



Towards a more inclusive, diverse and empowered JEF

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- Recognising that Europe has evolved to become a more diverse society than before, but that decisions are still made by ‘white male pushing 50 years’. This results in a generation that may lack representation in the boards of different NGOs and political parties.
- Acknowledging that societal power structures affect people’s possibilities to participate and be themselves in the society, e.g., due to their age, gender, gender expression, religious conviction, or other belief, ethnic or cultural background, educational background, socio-economic background, ability or any other personal attribute.
- Acknowledging that currently at this stage, JEFers are not fully representative of all Europeans and people living on the continent including people with different abilities, educational and socio-economic backgrounds and we still lack visible minorities; whether in membership, in elected positions or the Secretariat.
- Being aware that JEF Europe and its national sections face, like many other non-governmental organisations and youth political organisations, the challenges of the gender-gap, in particular online, and therefore strives to empower women and gender minorities to take higher positions in the different levels of JEF.

- Recalling the progress on improved inclusion through introduction and subsequent development of the JEF Code of Conduct as well as development of processes to tackle and prevent harassment, bullying or other forms of indecent behaviour.
- Taking note of the results of the 2023 membership survey data showing a general lack of gender balance in the network outside of elected positions, and a general lack of strategies to empower JEFers from different backgrounds and to develop accessibility.
- The implementation of Gender Watch has shown variation in participation of genders in Federal Committee meetings and the increased representation of women and non-binary people in elected positions has impacted the results.
- Keeping in mind the labour of the Task Force Empowerment and Diversity, which aims to foster equality and inclusion within the network as well as increase the participation of young people with fewer opportunities and different backgrounds in JEF.
- Recalling initiatives such as the JEF Solidarity Fund aimed at lowering the threshold of participation of young people with lesser means and welcoming the creation of the guidelines for application of the Solidarity Fund as well as increasing the maximum amount of the travel cost reimbursement.
- Recognising the overall increased societal understanding and recognition of equal representation of individuals with different backgrounds and identities, as well as the need for continuous action for ensuring such representation.
- Recalling JEF Europe's commitment with the political participation of minor young people, including with its long-term support of the 'Vote at 16' campaign by the European Youth Forum (YFJ).
- Recalling the recent JEF projects aiming to improve inclusion within and outside of the network, including Words of Europe, Cooperation Youth Vote, United in Inclusion, Impact, MindSet and related actions, including providing opportunities for political participation for young people.
- Noting the initiatives taken over the past years to improve the safety, accessibility and inclusivity in the network, including guidelines for minors and protection of activists as well as the accessible language guide.
- Recognising barriers for participation in JEF activities such as the high cost of travel to international events and activities.
- Being aware of the increased demands and pressure young people face in their everyday lives, including their activism.

- Convinced that continued and further action to improve inclusion is needed.

Therefore, JEF Europe:

1. Demands that JEF sections create an environment within JEF where members feel comfortable to address questions of empowerment, diversity and inclusion.

2. Encourages diversity in its membership which can only be attained through the active recruitment of JEF members through a multitude of different environments and institutions rather than the often standard recruitment through universities. This diversity of membership could be sought from different educational institutions and secondary level schools, other youth organisations and minority communities. We also aim to recruit those who are not currently studying or people already in the workforce. JEF sections should reach out proactively to the aforementioned institutions for their support. By doing so, JEF would further gain legitimacy, by ensuring better and wider representation of the European youth and better reflect their ideas and opinions.

3. Recommends sections to introduce measures to increase representation of women and gender minorities, in particular in leadership positions e.g., through introduction of quota systems and other means. The quota system should not be the only tool we use to tackle the problem of under-representation of women and gender minorities in high-level positions and look into adaptation of the quota systems to take into account non-binary people.

4. Calls upon its Presidium and Secretariat to continue to monitor a Gender Watch during statutory meetings, aiming at keeping track of participation throughout JEF events. The JEF Europe Presidium and Secretariat can then share best practices with sections that are interested in implementing the 'Gender Watch' method.

