

D1 Political Platform

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Text

1 Introduction

2 We, the Federation of Young European Greens (FYEG), are the Green youth voice on
3 the European level. As part of a wider movement, and composed of diverse member
4 organisations uniting their collective voices and aspirations, we agree: our way
5 of living needs to change.

6 Our individual and organisational backgrounds lie in social and environmental
7 justice movements, Green party organisations, various single-issue campaigns, as
8 well as gathering previously non-politicised youth. Our similarities are much
9 stronger than our differences of opinion, and our diversity is a strength, it
10 makes us explore and discover the concrete things and changes we fight for,
11 together.

12 Through our shared struggles and aspirations we come to understand that no
13 single one of our topics is a lone priority but that the connections between us
14 are connections between issues. We refuse to choose between either the survival
15 and well-being of our shared planet, our personal liberties and freedoms, or
16 social welfare. To us, a Green perspective encompasses all of these demands, as
17 described in this document.

18 To bring about the survival of the planet, amelioration of personal liberties
19 and sustainable development, as well as global social justice, we must find the
20 channels, political arenas and tools to succeed. The institutions of formal
21 politics are spaces where many decisions that affect our lives and our politics
22 are made. We must work to be present and heard at all these stages and make
23 clear the urgency of green politics in order to establish support for our
24 political positions.

25 But we know that politics does not begin nor end at the doorsteps of these
26 institutions. We have learned from history about the brutality and harshness of
27 the struggles for rights we take for granted today.

28 The challenges lie not only in victories within institutional politics, but also
29 in the changing of the playing field of politics. We have seen how the
30 environment, animal rights, the rights of minorities and other neglected causes
31 have been brought into the centre of the institutions through the dreams and
32 actions of, sometimes, a small number of committed individuals and movements.
33 This, to us, is part of what it means to be committed to the ideal of social and
34 environmental justice, democracy in general and Green politics in particular.

35 **Democracy**

36 Our Green ideals can only be reached through participatory democracy, an ongoing
37 process that we should never stop developing. It is not just about voting, but
38 about fundamental rights and participation in every area of life.

39 **Direct Democracy and Participation**

40 Democracy must be more than simply a periodical procedural issue. Citizens must
41 be able and encouraged to engage and participate actively as much as possible in
42 the political decision-making process in order for society to be genuinely
43 democratic.

44 FYEG stands for the right and responsibility of every citizen to be informed and
45 involved in all political, economic and social processes that are directly or
46 indirectly concerning their environment. We therefore call for direct democracy
47 at all levels of society to enable people to directly influence all the
48 political decisions which affects their society's development and enable them to
49 hold governments to account.

50 Democracy needs a strong protection of the rights of minorities, individual
51 liberties and human rights. No majority decision may be possible to reduce these
52 rights and liberties.

53 We support the implementation of grassroots methods such as participatory
54 budgets, local decision-making and regional parliaments as well as limiting
55 mandates by number and time in order to prevent the accumulation of power.

56 We call for democracy in all institutions which affect human life. Thus, pupils,
57 students and teachers should take decisions in schools and universities and
58 workers should decide about the future.

59 Citizenship must be available to all, regardless of origin or nationality. A
60 residency citizenship is a fundamental condition for democracy, so that everyone
61 has an equal opportunity to engage in the society which affects them.

62 The right to vote and stand for election at all levels must be guaranteed on the
63 basis of residence.

64 We do not support monarchy or any other non-elected system of governance. These
65 models are directly opposing and undermining values and practices of direct
66 democracy and must be abolished.

67 On the local level, we promote and support community activism and volunteering
68 as a form of human solidarity and a way to engage in participatory rights and
69 responsibilities. This mustn't be an opportunity for authorities or individuals
70 to exploit free labour but a way of building strong, resilient local
71 communities. The experience and contributions of activists and volunteers to the
72 labour market must also be recognized and valued.

73 As an organisation of young people, we support youth participation in
74 institutional politics as well as activism. We encourage others to join us in
75 demanding better education and opportunities for young people to participate in
76 all political activities.

77 We consider every single citizen as an essential part of our integer society and
78 therefore we demand the ban of a fixed voting age. We think that broader
79 participation could introduce a lot of new energy. Furthermore, political
80 stakeholders would focus not only on one specific group of people but rather all
81 society.

82 We believe e-democracy¹ and e-participation can improve access and participation
83 in political processes, strengthening grass-root democracy.

84 **Information and Openness**

85 FYEG considers both transparency and accountability as vital for the functioning
86 of democracy. Without these governments tend towards corruption and nepotism and
87 citizens lose sufficient means of control of their governments.

88 We see communication as a fundamental social process and a pillar of democracy.
89 Everyone must have equal access to the media and the tools for its exchange.

90 Information within public bodies must be open and accessible. Public and private
91 information of public interest must be easily available to everyone with simple,
92 short and transparent procedures of procurement. Specifically, the data of
93 governments and related institutions must be accessible to civil society, with
94 the exception of personal data.

95 Freedom of thought, expression and speech must be respected. However, rhetoric
96 calling for violence and discrimination in public speech, marketing or
97 information needs to be recognized as hate speech and banned.

98 We emphasize the social value of Internet use in particular and demand free
99 access for all. Free software and Open source² and related technologies, which
100 boost the exchange of information and also counter existing monopolies of
101 information, should be the standard. Public funding and subsidies should be
102 targeted at opensource technologies to offer viable alternatives where they do
103 not exist yet.

104 The Internet is a public space that should not be dominated by certain groups,
105 companies or governments, and the same rights and liberties that are expected
106 offline must be guaranteed online. Therefore, we believe that net neutrality³ is
107 crucial for a democratic society.

108 In a society where more and more of our lives take place online, it's crucial
109 that personal privacy is protected. Legal authorities must only be able to
110 access citizens personal data if there is a court injunction. Nevertheless there
111 must be strict and transparent regulation procedures to void fraud.

112 We believe in the public domain and strongly support limitations of intellectual
113 property rights and patents. Thoughts and ideas evolve more creatively and serve
114 humanity better when they're shared.

115 **European Union Institutions**

116 FYEG believes there is a significant democratic deficit within EU institutions.
117 In order to remedy this we must transfer power from the Commission and Council
118 to the European Parliament. Furthermore, European Commission need to be directly
119 elected by EU citizens in order to close the gap between citizens and the EU
120 institutions. Transnational lists for the EP are needed in order to develop the
121 concept of pan-European citizenship.

122 To prevent member states using their veto to defend their own narrow interests,
123 we demand a European Council based on majority rule as opposed to consensus. The
124 voice of the Union must not be monopolised by any single member state.

125 The process of integration and harmonisation must not lead to a race to the
126 bottom between member states. On the contrary, there must be a guaranteed high
127 standard of public services and environmental protection and member states must
128 not be economically disadvantaged for unilaterally increasing these standards.

129 We strive to improve EU citizenship as a step towards a Social Europe. Free
130 movement of people and the respect of human rights must be guaranteed and
131 integral to the concept of EU citizenship.

132 **Regionalism**

133 FYEG believes borders, such as national boundaries, are artificial social
134 constructs imposed on inhabitants. States must recognise the dynamic interaction
135 of people, cultures and identities, thus the life and development of regions has
136 to overcome national borders.

137 We support the organising principle of subsidiarity whereby matters are
138 deliberated upon by the most competent authority, starting from the lowest or
139 least centralised level. We see regionalism as a way to bring about more direct
140 democracy in the spirit of subsidiarity, to strengthen local communities as well
141 as their economy through devolution and to embrace cultural diversity.

142 Regionalism, however, must never become a vehicle for nationalistic or ethnic
143 segregation but rather help to better enable communities and their cultural
144 self-determination. Though this can not undermine interregional solidarity.

145 **Civil Society and Justice**

146 FYEG believes that no democracy can function without a critically involved and
147 active civil society. Unions and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are vital
148 in holding governments to account. We deplore the attempts of business interests
149 to disguise lobby groups as grassroots initiatives. Lobbying must be transparent
150 and strictly regulated, free of disproportional influence of profit oriented

151 organizations.

152 For all holders of political office, there needs to be a waiting period before
153 they can accept a new job from the business sector. Lobbying for commercial
154 interests while in office has to be ended.

155 No democracy can be conceived without an independent judicial system, which
156 operates free from political pressures and interference. FYEG strongly believes
157 that in a conflict with economic or political interests, strong and independent
158 courts must effectively protect civil liberties and human rights.

