



COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT NETWORK EASTERN EUROPE

Strategy Document 2019-2021

This Strategy Document puts forward CDN's core direction over the period 10 2019-2021. The document is based on the consultations with member and partner organisations and is a consolidated outcome of Strategy Planning Meeting 2018.

The document is complementary to CDN's political platform and aims at capturing main objectives of the Network, bringing sharp focus to the work of 15 CDN, and assisting the Executive Committee and Secretariat in developing and executing the work plans that are in line with the overall objectives; the document informs our Partners about the organisation's strategic goals and priorities for the **next three years**; the Strategy also describes the major areas of activities as well as proposes tools and mechanisms allowing 20 realization of the activities of CDN in the period of 2019-2021.

→Support MOs in the process of Organisational Management, Enhancing democratic structures and Political Maturity

Being established as a Network with a main aim of building capacities of youth Green organisations, we consider it of utmost importance to 30 keep the main focus on supporting MOs in their 1) political 2) structural and 3) organisational development.



Faced with our membership frequently fluctuating on the ladder of political/organisational maturity due to internal or external factors, we will pursue upholding the work that CDN has been carrying out in this regard. Namely:

i. CDN will continue its work on supporting MOs in reaching political maturity and assist transformation of its MOs into youth advocacy organizations capable of policy making and negotiating. We will strive to facilitate exchange of the practices and experience between the CDN's Partner Organizations and Member Organizations with regard to advocacy, campaigning, policy-making and public communications. This will be reached through statutory activities and educational activities such as advocacy trainings and Green politics trainings. We see Green education initiative as a structure within CDN that can, supported by the EC, work on mapping the needs of MOs in this area and developing the suitable support for them.

ii. CDN envisions its MOs as inclusive and safe spaces for everyone with well-developed democratic structures that provide space for equal participation of all and ensure transparency in all the organisational work. Therefore, CDN will continue to work on assisting MOs with developing their democratic structures and creating safe and inclusive working environment for different underrepresented groups. Through its activities on gender and the work of the Gender WG, CDN will keep working on supporting women, trans and non-binary people to fight for equal representation within MOs structures. Moreover, we believe that work in the direction of structural development of MOs is done through exchange of experiences between MOs and especially Boards and Secretariats and we will strive to provide space for MOs to exchange experiences in this regard. Furthermore, we believe that learning comes from attending CDN



activities and MOs' having their members represented within CDN structures such as EC, WGs, prep-teams etc.

iii. CDN encourages and supports MOs in advancing their organizational management skills as we see it crucial in order for MOs to work on fulfilling their aims. Having this in mind, CDN will strive to provide organisational learning opportunities for MOs such as space for exchange of experiences between MOs Boards and Secretariats, MOs visits to MOs as well as establish platforms for MO- MO communication. CDN will continue following up on MOs' needs and accordingly organising trainings on project writing and management, fundraising, membership management etc.

Last but not least, in order to perform its role in Eastern Europe, CDN should also be strong institutionally and mature into the network with well-developed sense of internal solidarity among its members and partners. CDN should strive to work towards reviving internal coherence among its membership through prompt reaction to the regional dynamics, policy positioning, solidarity actions, proactive communication and advocacy. In this regard, we will keep fostering the solidarity activities between our MOs.

→Geographical scope of work

In order to support MOs in positioning themselves as relevant actors in political discussions on local, regional and international level, CDN will continue to organize activities on all three levels.

Through international activities, such as topical seminars, study sessions and summer schools, CDN strives to enhance international cooperation and learning between MOs, POs and other young Green-minded activists. We see international activities as important space for topical development and accumulation space for ideas and good practices as well as positioning CDN

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as relevant partner not only in Green circles but also within networks
95 working on similar topics as CDN. Moreover, international activities stay an
important opportunity for MOs to network and increase visibility of their work in
international context.

