



Budapest, 23 April 2017

Motivation Letter: Candidacy for FYEG EC 2017-18

Dear young Greens, dear friends,

My name is Zuzana Pavelková, I am a member of Mladí zelení (Czech Young Greens) and herewith, I am genuinely honored to present you my candidacy for the Federations of Young European Greens Executive Committee (FYEG EC).

About me

I am genuinely European. Originally from a small town in Northern Bohemia, I have lived mainly outside my country of origin ever since I was 12 years old. I attended a Czech-German grammar school in Germany, which made me later continue with my B.A. studies in International Relations in Dresden. I spent my Erasmus in France, I worked for an NGO in Bosnia and Herzegovina for a year. At the moment, I am finishing my Master's in Human Rights at the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary. (Yes, the university the Orbán government is vigorously trying to shut down). Thanks to these experiences, I have developed a good understanding of the political realities and contexts of several European countries. But most importantly, for me, borders are truly inexistent and crossing them is part of the everyday. And I want this opportunity for everyone.

My experiences as a Green activist

Having nearly finished my B.A. studies in 2014, I moved back to the Czech Republic and worked as an intern for the Czech Green Party at the European Parliament elections campaign. This is where I started to meet the young Greens. As I continued running into young Greens at protests, happenings and events in the months that followed after the elections, I decided to attend the Mladí zelení General Assembly in January 2015 where I eventually joined. At this point, I was already living in Sarajevo. Yet despite the distance, I managed to stay continuously involved in Mladí zelení and the young Greens on the European level. I had the chance to represent Mladí zelení at the FYEG GA in Tbilisi in 2015, where I tabled a negotiated a comprehensive resolution on EU asylum and migration policies "A Europe that Saves Lives."

2016 was an intense year and not only because I moved back to Czech Republic. Coming back, I quickly joined the activities in support of refugees' and migrants' rights by organizing happenings, speaking at protests and eventually bringing two vans of Czech young Greens to Idomeni. But more importantly, in 2016, I was one of the main organizers of the FYEG General Assembly and Spring Conference in Prague. In a small team of not more than five people, we have managed to deliver not only on the GA logistics. Under the title "Crisis of Democratic Governance in Europe" we have put together a full conference program with four different panels, several workshops and almost twenty international speakers and facilitators. The conference managed to attract visitors from outside our regular Green "bubble" and if you were in Prague with us, you may remember that the GA was praised as a major success by the leaving EC, as well as the participating delegates.

Motivated by the PraGA16 success, I joined the Prep Team for the Global Young Greens (GYG) congress in summer 2016 and quickly took the responsibility for coordinating the fundraising sub-group. Through several months of day to day work and an amazing team, we have not only managed to gather enough funds enabling us to lower down the barriers for participation for delegates from the Global South. What is more, we could launch the congress this March with a significant reserve of several thousand Euros which has later proven crucial in order to enable us for flexibility vis a vis unexpected visa issues and flight cancellations. The congress ended with a healthy financial balance, allowing for a smooth take over by the new GYG Steering Committee.

Last but not least, I have gained important experiences also outside the young Green movement. In 2014 and again in 2015, I have worked for several months as a campaigner for “Reconstruction of the State” - one of the best rated Czech anti-corruption campaigns since the 1990’s. Having successfully lobbied for positive changes in more than five legislative areas, I have developed a good understanding of campaigning and working with the media. Building on these experiences, I spent several months preparing a large-scale awareness raising campaign on gender-based violence for the Gender Equality Unit of the Office of the Government in the spring and summer 2016. The opportunity of working for the government has then again taught me that money does not always make the difference but has also shown me importance of individual responsibility and personal integrity when dealing with large public funds.

These experiences as well as a number of successfully coordinated smaller-scale events and actions give me the confidence that I have the necessary know-how, dedication and long-term stamina for FYEG’s efficient coordination.

My vision for the 2017-18 mandate

I understand the role of FYEG EC not as merely executive, but also as political. I believe to have the knowledge and know-how to help strengthen FYEG’s political profile in the following thematic areas: (1) asylum and migration, (2) fight against the far right, in particular in CEE and (3) human rights aspects of climate change. Having worked in the field of asylum and migration academically, professionally and as an activist for the past seven years, I want the FYEG to become a reliable ally for migrants and refugees in Europe, while making sure it does not totemize them for its political goals or hijack what is and essentially has to be their struggle. Coming from a region with high unemployment and a family environment where racist, gender-biased or homophobic jokes were made part of the everyday, I want the FYEG to speak loud and clear against the rise of fascism in Europe. But I also want to make sure FYEG leaves its door open towards those who are ready to listen and talk to us, albeit they may not share our views (yet). Moreover, in the face of everyday emergencies, I want to make sure the fight against climate change remains our long-term priority. As a human rights scholar and practitioner, I want the FYEG to increasingly frame climate change in a rights-based language. We and the future generations have the right to a planet which remains habitable.

In addition to the political priorities above, I also wish to devote part of my potential future mandate to continuous internal development and capacity building of our movement and the FYEG MOs. In this regard, I would like to focus on the following cross-cutting issues: (1) capacity building for the upcoming European Parliament elections, (2) inclusivity measures leading to an increased diversity of membership and (3) respect for difference within the movement. I want

us to learn together how to become successful campaigners and responsible politicians. I want us to discuss and learn from each other how to make our organizations and the FYEG as a whole more inclusive, more regionally balanced, more gender-sensitive, more egalitarian and less white. Last but not least, seeing all too many progressive movements splitting over marginal divergences, I want to make sure our different approaches do not prevent us from working together towards common goals.

Making the vision work in practice

While some of the above will be a matter of personal approach and day-to-day work, concrete steps can be taken to make some of the points work in practice. Let me illustrate some of them: First, I want us to leave the GA with a concrete understanding of our positions on recent developments of EU's asylum and migration policies. To this end, I am planning to table a resolution together with the Migration Working Group. Second, if elected I want to work towards ensuring that representatives of refugees and migrants communities are invited and can take part in our Summer Camp, enabling us to brainstorm together how we can be of allies to our common struggles. In the long term, I want to keep providing continuous support to the Migration WG both, in terms of knowledge and FYEG's organizational capacities. Third, I want to uphold the GYG17 congress momentum and serve as liaison between FYEG and GYG for the future. In the long term, I want to work together towards establishing common FYEG-GYG delegations for the annual COPs. Such will enable Green activists from countries already strongly affected by climate change to gain visibility for their struggles and us a better understanding of the local impacts of climate change which we can make use of for better informed awareness raising and campaigning. Last but not least, I want to take practical steps towards starting to prepare the FYEG for the 2019 European Parliament elections. These could include for example a series of capacity building activities for the MOs on issues such as campaigning and media work, public speaking or negotiating candidacies with the mother parties. Moreover, I want to take steps towards developing a campaigning strategy, establishing a campaigning team, and organizing an extraordinary General Assembly for our efficient preparation in 2018.

In the past two years, I have learned that dedicated teams and even small day to day work can make miracles happen. I have learned to appreciate the importance of radical direct actions for shifting the public discourse and I don't mind putting my body in the way. I have also learned how important it is to divide tasks equally, to work cooperatively and to take care of our physical and mental health as activists. I know that I still have a lot to learn. I want to learn from and with you how to empower each other and how to make FYEG more inclusive, more open, and, more responsive to the needs of all our MOs. We are in the middle of a fight against the far right, in the middle of a fight against Europe becoming a closed-off island with the Mediterranean turning into a gigantic gas-chamber and in the middle of an ever more urgent fight against approaching climate catastrophe. So let us grow stronger and fight together.

Yours,



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