159 **Economy**

160 FYEG identifies the root causes of social and environmental crises in the
161 current economic model. In order to bring an end to environmental destruction
162 and human deprivation, a system change is urgently needed. We believe a Green
163 Economy can achieve the necessary radical change through democratisation of the
164 economy, redistribution of wealth⁴ and social and environmental justice.

165 **Capitalist Economic Model**

166 The current economic system, with its social division based on who owns the
167 means of production and its prioritisation of wealth accumulation⁵ at the
168 expense of people and environment, causes and aggravates many of the social and
169 environmental problems we see today.

170 This social division has become a coercive hierarchy, the root cause of social
171 domination through inequalities of wealth and power and involuntary wage labour⁶
172 relations. In theory, a capitalist economy and politics are separate spheres,
173 but in reality wealth, corporate or individual, has a huge influence on
174 governments, policies and politics.

175 The influence of wealth on politics grossly distorts democracy, decreasing the
176 influence of and excluding most citizens. This is directly opposed to our belief
177 in direct democracy - the empowerment and engagement of all citizens.

178 Individual and national wealth increasingly determines access to education,
179 healthcare, housing and other vital services and assets. Inequality of wealth
180 therefore leads to an inequality of access, which in turn leads to social
181 deprivation (also see 'Social Classes').

182 Economic growth based on material consumption is neither possible nor desirable
183 as it is both socially and environmentally unsustainable. If the link between
184 economic growth and environmental destruction cannot be broken, a controlled
185 recession is a better alternative.

186 Therefore, FYEG is opposed to capitalism on the grounds that it intrinsically
187 entails social domination and long-term growth based on material consumption,
188 which inevitably leads to the exploitation of people and the environment.

189 We also oppose the exponential expression of capitalism - the global neoliberal⁷
190 system - where corporations and the market prevail over human needs.

191 **Green Economy**

192 FYEG thinks beyond materialism⁸ and consumerism⁹. We strive for a system change,
193 for a new socio- economic system to guarantee social and environmental justice
194 and the utilization of natural resources under public stewardship and the
195 precautionary principle¹⁰ of long term sustainability¹¹.

196 We strive for a system which values equality and cooperation instead of material
197 and monetary profit maximisation¹² as the driver for economic activity. We
198 strive for a system which places people and the environment before profit. Such
199 a system also understands human activity as part of a rich yet finite,
200 interdependent and fragile ecosystem. For this, we need a Green Economy and to
201 understand the economy as a tool and not as an objective in itself.

202 We therefore conceive Green Economics under this new paradigm of analysis: the
203 elimination of the unlimited growth goal, the end of excessive capital
204 accumulation and a redistribution of wealth and production factors¹³.

205 Through the green economy we strive for gender equality and the destruction of
206 the gender work division. Intergenerational¹⁴ and intragenerational¹⁵ equity are
207 also fundamental social values for a Green Economy.

208 We must redirect and reduce production, promoting new forms of social
209 relationships and trade based on environmentally and socially sustainable
210 activity. As a society we must be less intensive and more efficient in our use
211 of natural resources.

212 We reject the commodification of the environment and the privatization of common
213 goods such as water resources, the climate system, earth's genetic heritage,
214 knowledge. We reject the systematic privatization of the commons. We call for
215 political and economic systems that emphasize an equitable and sustainable
216 access to material and immaterial common goods. A Green Economy is an economy
217 that encourages sustainable technological and social innovation.

218 In order for economics to be ecologically sustainable¹⁶ , all the factors
219 damaging the environment have to be included into the production costs. The
220 gains must be invested in appropriate funds and be used for positive action
221 towards environmental restoration.

222 To achieve these goals we must utilise new economic indicators to help us
223 understand our progress. We must go beyond GDP (Gross Domestic Product¹⁷) and
224 incorporate invisible work forces - health and happiness and the real
225 environmental costs and benefits.

226 We strive for everyone's right and possibility to seek happiness. A good life is
227 far more important a goal than economic growth, full employment or maintaining a
228 welfare state – although all of these have their part in reaching the goal of a

229 happy society. It's not up to politicians to decide what makes a person happy.
230 Political decisions can however affect people's possibility to seek happiness
231 and prevent problems which lower happiness. Politics should create possibilities
232 for happiness to grow instead of worrying about GDP.

233 To conclude, the green economy requires a revolution of our social and economic
234 system to reduce production and material consumption and increase human well-
235 being through the implementation of new values and priorities.

236 FYEG understands the concept of the Green New Deal as the first step towards a
237 Green Economy aiming to reduce the intrinsic crisis of capitalism. The GND
238 emphasises sustainable energy, Green jobs, moving towards a more service
239 focussed economy, the reduction of working time and the redistribution of wealth
240 while reducing our ecological footprint.

241 **Labour and Use of Time**

242 Disadvantaged groups are often forced to take up degrading jobs for low wages.
243 This inequality often persists for generations.

244 FYEG believes that work must be fulfilling mentally, physically and socially and
245 ensure fair wages. Working conditions must provide good health and safety, equal
246 treatment between genders, different sexual orientations, class, ages and
247 origins, career prospects and possibilities for further training. Thus, the
248 labour market must recognise workers as holistic human beings, taking into
249 consideration all their needs.

250 Everybody must have the right to organize their work in the most suitable manner
251 for themselves. We strive for a reduction of working hours. This way we can
252 create more jobs, reduce consumerism¹⁸ and recognize the time necessary for
253 social interaction and care work.

254 However, the reduction in working time should not lead to a disproportionate
255 reduction in purchasing power¹⁹.

256 We strive to change our understanding of work; from working for wages in order
257 to fulfil short term consumerist desires to a balanced life of work and free
258 time which enables us to live fuller, more sociable and enjoyable lives. The
259 role of work must also be seen as a way of meaningful participation in society,
260 and every person must have the right to participate and find suitable work.

261 The cooperative²⁰ business model can be the first step towards the systemic
262 reorganization of the labour market and production factors. Cooperatives are
263 also integral to democratising our economy, vital if we are to transform our
264 society towards a fair and sustainable world.

265 **Fiscal and Monetary Policy**

266 We want a fair fiscal system²¹ with three main goals: to support a strong
267 welfare state, reduce social inequalities and incentives for green and

268 sustainable investments. We stand by the principle of progressive taxation on
269 wealth, which also needs to internalize environmental costs to make polluters
270 pay.

271 Fiscal and monetary policies²² are basic economic instruments. Debt, deficits²³
272 and surpluses²⁴ are important tools for equalizing macro-economic trends²⁵,
273 though a systemic increase in structural debt undermines intergenerational
274 solidarity. Especially during a recession, fiscal and monetary policies should
275 be used to reactivate the economy, invest in meaningful assets and hence create
276 jobs.

277 FYEG opposes budget cuts without a socially inclusive debate. Knowing the danger
278 of high inflation²⁶ for the whole economy, measures must be responsible and
279 carefully considered. Nevertheless, interest rates must not be managed simply in
280 terms of limiting inflation without consideration for jobs and the impact on
281 income distribution.

282 At the European level, we believe tax harmonisation²⁷ is necessary to avoid a
283 race to the bottom regarding the lowering of corporate and income taxation.
284 Additionally, fiscal systems must work together to eliminate fiscal fraud, tax
285 evasion and tax loopholes. We demand a new structure to regulate financial
286 markets and the implement a financial transaction tax to reduce speculation and
287 produce positive incentives for investment in the real economy²⁸.

288 Regarding the Euro-zone, we cannot expect it to work efficiently or at all
289 without a political union, which involves common social and economic policies.
290 Therefore, we need a real fiscal union, with a Euro-zone Treasury and a suitably
291 substantial budget in order to apply effective fiscal policies.

292 **Financial Markets**

293 FYEG opposes the development of an unrestrained financial sector in recent
294 decades. This sector has hijacked the process of accumulation²⁹, creating new
295 financial instruments and innovations which undermine the value generated in the
296 real economy. The deregulated financial sector also continues to have a very
297 disproportionate and tyrannical influence on our democracies.

298 The financial market, the banking system and the qualification agencies³⁰ must
299 therefore be strictly regulated and preferably democratically owned through
300 cooperatives to put finance at the service of the economy and the people, not
301 the other way around.

302 We believe the financial system must recover the coherence between production
303 and consumption. We need a new global financial architecture to break down the
304 logic of growth based on the growing debt of central countries accompanied by
305 the creation of a semi-periphery³¹ which produces manufactured goods and a
306 periphery relegated to provide raw materials. We must break with the logic of
307 unequal development and with the neo-colonial exploitation and conditions it
308 imposes.