Regional level of work stays especially important as CDN operates in regions
100 that share similar issues but provide limited space for youth to cooperate due
to current and past political tensions between neighbouring countries.
We see the importance of providing the space for young people to work
together in order to understand current political and economic situations in the
regions and discuss and cooperate on topics of regional interest. CDN will
105 continue its work in three regions - Balkans, RUMB (Russia, Ukraine,
Moldova and Belarus) and South Caucasus and Turkey - by organising regional
meetings, trainings and round
tables.

110 Apart from organising international and regional events, CDN will keep
supporting MOs locally by organising study visits, trainings and directly
supporting MOs in their work by having representatives on MOs' events when
possible, or through online consultancy. Another way of local support to MOs
is by co-organising side events with MOs hosting CDN activities and by this
115 helping them rise their visibility on local level.

→Topical Diversity

Throughout the years that CDN has been operating, the organisation
120 addressed and provided exchange of expertise on variety of topics
under the Green framework. Selection of topics and CDN's activities
had always been a reflection of regional dynamics, challenges and
needs of our MOs, POs and youth. Such an approach gives CDN flexibility to
meet the demands of the existing underpinnings and development in it.

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In order to keep the network up to date with rapid political developments and challenges in Eastern Europe, and assess their implications on green youth organisations and their agendas, CDN aims at maintaining the principle of topical diversity of its activities.

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Cooperating under Green framework allows us to be needs-oriented. Therefore, through taking into consideration the Member and Partner Organisations' needs, CDN will strive to encompass the topics of Sustainability, Climate Change, Gender, Digital Rights and Social Justice with the intersectional approach based on principles of inclusion and democracy.¹

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Moreover, offering Green idea as overarching framework for the variety of topics, CDN¹ will spark the debate and continue its work on deconstruction of the concept of politics and work on its meaning as means for implementation of the Green values.

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→Methodological Diversity

Diversity in the activities, methods, approaches, tools and priorities is a key element for CDN in its work of empowering youth in their communities. CDN believes that Non- Formal Education (NFE) methodology -- being interactive, participatory and experiential -- responds to the needs and interests of young people, is based on the values of inclusion and democracy, and offers more meaningful empowerment for youth.

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We want CDN to become a reference centre for non-formal education on youth participation based on Green values. Therefore, CDN will keep track of and attempt to further upgrade its NFE competency, and invest time and

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60 **1 for further reference on the topics see the political platform document.**

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resources in educating and training members of the EC and Secretariat. By the same token, CDN will strive to strengthen its MOs' capacities by providing expertise through adopting NFE methods in its educational or statutory activities.

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In the era of digital revolution, navigating through the plethora of information deems to be a challenging task to the individuals. On the other hand, organisations attempting to deliver the message across their targeted communities seem to face multiple difficulties and require additional financial capacities. CDN and its Member Organisations are no exception in this case. In the period of 2019-2021, CDN will strive to enhance its position in online and offline domains through stretching its capacities. In partnership with our project partners, CDN will keep on developing online courses, podcasts, webinars, among others so that they can be disseminated.

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→ Internal Development

Institutional sustainability is one of the big priorities for CDN as an organisation stepping up on the maturity ladder, with challenges of constant fluctuation of membership in its member organisations. We believe the institutionalised memory that the network has accumulated should not be stagnated, rather - enriched and matured.

Therefore, in the next few years CDN stresses organisational knowledge accumulation, preservation, and transfer as one of its priorities and will devote energy and resources to upholding the smooth generational transfers within CDN structures - such as Secretariat-Secretariat, EC-EC, Secretariat-EC exchange and so forth. CDN already has created and is constantly updating the Office transfer document. In order to ensure the expertise within the Executive Committee, CDN will strive to create the EC-EC transfer document as well.



In order to successfully transfer the knowledge and capacities onto the member organisations, CDN sees the Executive Committees' high engagement in the membership management process utterly necessary. In 2019-2021 CDN should further strengthen leadership role of its Executive Committee enhancing motivation, responsibility and decision-making of the members of its Executive Committee.

195 Additionally, in the next three years CDN will work towards efficient distribution of duties and rights among its structures in order to lead to better understanding and ownership of CDN activities among its member and partner organisations.

