

**50**  
**YEARS**

YOUNG  
EUROPEAN  
FEDERALISTS

Simply

A Generation Ahead

JEF - EUROPE  
YEARS OF ACTION  
TOWARDS A  
50 FEDERAL  
EUROPE



**DECEMBER 2022**



# [JEF EUROPE]

## 50 years of action towards a federal Europe

JEF Europe celebrated its 50th European anniversary in 2022 and has used this occasion to take a look back. This is a time to remember that European integration is not only the result of nations and governments, that it is also an idea supported by thousands of activists long since before the last war, and amongst them the Young European Federalists. Fifty years after our European revival, let us remember the actions of our predecessors for a united and federal Europe. As Young European Federalists, we are those who pioneered peace as our main political target, who were the first to state that peace and the rule of law were inestimably more important than national differences. We are those who contributed to the creation of the single internal market and the single currency, to the removal of border controls, to the creation of the Erasmus programme. We are those who have stood up for European democracy over decades, for common supranational institutions and for supranational parliaments.

As JEF is an organisation in which the citizen is key, in which people thought and fought for their ideas, as JEF has been from its very beginning a great human adventure, let the story be told by those who made it.

*Antonio Argenziano, President of JEF Europe 2021-2023*

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**50 YEARS OF ACTION TOWARDS A  
FEDERAL EUROPE**

# HOW AND WHY JEF WAS REVIVED

Summary written from an article by

Tobias Flessenkemper

(JEF Europe Secretary General 1996-1998) in 1997.

The Federalist Movement was founded in 1947 in Montreux, Switzerland. JEF was born as the youth section of the Federalist Movement and began its activity in several European towns in 1948. Young people in particular played a major role in this movement and the Young European Federalists organised themselves into JEF sections, establishing a new European structure with a European office in Paris. That was in 1949.

The defeat of the European Defence Community in 1954 caused a major crisis among Federalists, including JEF. With the internal split in UEF in the 1950s between 'gradualists' and 'maximalists', the international youth organisation also fell apart. Although JEF sections were active everywhere, no international coordination existed. Nevertheless, the various groups continued their work on local, regional and national levels.

Several common actions were organised in the late sixties, among which the campaign for the direct election of the European Parliament. For instance, in 1967 young people held mock negotiations in Brussels. The idea was to work out a treaty of accession for the UK to the Community. In March 1969 they organised a demonstration on the spectators' benches of the European Parliament, demanding direct elections of the European Parliament by universal suffrage. In many European countries protest demonstrations were organised against the Colonel's coup and dictatorship in Greece.



JEF street action

These activities helped the first groups of young federalists to collaborate very closely and to tighten their links again. This collaboration became concrete through the creation of JEF's liaison office in 1970. It was there that the international association took the name of 'Young European Federalists' and held its founding Congress. The Congress was held in Luxembourg on 25 and 26 March 1972.

The reason for re-establishing an international JEF can also be placed within the context of the development of youth culture and youth movements in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In most western European countries but also on the other side of the "Iron Curtain", young people and students revolted against society, asking for more democracy. The young people's protest shocked politicians so much that they started to reflect on how to better involve young people in politics and society. At the European level, the Council of Europe in Strasbourg took a leading role in this process.

Around the same time JEF-Europe was founded in its current form, the Council of Europe was setting up the European Youth Foundation (EYF) and shortly afterward the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg. There were very few international youth organisations, so it was the right moment to found one -JEF-Europe. This does not mean that JEF-Europe would not have been founded without the existence of the European Youth Foundation but the possibility to get support definitely helped the different JEF groups come together. "Just to show how fast we were: in the European Youth Foundation all organisations get a number when they apply the first time. JEF has number eight. Today more than 600 organisations are registered" (Florian Flessenkemper)

JEF activities on a European level started with mock negotiations on the northern enlargement. The year when JEF-Europe was founded, 1972, was a crucial year for Europe. Denmark, Ireland, Norway and the United Kingdom applied for membership of the European Community.

Even though JEF was still interested in the European Community, new topics became increasingly important: East-West reunification and enlargement; disarmament; women; the environment and international development issues. Not to mention the fight for a directly elected European Parliament.

# TESTIMONY BY PETER OSTEN, FIRST PRESIDENT OF JEF EUROPE

## 1972-1974

JEF had already existed in Europe before 1972. If I'm not mistaken, they were created under the name "Young European Federalists" in 1950 and were "sleeping" with the schism of the UEF.

"Am Anfang war die Tat." —Goethes Faust (Teil 1, 3. Szene)

The re-birth of JEF - in my eyes - began March 11, 1969, in Strasbourg, when thirty French, German and Italian federalist students had disrupted the inaugural session of the European Parliament under the chairmanship of the oldest Ferruccio Parri, demanding European democracy and the direct election of the EP. Among others there was one of the "protesters" Lucia Bolis (daughter of Luciano Bolis and goddaughter of Ferruccio Parri) and Jean-Philippe Allenbach (Franco-Swiss presidential candidate in 2007 for the Federalist party). And there was me. Being the only one who wore the tie I had to give interviews to the media, which then got me some notoriety in federalist circles.

There was then a schism between the federalists in Europe. The Union of European Federalists had split into two in 1956; the "functionalists" had established the Centre for federalist European action "AEF", the "constitutionalists" had gathered in the MFE, and JEF, as the Youth organisation of UEF actually had "fallen asleep" ...

One of the ideas of young federalists was then to overcome this split of federalists and raise JEF at European level.

In 1969 there was still the Europe of six member-states blocked by the "Gaullist" policy. But on April 28, 1969 De Gaulle resigned after losing a referendum on

regionalisation. Beginning in December 1969 there was the first summit of Heads of State and Government at The Hague, and the federalists from two trends - especially young Federalists, with their success in Strasbourg - organised the first counter-summit. The Europe of six decided to expand - especially de Gaulle had blocked the entrance to Great Britain - and young Federalists meeting in The Hague decided to redo the JEF at European level.

But anyway it took some time. For JEF-Germany I organised a preparatory meeting in Freiburg im Breisgau (December 1970). The (re-) founder Congress was scheduled again in 1971, but we needed to organise subsidies ... and with the support of the secretariat of the European Parliament and thanks to the good relations of Karen Fogg (then Deputy Secretary General of the European Movement) this congress took place in March 1972 in a room of the European Parliament on the Plateau de Kirchberg in Luxembourg, with delegates from nine countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Great Britain, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands).

