

E1 3 Year Plan

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Text

1 **1. Analysis**

2 **Political context**

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

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

22 **Organisational context**

23 In the last few years, FYEG has grown and developed both in terms of
24 organizational capacity and political impact. From a revised political platform
25 and the start of a strategic planning process to support organisational
26 development, to continued professionalisation of our Office capacities, FYEG has
27 been setting the foundations for long-term success.

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

29 • Campaigning; with the first coordinated EU election campaign which supported
30 member organisations and young Green candidates across the EU, and the current

31 climate campaign.

32 • MO engagement; which is no longer limited to annual GAs and has recently
33 included closer cooperation for specific campaigns or the collaborative
34 elections manifesto, regional summer camps which helped develop links between
35 neighbouring organisations, MO conferences and the start of the Twinning Cities
36 project to develop direct links.

37 • Credibility with our partners; including supporting the winner of the
38 #GreenPrimary for the Green leading candidate in the EU elections, more active
39 and closer cooperation with organisations such as the European Green Party,
40 European Youth Forum and Green European foundation.

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

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

54 **2. Main aims**

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

56 A. Consolidation of the organisation - ensure that FYEG has the capacities and
57 focus it needs to fulfil its objectives

58 B. Strengthening the Young Green movement - FYEG is nothing without its
59 grassroots, and should adopt a strategic, proactive role to support Young Greens
60 across the continent and especially where it is needed most

61 C. Achieve political impact - many are brought to the Green Youth by a desire to
62 make the world a fairer, more sustainable place. An organisation needs to exist
63 not for its own sake but as part of a greater objective.

64 **A - Consolidation of the organization**

65 • Priorities - The volunteer and part-time nature of FYEG means there are often
66 many different, parallel and sometimes competing lines of work, all driven by
67 very motivated and committed volunteers. In this context, it is sometimes
68 difficult to prioritise work - relative to each other, and relative to the

69 capacities of the volunteers or the Office. It is therefore important that
70 mechanisms are put in place to allow a more effective prioritisation to take
71 place, so that the organisation can meet its expectations whilst avoiding the
72 burning out or just overworking of volunteers and Office.

73 • Goals - to support this, FYEG needs to take a “SMART” goal approach: activity
74 plans, projects and proposals should have aims which are Specific (so we know
75 how they can best be carried out), Measurable (so we know if they have been
76 met), Achievable, Relevant to our long term aims, and Time-bound. Plans should
77 be presented clarifying how they help meet FYEG’s wider aims and with some
78 detail on success criteria which can be evaluated at the end of the work.

79 • Funding - with increasing restrictions to political youth organisations and
80 FYEG’s increasing range and quality of projects, it becomes necessary to have a
81 longer term approach for funding. The EC should work on developing three-year
82 rather than one-year activity plans, which will allow to apply for significantly
83 larger admin grants. Additionally, developing new and creative avenues for
84 funding (such as crowdfunding or new partnerships) will allow us to go beyond
85 our traditional funding sources.

86 • Volunteer management - FYEG has access to thousands of motivated volunteers in
87 several tens of countries, often with great talents which could be of use to the
88 Federation - whether it’s social media, graphic design, training, political
89 communication, software... This may also include former FYEG members who are now
90 successfully carrying out activities interesting or relevant for current
91 members. However, current structures and processes do not allow to easily tap
92 into this potentially vast pool of resource. A clearer set of overarching
93 priorities may free up time to allow for a more active form of volunteer
94 management, allowing the organization to benefit from people who want to
95 contribute with their time and their skills. At the same time, a more structured
96 approach to work will help to look after existing volunteers and staff,
97 preventing burn-out and supporting motivation.

98 • Office development - In the last few years, fundraising has allowed to
99 increase recruitment in the Office, but the staff is still over-worked. With
100 improved funding capabilities, access to volunteer support, and a clear
101 prioritisation of the year’s objectives will allow the Office to carry out their
102 jobs more easily and hopefully within decent working hours. Additionally, time
103 that has been freed up can be dedicated to improving current processes and the
104 development of office capabilities. We strive for having at least 3 people
105 working permanently at the office.

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

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

110 • Improved consultation - member organisations checking in with FYEG’s work
111 simply once a year at the annual GA should be a thing of the past.

112 The Federation has trialled and will continue to develop interaction
113 opportunities for member organisations, including consultation on running
114 projects or FYEG's voice in external organisations.

115 • Proactive MO inclusion - with regular conferences of MO representatives and
116 updates by MOs at each GA, it will be easier for FYEG and its members to
117 understand what situation each member is in, organizationally and politically.
118 This will also allow to identify early on if an organisation is struggling,
119 either with FYEG work or with their political situation, and will allow FYEG to
120 react sooner to provide the adequate support.