309 **Energy**

310 The insatiable extraction and consumption of fossil fuels for energy has
311 underpinned the evolution of our capitalist economic system since the industrial
312 revolution. However, our continued dependence on fossil fuels now threatens
313 society itself. Burning these fuels releases greenhouse gas emissions, the
314 principle cause of anthropogenic ³² climate change which now threatens the
315 stability of global society putting hundreds of millions of people at risk.

316 Furthermore, we are simply running out of conventional oil. Resource scarcity
317 will result in rapidly increasing prices and economic shocks disproportionately
318 affecting vulnerable groups and the Global South³³. The economic, political and
319 hegemonic structure of our energy system promotes increasingly extreme
320 extraction methods, such as mountain-top removal, fracking and coal-to-gas, in
321 order to utilise dwindling fossil fuel resources. These methods and products
322 should be banned entirely.

323 Therefore, we urgently need to revolutionise our energy system over the next
324 decade, transforming fossil fuel infrastructure into a green, socially equitable
325 renewable energy system.

326 In doing so, we must be aware of false solutions, both technologically and
327 systemically. Nuclear power, with its risk of considerable harm and pollution,
328 must be decommissioned, as it has no part to play in our energy future.

329 Carbon capture and storage³⁴, geo-engineering³⁵ and other technological
330 'solutions' which perpetuate the burning of fossil fuels, conveniently without
331 challenging the status quo and with considerable risk to society, are no
332 solution and hence must not be prioritised and considered with caution. Measures
333 must be taken to fight the causes of the problems like too high emissions,
334 unsustainable consumption of natural resources and not simply the consequences.

335 FYEG proposes not just technological solutions but a transformation of our
336 energy system as a whole, re-conceptualising how we produce, consume and own
337 one of the most fundamental resources of society. Renewable energy technologies
338 such as wind turbines and solar photovoltaics enable the decentralisation of our
339 energy supply.

340 But decentralisation must also be a social priority; enabling communities to
341 better understand and decide how their energy is produced and profiting from
342 energy production. This can help strengthen the role of communities in society
343 and help to progressively challenge the centralised corporate dominance of our
344 energy system, which continues to create significant obstacles to transforming
345 our energy supply.

346 A European institution must coordinate our efforts to reduce greenhouse gas
347 emissions, ensuring increases in efficiency, the most effective immediate step,
348 are not simply matched with an increase in consumption resulting in ongoing
349 unsustainable levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

350 We must also hold Europe fully accountable for the products we consume and the
351 impact these have on people and the environment globally. Moving polluting
352 industries to other countries with less strict regulations enabling continued

353 pollution must be fully accounted for and Europe must take full responsibility
354 for these emissions.

355 The EU must also become a leader in renewable energy research, development and
356 installation and must also lead politically at international climate
357 negotiations. The EU must provide access to its gained knowledge and developed
358 technologies and offer support in international climate negotiations to bring
359 forward the energy revolution globally.

360 We have a diminishing window of opportunity to address climate change. We must
361 act immediately to address not only the technological but importantly also the
362 socio-economic causes of and solutions to climate change. This means
363 transforming our energy system through decentralisation of supply coordinated at
364 a European level but benefiting the communities who produce the energy and
365 challenging the current out-dated centralised system of supply.

366 **Social Europe**

367 FYEG wants an inclusive Social Europe in which social justice prevails. Thus, we
368 demand social policies to guarantee citizen's emancipation. Basic Income³⁶,
369 progressive taxation, public pensions, free education, public health care and
370 guaranteed access to housing are the main elements to achieve a redistribution
371 of wealth³⁷ and a more equal society. The implementation of a basic income
372 system must not result in an abolition of existing social rights and benefits.
373 We see basic income as a crucial and important complementation of existing
374 social benefits.

375 **Welfare State**

376 FYEG opposes the model of global neoliberalism³⁸ which destroys the presence of
377 the state in the economy and does not recognize socio-economic rights. We
378 recognize socio-economic rights as the basis for the existence of social
379 policies. All members of society should have equal rights. Thus, we believe in
380 the concept of a social citizenship. Every individual has the right to live a
381 life independent from family and the market.

382 The welfare state must guarantee citizens emancipation and must be based on the
383 principles of universalism. Rights must be de-commodified and must be of a high
384 social standard. De-commodification of the status of individuals vis-à-vis³⁹ the
385 market means to ensure emancipation of individuals from the market and entails
386 citizens to opt out of work with the life-long approach, without losing their
387 job, income or general welfare.

388 We believe that the first step is the implementation of a basic income scheme,
389 which recognises the fundamental value of every person in society and also the
390 value of unpaid work. It allows people to make decisions independent of economic
391 factors and to engage in socially useful activity outside of the monetised
392 economy such as caring and volunteering. Moreover, it gives workers more
393 bargaining power within the labour market.

394 The welfare state must also cater towards the needs of certain groups in order

395 to avoid social exclusion and poverty. Poverty is more than the lack of
396 financial resources and income; it encompasses vulnerability, precariousness,
397 the lack of opportunities and the denial of rights. It can be described as a
398 state of limited social, cultural and political participation. The rules of
399 competition and the free market must not be applied where they collide with
400 socio-economic rights.

401 State ownership of social services means these services are democratically
402 accountable. Therefore the privatization and outsourcing of social services is
403 unacceptable. We also believe that a functioning welfare state generates more
404 good than a narrow budgetary view can indicate, a financial deficit⁴⁰ being more
405 bearable than unanswered social needs.

406 **Employment and Labour Unions**

407 Employment policies setting out the parameters for working conditions and
408 relations must be deliberated over by all concerned stakeholders. We recognise
409 this dialogue as a crucial step to improving workers' rights and we recognise
410 the role and importance of strong labour unions and legislation in creating and
411 maintaining high labour standards.

412 FYEG strives for a European Welfare State which enables disadvantaged group's
413 emancipation and access to a labour market which guarantees decent work.

414 We see Green jobs not only as those created in renewable energy and recycling
415 sectors, important though they are. Our concept of Green jobs also includes
416 those jobs which fulfil our concept of a Green economy as previously described.
417 Green jobs therefore must increase equality between classes and close the gender
418 pay gap. They must also eliminate precarious contracts and involuntary part-time
419 employment.

420 We denounce the weak position of youth in the European labour market and the
421 disproportional effects of economic crises on young people. Despite being the
422 most educated generation ever, we find it increasingly difficult to get a decent
423 and stable job. Young people need a stronger lobby in Europe. FYEG advocates
424 youth rights especially when it comes to labour policy.

425 A strong legal framework guaranteeing the formation and action of labour unions
426 is needed in Europe and at the EU level. We call for the ratification and
427 implementation of all provisions of the International Labour Organisation
428 (ILO)⁴¹.

429 Finally, the creation of Green jobs and reduction of unemployment and
430 discrimination in the labour market must be overcome by an alliance of labour
431 unions, worker cooperatives⁴² and social and political movements. We strive to
432 build strong relationships with the aforementioned organisations and movements
433 as part of our role in creating a fair, sustainable society.

434 **Pensions**

435 FYEG believes access to a pension must be a social right. Pensions must enable
436 the elderly and certain dependants to have a decent standard of living. States
437 must provide a decent, public and universal pension scheme for all citizens,
438 based on progressive income taxation which also guarantees future generations
439 access to decent pensions.

440 Pension funds must be publicly owned reducing risk and enabling the state to
441 make socially useful investments. Over and above compulsory pension commitments,
442 further and unlimited voluntary investments in public pension schemes must be
443 allowed. The financial benefits of a public pension fund must not be applied to
444 the private sector.

445 EU pension schemes must be harmonised to enable the free movement of workers.
446 Any pension negotiations must be undertaken with suitable dialogue and
447 conditions for workers.

448 **Education**

449 The universality of public education is at risk and is increasingly becoming
450 marketized. Formal education is becoming a process simply to prepare people for
451 the labour market. We believe education and self-cultivation have an intrinsic
452 value and are always to the benefit of society and therefore must not be viewed
453 or practised in these narrow terms.

454 FYEG believes education must be a basic social right, free, plural, equally
455 accessible to all, gender-sensitive, of high quality, and meet the individual
456 developmental needs of each person. Education should be holistic and inspire a
457 hunger for academic and non-academic learning. Formal, non-formal and informal
458 education is the preparation for a complex world and must provide knowledge and
459 skills needed to fully participate in society.

