

# Child Protection Policy

# 1. Introduction

Federation of Young Greens of Europe is a non-governmental non-profit organization, youth wing of the European Green Party with independent structures, its own legal entity and political aims. According to our Internal Rules and Procedures, FYEG members should be European, active on a national or regional level, function based on democratic principles and consist of young people. FYEG defines young as people younger than 35 years old. There is no minimum age limit to be involved with FYEG, yet our activities target those between 14 and 30 years old. According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) a child is every human below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

FYEG is an organisation that inherently fights for and promotes the rights and values of young people. It is a youth organisation that is governed by young people, run by young people, for young people. FYEG believes that young people are systematically excluded from decision-making processes or from positions of power due to age-based discrimination. FYEG fights against age-based discrimination and adultism that implies that young people are not capable of making decisions or holding positions of power by referring to them as children.

## 2. Who does this policy aim to protect?

No child or minor should have their welfare compromised through their involvement with FYEG. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that we have in place systems, processes, and clear responsibilities across FYEG for the protection and safeguarding of all children and minors who come into contact with FYEG and its activities.

This policy is developed to cover young people who attend FYEG's in-real-life activities. This policy covers people aged between 14 and 18. FYEG has a broader Safe Space (See Annex 1) that should be read together with this document.

## 3. Responsibilities

- All FYEG members are responsible for abiding by the Internal Rules and Procedure and Safe Space Policy, Anti-Sexual Harassment Protocol and Safeguarding Commitment.
- The Secretary General, Project Manager (for educational activities) and Office Manager (for statutory activities) are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented in FYEG activities.
- Every FYEG Activity has an Awareness Team, who supports the Staff in implementing the Safe Space, Anti-Harassment and Safeguarding policies.
- The Executive Committee Awareness Team can offer advice and support on the development and implementation of the policies.
- The FYEG Executive Committee is responsible for overall implementation of the policy.
- The Advisory Committee is responsible for investigating and making decisions on any conflicts or cases that arise from breaches of the policies.

## 4. Care taking for Minors during FYEG Events

Participants to an event are selected either by the EC or by the prep-team when there is one, striving for gender, age and geographical balance. The EC decides if the event is open to all or only to delegates of Member Organisations. The EC or the prep-team can't discriminate applicants based on their age. If the funders of the activity have specific regulations or requirements

regarding the age of the participants, this is clearly communicated in the call for participants.

For educational activities Project Manager, for statutory activities Office Manager is the main point of contact for the minors. The Secretary General is the main responsible for the wellbeing of the minors.

The below guidance should be followed:

- If FYEG activities require a participant under the age of 18 to spend a night away from home a special parental/guardian form should be received before this can happen, confirming that the parent/guardian are happy with the proposed accommodation arrangements and outlining the arrangements under which the member aged under 18 is being accommodated, including emergency contacts. See Annex -2 for the Draft Consent Form.
- Where possible, ensure that the minor is not traveling alone. Try to ensure that the minor is always in company of at least one responsible adult.
- Ensure that minors have given their full and informed consent to interactions and activities, they have read the safe space and anti-sexual harassment policies.
- Ensure that the prep-teams and other teams responsible in organising the events have read the safe space and anti-sexual harassment policies and are aware of their responsibilities.
- All consent forms related to safeguarding should be retained securely on file in line with data protection regulations. It should be understood that all consent from parents/carers can be withdrawn without justification and made effective immediately.

Organisers of the event shall make sure that underaged participants are not exposed to dangerous situations involving alcohol or illegal drugs.

This shall be ensured by, among others, the following measures:

- Participants below 16 and those for whom it is forbidden by domestic laws, shall not consume alcohol or illegal drugs, and one shall not offer some to them. In the event that this does take place, all parties responsible must be banned from the rest of the programme. Moreover, their respective member organisations shall be notified by the Executive Committee upon violation of these rules;
- Alcohol and illegal drugs shall not be consumed during official sessions part of the programme;
- FYEG shall look into organising sessions and parties in other places than those where alcohol consumption is central, such as bars or clubs;
- Members of the Executive Committee and the prep-team shall lead by example and abstain from excessively drinking alcohol and from using illegal drugs during an event. Additionally, two people, from either the Executive Committee or the prep-team, should be appointed to stay sober during the programme.