121 • Capacity building - understanding MOs situations and capabilities and a more
122 fluid communication will allow to better plan capacity building events and
123 projects and ensure the MOs' priorities are brought into account.

124 Specific opportunities for sharing of best practice should be identified and
125 carried out. The budding Treasurers' network is a first trial for this, which
126 will both give FYEG a better visibility of MOs' fundraising capabilities and
127 hopefully allow members to learn useful skills. We are also specially trying to
128 support Eastern European and non-EU MOs. Therefore we will conduct at least one
129 event every year in one of these regions.

130 Integrating the perspective of non-EU countries.

131 o Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe: We strive to work very
132 close with our sister-organisation. They have succeeded in politicising many
133 activists and organisation in Eastern Europe. In the next three years we will
134 make real efforts to include more organisations from Eastern Europe in FYEG and
135 include the perspective from non-western countries and non-EU Countries in our
136 policy-making. We will work closely with CDN to have a common approach to our
137 work.

138 o FYEG is still lacking MOs in Russia and in the Balticum, we will try to
139 investigate the possibility to start or connect with young green movements in
140 these areas and hope to expand our network.

141 o To be more present outside of the European Union, we will investigate the
142 possibility of opening up a second office in this area.

143 • Reaching individual activists - individual MO members can currently
144 participate in FYEG working groups and specific campaigns, events and seminars.
145 Two projects in current development will allow to engage local and individual
146 activists on a more consistent basis: Twinning Cities, bringing together local
147 groups, and Politicising the Personal, bringing visibility to local and
148 individual struggles and showcasing the diversity of activities Young Greens are
149 involved in throughout Europe.

150 • Elections' support - a lot of FYEG's member organisations take part in local,
151 regional or national election campaigning either to support Young Green
152 candidates or Green political parties. This often takes up the organisation's
153 capabilities during most of a year with preparations and campaigning, meaning

154 that organisation is less likely to engage on the European level. Having a year-
155 in-advance overview of expected elections throughout the year will allow to
156 identify this - FYEG can then either understand how to support the organisations
157 appropriately (e.g. by organising training at a time suitable for several
158 organisations, or providing online content), or plan for slightly lower
159 participation from that MO over a certain period. This planning should be
160 supported by the MOs themselves, bringing up their plans for the year to the
161 table at the GA.

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

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

177 **C - Making an impact**

178 • Goals - more goal-oriented plans will allow to better understand current and
179 planned impact of FYEG work - whether on MOs capabilities, internal political
180 positions, or on the wider political sphere.

181 • External visibility - press releases, street actions and political opinions
182 should be planned with a clear idea of the purpose, the target audience and the
183 plans to maximise the external visibility. Not all documents and actions need to
184 have a wide external audience and may be valuable in other ways - such as
185 training, creating video resources or networking - but being clear with this
186 from the outset will ensure plans are more efficient.

187 • Voice in the European Parliament - as young people and as members of a
188 progressive European political family, we have access to a resource that has
189 hardly been used so far in FYEG: the European Parliament. Young Green MEPs are
190 often open (and very willing!) to incorporate questions, perspectives and
191 demands into their parliamentary work: they understand the importance of our
192 voice - and not only those of the lobbies - being heard. FYEG should be the one
193 to provide the space for Young Greens, regardless of their origin, to raise
194 their voices and stories into the decision-making centre of the EU. The exact
195 mechanism would need to be developed with time in close cooperation with the
196 relevant MEPs, but in the first instance could include a collaborative approach
197 to get Young Greens' questions and points asked in the Parliament.

198 • Common campaigns - the 2014 EU elections campaign and the 2015 climate

199 campaign have both included MO participation at the planning and the execution
200 stage. The continuation of common campaigns will support MO-FYEG cooperation and
201 allow to continue to improve best practices. Campaigns should be carefully
202 evaluated and build upon previous experience.

203 • Other youth organisations - in our work we interact with the spheres of a lot
204 of other youth organisations, from local to international level, from party-
205 political to learning-based to anything in between. FYEG should consider the
206 value of potential cooperation, either bringing on board different types of
207 organisations for broader campaigns (e.g. local social work NGOs for a European
208 campaign on decent opportunities for the Youth), or using our position in the
209 political sphere to pull other organisations towards more progressive and
210 sustainable positions (e.g. resolutions and training in the Youth Forum, or
211 cooperating with other political youth organisations on common topics). Again,
212 these strategies should be planned with a clear set of objectives in mind.

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

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