460 We believe the current education model should be radically democratized,
461 creating collegial instead of authoritative relations. This is important not
462 only for knowledge and creativity, but even more for understanding non-
463 hierarchical and democratic values at early ages.

464 Schools, universities and non-formal education centres must be intercultural and
465 non-discriminatory; they must not be divided by age, sex, religion, ethnicity,
466 origin, disabilities or legal status.

467 We seek real alternatives to higher education. There must be greater support for
468 apprenticeships and employment orientated training for young people, especially
469 women, including lifelong training and learning programmes.

470 We value the advantages of non-formal education. We are against the
471 categorization of people based on formal qualifications. Non-formal education
472 has to be supported by the state by providing resources and time and by labour
473 markets by recognizing its value as one form of education.

474 **Health**

475 FYEG believes that access to healthcare is a human right and must be free.

476 Health begins with a healthy lifestyle. Prevention and education on healthy life
477 styles must be the corner stone of all healthcare policies.

478 Healthcare systems must be based on prevention, be accessible, non-
479 discriminatory and adjusted to every individual's needs. Healthcare must also
480 consist of psychological and social care. Treatment must be free of religious,
481 cultural or traditional limitations.

482 Pharmaceutical corporations are not transparent and often profit at the expense
483 of public health, especially in the Global South ⁴³. Therefore, we demand a
484 fair, publicly owned pharmaceutical sector to compliment the private sector.

485 We strongly support the donation of organs and urge for an international
486 transplant system.

487 Sex education, including education on contraception and reproductive health care
488 must be introduced from an early age in formal education and respect different
489 genders and sexual orientations. We oppose prejudices and discrimination, such
490 as zephobia, towards people living with sexually transmitted diseases.

491 We support the demystification of drug issues as it leads to a more open and
492 realistic debate on drug policies. By legalising drugs, health risks will
493 decrease and drug-related crimes will be reduced. Drug policies should be based
494 on the principle of damage minimisation and rehabilitation must be provided
495 within the public healthcare system. Rehabilitation methods need to be developed
496 to become more effective, and must not include practices which endanger human
497 freedoms.

498 All human beings have the right to make decisions about their own bodies and
499 life. Women must have the right to decide about their own bodies without
500 economic restriction. Thus, abortion needs to be legally defined and freely
501 provided. Assisted suicide should be accessible to everyone suffering from
502 unbearable physical or mental suffering.

503 **Housing**

504 FYEG believes housing is a basic human right and that housing should not be
505 treated simply as a commodity. The housing market must fulfil people's needs and
506 not be reduced to profit maximization. We deplore financial speculation on
507 people's homes and believe that people must not be left without decent
508 accommodation under any circumstances.

509 As a consequence of the unregulated private market, many people have been made
510 homeless or are often subjected to low quality, temporary, overcrowded housing
511 which has adverse psychological and physical affects. We are committed to
512 fighting homelessness, which represents one of the most brutal and blatant forms
513 of poverty and exclusion in European societies.

514 Social housing must be made available, offering a long-term quality solution. We
515 oppose processes of gentrification, which increases house prices and produces
516 socially homogeneous neighbourhoods, forcing people to relocate often against
517 their will.

518 Homes must be affordable to those who most need them, ecologically sustainable
519 and provide quality amenities to foster community cohesion. We also believe
520 housing cooperatives must be strongly encouraged and have access to adequate
521 financial resources.

522 Urban planning must be utilized to suitably increase urban density, and reduce
523 urban sprawl. This is both ecologically and socially beneficial.

524 **Transport**

525 People have a right to mobility and the use of transport. It is necessary to
526 invest in, expand and promote public transport and to guarantee free access for
527 everyone. There is a need for improved infrastructure and a shift to sustainable
528 and eco-friendly forms of mobility and to think of mobility as a complex
529 concept, involving different vehicles and ways of travelling.

530 All the external costs of private transportation have to be included to show
531 that it is extremely expensive and occupies a lot of our space. Schemes for
532 sustainable transport should be supported by economic incentives like eco-taxes
533 on fossil fuel.

534 Local and regional consumption of goods should be encouraged. Transport of
535 living animals, waste and dangerous products must be kept as short as possible
536 and eventually discontinued. In industrialised countries road traffic, harbours
537 and airports must not be extended.

538 We believe in a democratic and open planning system which we believe would
539 reduce the need for transportation.

540 Cities are expanding and the principle of urban mobility must be respected. Car
541 free cities open possibilities for urban mobility around pedestrians, cyclists
542 and public transport and the reoccupation of public space by people. In this
543 way, cities play their role in genuine ecological and democratic change.

544 **Public Space**

545 FYEG conceives of public space as a place of meeting for reflection and casual
546 and formal socialising. Public space provides places for public audiences, for
547 street art and expressions of protest all of which are fundamental to democracy
548 and community well-being.

549 Unfortunately public spaces are being sold off to create high street shopping
550 centres or are having measures put in place limiting people's right to meet and
551 gather. We must immediately stop this destruction of public spaces, our squares,
552 streets, gardens and town centres.

553 Therefore we demand an immediate stop to the transformation of public space into
554 private spaces.

555 All arbitrary restrictions of civil liberties in public space are unacceptable
556 and such legislation must be repealed. Further, we deplore and seek to limit the
557 visual pollution of public space by excessive presence of ad-campaigns.

558 **Access to Culture**

559 FYEG believes that free access to culture is a basic right of the people. The
560 abusive economic exploitation of culture through restrictive systems such as
561 marketisation and copyright, are an impediment to free access. As a solution, we
562 propose new models based on free sharing.

563 States must also provide free access to all cultural content in their
564 possession. Social centres must be freely available and under the democratic
565 control of local communities.

566 **Global Justice, Peace and Human Rights**

567 The current neoliberal ⁴⁴ institutions protect large corporate interests but not
568 people or the environment. We believe that another world is not only possible
569 but also urgently needed. We demand Global justice!

570 **Neoliberal Globalization**

571 FYEG stands for global justice and equality between countries. We oppose the
572 current neoliberal globalisation promoted by the World Trade Organisation (WTO),
573 World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), whose model continues
574 to enrich major multinational corporations and financial institutions at the
575 expense of the Global South⁴⁵, certain social classes and the environment.

576 Neoliberalism supports the privatization of national industries, deregulation
577 and enhancing the role of the private sector while restricting or eliminating
578 the role of the state. It undermines local decision-making and exploits local
579 populations. Under neoliberalism restrictions on corporations and capital are
580 removed, while boundaries are maintained for local and other communities.

581 Neoliberalism leads to high levels of social exclusion, destruction of labour
582 unions, large disparities in income, increased poverty, poor and unequal
583 education, poor healthcare and high rates of crime and incarceration. It
584 reinforces the North-South divide and maintains neocolonialism.

585 This stems from a long history of exploitation especially by European powers.
586 The industrialisation of Europe was based on the slave trade and mass atrocities
587 by the colonial powers who extorted raw materials through force. Most of the raw
588 materials necessary for the continued material growth of our economies still
589 comes from the Global South, but the companies extracting them are based in the
590 Global North⁴⁶.

591 Following the end of colonialism, neocolonialism now prevails. Global
592 institutions like the United Nations Security Council, WTO, WB and IMF do not
593 represent the population of the world.

594 **Another Globalisation is Possible**

595 FYEG fights for global justice. We believe that an alternative form of
596 globalisation based on global justice, cooperation, democracy, engagement and
597 the free flow of information is possible. We are in solidarity with the global
598 marginalised majority and press for fairer global structures and
599 institutions, which need to be reflected in the economic system.

600 There needs to be democratic ownership of natural resources by the people.

601 We support grass-roots organisations, indigenous people's movements and
602 democratic leaders in their efforts to push for global justice. We thus support
603 institutions such as the World Social Forum (WSF) and the United Nations
604 Economic and Social Council (UNESCO). The WSF seeks to develop an alternative
605 future through the global engagement of civil society, social movements and
606 NGOs. We are part of a decentralised debate, exchange of experience and
607 knowledge and coordinated action working towards a fairer and sustainable world
608 as a legitimate and democratic alternative.

609 **The United Nations**

610 The United Nations was born out of the terrible experiences of the world wars.
611 However the nations governing the UN did not succeed in creating a safe, secure
612 and fair world. With its organisations and its Human Rights Conventions it aims
613 at ensuring freedom and well-being for all. The UN aim of development must not
614 be reduced to abstract millennium goals, a policy of global justice can only be
615 achieved with a fair distribution of wealth⁴⁷ and power.

