

A4 Strategy Document 2019-21

Organization: CDN

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Motion text

1 **Strategy Document 2019-2021**

2 This Strategy Document puts forward CDN's core direction over the period 2019-
3 2021. The document is based on the consultations with member and partner
4 organisations and is a consolidated outcome of Strategy Planning Meeting 2018.

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

13 **☒Support MOs in the process of Organisational Management, Enhancing democratic 14 structures and Political Maturity**

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

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

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

32 ii. CDN envisions its MOs as inclusive and safe spaces for everyone with well-
33 developed democratic structures that provide space for equal participation of
34 all and ensure transparency in all the organisational work. Therefore, CDN will
35 continue to work on assisting MOs with developing their democratic structures
36 and creating safe and inclusive working environment for different
37 underrepresented groups. Through its activities on gender and the work of the

38 Gender WG, CDN will keep working on supporting women, trans and non-binary
 39 people to fight for equal representation within MOs structures. Moreover, we
 40 believe that work in the direction of structural development of MOs is done
 41 through exchange of experiences between MOs and especially Boards and
 42 Secretariats and we will strive to provide space for MOs to exchange experiences
 43 in this regard. Furthermore, we believe that learning comes from attending
 44 activities and MOs' having their members represented within CDN structures such
 45 as EC, WGs, prep-teams etc.

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

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

61 **☒ Geographical scope of work**

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

65 Through international activities, such as topical seminars, study sessions and
 66 summer schools, CDN strives to enhance international cooperation and learning
 67 between MOs, POs and other young Green-minded activists. We see international
 68 activities as important space for topical development and accumulation space for
 69 ideas and good practices as well as positioning CDN as relevant partner not only
 70 in Green circles but also within networks working on similar topics as CDN.
 71 Moreover, international activities stay an important opportunity for MOs to
 72 network and increase visibility of their work in international context.

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

82 Apart from organising international and regional events, CDN will keep
 83 supporting MOs locally by organising study visits, trainings and directly
 84 supporting MOs in their work by having representatives on MOs' events when
 85 possible, or through online consultancy. Another way of local support to MOs

86 is by co-organising side events with MOs hosting CDN activities and by this
87 helping them rise their visibility on local level.

88 **☒ Topical Diversity**

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

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

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

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

110 **☒ Methodological Diversity**

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

118 We want CDN to become a reference centre for non-formal education on youth
119 participation based on Green values. Therefore, CDN will keep track of and
120 attempt to further upgrade its NFE competency, and invest time and resources in
121 educating and training members of the EC and Secretariat. By the same token, CDN
122 will strive to strengthen its MOs' capacities by providing expertise through
123 adopting NFE methods in its educational or statutory activities.

124 In the era of digital revolution, navigating through the plethora of information
125 deems to be a challenging task to the individuals. On the other hand,
126 organisations attempting to deliver the message across their targeted
127 communities seem to face multiple difficulties and require
128 additional financial capacities. CDN and its Member Organisations are no
129 exception in this case.

130 In the period of 2019-2021, CDN will strive to enhance its position in online
131 domains through stretching its capacities. In partnership with our project
132 partners, CDN will keep on developing online
133 courses, podcasts, webinars, among others so that they can be disseminated.

134 **☒ Internal Development**

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

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

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

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

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

164 **☒ Communication and Outreach**

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

169 We see the need of this relationship to be strengthened institutionally,
 170 supported by our Executive Committee and mediated through our online and offline
 171 work, supporting the ideas regarding strategic partnerships and mutual
 172 activities among the MOs and POs.

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

177 Moreover, we strive to boost visibility of the Eastern European Young Green
 178 community and ensure youth perspectives are included within the wider green
 179 movement and Green perspectives are mainstreamed within the wider youth
 180 movement. Therefore, we see the importance of working on intensifying external

181 communication with and with other (potential) stakeholders. CDN is keen to
 182 invest in becoming members of European Youth Forum and thus widen its youth
 183 network, as well as have a representation at this youth lobby in order to
 184 contribute to the increased youth autonomy and inclusion and stronger youth
 185 organisations in Eastern Europe.

186 **☒ Wider Green Family**

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

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

202 **☒ Working Groups**

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

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

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

219 **☒ Cooperation Perspectives**

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

225 **☒ Shrinking Space for Civil Society**

226 Civil society makes critical contributions to the effective and democratic
227 policy-making, thus also impeding corruption and societal unrest. The freedom to
228 discuss government policies and demand
229 government accountability accelerates positive societal progress. However, over
230 the past years
231 concerns have mounted about shrinking civic space across Central and Eastern
232 Europe, including curtailing civil society organisations (CSOs) and independent
233 media, criminalizing solidarity, restricting freedom of assembly and creating an
234 increasingly difficult environment to pursue activism.
235 While new technologies and interconnectedness have helped to develop civil
236 society networks, they have also opened up new avenues for threats to civic
237 space and dissenting voices. To that end, CDN will be exploring alternative
238 methodologies of doing activism and affecting politics in these kind of
239 political environments.

240 **END**