# Annex 1: Safer Spaces

## 1. Safer Spaces Policy

Safer spaces are evolving and not static. We have high expectations on how we behave towards each other in our meetings, actions and social spaces. Making a space safer means different things depending on the group of people involved as each group has different needs. This policy aims to be considered in every meeting involving FYEG, but the document should evolve as we learn and grow.

As an organisation we build social relationships inside and outside of meetings and actions. We commit to this Safer Spaces policy wherever we are together, this includes ensuring that ALL spaces are inclusive and harmless.

If someone violates these agreements a discussion or mediation process can happen, depending on the wishes of the person who was affected. If a serious violation happens to the extent that someone feels unsafe, they can be asked to leave the space and/or speak with one member of the Awareness Group. If necessary, the Sexual Harassment Protocol will be activated.

1. Respect! Racism, as well as ageism, GSRM-phobia , sexism, ableism or prejudice based on ethnicity, nationality, class, gender, gender presentation, language ability, asylum status or religious affiliation is unacceptable and will be challenged. FYEG has a zero-tolerance policy with any kind of discrimination, even though we acknowledge that there can be different levels in a breach of a safe space.
2. Be aware of your privileges! Including racial, class and gender privilege and/or less obvious or invisible hierarchies. Think about how your words, opinions and feelings are influenced and who they might exclude or harm.
3. Consent! Respect each other's physical and emotional boundaries, always get explicit verbal consent before touching someone or crossing boundaries. Don't assume your physical & emotional boundaries are the same as other people's.
4. Friendly use of language! Be aware of the language you use in discussion and how you relate to others. Try to speak slowly and clearly and use uncomplicated language especially when non-natives speakers are involved in the conversation.
5. Don't anticipate yourself! Avoid assuming the opinions and identifications of other participants.
6. Learning; if you don't understand something, just ask. You may be directed to a book, website or skill share to learn more. It's ok to make mistakes. Please show appreciation for the hard work of others and be considerate when you offer criticism.
7. Everyone has their turn; give each person the time and space to speak. In large groups, or for groups using facilitation: Raise your hand to speak.
8. Calling out; if you have acted or spoken harmfully, even if unintentionally, expect that someone will bring this up to you. If this happens, listen and reflect on what they are saying even if you think they may be wrong. Don't try to absolve yourself of responsibility.

This policy should be expanded with specific measures and practices to promote the creation of safer spaces.

## 2. Anti sexual harassment protocol

FYEG has a zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment at all its events, within all its structures and during all activities. This protocol is applicable for those participating in an FYEG activity (General Assembly, Strategic Planning Committee, Working Group Meeting or any other activity), members of a Member Organization (MO), or members of an online structure of FYEG, referred to as “this organization” from now onwards in this protocol.

Anyone who is subject to sexual harassment can approach one of the designated contact points responsible for receiving complaints of sexual harassment. The Executive Committee will designate an Awareness Group for anyone presenting allegations of physical, verbal or online sexual harassment. In accordance with the IRPs, the Awareness Group will be formed by two persons from the EC who are of different genders. Additionally, every Prep - Team will designate one person to be an independent contact person in our projects. However, this person shall always inform the official contact points if a procedure starts, in the case of their absence, the main contact will be the Project Manager.

When one of these procedures is open in the organization, the EC as a whole must be informed of the procedure without details of the people involved or the presented allegations to respect confidentiality. If a case involves someone from the EC, the case will be brought to the Advisory Committee (AC). The Advisory Committee will act as contact points when a case arises, following this protocol. However, the EC will not be informed until a final decision is made.

Important note:

These procedures will follow general principles such as the privacy of the survivor, confidentiality of the process and survivor’s choice and preference. We respect the presumption of innocence of any alleged harasser which is why this procedure is in place and has been approved in the General Assembly. However, as a feminist organization, we also believe in the principle of believing the survivor and putting the burden of the proof on the alleged harasser.