616 In order to be strengthened, the UN needs to be democratised. We demand the
617 dissolution of the UN Security Council. We call for a democratically elected UN
618 Parliamentary Assembly, which should elect an executive committee giving fair
619 representation to different global regions and legitimacy to the decision-making
620 bodies of the UN.

621 The UN General Assembly must implement economic and social policies so as to
622 achieve global justice, opposing the hegemonic policies of the WTO, WB and IMF.

623 **Human Rights**

624 FYEG demands human rights to be universally recognized and respected. To achieve
625 this goal we need a strong global network of civil society, supported by
626 education and training instruments. International conventions are an important
627 tool, as are the internal workings of the United Nations to enforce them, by
628 naming and shaming, international pressure, and sanctions. However, human rights
629 go beyond international agreements; they begin from the needs of each person,
630 within each society.

631 We condemn the practice of abusing human rights in international politics as an
632 argument to pursue own national interests. Human rights, which essentially
633 evolve and develop, need to be transversally included on all institutional
634 levels, along with corresponding monitoring mechanisms.

635 We acknowledge that the basic rights, dealing with civil liberties and
636 participation in political life, are still causes that need to be fought for, in
637 Europe as elsewhere. This however should not hold us back from participating in
638 the struggle for new human rights.

639 We are in favour of a stronger international human rights regime working in
640 cooperation with regional human rights courts. We support the establishment of
641 effective possibilities to judicially prosecute breaches of human rights on the
642 global level, since there is currently a wide gap in internationally concerning
643 the real implementation of human rights. We strive for an impartial institution
644 to bring perpetrators of the Global South and the Global North to justice, if
645 justice cannot be implemented regionally.

646 **Peace**

647 FYEG is committed to the vision of a world without weapons, armed conflict and
648 war. We understand peace to be more than the absence of war and pacifism as a
649 necessarily transversal concept, which affects different areas of policy. Peace
650 has to be built every day by reducing sources of conflicts such as poverty,
651 injustice and discrimination. To achieve this, all actors must take
652 responsibility and promote human rights.

653 Everybody has the responsibility to prevent the outbreak of violence using all
654 legitimate means available. Therefore we support the responsibility to prevent
655 and demand its institutionalisation on the UN level. The use of violence can
656 only be the very last resort of political action. Decisions that lead to the use
657 of military force must be transparent, fully accountable, democratically
658 legitimized and reasonably justified.

659 We maintain a high degree of suspicion with regards to the "Responsibility to
660 protect", due to the potential for abuse. It has too often been used to
661 legitimize actions beyond protection of civilians. However, we are not
662 inherently opposed to "Responsibility to protect", as it may provide a means of
663 last resort for the international community to protect civilians against abuses
664 on a mass scale.

665 Military intervention must require a UN mandate. Intervention should only be
666 mandated to stop mass atrocity crimes and must be strictly limited in mandate
667 and action.

668 We oppose the maintaining of large military forces which we see as a waste of
669 resources that should go to other priorities and aggressively provocative
670 towards other groups and nations. Therefore we support the continued reduction
671 of arsenals by destruction of obsolete material and material swapping between
672 nations.

673 Furthermore, we demand the end of all weapon production under profit logic,
674 retaining only that necessary to comply with the international community's
675 responsibility to protect. All subsidies to the armaments industry must be
676 ended.

677 In this context nuclear weapons must be highlighted. Development and testing of
678 nuclear weapons must be banned globally and the process towards total nuclear
679 disarmament must continue with increased urgency.

680 We believe that structures such as NATO⁴⁸ go against the fundamental aim of
681 European construction that is to spread peace. By its historical purpose, narrow
682 militaristic outlook and fundamentally undemocratic structures, it should not be
683 a model for the future. We therefore think that NATO must be dismantled.

684 For the EU to truly represent its ideals and values in foreign politics, non-
685 violence and co-operation policies are powerful tools and must be utilised.
686 Therefore we demand the creation of a European Civil Peace Corps, as a non -
687 military structure, in charge of creating and preserving peace. Members of this
688 Corps should be trained in the skills of non-violent conflict resolution, and
689 should be employed as both a preventive and a curative measure.

690 We oppose the state's right to force participation in military training and
691 activities. Any forced service must be abolished.

692 **Migration and borders**

693 FYEG believes that freedom of movement is a human right, migration is not a
694 crime and no human is illegal. We demand legal protection and residency status
695 for migrants and respect for their human rights. We strive for the complete
696 abolition of borders and the unquestionable right for everyone to choose a place
697 of residence.

698 The current EU border policies institutionalize racism and social
699 stratification. Militarized agencies are not a viable way of meeting neither the
700 challenges of global migratory flows nor the needs of migrants and refugees.
701 Europe has become a fortress while migrants are exploited as a cheap labour
702 force on the basis of their vulnerable status. As such FYEG is convinced that
703 FRONTEX⁴⁹ must be abolished.

704 We are against externalization of European borders. These policies are
705 interfering in migration patterns which are beyond EU borders and as such are
706 implemented outside of any legal and legitimate context, representing a direct
707 attack on human rights. European policies need to focus on mitigating the actual
708 reasons of forced migration and offer substantial help.

709 Though the European Union supports the free movement of goods, capital, services
710 and people, these freedoms end at its borders.

711 We demand the immediate implementation of a common European border policy
712 respecting fundamental human rights. The EU must harmonise asylum procedures

713 reflecting the principle of solidarity and inclusive Europe, while actively
714 supporting the UNHCR⁵⁰ resettlement programme for refugees.

715 A fair and humanitarian asylum system must be based on understanding of and
716 respect for the needs of asylum seekers.

717 Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, also known as the
718 UN Refugee Agency.

719 **Identity, Equality and Inclusion**

720 Through identifying links between multiple levels of discrimination, we are able
721 to fight for an equal society. We must smash patriarchy, class division, racism,
722 fascism and every other system of oppression.

723 **Identity**

724 FYEG stands for an open, intercultural and fair society where individuals are
725 free to express themselves and pursue happiness. The division of people into
726 groups based on various personal attributes limits and is in opposition to the
727 concept of identity. The different norms that societies implicitly or explicitly
728 rely on are not only subject to change throughout history, but also often
729 constitute a form of violence against those who do not fit these norms.

730 Ideas and stereotypes that are labelled and justified as natural are usually
731 socially constructed norms. The concept of normal has been built on the social
732 values, rules and institutions dominated by rich senior white men. This
733 discourse has been imposed on all of society and needs to be deconstructed.

734 The practice and acceptance of this concept oppresses not only women but all
735 individuals with a different identity. Further, different forms of oppression⁵¹
736 often interlink to form multiple oppression on certain groups and individuals.
737 These interrelated structures of oppression degrade society as a whole.

738 We believe that humans should not be forced to choose between identities as if
739 they were mutually exclusive choices. We welcome movements that break up old
740 norms and stereotypes. Any discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, sexual
741 orientation, class, appearance, age, disability, religion, political ideas or
742 any other category is unacceptable. To us, society must be open and inclusive
743 and not demand mono-cultural daptation⁵².

744 **Equality and Non-Discrimination**

745 FYEG sees discrimination and repression as a form of violence. Too often,
746 injustice is taken as natural and constructed norms remain unquestioned.
747 Knowledge, experience and exchange with people who experience discrimination can
748 weaken existing stereotypes and open the path towards a better society for
749 everyone to enjoy.

750 Society must acknowledge discrimination. We advocate the creation of awareness-
751 raising and monitoring institutions on discrimination.

752 Information should be collected to expose existing injustices and must also have
753 influence on the policy-making process.

754 We demand all necessary instruments and policies to eradicate all kinds of
755 discrimination and move towards an equal society. To reach this, all policy
756 areas must integrate the idea of inclusion.

757 **Social Classes**

758 FYEG recognizes social class as the main obstacle to an equal and fair society.
759 Classes are the social stratification due to power relations in the labour
760 market and the economic system. People with the same social, economic and
761 educational status belong to the same social class.

762 Social class often determines the possibility of a person to participate in
763 society, particularly in decision making processes. Culture, education, economic
764 background and social contacts reinforce stratification and power structures.

765 FYEG strives towards the elimination of social classes creating a society of
766 genuine equal opportunities.

767 **Gender**

768 FYEG recognizes gender as a social construct and a product of patriarchy. We
769 believe that all roles and divisions based on gender hide a relation of power.
770 Therefore we oppose the binary gender system and demand neutralization of gender
771 based differences in society. This power relation and the norms it establishes
772 oppress both woman and men.

