

Annual Report – European Grandparents for Climate

Activities Since the General Assembly (December 2024)

The year since our last General Assembly in December 2024 has been shaped by two major developments: one external, redefining the landscape for climate activism, and one internal, strengthening our organization.

A Changing Political Landscape

The most impactful external event was the **re-election of Donald Trump**. His administration has aggressively promoted fossil fuel extraction and treated the EU as an economic and political rival. Combined with the ongoing war in Ukraine, these developments have made the fight against climate change even more difficult.

In response to these pressures, the **Clean Industrial Deal** was launched to boost Europe's competitiveness, later followed by the Omnibus Package. However, the deal weakens core climate goals by omitting targets for reducing energy consumption or phasing out fossil fuels. The strengthened rightwing parties in the European Parliament saw this as an opportunity to advocate for further deregulation of sustainability and environmental EU regulation.

After assessing the implications of these changes at an open plenary meeting in March, **European Grandparents for Climate (EGC)** took action - repeatedly calling on EU institutions to protect the achievements of the Green Deal and prevent harmful deregulation. Through position statements and open letters, we have urged decision-makers to keep climate protection at the heart of European policy. In between there have also been other ad hoc appeals.

Our Advocacy and Actions

March

- Open plenary meeting about the changed global and European political situation

April

- Protest and Remonstrations Against BP's Increased Investment in Fossil Fuels – letter to BP CEO Bernard Looney

May

- Designed EGC Earth Overshoot Day buttons to be paraded in national grandparent Earth Overshoot actions.

- Letter to the Prime Minister of the UK about the arrest of peaceful activists.

June

- Letter to the EU Commission urging the protection of the *Sustainability Due Diligence Directive*.
- Letter to Ursula von der Leyen expressing concern about the environmental provisions in the *MERCOSUR treaty*.
- Invited by the European AGE organization to give short video testimonials on our activities. Godela von Kirchbach and Mogens Jørgensen volunteered and answered questions in a video that can now be seen on YouTube.

July

- Statement on the *International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion of 23 July 2025* on the Obligations of States in Respect of Climate Change

August & September

- Signed two joint papers with CAN and EEB and other organizations urging the EU not to weaken its social and environmental protections.
- Published EGC position paper on The False Dilemma: Social Security vs. Climate Protection in the EU

October

- Board statement celebrating that, for the first time, renewable energy generated more electricity worldwide than fossil fuels — and calling on the EU to defend the Green Deal.
- Signed an *open letter to pension fund trustees* urging responsible investment to prevent climate-induced economic collapse.

November

- Letter to heads of state at *COP30* calling for firm commitments to climate protection.
- Signed a *CAN letter* advocating a *Just Transition* at COP30.
- Supported an *open letter by the Sunrise Project* to The World Pension Summit, highlighting climate risks for young workers.
- Letter to the *European Parliament* leadership defending the *Sustainability Due Diligence Directive*. Several EGC member organizations simultaneously wrote letters to their national MEPs.

Growing Recognition and Collaboration

EGC's visibility continued to grow throughout the year.

- Eva Riemer, Roland de Wolf and Wim Aerts explored membership opportunities in EEB and CAN, both of which look very promising.
- Godela von Kirchbach was invited to speak in *Prague* on *Aging in Motion.*”
- Isabelle Jörg gave the *opening address* at a webinar hosted by the *International Network for Social Protection Rights* on *Les personnes âgées en première ligne face au changement climatique. At the same seminar, Mieke Van Nutland, an ambassador of the Flemish grandparents, summarized the seminar and in her summary several times mentioned the EGC and Klimaseniorinnen.*

These invitations and references reflect our increasing recognition as a European voice linking climate protection and intergenerational justice. They are also a result of our member organizations’ persistent promotion of the EGC in their own national and international networks.

New membership of the EGC

In the UK “**Our Grandchildren's Climate**” has been founded and became a full member of the EGC. The extraordinary member from the UK has joined this organization.

The French extraordinary member **Grands-Parents pour le Climat** had to cancel their membership due to lack of funding.

Grand Parents from Luxemburg have participated in two plenary meetings and Swedish Grand Parents joined our conference in Oslo as observers

A second Finnish Grand Parent group, **Aktivistimummot (Activist Grannies)** joined us as an extraordinary member and participated in Oslo.

Keeping Our Organization going

Our **EU Working Group** started monitoring developments in European climate policy, in the shadows of the severely changed European and global political landscapes. Our **Positive Communication Group** and our **IT backing team**— met monthly to advance their respective areas.

To coordinate our activities, the Board held **twelve meetings** and several **plenary sessions**, including **two open plenaries** for broader participation.

Our indispensable **website-, newsletter-, and webmail editors and -managers** Hugo Swinnen and Tilman Voss did a great job, bringing EGC and national news out to our subscribers. They also worked to re-establish our mail addresses and contacts that had suddenly disappeared due to an unexpected system update by the hosting company.

The Oslo Meeting – A Milestone

The highlight of the year was our **meeting in Oslo**, generously hosted by our Norwegian members. After months of preparation, the event proved a resounding success — strengthening our cohesion, sparking fresh motivation, and giving us a clearer strategic direction.

We agreed to focus our advocacy on the **phase-out of coal, oil, and gas**.

In addition to the existing working groups:

- EU Working Group
- Working Group on positive Communication

we also launched new working groups on:

- Effective climate communication (The Psychology Working Group),
- Enlargement of our network,
- Fundraising
- General Communication (including website, other channels and technical issues)

We further decided that an **annual in-person meeting** is essential for maintaining trust and collaboration within our organization. The next one will probably be hosted by our Dutch colleagues.

Staff

All work has been done by volunteers: Board members, Webmail administrator, Website manager and Newsletter editor, Note takers, WG coordinators and WG members,

All members paid their own travel expenses to Oslo. Lodging and travel expenses to the meetings with EEB and CAN were paid by the participants themselves.

Looking Ahead

In a challenging political climate, our commitment remains strong: to give voice to the older generation's responsibility toward the future — and to keep the spirit and substance of the European Green Deal alive.

In 2026, we will start trial memberships of EEB and CAN Europe, aiming at becoming accepted as full members.

Our new working groups have started their work and our old working groups have grown with new, competent participants. This is very promising.

New member organizations from Slovenia, Czech, and Iceland are in the pipeline.

Appendices:

- 1) Composition of the board
- 2) List of member organizations

Appendix 1

Composition of the Board in 2025

According to the statutes, the board consists of at least 5 members, 4 of these with fixed portfolios: Co-chairs, Treasurer, and Secretary. Throughout 2025, the board consisted of:

Co-chairs: Godela von Kirchbach and Eva Riemer

Treasurer: Philip Beekman

Secretary: Vacant

Member without portfolio: Isabelle Jörg.

In addition, Roland de Wolf has been a visiting member proposed by the Belgian member organizations.

Appendix 2

Member Organizations

Full members:

- Grand-Parents pour le Climat, Belgium (Wallonia)
- Grootouders vor het Klimaat, Belgium (Flanders)
- Grootouders vor het Klimaat, The Netherlands
- Besteforeldrenes Klimaaksjon, Norway
- Bedsteforældrenes Klima Aktion, Denmark
- Grandparents for Climate, Austria
- Omas for Future, Germany
- Grands-Parents pour le climat Suisse / Klima-Grosseltern Schweiz, Switzerland
- Klimaseniorinnen, Switzerland
- Our Grandchildren's Climate, UK
- Ilmasto Isovanhemmat (Grandparents for Climate), Finland

Extraordinary Members:

- Aktivistimummot (Activist Grannies), Finland
- Grandparents for Climate, Sweden