

EC6 Klāvs Veseļuns: Candidate for Executive Committee

Agenda item: 2. Executive Committee Candidates

Introduction

Hi! I am Klāvs, a 21-year-old green activist, queer, and environmental policy student. I have held positions at all levels in Protests, the Latvian Young Greens, and have experience working in the Progressives, the Latvian Green Party. My engagement in FYEG goes back to early 2021 and I have represented my member organization in multiple MO/Young Green Forums and GAs. I was also in the FYEG delegation to COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh, where I realized that I should take the next step and run for the EC.

As an activist from the Baltic States, I clearly see the increasing divide between the East and West member organizations and I believe that this is the biggest threat to FYEG currently. If elected, I will work on reducing this divide and make FYEG a place, where all member organizations feel included and listened to.

If you have any questions, feel free to message me on your platform of choice. I will be happy to answer them. See you all in Barcelona!



Member Organisation:
Protests

Supporters

Liina Reimann (MTÜ Noored Rohelised); Ketevani Julukhadze (Young Greens of Georgia); Igor Skórzybót (Ostra Zieleń – Polish Young Greens); Brajan Martić (Youth Forum URA); Iason Paschalidis-Gerostergiou (Νέοι Πράσινοι - Greek Young Greens); Mylena Ferreira (Joves Ecosocialistes (Catalan Young Greens); Cameron Garrett (Scottish Young Greens); Ivana Vojnov (Green Youth of Serbia); Patrícia W. Marcelino (Ecolojovem- Portuguese Young Greens); Mariia Patrul (Зелена молодь України - Green youth of Ukraine); Nefertiti Bikin-kita (Swiss Young Greens); Theo Lecarpentier (écolo j); Benjamin Wold Birmanis (Young Greens of England and Wales); Konsta Lindi (Vihreät nuoret); Tove Ljungberg Haasum (Grön Ungdom)

Motivation letter

Dear Young Greens,

I am Klāvs, a 21-year-old green activist, queer, and environmental policy student from Latvia, though now living in the Netherlands. After years of being engaged with FYEG, Protests, DWARS, and Green politics in general, I have decided to apply my skills and experience to the Executive Committee of FYEG in a strategically important year for the organization. FYEG has given me opportunities that I never believed I would get. From representing FYEG at the COP27 to countless friendships to opportunities to meet world leaders. And now it is my time to return the favor to FYEG. I will do everything I can to make us into a stronger, more inclusive, and more impactful organization.

My first interaction with Green politics was in 2018 when I found out about Progresīvie, which is now Latvia's candidate member party of the European Green Party. They offered a desperately needed Green and leftist alternative to Latvia's status quo. Back then they were fighting for 2% and state funding. I convinced my parents and some older friends to vote for them, as I could not vote myself.

I have the experience to help lead FYEG into being more responsive to the needs of its member organizations, having been active within my MO and FYEG for several years in different roles. Applying for the Protests membership was the step that changed me the most. FYEG has given me many opportunities that would not be possible otherwise. My first FYEG event was the 2021 MO Forum. Later on, I represented Protests in the 2021 and 2022 General Assembly, as well as the 2022 MO forum and this year's Young Green Forum, which taught me about this organization's function and biggest challenges.

Being able to represent FYEG in COP27 was one of the most empowering experiences in my life. I am proud of our delegation's work and saw that even a four-person team can have a huge impact by achieving media coverage from around the world and even in Latvia. We secured meetings with government ministers, and ultimately helped with the closing statement on behalf of Global Youth. That helped me to see how inaccessible top politicians are in regular situations, which further solidified the thought that FYEG has essential work to do in representing our MOs and that I have the skills to help us grow our influence over these politicians.

