



## 1 **Renewing and rejuvenating the Greens**

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3 When analysing the results of the 2014 European elections it is clear that if young people had  
4 a say, the debate on whether we need a European Union would be much less sceptical<sup>1</sup>.  
5 Moreover, when looking at voters' preferences, you can see that if the turnout among young  
6 people was higher, progressive parties, and Green parties in particular, would have a much  
7 greater presence in elected bodies<sup>2</sup>.

8  
9 However, young people do not go to vote as much as other age groups. The low  
10 representation of young people and their main concerns make it unattractive to vote. In recent  
11 years, a few political parties have been successful in addressing these issues, but are not  
12 bringing the ultimate progressive solutions young people want. The Green movement has been  
13 fighting for many years for a better representation of the population in our parliaments. And  
14 there are many good reasons to do this, one being that if someone tells your story and they  
15 seem to understand you, because they are like you, you are more likely to vote for them.

16  
17 The truth is, however, that politics is still often seen as a place where wise older people have to  
18 take the difficult decisions. And while other, even highly conservative, parts of society,  
19 including parts of Hollywood and corporate boards, are listening to public pressure and  
20 becoming increasingly diverse, the political arena is lagging behind and continues to look  
21 exactly the same.

22  
23 Although Green parties continue to have a higher concentration of younger people than most  
24 other parties, the chances of them getting elected are often slim. Even within our own  
25 progressive movement, we seem to find it difficult to put forward a Young Green.

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27 Looking at recent developments in electoral campaigns, we note a lack of renewal and  
28 rejuvenation within parties. By not putting young people high on the list, more people will be re-  
29 elected rather than newly elected, preventing more experienced politicians from passing on  
30 their skills, knowledge and experience. Without fresh blood, political groups will stand still. And  
31 without young people on the lists, young people are less likely to vote Green.

32  
33 As the Green movement, we are a great school for young politicians. One of our considerable  
34 strengths are the Green youth wings, where Young Greens can learn by doing. This is where  
35 they can learn to make mistakes, feel free to make alliances with newly emerging progressive  
36 movements, develop their own political views, and where they can gain experience in all  
37 aspects of politics – writing policy papers, campaigning or winning Green political victories.  
38 The Young Greens do it all and they do it well. Greens win elections because young people see

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[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2014/post/post\\_2014\\_survey\\_analitical\\_overview\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2014/post/post_2014_survey_analitical_overview_en.pdf)

2

GroenLinks, with 30-year-old Jesse Klaver, would have been the second biggest party amongst under 25-year-olds, and the third under 35: <https://nos.nl/artikel/2163382-jong-of-oud-man-of-vrouw-wie-stemde-op-welke-partij.html>.

In the Czech Republic, the likelihood of young people voting Green is twice as high as for other parties:  
<http://showme.median.cz/volby-2017/>

In the German federal elections in September 2017, Greens performed best among 18-24-year-old voters:  
[http://www.tagesschau.de/multimedia/bilder/uvchart-ydthhzpcgmui-101~\\_v-videoweb1.jpg](http://www.tagesschau.de/multimedia/bilder/uvchart-ydthhzpcgmui-101~_v-videoweb1.jpg)

Among 18-29-year-old voters in Finland, the Greens are the most popular party with 30.9% and growing:  
<https://tietoanurista.fi/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Puoluekannatus-768x640.jpg>



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39 them as a movement they want to campaign and vote for<sup>3</sup>. For young people in particular, the  
40 Young Greens are an important gateway for this.

41  
42 If we want more young people to go out and vote, and in particular more young people to vote  
43 for the Greens, we must represent youth properly. To achieve this, we need young people  
44 higher on our lists, able to make a substantial contribution to campaigns, to gain even more  
45 political experience and thus to be able to get elected. Autonomous youth wings are an  
46 essential prerequisite for this.

47  
48 With reference to the above, the EGP and its member parties commit to:

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- 50 ● Supporting autonomous youth wings;
  - 51 ● Keeping in mind the importance of renewal within Green parties;
  - 52 ● Facilitating a smooth transition from the youth wing into positions of responsibility  
53 within the party;
  - 54 ● Giving adequate space to youth-wing representatives to enrich debates and develop  
55 themselves; and
  - 56 ● Striving to have young people in electable positions in all elections where list elections  
57 apply

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In the recent successful Dutch campaign, young people joined the campaign both online and offline because they believed in the positive Green message.