This procedure might be applied to an internal case of a MO if this case is related to FYEG activity or if the people involved take part in any FYEG structure. However, we will not be able to extend sanctions or disciplinary measures beyond FYEG. MOs can however adapt this protocol to their own organization.

When the designated people receive a complaint of sexual harassment, they shall:

1. Immediately record the dates, times and facts of the incident(s);
2. ascertain the views of the survivor as to what outcome they want, ensure the survivor feels safe and ensure the survivor is separated from the alleged offender unless the survivor wishes otherwise;
3. ensure that the survivor and the alleged harasser understands FYEG protocol for dealing with the complaint;
4. discuss and agree the next steps with the alleged survivor, informal, formal or outside complaints procedure (police, hospital, embassy, etc.), on the understanding that choosing to resolve the matter informally does not preclude the survivor from pursuing a formal complaint if they are not satisfied with the outcome;
5. keep a confidential record of all discussions. Records will be destroyed if the alleged survivor requests it, or before the change to a new EC. However, a record of sanctions and a brief description of the reason will be kept in a safe place;
6. respect the choice of the survivor;
7. and ensure that the survivor knows that they can lodge the complaint outside of FYEG through the relevant country/legal framework.

## INFORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

If the survivor wishes to deal with the matter informally, the designated person will:

- Approach the alleged harasser saying that the behaviour is offensive, unwelcome and must be stopped;
- Inform the harasser that FYEG has a zero tolerance policy on sexual harassment and that disregarding this policy may result in the person's exclusion from the organization
- give an opportunity to the alleged harasser to respond to the complaint;
- ensure that the alleged harasser understands the complaints mechanism;
- facilitate discussion between both parties to achieve an informal resolution which is acceptable to the complainant, provided the alleged survivor agrees,
- ensure that a confidential record is kept of what happened;
- follow up after the outcome of the complaints mechanism to ensure that the behaviour has stopped and that there is no risk of its repetition;
- And ensure that the above is done accurately and at the latest within 10 days of the complaint being made. During events, the procedure shall take place within 48 hours.

## FORMAL COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

If the survivor wants to make a formal complaint or if the informal complaint mechanism has not led to a satisfactory outcome for the survivor, the formal complaint mechanism should be used to resolve the matter.

The designated person who initially received the complaint will communicate to the rest of contact points the opening of a formal complaint procedure. The EC will be informed of this, respecting the confidentiality of the alleged survivor and the allegations. The designated person who initially received the complaint will carry out the investigation with the assistance of the Awareness Group and the independent contact person at the moment in which allegations were presented, if any. They will help the investigator with the analysis and decision making process. A procedure for online harassment shall be developed.

The person carrying out the investigation will:

- interview the survivor and the alleged harasser separately
- interview other relevant third parties separately
- decide whether the incident qualifies as sexual harassment within the meaning of this protocol
- produce a report detailing the investigations, findings and any recommendations
- if the harassment took place, decide what the appropriate remedy for the survivor is, in consultation with the survivor (i.e. an apology, a change of structure, suspension..)
- follow up to ensure that the recommendations are implemented, that the behaviour has stopped and that the survivor is satisfied with the outcome
- if it cannot determine that the harassment took place, they may still make recommendations to ensure proper functioning of the organization
- keep a record of all actions taken
- ensure that all records concerning the matter are kept confidential
- ensure that the process is done as quickly as possible and in any event within 15 days of the complaint being made

The general rule is to avoid the presence of the alleged harasser in those places/structures in which the alleged survivor moves. It is vital that the wishes and needs of the survivors are incorporated into the outcome of the complaints mechanism.

A data protection protocol will be developed.

## OUTSIDE COMPLAINT MECHANISM

This protocol seeks to create a fast and appropriate response to allegations of sexual harassment.

However, it does not seek to substitute existing regulation and legislation on this issue. We want to make clear that FYEG wants to be fully supportive with every decision of the alleged survivor.

A person who has been subject to sexual harassment can at any time make a complaint outside of the organization. Even though this organization cannot offer legal advice, the contact point(s) will accompany the person to the instance this person prefers (hospital, police, ombudsperson, law courts, embassies, etc.) if they request it.

