

SG-REP Sec-Gen Report

Organization: CDN
Resolution date: 18.03.2025
Agenda item: 4. Reports and plans

Motion text

1 Report covers the period from May 2024 to March 2025.

2 Background

3 The Secretariat report was presented at GAs twice, in 2019 and 2022, to reflect
4 on Secretariat working conditions and practices and propose recommendations for
5 improvement.

6 Since this year, as the Secretary-General is elected by GA, such a report will
7 be presented by the Sec-Gen to reflect on the SG's and, in wider context, office
8 work in the previous year. The report does not cover the activities implemented
9 both physically and online, as they are in the scope of the activity plan.

10 Employment Conditions & Infrastructure

11 Working conditions are decent, with much improvement during the previous three
12 years. The salaries in the Office were significantly increased at the beginning
13 of 2024, amounting to EUR 1,300 for Sec-Gen, and EUR 1,200 for other employees.
14 In February 2025, the salary of other employees was increased by EUR 50 to
15 compensate for the increase in taxes in Serbia (this does not apply to Sec-Gen,
16 which settles taxes in Poland). This is about the average official gross salary
17 in Serbia (1268 EUR). The Office has been the same since the beginning of 2023,
18 giving enough space for the personnel and not shared with any other entity.

19 A major step forward in improving the conditions for the Office was the creation
20 and adaptation of the Office Guidelines, defining the conditions of work in the
21 Office. Previously, all the conditions were scattered in various documents, such
22 as contracts, separate documents, and EC Meetings minutes, as well as resulting
23 from an unwritten agreement, now they are in one document. We have introduced a
24 clear policy of paying for overtime (up to 70 hours a year), previously it was
25 decided to pay (or not) overtime payments ad hoc at the end of every year.

26 Office personnel in 2024 were a bit overworked, with reflects in overhours paid.
27 This was largely due to the calendar (Summer Camp in August and the start of
28 subsequent activities at the end of August made it impossible to take holidays
29 for most of the summer) and unexpected events (new GF application, new residency
30 law in Serbia that prolonged the Sec-Gen residency process). We decided to
31 prolong the transfer period in the Office and think about opening the
32 internship. However, implementation of any bigger additional activity would
33 require employing additional persons, thus administrative fundraising.

34 Internal training

35 We did not manage to organise internal training, especially in social media
36 skills, and in some specific policy areas. This resulted from overspending on
37 some other activities and a lack of capacities in the office to organize
38 additional training and implement its results. We took part in more external
39 training, especially by the European Youth Foundation and Council of Europe.
40 This helped a lot in gaining skills in some key elements (e.g. trauma-informed
41 youth work), however, was not as specific and tailored to our needs as internal
42 training would be. For example, theoretical knowledge and an open course on
43 social media would not improve our communication, while the tailored workshop
44 would do, external training on the legal administration of INGO would also not
45 be helpful for our specific legal organisation, but a workshop with lawyer with
46 experience on INGOs as ours would be.

47 Strategy Monitoring

48 We have met our strategic objectives in 73% (I goal: 80%, II goal: 76%, III
49 goal: 63%). The raw numbers don't say much though, as this is the first year of
50 strategy monitoring by CDN - KPIs set and targets indicated need to be revisited
51 in the next EC mandate, before mid-term strategy assesment. From specific
52 objectives, we succeded especially in enhancing capacities in our events,
53 further professionalisation of the network. We need to work especially on: (1)
54 small-scale fundraising, (2) digital activities and campaigns, (3) number of
55 opinion pieces by EC, and (4) number of inputs from MOs to newsletter gathered.

56 Contact with EC

57 The office is in constant contact with EC. Delegation Order has made it easier
58 to work, as most tasks and small decisions are taken very quickly, and only
59 strategic decisions that require serious discussion are left for EC meetings.
60 This makes it easier to plan work significantly. However, when an EC member is
61 not active, it requires additional work by the entire EC or even the Office is
62 sometimes forced to make strategic decisions that should not be our role. Last
63 year it significantly hindered some activities, especially fundraising and
64 strategy monitoring.