773 This powerful system affects human beings in the most intimate areas of life.
774 Patriarchy imposes a false dichotomy on societies: a masculine domain, which
775 centralizes political, social and economic power, and a female domain of the
776 private sphere. Activity in the female sphere, such as care-taking within
777 families, is not recognised as socially or economically valuable and thus
778 renders the contribution of women invisible.

779 Moreover, our economies take advantage of this model by externalizing care costs
780 to families and thereby effectively to women. All those who are capable should
781 equally share care work. We support measures that give people, regardless of
782 their gender, possibilities for care taking without being penalized in their
783 careers.

784 Language and symbolic expressions in society perpetuate and reinforce gender
785 discrimination in an almost invisible way. We ask for a gender sensitive
786 language, still bearing in mind that gender is not a binary concept.

787 We demand that sexual harassment and gender violence be considered violent,
788 criminal acts and that they are legally prosecuted. The victim should not be
789 blamed for having been assaulted. Instead, adequate resources for helping the
790 victims of sexual assault both in their legal fight and psychologically, must be
791 made available.

792 **Feminism**

793 FYEG declares itself a feminist organization. Feminism, to us, refers to both
794 the fight against patriarchy and the desire to go beyond binary gender
795 divisions. We see discrimination against women as a form of violence present in
796 politics, the labour market, our education and private life. We identify queer
797 theory⁵³ as a promising intellectual framework to go beyond gender structure. In
798 order to reach a gender neutral society we support the use of quotas in favour
799 of women as a first step towards equality. We therefore advocate quotas as a
800 transitory measure to empower women.

801 We acknowledge gender-based discrimination of women in the labour market. Thus
802 we demand equal pay for equally valuable work and an end to discrimination based
803 on pregnancy and parenthood.

804 **Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Intersexual, Transgender and Queer**

805 FYEG opposes any discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Everybody
806 should have the right to freely express their sexuality. We advocate the
807 recognition of sexual minorities, and their rights as lesbian, gay, bisexual,
808 intersexual, transgender and queer⁵⁴.

809 Sex and sexual orientation must not be registered. Legal recognition of gender
810 identity should not be a reason for a violation of physical integrity. Education
811 and information on sex, gender, sexual orientation and identity, especially on
812 intersexuality and transsexuality, needs to be introduced, supported and
813 included in curricula and the public domain.

814 We demand the same rights and responsibilities for all despite their sexual
815 orientation. We demand legalization of same-sex and transgender marriage,
816 adoption of children, artificial insemination and the entire legal framework to
817 guarantee equality. Jurisprudence must not impose a model of family.

818 The definition of one's sexual identity should be in each individual's own
819 hands. Everybody must be free to change sex. Right and access to sex
820 reassignment must be guaranteed and paid for via public health care. We deplore
821 the practice of requiring individuals to undergo sterilization before a sex
822 change and we strive to abolish such requirements in European countries.
823 Receiving legal recognition of gender identity must not require any medical
824 intervention.

825 We particularly deplore homophobia and transphobia. We demand the de-
826 pathologization of homosexuality and transsexuality.

827 We demand that the EU, its member states and civil society support and defend
828 LGBTQ rights and LGBTQ movements in other countries.

829 **Disability**

830 A fair society is based on equal rights and equal access. FYEG supports people
831 with disabilities in their fight for equal rights and access. Society has
832 historically marginalised people with disabilities by creating special areas and
833 by not adapting public space to everybody's needs. This denial of equal access
834 to social, political, and economic life must end.

835 We demand that urbanism and architecture integrate the needs of people with
836 disabilities and contribute to the creation of an inclusive public space for
837 all. Accessibility benefits not only people with disabilities but everybody.

838 Access to braille, communication aids or sign languages must be broadened as
839 well as access to information, media and interaction facilities for people with
840 disabilities.

841 **Age**

842 FYEG is opposed to age discrimination. The description of young people as
843 essentially immature and unreasonable is the basis for underrepresentation in
844 decision-making processes. It is crucial to promote the participation of youth
845 to shape the social, economic, cultural and environmental decisions, which
846 affect them. We refuse to be "youth for youth" and seek to participate in all
847 decision making processes as equal and respected stakeholders.

848 We are aware of the need for intergenerational⁵⁵ solidarity. The discourse that
849 excludes the elderly from active participation and secludes them into designated
850 areas is driven by the same mechanisms we denounce in the case of youth. Thus,
851 we refuse to believe in the stereotype of senile, disillusioned and necessarily
852 conservative seniors. Youth and the elderly are linked by an assumption that
853 both groups are outside the economy as active labour and are therefore of lesser
854 value, a concept contrary to all our beliefs.

855 **Intercultural Society**

856 FYEG acknowledges that European populations do not fit the idea of monolithic
857 cultural entities at all. Europe is a diverse continent and we need to draw
858 inspiration from this fact. Nation states were never and are not identical with
859 any kind of coherent, static and closed culture.

860 To us, ideas of national identity make no sense. European policies require an
861 intercultural perspective in order to overcome hate and discrimination towards
862 groups that do not correspond to these nationalist norms. We also oppose the
863 view that migrants need to go through a process of assimilation, which often
864 includes a rejection of their own identity. This leads to institutionalised
865 racism on a European and national level. Societies should accept complex
866 identities and personal histories.

867 The institutions of our societies do not reflect their diversity. Hidden
868 barriers and obstacles, as well as structural racism in institutions, need to be
869 addressed and fought, especially in politics and the media, which often create a
870 tense atmosphere with unbalanced and destructive coverage of migrant issues.

871 Language, as one key tool in an intercultural society, has great practical,
872 social and cultural value. Therefore, we believe that learning foreign languages
873 must be promoted at all levels of society. Empowering individuals to learn from
874 others and increasing communication between people from different backgrounds is
875 a vital first step to overcome boundaries and divisions.

876 **Religion**

877 For us, no religion is better or worse than others. Churches ⁵⁶ must be
878 separated from the state and no religion should have privileged status. In an
879 intercultural society it must be possible for everyone to live in a climate of
880 peace, mutual respect and tolerance regardless of their individual view of life
881 in general.

882 In many countries this means that existing privileges need to be abolished. We
883 stand for a secular state where religious laws are not considered as above or
884 outside civic law. With respect to diversity, traditions and customs, religious
885 laws, structures and procedures need to respect state laws as highest reference.
886 This is crucial for the preservation of human rights and equality. Governments
887 need to stay away from amalgamation of state and religious affairs.

888 **Anti-Fascism**

889 FYEG is opposed to nationalism. We reject the idea that membership in a
890 constructed entity gives people certain traits and realise the divisive and
891 blinding nature of such an idea.

892 Fascism has played a terrible role in European history, imposing monolithic
893 identities and turning its invisible violence into open violence. The fascist
894 attack on personal freedom and diversity as well as its crimes against humanity
895 are the reasons we define ourselves as anti-fascist and are in solidarity with
896 the anti-fascist movement.

897 **Ecology**

898 Ecology is present throughout this document, and is the basis of our Green
899 thinking. The earth has limited resources, and we have to plan our sustainable
900 social model based on those limits.

901 **Value of Nature**

902 FYEG believes that nature has an intrinsic value. All conflicts between society
903 and nature are products of an unhealthy, unsustainable and unethical perception
904 of nature. Long-term sustainability⁵⁷, preservation of local ecosystems and
905 stability of ecological cycles have to be prioritized and set as "necessary

906 conditions” for any exploitation of any natural resource.

907 All ecological issues must be understood and solved in a holistic and
908 interlinked way, rather than downplayed as technical issues within the field of
909 environmentalism to be solved by technological improvements.

910 Since nature is a very complex system of life cycles, we have neither reason nor
911 rationale for having blind faith in technology for fully understanding all the
912 ecological crises, much less solving them through technical means rather than
913 comprehensive social change.

914 **Climate Change**

915 Climate change is one of the greatest and most urgent crises of our current
916 society. Without immediate radical action on a global scale humanity faces
917 likely catastrophic climatic changes. Extreme climate and weather patterns not
918 seen during the development of civilisation will become the norm, having
919 potentially drastic adverse effects on humans, animals and plants.

920 The scientific world is unsure exactly how soon we may tip the delicate climate
921 balance into positive feedback loops which would then leave us on an all but
922 unstoppable path to several degrees of catastrophic global warming. We therefore
923 urgently need sufficiently ambitious global legally binding agreement to reduce
924 CO2e emissions in line with scientific recommendations.