## SANCTIONS AND DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Anyone who has been found to have sexually harassed another person under the terms of this policy may be sanctioned. Sanctions may include but are not limited to one of the following :

- Verbal or written warning
- Suspension from an elected or non-elected FYEG structure, in line with FYEG IRPs when appropriate
- Dismissal/expulsion

Depending on the seriousness of the allegations, the EC, upon request of the Awareness Group may suspend someone from taking part in any FYEG structure or activity during the duration of the process. Confidentiality of the survivor will be maintained.

In case of sexual harassment, violence or discrimination by a member of an elected body within FYEG (Financial Control Committee, Advisory Committee or Ecosprinter Board) the EC can exclude the offender after consulting the full MOs. (cf. 2.2.2). If the case arises within the EC, the Advisory Committee can exclude the offender after consulting the full MOs.

The nature of the sanctions will depend on the gravity and extent of the harassment. Suitable deterrent sanctions will be applied to ensure that incidents of sexual harassment are not treated as trivial. Certain serious cases, including physical violence, will result in the immediate dismissal of the harasser.

## 3. Guidelines for persons of contact

Read the protocol and understand every aspect

What is sexual harassment? It is unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature which:

- Violates your dignity
- Makes you feel intimidated, degraded or humiliated
- Creates a hostile or offensive environment

Sexual harassment “can include, but is not limited to”, these examples:

- Touching, pinching, stroking, squeezing, or brushing against someone
- Leering or ogling
- Making LGBTIAQ+-phobic or GSRM (Gender, Sexual and Romantic Minorities)-phobic comments and sexually suggestive signals, winking
- Sending unwanted e-mails, text messages, posting sexually-explicit jokes or content on FYEG communication channels
- Sexual comments or jokes
- Making insults based on a person’s sex or rating their sexuality
- Turning work discussions to sexual topics
- Physical behaviour, including unwanted sexual advances, touching and various forms of sexual assault
- Displaying pictures, photos or drawings of a sexual nature

Remember: Whether harassing intentionally or unintentionally, we all have a responsibility to monitor our behaviour and respect each other. Anyone who reports an incident has the right to remain anonymous. They also have the right to feel safe and respected.

### Listen and Support

It's tough to be prepared when someone tells you that they have been the survivor of sexual harassment. Remember, you can only provide support

Support and understanding are essential. It takes a lot of courage for a survivor to share their experience;

Try to provide a safe/non-judgmental environment, emotional comfort and support for the survivor to express feelings;

Let them know that they can talk with you. Listen. Don't rush to provide solutions.

### Believe

The most common reason people choose not to tell anyone about sexual abuse is the fear that the listener won't believe them. People rarely lie or exaggerate about abuse; if someone tells you, it's because they trust you and needs someone to talk to.

People rarely make up stories of abuse. It is not necessary for you to decide if they were "really hurt." If the survivor says they were hurt, that should be enough

Believe what the person tells you. It may have been difficult for them to talk to you and trust you. Unless proven wrong harassment has happened.

### Reassure

Sexual assault is NEVER the survivor's fault. No one asks to be sexually assaulted by what they wear, say or do. Let the survivor know that only the perpetrator is to blame;

The survivor needs to hear that fears, anxieties, guilt and anger are normal, understandable and acceptable emotions;

Remember, no one ever deserves to be abused or harassed.

### Be Patient

Don't press for details – let the person decide how much to tell you. Ask them how you can help;

Survivors have to struggle with complex decisions and feelings of powerlessness, trying to make decisions for them may only increase that sense of powerlessness;

You can be supportive by helping them to identify all the available options and then help them by supporting their decision making process (here refer to the protocol).

The survivor can't just "forget it" or just move on. Recovery is a long term process and each individual moves at their own pace



## Encourage

Encourage the survivor to seek medical attention, report the assault, and or contact a professional if needed. Remember, the survivor must ultimately make the decision as to what to do. They are the experts in their own lives. Don't push. Remember, support their choices no matter what they decide.