65 The Executive Committee's Office Responsible role is not very well defined but
66 should be taken more seriously. Office Responsible should be regularly in touch
67 with the Office, not only at the moment when some conflicts occur and
68 intervention is required (none during this year) but at least periodically
69 checking the progress of work, the condition of work and the workload in the
70 Office.

71 Fundraising

72 Structural fundraising remains the priority. During the year we submitted two
73 applications for new grants. The ideas for them can be used in the additional
74 applications, we also developed partnership programme ideas that we are going to

75 apply for in the next year. Due to decreasing support for NGOs in Europe and
76 around the world, some programmes we planned to (re)apply for (eg. NED) were
77 closed.

78 We need more training and experience in small-scale fundraising, as we received
79 only 50 EUR in donations.

80 Due to changes in the Swedish government, our previous agreement with Green
81 Forum ForumCIV (originally for 2023-25) was terminated. We needed to apply for
82 another programme of Green Forum. The process went smoothly, with great help
83 from Green Forum. We submitted the application and received additional funding
84 from GF. However, it took about ~80 working hours for Sec-Gen and ~20 other
85 workers to finalise the application, thus taking a lot from Office capacities in
86 other directions (eg. Webinars, further fundraising).

87 Among the savings sought on current activities, it was possible to save on
88 Executive Committee Meetings, organizing one less than planned. Thanks to the
89 adoption of the Delegation Order, this did not negatively affect the work of the
90 Office.

91 Relations with other organisations

92 Our relations with FYEG have definitely improved, which makes our work easier.
93 We are in constant communication and share our plans. We have tried to be active
94 at events of other Green organizations, participating in EGP and GEF congresses
95 and contacting many organizations. We need to work on increasing our visibility
96 and influence, both for political purposes (e.g. thinking about submitting a
97 resolution together with FYEG), as well as to help our MOs. Conflict with the
98 mother party occurs often in our regions and EGP should take this more
99 seriously. Most notably, Polish Young Greens almost ceased to exist during the
100 last two years due to the attacks and illegal stop of funding by the Polish
101 Green Party's board on the youth wing – unfortunately, a member of the Polish
102 Green Party's board was elected to EGP Committee. In such situations, we should
103 be more visible to better amplify the voices of our MOs.

104 We have been more active in the EYF, establishing contacts with many
105 organizations thanks to this. We have also established contact with the European
106 Youth Forum. However, we do not yet meet the minimum requirements for membership
107 in the IFJ (minimum 3000 members, minimum 100 in 6 countries).

108 Next steps and recommendations

109 The priority for improving the work of the office in the next year will be (1)
110 further fundraising and (2) refining the internal documents. Fundraising is
111 necessary for the further growth of the network, and even small-scale
112 fundraising will be crucial for co-funding of activities, thus better planning
113 and increasing the impact of the activities (eg. by funding additional local
114 action). On internal documents, the political platform should help in
115 communication, we also will work on creating new IRPs, as the current one is
116 outdated and chaotic.

117 Regarding IRP changes, for the whole network, rethinking the format of General
118 Assembly and reducing the costs of it would be suggested. As GA spending is
119 growing due to increasing the number of MOs and is not a project, it is harder
120 to get funding for it. It is now over 20% of administrative spending and in the
121 year Strategic Planning Meeting (3-day GA) would be even bigger. At the same
122 time, since GA does not GA is not a place for many political discussions on
123 motions and resolutions, its format should be rethought and slightly changed to
124 bring more added value to the network and participants. The value of the
125 networking part of GA can be realized in (cross)regional meetings, and part of
126 GA spending could be allocated to capacity-building activities or internship
127 programs. Another suggestion is to strengthen the role of EC. Especially in
128 terms of representing the organisation externally, or in social media, EC should
129 have clearer responsibilities, either for all of EC, or in the form of two
130 (informal) co-spokespeople, or specific co-spokespeople policy. There should be
131 also a clearer procedure for dealing with when someone from EC does not fulfil
132 their responsibilities. In addition, the Executive Committee's Office
133 Responsible role should be taken more seriously.