925 Such an agreement has to be prepared and underpinned by ambitious strategies and
926 measures on national, regional and local level. The agreement has to be built on
927 principles of global justice and resisting countries must be brought to a common
928 playing field through climate tariffs.

929 Countries in the Global North⁵⁸ must acknowledge that the largest share of
930 global CO2 per capita emissions originated in their countries and currently
931 continue to do so, resulting in a widening gap with the Global South⁵⁹.
932 Therefore they must agree a suitable fund to help other countries mitigate and
933 adapt to climate change.

934 FYEG demands the implementation of a cap-and-dividend scheme mixed with cap-and-
935 investment to mitigate carbon emissions and to reduce global inequalities. The
936 scheme must be developed at regional levels under a binding global agreement.
937 Considering vested interests at play within international markets, we do not
938 believe market mechanisms alone can adequately mitigate emissions.

939 All countries must increase their efforts in order to ensure atmospheric
940 greenhouse gas concentrations are rapidly reduced to ensure we do not exceed a
941 temperature rise of 1.5°C. This figure of 1.5°C must always remain consistent
942 with the most recent scientific recommendations with consideration to the
943 precautionary principle⁶⁰ as described by the United Nations Framework
944 Convention on Climate Change.

945 **Biodiversity**

946 Biodiversity is fundamental to healthy ecosystems and of great importance to our
947 well-being, both physically and psychologically. As well as being integral to
948 the economy, biodiversity provides irreplaceable natural services; it is also a
949 vast medicinal resource and for many also plays an important spiritual and
950 cultural role.

951 We are currently facing the simultaneous ecological disasters of climate change
952 and biodiversity loss, both of which are directly related to our society's
953 unsustainable economic system, overconsumption, use of toxic chemicals and the
954 related unsustainable practices and habits.

955 One of the most devastating aspects of biodiversity loss is the current mass
956 extinction of species, caused by a number of serious, deep-rooted problems such
957 as habitat destruction, climate change, land use changes, the introduction of
958 invasive species, genetic pollution, monoculture and overexploitation.

959 FYEG believes wide-ranging measures are necessary to deal with these problems,
960 including fundamental changes to our economic system and our way of life. As
961 well as rapidly reducing our exploitation and wastage of land and other natural
962 resources we need to ban unsustainable practices for example genetic
963 modification of animals and plants and strictly regulate the use of various
964 chemicals.

965 Immediate radical action must be taken at all levels of society from local to
966 global and we believe Europe is financially well set to lead the way. Europe's
967 role is especially important considering the historic damage Europe has
968 inflicted on global ecological systems.

969 The European Union must switch to a holistic approach to biodiversity,
970 recognizing the direct links with climate change, agriculture, pollution,
971 transport and energy issues. These aspects should be taken as principles in all
972 foreign policy and development cooperation of the EU.

973 Any implementation must be taken with full cooperation of those communities
974 affected and all stakeholders must be fully involved in the long process to
975 address this issue.

976 **Agriculture, Food and Rural Life**

977 The "Green Revolution"⁶¹ brought us energy intensive agricultural practices,
978 known as industrialized agriculture, which has destroyed ecosystems, seriously
979 harmed biodiversity and lead to the loss of fertile land which is becoming a
980 serious problem. It brought us a centralized seed market, with high performance
981 seeds, which need high input of chemicals and fertilizers to grow and are not
982 able to adjust to changing conditions and diseases.

983 The change of agricultural practices all over the world goes hand in hand with
984 the globalization of food markets, which set the focus on cost efficiency over
985 sustainability. In order to compete in this market wages are reduced and working
986 methods mechanised. This leads to monocultures and loss of work leads to
987 unsustainable urbanisation.

988 Food processing and distribution has been monopolized creating significant
989 obstacles for small farmers who don't have the money to invest in the machines
990 they need to match the standards of big food companies.

991 Since the most basic and important livelihood of billions is falling apart and
992 the food security and safety of the rest of society is under severe threat, FYEG
993 demands immediate action: to stop unsustainable, unfair, energy-intensive,
994 centralized practices and policies on the one hand, and to implement
995 sustainable, fair and energy-efficient, decentralized, democratic and local
996 practices and policies on the other hand.

997 There are many positive trends working towards sustainability, fairness, energy-
998 efficiency and decentralization. Financial support for agricultural activities
999 should be directed towards ecologically and socially sustainable practices.

1000 Organic farming must become the standard form of food production. Other forms of
1001 bringing food production closer to consumers and making it visible in everyday
1002 life in cities is also important. Community gardening and urban farming, while
1003 usually small-scale, helps us re-think our relationship to food, as well as
1004 being a positive form of reclaiming unused urban space.

1005 Our growing need for both food and living space must be solved without large-
1006 scale expansion of either cities into rural areas or of agriculture into
1007 especially biodiverse areas.

1008 Local seed production is needed, not GMOs and high performance seeds. The right
1009 to store and sow seeds should not be limited, and seed patents should not be
1010 allowed for human as well as for animal feeding.

1011 GMOs are no solution to the food crisis and should be banned. They can have a
1012 harmful impact on local ecosystems and support multinational seed companies, who
1013 take away the freedom of the farmers with unfair contracts. We are however, not
1014 inherently against publicly funded research into GM products.

1015 The unsustainable fishing practices of the EU is a serious problem for food
1016 security and biodiversity. Overfishing in European waters has led to an
1017 unsustainable amount of fish, which in turn leads to socially unacceptable
1018 fishing agreements. This leads to overfishing and destroys the livelihood of
1019 local fishermen.

1020 Fish farming currently is a threat to biodiversity and wild fish, and massively
1021 pollutes oceans, seas and lakes. If fish is farmed, it must take place either on
1022 land or with suitable mitigation measures.

1023 In the European Union, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is the most
1024 important tool to influence agricultural practices. Today it serves to support
1025 industrialized agriculture and export-orientated farming.

1026 This has to be ended. Public money should go towards public goods. The CAP
1027 should support farming styles and agricultural practices which ensure

1028 biodiversity and a sustainable environment. It should support rural areas
1029 through the support of regional markets and small-scale farming, allowing local
1030 communities to be autonomous in relation to food. A change in the CAP could
1031 offer an opportunity to fight climate change by encouraging farming of edible
1032 crops instead of meat for consumption.

1033 **Bioethics**

1034 FYEG sees value also in life itself. In addition to the obvious value of
1035 ecosystems and consciousness, living beings in general must be treated with
1036 respect. We strongly oppose any misuse, abuse and objectification of living
1037 beings.

1038 Vegetarianism and veganism are preferable over other diets, not only for their
1039 environmental benefits, but also out of respect for life itself. Lifestyles
1040 using few or no animal products should be made possible and supported at all
1041 stages of life, including public institutions. We support legislation and the
1042 distribution of public resources to reduce animal consumption.

1043 In the life saving medical and physical sciences we strongly encourage the
1044 development of alternatives to animal testing. In all other branches of industry
1045 and science animal testing must be banned. Furthermore, we call for pain-free
1046 husbandry, especially agricultural animal farming and the introduction of
1047 adequate regulations. We want to abolish the keeping of animals for circuses.
1048 Zoos and other areas where animals are simply for people's entertainment need to
1049 be abolished and large zoos need to be transformed into parks. Hunting as a
1050 hobby must be discontinued. We need more nature reserves and programmes for the
1051 preservation of endangered species.

1052 Conservation efforts must be de-coupled from entertainment using animals such as
1053 zoos and circuses, which we see as denigrating and often abusive.

1054 **Ecology as the Fundament of Our Society**

1055 Reality has a Green bias in that there are objective limits to material growth
1056 and expansion. These restrictions set by our material reality are a frame that
1057 all politics has to work within, and the Green movement has been the first,
1058 though hopefully not the last, to recognize this.

1059 The consumption of non-renewable resources has always been and remains a short-
1060 term option, whereas the values of nature that are destroyed by such short-term
1061 actions may remained indefinitely. All of society needs to recognize the long-
1062 term value which being destroyed for short-term gains. Society must be re-
1063 structured to serve a long term perspective.

1064 **Conclusion**

1065 This document outlines our basic political beliefs and stances. It creates a
1066 philosophical framework for action at a local level and enables the Federation
1067 to elaborate concrete topical policy papers and act politically in accordance.

1068 Through creative discussion and debates we have improved our knowledge and
1069 established a mutual understanding across the Federation bringing our members
1070 closer together.

1071 To bring about the much needed change in our fight for global social and
1072 environmental justice, we strive to build alliances with other political forces
1073 and actors. We shall do this on the basis of the ideas and concepts we outline
1074 in this political platform both inside and outside the Green Family.