The elected board then consisted of two vice-presidents, Erwan Fouéré (Ireland, later an Ambassador / Ombudsman of the OSCE responsible for settling the conflict between Moldova and Transnistria) and Rob van den Toorn (Netherlands), as well as myself as President. The first task of the office was to establish a secretariat. Attempt to rent and set up a secretariat in Leuven / Leuven was a failure. But in August 1972, I became an intern at the Commission, and we sat at the common office of European Movement International and MFE, 14 Rue Duquesnoy in Brussels. In fact it was free for us, and with the benevolence of Caterina Chizzola (Secretary General of MFE) and Robert Van Schendel (Secretary General of EMI), Anne Ottoy (co-opted Executive Secretary of JEF) and Bénédicte de Meeûs also worked for JEF.

In 1973 we had already three new sections, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, we organised a training course in Verona, two seminar-conferences on European migration in Esslingen (Baden-Württemberg, 31 May-3 June 1973 ) and Cagliari (Italy / Sardinia) in August 1973 and a programmatic seminar in September 1973 in Lyon. The board had co-opted Wilms Carl Wright (then a member of the Cabinet of Commissioner George Thomson), Helios Radresa (our Press Officer: now a poet) and Karel van Hulle (Treasurer). And we had a bulletin: "JEF info".

# 1979

## THE FIRST

# EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

*The campaign for a directly elected European Parliament was one of the first major campaigns of the Young European Federalists.*

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From what I recall, the most important European-wide campaigns of the organisation were about two things: the elections to the European Parliament but also the political parties. In 1973, we had a launch meeting in Cambridge, where we invited youth representatives of political parties as well as JEF activists. We started a general explanation of how the European Parliament operates and then we split up people into political families and got them to draw up a programme and secondly to debate that in a European Parliament style format, in terms of political parties, not national delegations. That led to campaigning on the whole theme of having European political parties, which we considered to be essential for making European elections a success. And 40 years on, it is still the view of some of us that we won't really make European elections a success until we have proper European political parties. To have a democratic dimension of the Union, political parties are in a central part of that, otherwise it is meaningless to have a democratic expression.

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Julian Priestley, President of JEF-Europe 1974-1976

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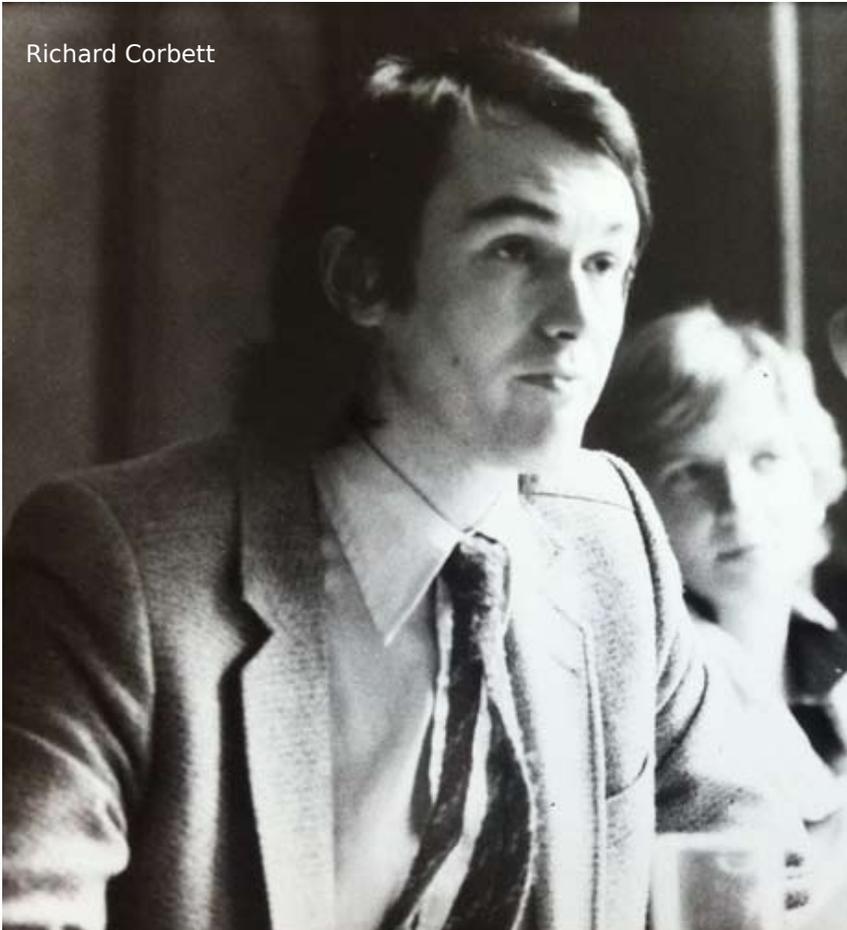
We had of course long campaigned in favour of an elected European Parliament: petitions, demonstrations, meetings, articles, including a massive demonstration in Rome outside the December 1975 European Council that finally agreed on direct elections. (There was no Internet campaigning those days!) Once it was achieved, we pressed and encouraged the EP to be bold and to initiate moves towards European Union that governments seemed reluctant to take.

I remember in particular a huge federalist demonstration (with UEF) at the entrance to the EP when the newly elected MEPs arrived on the first day of the first session to take their seats. I was asked, without any advance notice, to speak to the several thousand demonstrators -- quite a daunting experience for a twenty-four year old without any preparation or even any notes! A couple of years later, I had the privilege to work for one of those MEPs -- Altiero Spinelli when he was Parliament's rapporteur to prepare a Draft Treaty establishing a European Union -- the proposal that triggered the events that led to the Single European Act and the Treaty of Maastricht.



Richard Corbett, President of JEF-Europe 1979-1981

Richard Corbett



# 1980s: ACTION TOWARDS A UNITED EUROPE

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East-West youth exchanges and contacts were a novelty. Here, JEF joined other European youth organisations in seeking to establish a pan-European framework for youth cooperation. We were under no illusions about who we were dealing with: in many cases the youth section of the state bureaucracy of totalitarian states. Yet, these contacts could open some doors -- and not all youth organisations in Eastern Europe (as we called it then) were completely controlled by the Communists. A good example was the Youth for the United Nations (SPPONZ) in Poland: the government could hardly ban an organisation that supported the UN, of which Poland was a member, so it was allowed to exist and became a magnet for young Poles who were interested in international affairs and contacts. Many of them were very interested in JEF and we were able to arrange joint seminars, conferences and visits. SPPONZ became almost a de facto JEF section behind the Iron Curtain!

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Richard Corbett, President of JEF-Europe 1979-1981

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In 1978 the context was of course the Cold War. The JEF logo included a map of Western Europe, which I changed to the whole of Europe without asking anyone's agreement! JEF always believed that the whole of Europe should be united, not just the west. As president, just before Solidarnosc appeared on the scene, I developed relations with SPPONZ, Polish students whose official role was supporting the United Nations. One of their activists, Jaroslav Pietras, later led Polish negotiations for EU accession. We also visited the League of Socialist Youth of Yugoslavia in Belgrade and Pristina, from which later emerged at least one JEF section. In 1981 Europe had been divided into East and West all our lives and we

could not imagine that the division would only last eight more years.

