily attainable.

9. Reinforce and encourage youth and workers' mobility programs and mobility partnerships, including with third countries, as it helps to strengthen a European awareness and solidarity, and supports intercultural learning. Administrative barriers should be removed.