

## **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-democracy<sup>1</sup> 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 source<sup>2</sup> 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 neutrality<sup>3</sup> 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 wealth<sup>4</sup> 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 accumulation<sup>5</sup> 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 labour<sup>6</sup>  
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 neoliberal<sup>7</sup>  
190 system - where corporations and the market prevail over human needs.

### 191 **Green Economy**

192 FYEG thinks beyond materialism<sup>8</sup> and consumerism<sup>9</sup>. 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 principle<sup>10</sup> of long term sustainability<sup>11</sup>.

196 We strive for a system which values equality and cooperation instead of material  
197 and monetary profit maximisation<sup>12</sup> 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 factors<sup>13</sup>.

205 Through the green economy we strive for gender equality and the destruction of  
206 the gender work division. Intergenerational<sup>14</sup> and intragenerational<sup>15</sup> 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 sustainable<sup>16</sup>, 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 Product<sup>17</sup>) 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 consumerism<sup>18</sup> 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 power<sup>19</sup>.

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 cooperative<sup>20</sup> 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 system<sup>21</sup> 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 policies<sup>22</sup> are basic economic instruments. Debt, deficits<sup>23</sup>  
272 and surpluses<sup>24</sup> are important tools for equalizing macro-economic trends<sup>25</sup>,  
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 inflation<sup>26</sup> 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 harmonisation <sup>27</sup> 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 economy<sup>28</sup>.

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 accumulation<sup>29</sup>, 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 agencies<sup>30</sup> 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-periphery<sup>31</sup> 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 <sup>32</sup> 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 South<sup>33</sup>. 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 storage<sup>34</sup>, geo-engineering<sup>35</sup> 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 Income<sup>36</sup>,  
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 wealth<sup>37</sup> 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 neoliberalism<sup>38</sup> 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-vis<sup>39</sup> 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 deficit<sup>40</sup> 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)<sup>41</sup>.

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 cooperatives<sup>42</sup> 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 <sup>43</sup>. 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 <sup>44</sup> 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 South<sup>45</sup>, 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 North<sup>46</sup>.

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 wealth<sup>47</sup> 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 NATO<sup>48</sup> 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 FRONTEX<sup>49</sup> 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 UNHCR<sup>50</sup> 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 oppression<sup>51</sup>  
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 daptation<sup>52</sup>.

### 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 theory<sup>53</sup> 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 queer<sup>54</sup>.

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 intergenerational<sup>55</sup> 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 <sup>56</sup> 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 sustainability<sup>57</sup>, 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 CO<sub>2</sub>e 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 North<sup>58</sup> must acknowledge that the largest share of  
930 global CO<sub>2</sub> per capita emissions originated in their countries and currently  
931 continue to do so, resulting in a widening gap with the Global South<sup>59</sup>.  
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 principle<sup>60</sup> 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"<sup>61</sup> 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.

- 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 CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere from fossil fuel  
1153 use in power generation and other industries by capturing CO<sub>2</sub>,  
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.