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David Grace, Secretary General of JEF Europe 1978-1980,  
President of JEF Europe 1981-1983

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In 1989 I was elected President of the organisation, in the midst of the Yugoslav wars, the break-up of the Soviet bloc and the Maastricht negotiations. These changes had their impact in JEF: there were those that supported deepening and those that supported enlargement. These were difficult times; debates were hard and often ended in acrimony. In the event, JEF followed the predominant trend of enlarging, not necessarily for the benefit of JEF or of Europe, but perhaps that was the only option available at the time.

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Giannis Papageorgiou, Secretary General of JEF Europe 1985-1987  
President of JEF Europe 1989-1991



JEF Congress - September 1981

# 1990s: EVOLUTION WITHIN A VERY EUROPEAN UNION

*In the 1990s, three basic developments influenced the work and the discussions of JEF. Firstly, the return of nationalist wars in Europe. Secondly, the crisis of legitimacy of the European integration process for many reasons, highlighted by the Danish referendum in 1992, the lost Norwegian referendum in 1994 and the negative attitude of a majority of EU citizens towards the Euro. And thirdly, the open questions on the enlargement of the European Union.*



When I was active at the local level in Leuven, a lot of things were happening. We had the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Iron Curtain in 1989, which changed our whole world. At the European level we were also in the midst of the Europe 1992 Euphoria after the Maastricht treaty. We would wake up in 1993 in a new European Union and everything would be different.

I studied a year in the United States and when I came back in 1993 I became treasurer of JEF at the Munich Congress. Things were already a bit different... There were a lot of discussions in JEF about deepening (reforms, constitution) or widening (enlargement). The compromise was as always that we need both at the same time. The enlargement to 15 with the referenda (and the no vote in Norway) marked my generation of JEFers, but also the war in what used to be Yugoslavia.

One of the main actions next to pleading for a constitution was that JEF president Tor Eigil Hodne and some EB members went to Sarajevo under siege to plead for European unification. I think the action was Café Europa. Another campaign we ran was the ProVote campaign to try to get young people involved in the 1994 European elections. That was a big coalition of all kinds of youth political parties under the leadership of JEF. I remember the work we did with the ICC (the

intercitizens conferences), where a small group of former JEFers set up a pan-European network of organisations to discuss European reforms.

”

Olivier Hinnekens, Treasurer and Executive Board member of JEF Europe, 1993-1999

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When I was a vice-president of JEF between 1995 and 1997, we were acting in favour of democratic reforms in the European Treaties, gave support to the new JEF sections in Central and Eastern Europe and tried to act in favour of peace in the Balkans.

”

Jutta Hergenhan, Vice-President of JEF Europe, 1995-1997

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When I began my term in JEF, in 1995, the war in former Yugoslavia was still going on in the area of Bosnia & Herzegovina. The year before, JEF had started a huge campaign across Europe to help the rebuilding of the Sarajevo library.

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Nathalie Lasnier, President of JEF France 1997-1998 and Executive Board member of JEF Europe 1995-1997



JEF action in favour of democracy

# 1996: FEDERALIST CROWD IN FIRENZE



JEFers from all over Europe joined the international manifestation organised in Florence for the European summit. Many young federalists did not hesitate to spend more than 24 hours in a coach to take part. Eventually, they all gathered in Florence. First took place the European Youth Convention in Palazzo degli Affari, less than two hundred metres from the ancient fortress where the heads of state and governments had locked themselves away. JEF had invited members of the European parliament and representatives of international party political youth organisations to take the floor.

Marcelino Oreja, member of the Commission joined the event, between working sessions of the summit, and answered the questions of the audience. On behalf of JEF-Europe spoke Jutta Hergenhan, Vice President, while Ugo Ferruta, President, concluded by introducing the appeal to the Council and the IGC that the Youth Convention adopted.

On Friday evening, the participants walked around the magnificent cathedral and stood in Piazza della Repubblica, holding torchlights and waving flags despite a short rain. Some tourists even joined us with enthusiasm.

The highlight of the weekend was the demonstration the following morning when thousands walked from Piazza della Indipendenza to Piazza della Signoria. The participants of Friday's events had been joined by numerous Italian Euro-enthusiasts, not only from the federalist movements but also from many different organisations including the main trade unions of the country. The colourful and joyful procession attracted the attention of everybody who was passing by the city centre this day. A demonstration in favour of a more united, democratic and efficient Europe, gathered on Saturday 22 June in Florence 12,000 (according to the police) federalist militants and European citizens.

A delegation met with Mr Prodi, the Italian Prime minister, in order to give him the text of a declaration that had been adopted in a convention the day before. It demanded more transparency in the process to reform the Union and a better participation of its citizens and of the European Parliament.



JEF Press Release, 25 June 1996

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I was President from 1999 to 2001. In 1999 the European Union had still only 15 Member States and was negotiating the accession of the new member states from Central and Eastern Europe, which would join a few years later. The political debate, in JEF and in EU politics in general, focused on the dilemma between enlargement and deepening of political unification. While this dilemma has always existed in European politics, in those years it was perceived as a really existential challenge given the scale of the expected enlargement. JEF was supporting both enlargement and political unification at the same time, but different sections had different priorities and it was always difficult to find a balance at European level. JEF-Europe launched both a “European Constitution Campaign” to advocate a federal constitution for the Union and an “Enlargement Campaign” for a swift accession of the new member states. At that time very important was also the speech of German Foreign Minister Jochka Fischer at Humboldt University in 2000 on the idea of a federal avant-garde by a core group of countries, to reconcile enlargement and deepening - a hotly debated topic in JEF since then.

”

Paolo Vacca, President of JEF Europe, 1999-2001



JEF street action

# 2000s: TOWARDS A CONSTITUTION

## THE 2000 NICE CAMPAIGN



The major event was the public demonstration that JEF and UEF organised in Nice in December 2000 on the occasion of the European summit discussing the Treaty of Nice. In cooperation with all pro-European and other organisations, we gathered ca. 10,000 people from all over Europe, many of whom travelled very long distances by bus organised by JEF, for a march through the city of Nice and a final rally with speeches in the centre of town to claim a “European Constitution Now”. Around the demonstration we organised also a convention with youth political parties, a meeting with European politicians and some social activities. It was a massive political and organisation project for JEF and UEF. In fact, that is one of the largest public demonstrations organised by the federalist movement. We also had an important follow-up the year after, in October 2001, when we gathered several hundred activists from JEF and other youth organisation in a Youth Convention in Brussels to launch a “Manifesto for a European Federation” signed by all European youth political organisations.