## Respect Privacy - Confidentiality

Don't tell others what the survivor tells you. Let the individual decide who they will tell. It is important not to share information with others who are not involved;

If you do need to share information for their safety, get permission by letting them know what you will share and with whom it will be shared; ie. the rest of contact points in case of a formal complaint

## Establish Safety

An important part of helping the survivor is to identify ways in which the survivor can re-establish their sense of physical and emotional safety. You are a step in the process. Ask them what would make them feel safe and how you can help them accomplish this.

If the stalking or harassment is ongoing, help them to develop a plan of what to do if they are in immediate danger. Having a specific plan and preparing in advance can be important if the harassment escalates.

## Things you can say

It is hard to know what to say to a person when they confide in you. Refrain from asking a lot of questions, instead, support them with these phrases. Let the person know that you believe that they have the strength and capacity to heal.

- It's not your fault
- I'm sorry this happened
- I believe you
- How can I help you?
- I am glad you told me
- I'll support your choices
- You're not alone

## 4. Use of inclusive language

FYEG aims to use language in its communications and its events that reflects the level of English spoken within an organisation of mostly non-native speakers. FYEG promotes the use of inclusive and accessible language within the organisation. FYEG attempts to reduce the shame of using simple language. We do this to make sure that everyone feels welcome to participate and contribute.

## Annex 2: Consent Forum

Dear Parent(s), Dear Guardian(s),

Since your child is still a minor, we need your consent for their participation in FYEG's XX which will take place from XX. We ask that you fill out the form, sign & send the scanned version by email to office@fyeg.org at least one week before the start of the event.

I / we, \_\_\_\_\_ (parent/guardian name) allow my/our child \_\_\_\_\_ (child's name) to participate in the FYEG General Assembly under the conditions stated on the Declaration of Parents/Guardians below.

Declaration of Parents or Guardians

With my signature on this form, I agree to the following provisions: I and my child take our own responsibility for their participation in FYEG XX (the "event") in line with the FYEG Conditions on Liability & Insurance of Participants under 18 years old (below). I agree to the following:

1. I agree that our child must be back at the hostel or place of accommodation before or at 24.00 clock.
2. I agree that our child sleeps in a mixed-gender room if necessary.
3. In the following cases, FYEG reserves the right to send your child home: violation of statutory provisions, possession of drugs or drug consumption, excessive drinking or for under 16 year olds alcohol consumption, the consumption of tobacco, deliberate ignorance of supervision of those responsible for the event. The total costs of participation will be borne by the parents or guardians.
4. In the case of the need for medical intervention of any kind, you agree that FYEG will give permission to approve this procedure especially if an attending physician deems necessary and the parents/guardians could not be reached. The Executive Committee of FYEG is committed as soon as possible to pass all the necessary information to the parent or guardian.
5. We are aware that no permanent supervision on the part of the organizers can be ensured during the event. However, we will strive to be available as much as possible and you may contact us for any questions at insert phone number of Secretary-General
6. We are aware that parts of the event might be documented in video and audio recordings.
7. In the event of invalidity of any of these provisions, the other provisions remain.

### FYEG CONDITIONS ON LIABILITY AND INSURANCE FOR PARTICIPANTS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD

FYEG declines all responsibility for any risk that can occur to participants during their journey, or during their stay. Individual insurance or collective insurance against all risks is therefore necessary. There is a Social Security Convention on sickness insurance for member states of the European Union. Nationals of these countries can obtain the necessary documentation (form E 111). In addition, we cannot be held liable for the loss or theft of any personal belongings. Participants should ensure that personal insurance against loss or theft is obtained for the duration of the visit. Participants shall be responsible for any loss and/or damage to property, which is partially or wholly owned or rented by the FYEG for the duration of their participants' visit. This also includes responsibility for the actions of their participants in the event of loss and/or damage. The following conditions apply to guests and participants under the age of 18 written permission must be given from their legal guardians (parents); a strict non alcoholic policy is applied.

Contact information of the parents / guardians during the event (please specify at least one):

1 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

2 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Our child has one or more of the following conditions (eg. disease medications, allergies, chronic.)

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Place and date

Signature of a parent or guardian

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