200 In order to enhance institutional sustainability as well as internal organisational development, it is of big importance to keep CDN alumni engaged in the network in different ways: be it trainers, educational advisors or green aficionados. Therefore, CDN will strive to initiate the process of creating the Alumni Network that will compose of people who had been previously engaged within the organisation's structures and maintain close links with the green politics.

→Communication and Outreach

210 CDN is an organisation based on its membership and one of its primary priorities is to strengthen the relationship between its Member Organisations. We have been achieving this as a byproduct of our educational and statutory activities through providing platform to maintain continuous communication among MOs.

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We see the need of this relationship to be strengthened institutionally, supported by our Executive Committee and mediated through our online and

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offline work, supporting the ideas regarding strategic partnerships and mutual activities among the MOs and POs.

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Realising the importance of the external communications and online presence in the era of social media and visual communications, we see the need to strategically invest more in building EC's capacities on communications that will be positively reflected on CDN's visibility and outreach.

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Moreover, we strive to boost visibility of the Eastern European Young Green community and ensure youth perspectives are included within the wider green movement and Green perspectives are mainstreamed within the wider youth movement. Therefore, we see the importance of working on intensifying external communication with and with other (potential) stakeholders. CDN is keen to invest in becoming members of European Youth Forum and thus widen its youth network, as well as have a representation at this youth lobby in order to contribute to the increased youth autonomy and inclusion and stronger youth organisations in Eastern Europe.

→ Wider Green Family

At the moment, CDN holds a good deal of knowledge, resources and successful green partnerships to be a relevant actor within the wider Green Family. Yet, these cooperations need to be further strengthened in order for CDN to become a reference point as a capacity builder in Eastern European Green movement. We strive to keep these partnerships effective and fruitful: partnerships with green foundations, pan-European green and youth green networks will not only enrich our organisational knowledge and ideological stance that we later translate into educational activities, but also help us gain recognition in the struggle for youth to assume significant roles in their societies.

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250 In the process of gaining green partnerships from Eastern Europe, we will try to
balance between strengthening the existing network and its composing
MOs and POs on the one hand, and keep on searching for potential
partnerships from the societies where we do not have member/partner
organisations from at the moment (Kosovo, Russia, Greece, Baltic states), on
255 the other hand.

→ Working Groups

Working Groups are part of CDNs organisational structure and represent
260 mediating bodies to ensure the bottom-up activities and engage youth
that are not affiliated to organisations in their activities. Therefore,
Working Groups are open to individual members and are not limited
by CDN membership. Working Groups contribute to exploring the topics,
regional cooperations as well as methodological diversities of CDN.

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CDN envisions WGs as autonomous bodies with a consultative role when it
comes to topical expertise and support their initiatives to plan and
implement projects that resonate with MO needs and expectations. For
this, CDN will put efforts in enhancing the topical cooperation between
270 Member Organisations through Working Groups.

As the level of independence still varies between different working
groups, CDN will strive to secure funding for (bi-)annual WG meeting that
will also serve as a space for WGs to learn from each other's good
275 practices. Moreover, CDN will support development of WG annual
strategies and work plans. This would significantly help formulation of WG
identities and portfolio of activities.

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→Cooperation Perspectives

Hereby we'd like to stress out importance of cooperation with different stakeholders on international (European) level for entire Network. CDN is open and responsive to all initiatives that correspond to its values, are within its capacities, and to the interest and benefit for its member organizations and Eastern Europe.

→Shrinking Space for Civil Society

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Civil society makes critical contributions to the effective and democratic policy-making, thus also impeding corruption and societal unrest.

The freedom to discuss government policies and demand government accountability accelerates positive societal progress. However, over the past 295 years concerns have mounted about shrinking civic space across Central and Eastern Europe, including curtailing civil society organisations (CSOs) and independent media, criminalizing solidarity, restricting freedom of assembly and creating an increasingly difficult environment to pursue activism.

While new technologies and interconnectedness have helped to develop civil society networks, they have also opened up new avenues for threats to civic space and dissenting voices.

To that end, CDN will be exploring alternative methodologies of doing activism and affecting politics in these kind of political environments.