Paolo Vacca, President of JEF Europe. 1999-2001

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The 2000 Nice Treaty campaign for a Constitution has been the most important campaign I participated in: it generated the roots for a deeper and dynamic involvement in JEF all the following years, years where Euro was adopted, where we dreamt of a Constitution (listening to Mr Giscard d’Estaing’s speech at the Parliament), where ESDP was created, where we had finally the Lisbon Treaty, years of enlargement, years where European citizens have been wishing for more Europe and asking for less.

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Cécile-Liv Müller, International Officer of JEF France, 2001-2002



UEF-JEF public demonstration in Nice in December 2000

# THE CONVENTION ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE



I was very fortunate to be President of JEF during a period when European integration was very much a “hot topic”. My period of office coincided almost exactly with that of the Convention on the Future of Europe, which was a real focal point for the activities of the European federalists and a real opportunity to get many more people talking about federalism and European democracy. We ran a campaign called “Europe! A Generation Ahead!” which focused on one of the goals of the European Convention - to bring Europe closer to the people. JEF organised over 100 debates on the future of Europe at the national and local level and events all over Europe which focused on the work of the Convention. In Brussels, we lobbied members of the Convention, participated in the Civil Society Forum and established the Youth Contact Group, together with the Youth Political Parties and open to all youth organisations, to press for the views of Europe’s younger citizens to be included. JEF also ran a Convention webpage and a twice-monthly Bulletin to provide information and comment about the work of the Convention and to link together the different parts of our campaign. It was a very exciting time to be in JEF.



Alison Weston, President of JEF Europe, 2001-2003

## THE BIRTH OF THE EURO



You know, already then there were Eurosceptics – they didn’t suddenly arise because of the current debt crisis. This is why at that time, as an organisation, we insisted on celebrating the birth of the Euro: I wasn’t yet SG “but had initiated the « euro-seminar » in Frankfurt am Main, which included a « final countdown » show on euro-eve. This was pretty fun and we were featured on the front page of the local newspaper: the switch to the Euro was positive change, it said – target reached we replied! Internally, it was also a good moment to look back, remember where we were coming from and realise all we had achieved over the years: it’s very healthy for an organisation like JEF to take some distance

sometime and to underline its achievements. If you consider yourself as a history changer, you also have to accept that incremental change takes time!



Marianne Bonnard, Secretary General of JEF Europe. 2002-2004

# JEF WINS THE 2004 THEODOR HEUSS MEDAL

*In 2004, the Theodor Heuss Medal was awarded to the Young European Federalists for their commitment in a selfless and concrete way to the involvement of young Europeans with Europe, to intercultural exchange, and to the right of any person, no matter what their legal status is, to humane treatment.*

Theodor Heuss Medal - 2004



# 2005: THE EUROPEAN CITIZENS' CONVENTION



The European Citizens' Convention, held in Genoa on December 3-4th was one of the most important federalist events of the last years. The idea of a citizens' convention was launched by federalists before the French and the Dutch referenda, when it was still taken for granted that the European Constitution would enter into force.

The Convention would have served to propose the amendments required to make the Constitution a Federal Constitution, mainly the abolition of the veto right on all the competences of the European Union and on the procedure of constitutional revision and the transformation of the Commission into a European Federal Government.

Following the two failed referenda the EU has gone through a period of serious crisis and the constitutional process itself ran the risk of coming to an abrupt stop. For some months, it was only the federalists and very few others who held their position and were finally able to indicate the way to re-launch the idea of Europe having a Constitution as a fundamental step towards the European Federation.

In a climate of general Euroscepticism, worsened by the harsh contrasts in the debate on the financial perspectives for the years 2007-2013, the federalists had the lucidity to turn the Citizens' Convention of Genoa into the first major event aimed at saving the Constitution by gathering people, politicians, representatives of several organisations of civil society together to call for a federal and democratic Europe.

Furthermore, important topics of the political agenda were addressed in the working groups: the role of Europe in the world, the economic and social European model, the European citizenship. The debate in the groups and in the plenary led to the elaboration of a European Manifesto, which is a synthesis of the requests of civil society and of the proposals of federalists to re-launch the constitutional process.

It is a remarkable achievement that shows how federalist ideas are also reaching associations and civil society.

Many JEFers were present at the Convention and gave their support to the event by taking part in the debate and staging a lively demonstration in the streets to demand the re-launch of the constitutional process. The presence at the Convention of some MEPs is another noteworthy point: the European Parliament is a federal institution which, historically, has always been pushing for further integration in the European Union.

Our role is that of creating a link between our European representatives and the European people, who are in many cases vaguely pro-European but need to be led by people who are aware that the new line of division between progress and reaction is the one stated in the Ventotene Manifesto. Creating a front of people and of organisations pushing for a democratic and federal Europe is our task. The European Parliament is not insensitive to the requests of citizens and we must urge it to take brave initiatives.

I welcome some steps on the right way, such as the rejection, although not definitive, of the European budget approved by the Governments for 2007- 2013, on the grounds that it gives much less funds to the EU than the European Parliament required, and the adoption of the Duff-Voggenhuber report, even though two key points originally included in the initial text, i.e. the proposal of a new Convention and of a European-wide referendum in 2009, have been excluded from the final version. If the European Parliament seeks the support of citizens it will become an ally of federalists, as it was in the past.



Federico Brunelli , Treasurer of JEF Italy 2005-2011,  
co-founder of [www.eurobull.it](http://www.eurobull.it), on [eurobull.it](http://eurobull.it), 21st April 2006

# THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE CONSTITUTION



It was the times of the watering down of the Constitutional Treaty, the crafting of the Lisbon Treaty and the failed ratification. It was the time known as proactive neofunctionalism in which some in the EU bubble tried to build a political union in times of economic wellbeing to prepare the union for the bad times. Time has proven us right but this doesn't make it better. Reactive neo-functionalism is what has always worked for the EU. In this time JEF came up with the YES! Campaign which mobilised the EMI and the UEF to campaign in favour of the referendums [...]

Major events were the campaigning actions of the ratification campaign, especially in France. Then we had a big event in Brussels to close the campaign Give Europe a Face.



Joan Marc Simon, Secretary General of JEF Europe, 2004-2006

## THE REACTION TO THE REJECTION OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL TREATY



Our EB took over in November 2005. This was just a few months after the Constitutional Treaty had been defeated in two referendums in the Netherlands and France during the summer of 2005. A lot of soul-searching was going on across Europe as to how to move on from this situation.

Naturally, with the 2005 Congress in Strasbourg determining the broader policy lines for the organisation, we got actively involved in demanding from European decision-makers not to give up on the idea of an EU constitution. Our first target was the European Parliament where MEPs Johannes Voggenhuber and Andrew Duff drafted a report on the way forward. We contracted the “European Courier Service” to go to the EP and pick up the debate about the future of Europe and bring it back to the right addressee – the citizens of Europe.

Loaded with moving boxes carrying labels such as “Content: The debate about the future of Europe, Direction: The citizens” many JEFers and several MEPs, including

Duff and Voggenhueber, began the moving job right outside the Parliament after the voting. The day before all MEPs received an invoice from the European Courier Service, demanding political leadership in order to bring forward the constitutional project. It also demanded the support for a pan-European referendum on the constitution, a suggestion that had been removed from the original report. The latter idea was one of the more controversial ideas inside the organisation and in debates with UEF.

The political position of the organisation can be summed up along the lines of the “three-step plan towards the European Constitution”, adopted at the FC in Athens, October 2006: building commitment across the EU to move on with the constitutional process in 2007, revise the Constitutional Treaty in 2008, vote on the constitution alongside the EP elections 2009 and adopt with a double majority of citizens and states.



Jan Seifert, President of JEF Europe, 2005-2007

## THE 2009 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS



Another European political milestone during my SG term were the European Parliament elections in July 2009. We focused our actions on promoting the active participation of young people in decision-making processes by stressing the importance of voting in elections and using the momentum to stress the need for Europe to change course towards more accountability, more democracy, more efficiency and more transparency towards its citizens with the political campaign “It’s Time for Change...It’s Time for Europe!”

In the framework of this campaign we organised numerous debates, panels but also pan-European actions each time with a different focus based on the JEF Manifesto for EP elections in which we demanded: a) a European Economic Policy for ensuring growth, employment and sustainable development, in particular to benefit young people; b) a European Energy and Environmental Agency for ensuring global leadership in the battle against climate change and managing a European Energy Reserve to guarantee a strategic independence of the EU; c) a Citizens’ Right of Initiative in order to listen to the voice of European citizens; d) a European Civilian Service to promote EU citizenship among young people;

e) a reform of the European electoral system to avoid national debates in the future EU elections.



Peter Matjašič, Secretary General of JEF Europe 2008-2011, First Editor-in-Chief of [thenewfederalist.eu](http://thenewfederalist.eu) 2006-2007, Vice-President of JEF Europe 2006-2007, Bureau member of JEF Europe 2005-2006

## THE LISBON TREATY



I was elected as Secretary-General at the spring FC meeting in Biel, Switzerland and my official term was from September 2008 until August 2010. There was a lot of uncertainty in the European political context as the EU leaders failed to explain the benefits of and the importance of the much needed deepening as well as widening of the European integration process to their citizens. They opted for behind closed doors bargaining on what to keep from the failed Constitutional Treaty and how to avoid referenda instead of using the momentum and create a truly participatory citizens-led constitutional process. As Young European Federalists we were facing the dilemma of how much pro-European or federalist we want to be as not all member organisations within JEF-Europe understand or share the same meaning of federalism nor agree on which of the ways to achieve a united, federal Europe to embark on.

The reality of two Irish referenda on the Lisbon Treaty forced us to take a clear stand in favour or against a Treaty that had many positive content elements (e.g. European Citizens' Initiative, a youth article, more powers to the European Parliament, enlarged use of QMV voting etc) but that come into being with the typical old-style intergovernmental approach and horse-trading we witnessed with the Nice Treaty, while we asked for the convention method to be applied for any future treaty changes.

The political line set by the Congress and pursued by the Board was one of pragmatism. A Monnet-style step-by-step approach by defending the Lisbon Treaty, focusing on the positives and ensuring that pro-European forces learn the lesson from the 2005 referendums in France and The Netherlands, namely that we need to clearly defend integration, use the Lisbon Treaty as a step in the right direction, and once we got it focus on the more Spinelli-style grass-root

bottom-up creation of a federal Europe. This stance was very much reflected in our campaigns and actions of the time. When asked, we delivered with our YES2Lisbon campaign: we were one of the few youth organisations present there in Ireland on the spot to canvass in favour of allowing the EU to move further in its integration on both occasions. We organised a so-called pen action targeting EU leaders of the 26 EU countries that didn't have a referendum but Parliament approval to sign the Lisbon Treaty.

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Peter Matjašič, Secretary General of JEF Europe 2008-2011, First Editor in Chief of [thenewfederalist.eu](http://thenewfederalist.eu) 2006-2007, Vice-President of JEF Europe 2006-2007, Bureau member of JEF Europe 2005-2006

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Furthermore, the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty created the concept of European citizen's initiative and JEF started working a lot on the concept, the content and the methods to put in practice this initiative which finally came into force in 2012.

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Jessica Chamba, Vice-President of JEF Europe, 2007-2009

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One month after my election in November 2009, the Lisbon Treaty entered into force. I am not implying a strict causality between both events. However, since more than two years before its entry into force, I spoke openly and fervently in favour of the Reform Treaty. At that time, my arguments ran against the federalist mainstream of the day, which was more sceptical about the Treaty's negotiation process and shortcomings than optimistic about the substantial progress towards an 'ever closer union'. Once the Lisbon Treaty was finally over and done with, not only politicians but also citizens were tired of the seemingly never-ending institutional reforms after a decade of protracted battles. Against the backdrop of growing Euroscepticism, intergovernmentalism and nationalism, federalists were increasingly swimming against a current which rendered the call for our ultimate goal, a European Constitution, inopportune and even counterproductive from the perspective of several of our members.

In the spirit of the ‘politique des petits pas’, we thus settled for a more pragmatic course focusing on concrete legislative proposals that would bring the EU a step closer to a democratic European Federation. Our first big campaign visibly succeeded in turning the European Citizens’ Initiative Regulation into a more democratic and user-friendly tool than the original proposals from the Commission and the Council. Our second campaign staunchly supported the Duff Report on electoral reform and the creation of an EU-wide Constituency – an issue which the European Parliament eventually decided to put in the refrigerator until the political momentum for institutional reforms would dawn again. We also contributed to a number of Green Papers, lobbied for a European Statute of the European Association and carried on with the successful Belarus, 9 May and visa street actions while swiftly reacting to burning issues with anti-border and climate change actions.

The European political context being marked by a standstill in integration, we advanced the federalist ideals on the advocacy front by calling in our Press Releases for the proper implementation of the Lisbon Treaty and by clamping down on the ineffective intergovernmental deliberations within the European Council which seriously delayed support to Greece and failed to timely halt the worsening debt crisis. We demanded a more engaged EEAS during the Arab Spring and denounced the surges of nationalist and anti-EU sentiments that became apparent when leaders intended to reinstall internal border controls.

”

Philippe Adriaenssens, President of JEF Europe, 2009-2011

## TOWARDS A NEW CONVENTION

“

Following the agreement on the fiscal treaty by the heads of government of 25 member states, the heads of the three leading pro-European organisations (UEF, JEF and EMI) have petitioned the European Parliament in February 2012. The petition by the Presidents of the Union of European Federalists (UEF), the Young European Federalists (JEF-Europe) and the European Movement International (EMI) asks the European Parliament to use its new Lisbon treaty powers to initiate a further revision of the European Union treaties with the objective of creating a full fiscal union with a reformed financial system.

Andrew Duff MEP, President of UEF, said: “The intergovernmental treaty is a necessary expedient to bypass the British veto, but it does not install the fiscal solidarity needed to save the euro in the long run. Nor does it help resolve problems surrounding the Union’s political legitimacy.

“We call on the Parliament to act to use its full powers to initiate the next steps in European construction”.

Pauline Gessant, JEF-Europe President said: “The response goes in the right direction but is insufficient to address the present challenges decisively. Furthermore we strongly regret the old-style “behind-closed-doors” negotiations and the intergovernmental supremacy of the European Council. The European unification process must involve citizens and their representatives and be discussed in a transparent and democratic way”.

Jo Leinen MEP, President of the EMI, added: “The next steps of European Integration must be done with the participation of the Citizens Chambers – the European Parliament and the National Parliaments – and not through intergovernmental negotiations. The method for changing and improving the European Treaties must be a new Convention and not a series of EU Summits.”



UEF-JEF-EMI Press release, 07 February 2012

# 2010s & 2020s: BETWEEN CRISES AND GROWTH

## THE DEFENCE OF THE SCHENGEN AGREEMENT

In 2011, an important pillar of European integration was under threat as the idea of free movement within a borderless Europe was at stake after the arbitrary reintroduction of checks on the Franco-Italian border as well as Denmark's decision to reinstate random customs controls at its borders. Many JEFers expressed, in different ways, their opposition to a potential reform of Schengen.

On Friday, 17th June 2011, the Young European Federalists (JEF) held a protest action against the reintroduction of border controls in Denmark and against the questioning of the Schengen agreements. The slogan for the events in the border towns of Krusau (Denmark / Germany), Schengen (Luxembourg / Germany) and Kehl (France / Germany) was "A future without boundaries!".



# #DONTTOUCHMYSCHENGEN

Years passed, but the freedom of movement was threatened again in Europe. On the 6th of February 2016, Young European Federalists launched the #DontTouchMySchengen campaign across social media and beyond.

The campaign started due to the political situation surrounding the so-called 2015 refugee crisis as well as the decisions taken by Member States in response to it. Specifically, internal border controls were reintroduced in Germany, Austria, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and France (following the 13/11/2015 terrorist attacks in Paris). JEF Europe, coordinating with numerous other youth organisations as well as with youth political parties, sent an open letter to the then European Council President Donald Tusk urging the EU to preserve the Schengen principles. Additionally, the online campaign was launched and yielded a powerful resonance across social media platforms.

Free movement of people is one of the cornerstones of the European Union and open borders belong to its greatest achievements. Young European Federalists continue to advocate for free movement. #DontTouchMySchengen has been used way beyond the campaign, becoming a trademark hashtag of JEF when discussing freedom of movement and the developments of the Schengen Area. Even after 50 years, freedom of movement is not guaranteed in the EU as migration and the recent health crisis have been instrumentalised in order to reintroduce border controls or even temporarily impose border closures. Also, not all Member States of the EU have been accepted into Schengen, even if they fulfilled the accession criteria, such as Romania and Bulgaria. Therefore, #DontTouchMySchengen continues to be an important campaign on our way to a truly integrated Europe!

“

The European sovereign debt crisis and the subsequent austerity measures made European people poorer, wounded and divided. The migration crisis in 2015 was therefore faced in the most conservative way by most of the Member States, choosing isolationism rather than cooperation. JEF-Europe answered with one total campaign, spanning from advocating to institutions and policy makers to street actions to a (viral) online campaign to writing for the general press. The generous commitment of JEF activists and the proximity to the general public of a topic such as the freedom of movement made this campaign one of the most successful in those years.

”

Jacopo Barbati, Vice-President of JEF-Europe, 2017-2019

# FROM THE BELARUS ACTION...



Belarus action in Turkey



When we started our mandate in 2006 we set about to get JEF and our message out of the conference rooms and a somewhat alienating academic language and into the streets, involving all of the organisation in doing this. We believed that to create a federal Europe we needed to exemplify federalism by breaking it down to topics that people can relate to and to use communication tools that reached a much broader target audience.

Today “pan-European action” has become synonymous with JEF activism, but back in 2006 it was a fairly new concept to do a synchronised action across the streets of Europe. The very first one was the Free Belarus action on the eve of the Belarus “elections”. Both we and the Belarus media were stunned to see that youth in 25 cities stood united in their belief in a free and democratic Europe, but the action has since grown to yearly include up to 125 cities around the world, including Belarus. JEF and the action has become widely known with more and more partner NGOs joining in, large press coverage, patronages of politicians, awards being won and the action has even been presented in a schoolbook!

That we have inspired many other organisations to use pan-European actions have also contributed to build a European civil society and public space, an important step in constructing a federal Europe. We have shown that active European citizenship can use creativity to replace financial and human resources and that it can be implemented on your own doorstep while reaching across the borders of Europe.

Our pan-European actions on themes such as visas, European foreign policy, European constitution and many more have not only transformed the organisation into a grass roots activist organisation, it has also contributed to a very strong common identity between our sections and activists. Every year when I gag a statue, demanding a “voice to the Belarus citizens” I get goosebumps by knowing that young people from Istanbul to Minsk are at that very moment doing exactly the same to express our joint vision for a united, free and democratic Europe of solidarity. That is federalism that makes sense.



Åsa Guvén, Vice-President of JEF-Europe, 2005-2007

# ...TO DEMOCRACY UNDER PRESSURE

The “Free Belarus Action” was rebranded in 2014 to “Democracy under Pressure”. We broadened the focus of the campaign to include the many European countries that are facing difficulties with adherence to democratic principles, such as the rule of law and the safeguarding of human rights, including the freedom of speech. No country and no democracy is in fact immune to illiberal turns.

Every year, in March, JEFers take part in a Democracy under Pressure week-long campaign. We gag statues, organise awareness-raising activities, flash mobs, debates, articles and partnerships with other civil society organisations and local and European authorities. Through these actions, JEF wants to show solidarity to the citizens who would like a democratic change in their countries and within our own JEF family.



Democracy under Pressure in Luxembourg (2021)

# 15 YEARS OF DEMOCRACY UNDER PRESSURE – NOW UNDER ATTACK

After an edition of campaigning under lockdown, in 2021 we celebrated the



15 years of the Democracy Under Pressure campaign. On the one hand, despite the broadening of the scope of our campaign, for this anniversary we returned to the origins, supporting in particular the incredible strength of the Belarusian citizens that keep fighting for their freedom.

On the other hand, a campaign turning 15 years old is already quite special to any NGO, but it is specifically special for a youth NGO as this means that even more generations of members have been involved. So, when these actions lift the voices of those who are silenced by the ones who want to put democracy under pressure and make sure that they continue to be heard and supported in solidarity, we should be also proud.

In 2022, we subtitled our campaign Democracy under Attack in the midst of the brutal invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

“

Democracy under Pressure is not just a campaign but a commitment. It is a commitment we make as JEF Europe that year after year, for as long as needed, we will take the streets and speak for those that are silenced. We will stand up for rule of law and fundamental rights, we will stand up for peace, we will stand up for democracy!

”

Christelle Savall, Vice-President of JEF-Europe, 2021-2023

# MARCH FOR EUROPE

2016 was a very difficult year for European integration. Euroscepticism was growing and the Brexit referendum represented an emotional shock for all Europeans.

This is why the Federalists decided to fight back. On 24 - 26 March 2017, JEF organised its Federal Committee in Rome, where a meeting of the European Council was held, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Treaties of Rome.

The weekend was opened by a JEF- led Q&A with the Commissioner Federica Mogherini in the Italian Parliament. On the evening of March 24th the 45th anniversary of JEF was celebrated while the JEF logo was projected on the Colosseum.



On the 25th, the March for Europe happened. Over 10,000 people arrived in Rome to join to the big demonstration citizens organised by the Italian Federalists with the UEF and JEF, civil society associations and the main European parties, to demand a united, democratic and federal Europe. Thousands of EU blue flags and green E-flags flooded the streets of Rome from Bocca della Verità to get to the Colosseum.

Dozens of MEPs and political personalities joined the March, such as the president of the European Socialists and Democrats, Gianni Pittella, the ALDE leader Guy Verhofstadt, Monica Frassoni of the European Greens, the former Prime Minister Mario Monti and Elmar Brok, UEF President; several of them took the floor from the stage, together with federalists' representatives.

“

Today is not a day of mere celebration, but of struggle and political commitment to show the way to a federal Europe to the heads of state and government. The real battle today is between those who want to divide and destroy and those who want to unite and build. We are the wind that blows from Ventotene, from Utoya, from Suruc, from Lesbos and Lampedusa, that unites all the citizens of Europe and that passes through even barbed wire walls.

”

Giulio Saputo, Secretary General of JEF Italy

The president of MFE, Italian European Federalist Movement, Giorgio Anselmi, concluded the speeches with an iconic statement: "In the Ventotene Manifesto there is no mention of a 'dream'. We are not dreamers! We are here to carry on a concrete political objective that must be achieved."

Thousands of people stayed in front of the Colosseum waving flags and shouting "Federazione Europea SU-BI-TO". It was everyone's choir, JEFers from Italy and Scotland, from France and Germany, from Malta and Norway. Everyone, every JEFer kept singing it all day, until night. In fact, JEFers have never stopped singing their choir ever since.



# I CHOOSE EUROPE

Approaching to the 2019 European Elections, JEF was growing massively. From 2018 on JEF secured the Europe for Citizens operating grant, which meant a way bigger economic capacity. JEF decided then to invest in a more ambitious than ever European Elections campaign and to run it, for the first time the JEF President, Christopher Gluck, was hired in a full time position.

With these premises, "I Choose Europe" was then launched in the fall 2018 together with the partner organisations: Union of European Federalists (UEF), Animafac, Assembly of European Regions (AER), Balkans Beyond Borders, Center for Intercultural Dialogue (CID), DYPALL Network, Association Europe4Youth and European Educational Exchanges – Youth For Understanding.

After a couple of preparatory seminars in Portimão and Struga, the big opening of the Campaign happend in Paris in March 2019, during an event that gathered 4,800 young people.

With a Federalist Manifesto and pledges to submit to the candidates to the European Parliament, JEFers stated then to campaign all across Europe, around the bus tour organised by JEF Europe. It reached 14 different cities during the month of April. It was an exciting time and over 2,000 people joined dozens of JEF initiatives.

I Choose Europe was not only a great campaign, but also a moment of growth for the organisation. Many new JEFers started their engagement in those months which really represented a step up moment for the entire network.

JEF videos and campaigns showed in front of the European Parliament during the election night are definitely a nice image to represent it.



“

IChooseEurope was the biggest campaign JEF had ever done at this point and the whole team working on it was in equal parts excited, enthusiastic and very nervous. For me personally, working on a JEF campaign full-time, travelling all across Europe with the IChooseEurope bus and pushing for our vision of a federal Europe non-stop was a dream come true and easily the best time of my life.

”

Christopher Glück, President of JEF-Europe, 2015-2019



## CONFERENCE ON THE **FUTURE OF EUROPE**

The Conference on the Future of Europe was JEF’s most monumental advocacy effort at the start of the 2020s. After long delays, on 9 May 2021 the EU institutions jointly launched a year-long conference, where citizens were tasked to imagine the future of Europe, after crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. JEF took a central role in the Conference.

JEF-Europe published 13 ideas on the official online platform of the Conference, used for collecting citizens' proposals. Our flagship idea, "Stronger Together: A Democratic European Federation" became the most endorsed idea on the entire platform, while multiple other JEF ideas were also included in the final report of the Conference.

The Conference proved that a federal Europe is needed to respond to citizens' demands. After a process that involved citizens' panels composed of randomly selected citizens, the Conference made 49 recommendations for Europe's future. The proposals not only included multiple ideas long advanced by JEF, but also specifically called for reforms of the EU Treaties. In her 2022 State of the European Union speech held after the Conference, the Commission President Ursula von der Leyen called for a European Convention as a follow-up.

In short, the Conference has brought our vision of Europe closer to reality. JEF's task is to ensure that Europe follows through, and does what citizens asked for. During the Conference, JEF took leadership in the Civil Society Convention on the Future of Europe, a platform of over 80 NGOs that demand proper follow-up for the Conference. Thanks to this involvement, the JEF-Europe Secretary-General had a seat in the 341-member plenary of the Conference, as one of the few civil society representatives. JEF established itself as a key civil society player on the Conference, and was a regular point of contact for public figures who worked for the Conference to be a success.

As the Conference was wrapping up, JEF-Europe, JEF-France and European Movement Alsace organised a March for Europe at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, to demand a federal Europe. The Conference documented the citizens' demand for a united Europe: as ever, the federalists lead the campaign to achieve it. The 2024 European elections will be the next challenge on our way to achieving a European constitution.



# FEDERALIST ACADEMY

If there is one organisation whose social mission is to enhance young Europeans' understanding of federalism, then it's the Young European Federalists. On the occasion of JEF's 50th anniversary in 2022, JEF Europe organised a series of training sessions to answer the question every member has once asked themselves: "what does federalism actually mean?"

The Federalist Academy consisted of a year-long online course and an in-person seminar in Prague. Moreover, JEF Europe developed an online library of key readings on federalism to enable participants to deepen their understanding. More than 100 JEFers and newcomers from across Europe and beyond followed the online course. In eleven sessions hosted by academics from prestigious universities and by leading federalist activists, participants discussed several key themes: history of federalist thinking, achievements of the European federalist movement, studying today's European Union through the lens of federalism and prospects of federalism at a global level.

In Prague, the Federalist Academy seminar coincided with JEF Europe's Autumn Federal Committee and the closing celebrations of our 50th anniversary. The seminar showed a broader focus departing from the online sessions, covering themes like federalism and intersectionality or Europe's postcolonial liabilities as well as ways to campaign for federalism in public.

The Federalist Academy encapsulates the 'praxis' of the federalist movement: learning and engaging with ideas, with the clear goal of using the knowledge to change the world for the better. Thanks to initiatives like the Federalist Academy, JEF passes federalist thinking on to new generations. While renewing and further developing federalist thinking, it at the same creates debate on how it should evolve in response to the emerging societal, political, ecological and economic issues of our century.

“

The 50th anniversary of JEF is an opportunity to reflect on the future of federalist thinking. What are the unique contributions that federalists can make to debates on issues like climate change and digitalisation? Future editions of the Federalist Academy are the right place to continue finding our answers.

”

Juuso Järviemi, Vice-President of JEF-Europe, 2021-2023

# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF JEF

The reason why you're holding this booklet is connected to the purpose of these last pages.

In 2022, JEF Europe turned 50! For the past 5 decades, JEF has been advocating for the creation of a democratic European federation as a guarantee for peace, the rule of law and human rights. What JEF indirectly has done is to create a space where young people from all over Europe meet and connect, by uniting us all with a common mission, despite our differences. Today, we have over 10,000 activists, organised in over 250 national, regional, and local sections across 35 countries in Europe. This year, we made sure to commemorate this wonderful occasion, by delivering memorable get-togethers.

As flowers were blooming, we started the festivities at our Spring FC in Luxembourg, the place where JEF was first inaugurated in 1972. The Executive Board of 2021-2023 decided to leave something significant for the future generations. What better message to send than to make a time capsule? Or two?



We opted for two time capsules that are sealed for 10 and 50 years. In the future, JEFers will open the time capsules with its treasures. They'll be able to have a peek into the past, reflecting on JEF's successes and changes over time. The time capsules contain personal letters, pictures from the past, a crocodile, a handpicked stone from Ventotene, a special letter from the Executive Board and much, much more.

In the month of May, JEF was a key pillar to the organisers of the Strasbourg summit. This was a good moment to bring our federalist merchandise to the grand Federalist march. We also had the incredible opportunity of having a big party in Strasbourg's famous venue, Salle de l'Aubette, from where Winston Churchill in 1949 held one of the iconic speeches of European integration's history.

During the Ventotene seminar we recorded videos of activists with federalist beliefs. Afterwards we launched a recreation challenge with famous photos from JEF and federalist history.

To build up the momentum before our 10-year time capsule sealing party in Prague, during the FC, we started a countdown, connected to the #JEFchallenge. At the party we announced the winners and gave them prizes for their creativity. With the closing of the year and our office move, we held our last closing ceremony in Brussels. It was connected to the sealing of the 50-year time capsule and a fundraising event that gathered generations of JEF together.

Throughout the whole year, multiple celebrations took place, all thanks to our tireless volunteers. We have had a lot of fun, but also had the chance to look back in time and reflect on the greater story we - as JEF - are part of. May we continue to make it so special.





To conclude this 50th anniversary celebration, I want to share with you something intimate, from my experience as a federalist militant. There have been moments where I felt burnout, overwhelmed, and in one of these moments I wrote something that I want to share with you:

"Did you ever get to the evening and feel like a rock in the middle of the sea. Troubled by the waves, alone to face forces that seem insurmountable. Do you ever get to the evening and feel that you are alone, fighting against the windmills, that you are there alone fighting for what you believe in, while everyone around you is rowing against you?"

And you get the doubt that maybe the waves are right, that the people who are going against you are right, or that maybe you are not even able to tilt at windmills.

And you doubt. You doubt that what you believe in is perhaps not as important as you want, and that maybe you are just a lonely traveller in this crowded and chaotic world."

But no, this is how it works. These are the moments when you start listening to sad songs. But the good ones are able to wake you up, like a slap in the face. They are able to make you connect with your feelings and with how things are. And one of these songs goes like this:

*"No, this is how it works; You're young until you're not;  
You laugh until you cry; And you cry until you laugh;  
And you love until you don't; And you try until you can't."*

We won't be here forever; we won't be forever young. We won't be JEFers forever.

This is the time we have. The time to hang out, to share experiences, the time to grow together, the time to have an impact, to bring our grain of sand. Look around and appreciate what you see. Friends, and people you just met. With someone you'll never meet again, but for some reason there is this weird link that connects us all.

We share something deep. And that something stays. It is what you can feel every time, when we are together; that Something survived, somehow, through the years.

It seems magic, but it's not. It's work and passion, passion and work.

It is that something that drive us all out of our darkest hours, that keeps giving us that strength to believe that a handful of young people can really change the story of our Europe.

We failed so many times. Federalism itself has been a story of failures. But we are still here, that JEF Spirit is still here, for some reason. It has been here for more than 50 years, and we are sending a message to the JEFers of the next 50 years, because we know we won't be there, but they will.

In one of his tales, Asimov talks about a bunch of federalists who passed from one failure the other, before eventually succeeding. So, they learned a lesson that can be ours. It could be the message for the JEFers-to-come.

Yesterday, I mentioned Vaclav Havel calling not to work for a cause just because it stands a chance to succeed, but because it is the good thing to do. And there's the lesson:

In a good cause, there is no failure.



50th Anniversary final speech, 12 November 2022  
Antonio Argenziano, President of JEF Europe, 2021-2023





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JEF Europe Executive Board – December 2022

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