5. Requests the Presidium and Secretariat to extend the scope of diversity oversight beyond the aforementioned Gender Watch. That should be done by implementing statistical mechanisms to evaluate the diversity of attendees to statutory events and release such data at the beginning of each event.

6. Commits to ensuring inclusion and safe participation at all JEF activities.

7. Encourages sections of JEF to adopt and implement their own Codes of Conduct, based on the model set by JEF Europe's own Code of Conduct.

8. Demands JEF Europe and its sections to work on the development of a common framework for Codes of Conduct, completely applying at all levels of the network, with joint minimum standards for the protection of people involved in JEF events, and a mechanism to protect Code of Conduct contact persons in the exercise of their duties.

9. Pledges to ensure respect and safe participation for people belonging to sexual or gender minorities and ensuring that they can freely be themselves e.g., through providing training on inclusion of people belonging to gender and sexual minorities.

10. Requires members of the network to show respect for the various gender identities and expressions by encouraging presenting one's preferred pronouns when meeting new people.

11. Underlines the need for anyone to feel welcome to join any JEF events by making them as accessible as possible for people with different abilities. Concretely, measures should be taken when organising JEF events to ensure the widest accessibility to people in a disability situation, notably by making sure venues are accessible to people with reduced mobility, by providing sign language translation or any other suited measures.

12. Commits to communicating about accessibility at JEF events in a manner that is clear and reaches all possible participants.

13. Stresses the importance of JEF events being organised with accessibility at the forefront, following to the maximum extent possible the guidelines described in the checklist for organising accessible events included in the toolbox of the Task Force for Empowerment and Diversity.

14. Supports wide participation from all over Europe including by making the Solidarity Fund more accessible and offering greater possibilities for online participation.

15. Commits to collect data on application of the Solidarity Fund and continuously developing it based on the data.

16. Encourages our members to show and express their views, traditions, culture, religion and beliefs and commits to creating conditions where participants in activities feel safe to do so and respect others' right to do the same.

17. Supports our members' growth as federalists and active citizens and gives room to all political opinions and affiliations as long as those do not violate anyone else's enjoyment of their rights and JEF Europe values.

18. Commits to the use of simple and easily understandable language and explanation of difficult terms and abbreviations when using them to guarantee everyone's easy participation in JEF activities and encourages other participants to do so as well.

19. Commits to use inclusive language in its internal and external communication and take concrete action into communicating its methods on inclusion and building safer spaces.

20. Commits to empower capable and knowledgeable members regardless of their gender, background or geographical location who for whatever reason might not feel confident enough to run for positions on a local, regional, national and European level irrespective of whether they have or are currently holding an elected position.

21. Demands that JEF sections ensure the full participation of people under the age of 18, both at events and internal structures, in a safe way and within what national legislation allows.

22. Urges JEF Europe Executive Board and the boards of national sections to allocate members of their respective boards, whose task would be to encourage and support individuals with diverse backgrounds in their participation and to run for higher leadership positions within the organisation.

23. Commits to advertising the elections widely in the network, ensuring that they are organised in a democratic way and in line with federalist values and that the candidates feel empowered and respected.

24. Recommends JEF sections to develop training programmes aiming at addressing empowerment and diversity of our membership, to complement those offered to sections jointly by Task Force Empowerment and Diversity and Task Force Capacity Building.

25. Commits to providing opportunities to its Executive Board, Federal Committee and Secretariat to learn about power structures which affect participation in JEF Europe activities from experts and to raising awareness within the network in order to work for removing these barriers for participation.

26. Encourages JEF sections to implement practical tools to measure the improvements and share the results and best practices with JEF Europe during statutory and other meetings and on the internal area for common resources.

27. Commits to developing and promoting a culture of wellbeing among volunteers and staff, paying particular attention to mental health and right to disconnect, and inviting the Executive Board to take the lead in developing tools for this in collaboration with the relevant task forces.