1075 A mandate for FYEG and its bodies is hereby established through our vision of a
1076 better future. Collectively we will fight for this future!

1077 **Glossary**

- 1078 1. **E-democracy:** the use of information and communication technologies to
1079 engage citizens, support the democratic decision-making process and
1080 strengthen democracy.
- 1081 2. **Free software and Open source:** publicly licensed and available source code,
1082 granting users the right to use, copy, study, change, and improve the
1083 structure or design of software.
- 1084 3. **Net neutrality:** the principle that advocates no restrictions by Internet
1085 Service Providers or governments on users of the internet.
- 1086 4. **Wealth:** an abundance of valuable possessions or money.
- 1087 5. **Wage labour:** the socio-economic relationship between a worker and an
1088 employer, where the worker sells their labour under a formal or informal
1089 employment contract.
- 1090 6. **Neoliberal:** relating to or denoting a modified form of liberalism tending
1091 to favour free-market capitalism.
- 1092 7. **Materialism:** a tendency to consider material possessions and physical
1093 comfort as more important than other values such as social, cultural or
1094 spiritual.
- 1095 8. **Consumerism:** the preoccupation of society with the acquisition of consumer
1096 goods.
- 1097 9. **Profit maximisation:** the process by which a firm determines the price and
1098 output level that returns the greatest profit.
- 1099 10. **Production factors:** factors of production (or productive 'inputs' or
1100 'resources') are any commodities or services used to produce goods and
1101 services.

- 1102 11. **Intergenerational:** between generations e.g. intergenerationalequity means
1103 equality between generations not simply within generations
1104 (intragenerational equity).
- 1105 12. **Intragenerational:** occurring or existing between members ofone generation.
- 1106 13. **Sustainability:** meets the needs of the present withoutcompromising the
1107 ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 1108 14. **Gross Domestic Product:** the total value of goods producedand services
1109 provided in a country during one year.
- 1110 15. **Purchasing power:** purchasing power is the number ofgoods/services that can
1111 be purchased with a unit of currency. For example, if you had taken one
1112 dollar to a store in the 1950s, you would have been able to buy a greater
1113 number of items than you would today, indicating that you would have had a
1114 greater purchasing power in the 1950s.
- 1115 16. **Cooperative** : an organisation that is owned and run jointly by its
1116 members, who share the profits or benefits.
- 1117 17. **Fiscal system:** of or relating to government revenue, especially taxes.
- 1118 18. **Monetary policy:** monetary policy is the process by which the monetary
1119 authority of a country controls the supply of money, often targeting a
1120 rate of interest for the purpose of promoting economic growth and
1121 stability.
- 1122 19. **Deficit:** an excess of expenditure or liabilities over income or assets in
1123 a given period.
- 1124 20. **Surplus:** an excess of income or assets over expenditure or liabilities in
1125 a given period, typically a fiscal year.
- 1126 21. **Macro-economic trends:** the behaviour of the aggregate economy, including
1127 economy-wide phenomena such as changes in unemployment, national income,
1128 rate of growth, gross domestic product, inflation and price levels.
- 1129 22. **Inflation:** A general increase in prices and fall in the purchasing value
1130 of money.
- 1131 23. **Tax harmonisation:** tax harmonisation refers to the process of making taxes
1132 identical or at least similar in a region. In practice, it usually means
1133 increasing tax in low-tax jurisdictions, rather than reducing tax in high-
1134 tax jurisdictions or a combination of both.
- 1135 24. **Real economy:** The real economy generally refers to the nonfinancial
1136 economy—for example, manufacturing, farming, trade, and services.

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- 1137 25. **Accumulation:** the accumulation of capital is the gathering or amassing of
1138 objects of value; the increase in wealth through concentration; or the
1139 creation of wealth.
- 1140 26. **Qualification agencies:** financial rating agencies which calculate how
1141 risky investments are.
- 1142 27. **Periphery:** periphery countries (sometimes referred to as just the
1143 periphery) are those that are less “developed” than the semi-periphery and
1144 core countries. These countries usually receive a disproportionately small
1145 share of global wealth. They have weak state institutions and are
1146 exploited by more developed countries. By the exploitation of periphery
1147 country's agriculture, cheap labour, and natural resources core countries
1148 can remain dominant.
- 1149 28. **Anthropogenic:** originating in human activity
- 1150 29. **Carbon capture and storage:** Carbon capture and storage (CCS), (carbon
1151 capture and sequestration), refers to technology attempting to prevent the
1152 release of large quantities of CO₂ into the atmosphere from fossil fuel
1153 use in power generation and other industries by capturing CO₂,
1154 transporting it and ultimately, pumping it into underground geologic
1155 formations to securely store it away from the atmosphere.
- 1156 30. **Geo-engineering:** Geo-engineering (or climate engineering) means proposals
1157 to deliberately manipulate the Earth's climate to counteract the effects
1158 of global warming from greenhouse gas emissions.
- 1159 31. **Basic income:** income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis,
1160 without means testing or work requirements.
- 1161 32. **Vis-à-vis:** literally 'face to face'. Often now used in the sense of 'in
1162 relation to'.
- 1163 33. **International Labour Organisation (ILO):** is the international organization
1164 responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards
- 1165 34. **Global Justice, Peace and Human Rights**
- 1166 35. **Global South:** the collective title for states of South and Central America,
1167 Africa and most of the Asian states, considered as countries with a lower
1168 rate of “development”.
- 1169 36. **Global North:** the collective title for the countries of Europe, North
1170 America and Australasia, considered highly “developed”.
- 1171 37. **NATO:** the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is an intergovernmental
1172 military alliance based on the North Atlantic Treaty, signed on 1949. It
1173 is a collective defence force whereby its member states agree to mutual

- 1174 defence in response to an attack by any external party.
- 1175 38. **FRONTEX**: the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation
1176 at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union is the
1177 European Union agency for external border security. It is responsible for
1178 co-ordinating the activities of the national border guards in ensuring the
1179 security of the EU's borders with non-member states.
- 1180 39. **UNHCR**: the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees,
1181 also known as the UN Refugee Agency is a United Nations agency mandated to
1182 protect and support refugees at the request of a government or the UN
1183 itself and assists in their voluntary repatriation, local integration or
1184 resettlement to a third country.
- 1185 40. **Social oppression**: the systematic, socially accepted mistreatment and
1186 exploitation of a group or category of people by anyone. In sociology, the
1187 tools of oppression include a progression of denigration, dehumanization,
1188 and demonisation; which often generate scapegoating, which is used to
1189 justify aggression against targeted groups and individuals.
- 1190 41. **Cultural adaptation**: the sociological process of assimilation. It is a
1191 socio-political response to demographic multiculturalism that supports or
1192 promotes the assimilation of cultural and ethnic minorities into the
1193 dominant culture. Assimilation usually involves a gradual change and takes
1194 place in varying degrees; full assimilation occurs when new members of a
1195 society become indistinguishable from older members and they are forced to
1196 abandon their own values, culture, history and identity.
- 1197 42. **Queer Theory**: a field of post-structuralist critical theory that emerged
1198 in the early 1990s out of the fields of queer studies and Women's studies.
1199 Whereas gay/lesbian studies focused its inquiries into "natural" and
1200 "unnatural" behaviour with respect to homosexual behaviour, queer theory
1201 expands its focus to encompass any kind of sexual activity or identity
1202 that falls into normative and deviant categories.
- 1203 43. **Queer**: an umbrella term for sexual minorities that are not heterosexual,
1204 heteronormative, or gender-binary. In the context of Western identity
1205 politics the term also acts as a label setting queer-identifying people
1206 apart from discourse, ideologies, and lifestyles that typify mainstream
1207 LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transsexual) communities as being
1208 oppressive or assimilationist.
- 1209 44. **Churches**: refers to all kinds of religious institution, not only
1210 Christian.
- 1211 45. **Green Revolution**: a series of technological innovations, transfers and
1212 research initiatives which rapidly increased agricultural production
1213 around the world between 1940 and 1970, but now recognised to have had
1214 negative social and ecological consequences.
- 1215 46. **Precautionary principle**: Principle 3 of the 1992 Rio Declaration on

1216 Environmen and Development. Article 3.3 refers to the precautionary
1217 principle, which is widely reflected in environmental law and
1218 environmental agreements: “Where there are threats of serious or
1219 irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used
1220 as a reason for postponing such measures” – a statement which closely
1221 mirrors the wording of Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration.