

## **R07 \* The Right to Be Lazy: Dismantling the Capitalist Narrative of Relentless Work**

Proposer: LJE (France)  
Agenda item: 8. Resolutions

### **Motion text**

1 This motion questions fundamental assumptions in our European values and their  
2 deeply rooted link to capitalism. We aim, as FYEG, to denounce a culture of  
3 exploitation and propose alternatives to such narratives.

4 We acknowledge that the prevailing capitalist work culture prioritizes  
5 relentless economic growth over human well-being, driving individuals and  
6 society to exhaustion rather than emancipation. It must be stated that while the  
7 European Union boasts an overall employment rate of 75.8% for 2024, this  
8 relentless pursuit of employment targets often ignores the degrading structural  
9 quality of those jobs and the fundamental well-being of the populace. It is  
10 deeply concerning that workers' rights across Europe have plummeted to their  
11 worst level in at least a decade, with 54% of European countries now denying  
12 workers basic access to justice, and 41% violating the fundamental right to  
13 establish and join a trade union.

14 All political actors aligned with FYEG's values must emphasize that the burden  
15 of this capitalist system falls unevenly across demographics, evidenced by a  
16 persistent 10.0 percentage point gender employment gap across the EU that widens  
17 to 12.0 percentage points as workers age, and reaches severe extremes of 19.3  
18 percentage points in countries like Italy.

19 Our values as Young Greens will always stand for social justice, feminism, and  
20 intersectionality, recognizing that an economy driven by overproduction and  
21 endless labor actively destroys both human well-being and the planet's  
22 ecological balance.

23 The normalization of Burn-out, the commodification of self-help products, the  
24 uberization of healthcare access, the decrease in national healthcare budgets,  
25 the growing population turning to AI for healthcare advice: these are all  
26 symptoms of a system that thrives on creating problems it can sell the solutions  
27 to. Overwork must be the norm for this to function as intended.

28 The capitalist system thrives on a narrative that glorifies endless labor while  
29 ignoring its structural harms. This framework benefits a select few property  
30 owners while harming the broader public, who are pressured to dedicate their  
31 lives entirely to productivity. Modern flexible working arrangements, rather  
32 than freeing society, have increasingly given rise to widespread precariousness  
33 and new inequalities. The historical demand for the "Right to Work" has  
34 frequently been manipulated as a tool for continued capitalist exploitation  
35 rather than human liberation.

36 While capitalism demands infinite productivity, it actively dismantles the  
37 structures protecting workers. The European Commission is currently pushing a  
38 dangerous deregulation drive that would strip away vital labor law protections  
39 and undermine collective agreements for workers. The Inc. proposal is one of  
40 many proposed EU changes that have worried the population who will live with the  
41 consequences: in this case, the EESC Workers' group.

42 Concurrently, governments and employers are ruthlessly cracking down on labor  
43 organizing, exacerbated by the rise of far-right political movements that  
44 actively attack the right to strike.

45 Modern machinery and technological advancement possess boundless productive  
46 power that should drastically reduce working hours for everyone. Instead of  
47 utilizing automation to redeem society from the most arduous labor and grant  
48 days of rest, capitalism forces workers into an absurd competition with  
49 machines, leading to systemic overproduction and economic instability. This will  
50 only grow as Furthermore, the system fails to utilize human potential  
51 appropriately; currently, 21.4% of EU workers are over-qualified, trapped in  
52 jobs beneath their educational and skill levels just to survive the demands of  
53 the labor market.

54 **FYEG will continue campaigning everywhere for a radical societal shift away from**  
55 **the dogma of endless economic growth and labor.** Our "We fight for joy" is  
56 already part of this re-writing of capitalist narratives. More concretely, we  
57 must argue for sweeping reductions in the standard working week without loss of  
58 pay, striving toward the ultimate goal of drastically reduced work hours.

59 **Member Organisations (MOs) must advocate nationally** for the equitable rationing  
60 of work to provide all citizens with the leisure necessary for true human and  
61 civic development. We commit to sharing best practices across our network to  
62 challenge the moralistic narrative that equates human worth solely with economic  
63 productivity.

64 **The Green political family should integrate** demands for technological dividends  
65 into their legislative programs. This can be detailed in sectors as each  
66 machinery is specific to its area. We demand that the efficiencies gained

67 through automation be translated directly into increased leisure time for  
68 workers, rather than exclusively generating more profits for the already wealthy  
69 and increasing competition for the quantity of work demanded of workers.

70 **FYEG calls upon the European Commission to abandon its deregulation agenda and**  
71 **urgently bring forward a guarantee for quality jobs and improvement of workers'**  
72 **lived experiences in Europe.**

73 In concrete point and quoting Lucie Studničná, the current EESC workers' group  
74 president: *"On the Quality Jobs Act, speakers highlighted the urgent need for*  
75 *concrete and binding EU legislation to address gaps in worker protection,*  
76 *including psychosocial risks, algorithmic management, subcontracting abuses and*  
77 *the rise of precarious work affecting young people, women and third-country*  
78 *migrant workers. With geopolitical uncertainty fuelling distrust and populism,*  
79 *they argued that Europe must reaffirm its social model through enforceable*  
80 *standards and meaningful social dialogue."*

81 **We urge our Member Organisations to collaborate with trade unions and organized**  
82 **civil society to build national campaigns resisting the capitalist narrative of**  
83 **relentless labor.** We must replace it with the demand for the right to leisure,  
84 prioritizing rest and well-being for all demographics. It is with national, and  
85 local civil society that the FYEG's most direct influence is necessary to change  
86 narratives. We must understand and call out integrated capitalist norms at all  
87 FYEG levels, to counter them with alternative that will prioritize the long term  
88 quality of life for EU populations.

89 It is necessary for corporate lobbyists who currently influence conversations  
90 about the use of technology to be clearly identified and called out. This can be  
91 done through investigative journalism and FYEG Member Organizations amplifying  
92 findings in their national or european platforms, but it can also be done if  
93 more funding in the EU institutions' budget is dedicated to accountability  
94 regarding lobbyists' influence.

95 We mandate the Green political family to champion these demands in all future  
96 electoral platforms, ensuring accountability in the transition toward an economy  
97 that leverages technological dividends to reduce working hours and protect the  
98 social rights of all citizens.

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