

Towards a more empowered and diverse JEF

Internal resolution submitted by: *Task Force Empowerment and Diversity*

JEF Europe,

- *Recalling* that, the incoming Federal Committee in Malta 2017 decided to create a task force tackling the issues of empowerment and diversity within JEF Europe;
- *Keeping in mind* that the purpose of the task force is to aim at fostering gender equality and increase the participation of young people with fewer opportunities and different backgrounds in JEF on a representational level;
- *Aware that* JEF Europe, faces, like many other NGOs and youth political organisations, challenges to empower women to take higher positions in the different levels of JEF;
- *Observing* that active JEF's members often represent individuals with high level of education and come from the same socio-economic background;
- *Realising*, in addition, that gender-balance has become more visible thanks to a membership survey launched during summer 2018. Out of 54 answers from national and regional sections, 41% of sections hold statistics on gender balance and where members are from, 59% do not. Of the 19 sections that provided numbers, the findings are alarming. All of them, except one, have more males members than females. The average is 65% males for 35% females. Moreover, fewer than 30% of the sections who answered the survey have a strategy to include women and diversify their membership;
- *Acknowledging* that Europe has become a more diverse than ever and JEF does not reflect this diversity;
- *Deeply concerned* by such situations, the conclusion drawn is that it is urgent to take action;
- *Keeping in mind* that the ultimate goal is to reach diversity on every level but admitting that tackling gender imbalance could be the first easier step to reach;
- *Underlining* that JEF has already started to implement a Solidarity Fund in 2018, thus allowing participants with fewer opportunities to get reimbursed for attending JEF Europe statutory meetings.

Therefore, JEF Europe

1. *Demands* JEF sections to create an environment within JEF where members feel comfortable to address these issues. In fact, the 2018 JEF Europe Code of Conduct, which aims at ensuring that every individual feels safe, included and respected in JEF Europe, was created to ensure the standardisation and normalisation of this environment within all of its statutory meetings and events.
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 which could be sought from language schools, international schools, craftsmanship institutions, minority communities and organisations/businesses offering vocational training would better reflect the ideas and opinions of the broader community within Europe.
3. *Deeply convinced* of the benefits of a broader membership as recalled in the previous paragraph, JEF Europe *encourages* the active recruitment of members from these diverse environments also by proactively reaching out to the aforementioned institutions for their support. By doing so, JEF would further gain legitimacy, by boasting a better representation of the European youth.
4. *Calls upon* its sections to introduce measures to increase female representation; bearing in mind that the reinforcement and further introduction of the quota for board and committee positions would be a good short-term solution and a possible first step, though this measure should not be the only one to tackle the problem of female under-representation in high-level positions.
5. *Requests* active empowerment of capable and knowledgeable members regardless of their gender, background or geographical location which for whatever reason might not feel confident enough to run for positions on a local, national, regional and European level.
6. *Commits* to support and aid in the creation of an unofficial 'JEF Women' group, with the purpose of creating an environment wherein women are comfortable and motivated to speak to and seek support from other women within the network with the main purpose of empowering each other to take on more prominent roles and positions on local, regional, national and European levels.
7. *Recommends* JEF sections to develop training programmes aiming at addressing female empowerment and diversity.
8. *Designates* JEF Europe and national sections to allocate members of the board to encourage and support women and individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds to run for higher positions.
9. *Encourages* national sections to implement practical tools to measure the improvements and share the results with JEF Europe, whenever possible.
10. *Calls* on its Presidium and Secretariat to monitor a Gender Watch during JEF statutory meetings, aiming at keeping track of participation throughout the events. JEF Europe's Presidium and Secretariat can then share best practices with sections that are interested in implementing the 'Gender Watch' method.
11. *Encourages* the introduction of measures that make JEF events as accessible as possible to people with disabilities and/or from remote areas.