During the 2022 parliamentary election campaign in Latvia, I helped Progresīvie, primarily focusing on social media content and street campaigning. I also helped with the private campaign of the MP that I currently work for. In the last 2022 parliamentary elections, we got 10/100 of the seats and became one of the biggest Green parties in the world. That allowed me to become a part-time parliamentary assistant, mainly working with communications and policy research. The knowledge I have gained during this campaign and the work following it would undoubtedly aid FYEG during the upcoming European Parliament election campaign year.

However, during my relatively short time as an activist, I have seen the illegitimate elections and following oppression in Belarus, the unjustifiable and war crime-filled Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine, and the political attacks on the rule of law, migrant rights, and queer rights in Latvia. These are just a few of the unjustifiable attacks on democracy, human rights, and lives that have shifted my viewpoint incredibly. All of these have proven to me how fragile our democracies are and how important it is to internationally collaborate to repeal those attacks.

Although no one doubts FYEG's dedication to the rule of law and democratic values, it is hard to deny that the EC's initial response to the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine was underwhelming. In the last GA, we heard many emotional stories from different member organizations, including Protests, calling for political positions that would ensure less Western dominance.

And as a radical green, I cannot stress enough how important a just green transition is to me. We must protect not only the planet but also human lives, biodiversity, and whole ecosystems. We as the Greens must push for the most radical steps needed and I can guarantee that I will fight for this with all my energy. The European Green Party must get more ambitious on climate and social justice. FYEG has the most resources to successfully achieve that. Previously, I have worked on lobbying changes to the inner positions of Progresīvie, as well as worked with the FYEG EC last year to kick the pro-Kremlin MEP Tatjana Ždanoka out of the Greens/EFA group.

I have made many great friends through FYEG; therefore, this is my time to give back to this organization that has helped me to grow. After a term as a board member and later the international secretary of Protests, this feels like the next step to push for a green, inclusive, and ecosocialist Europe.

In solidarity for a Green future,

Klāvs (he/him)

Vision statement

Dear Young Greens,

Latvia is in a unique political situation. In the 2018 parliamentary elections, we ran on the “A Turn Towards the Nordics” platform, yet we also acknowledge that we share a lot with Eastern Europe. Much of it, undoubtedly, relates to the traumas from the Soviet occupation crimes against our societies. We directly have experienced the horrors of Russian imperialism and we know exactly what Ukraine is fighting against. The consequences of Russia’s bloody full-scale invasion of Ukraine have changed many of my political opinions and also my vision of what I believe that FYEG needs.

Reducing the divide between member organizations

However, we can see that Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine has started yet another divide in FYEG. The more Eastern member organizations started feeling disconnected and not properly heard by their Western counterparts. Although the outgoing EC has put a lot of work into solving this issue, there is still room for improvement. In the past, Protests and I have worked as the bridge between North and East region MOs in FYEG and that is something I am willing to continue.

A key part of the greater unity is listening and understanding. The EC must provide safe spaces and opportunities to share the experiences that have shaped the positions of member organizations. That would help to shift the internal positions of other member organizations, thus, leading toward a more united organization.

Green and young European Parliament

This EC will lead member organizations and their mother parties toward the European Parliament elections. I have worked on multiple campaigns throughout my time in activism. Protests’ short, yet effective information campaign against the LNG terminal plan led to a lot of media critique of the government’s plans. Moreover, I helped to manage the Progressive TikTok account during the campaign. Therefore, I believe that I can help to bring some new and innovative ideas that would help to make the Green wave into the next European Parliament.

The biggest European Parliament party EPP continues to move rightward and to normalize the far-right. To counter this, we must push for a new vision of Europe that brings justice, equity, and proper climate action. Greens must ensure that the far-right continues getting isolated and that will only be possible if all member organizations work together to get the Greenest and youngest European Parliament yet. I believe that FYEG has a major role in this. We can continue to push our mother parties and politicians for science-based climate policy in action and truly just society. Last year’s GA was one of the most controversial ones yet, however, I believe that Protests’ resolutions and amendments co-written by me helped to move FYEG closer toward the values that the East has been calling for.

Stronger and more integrated FYEG regions

During my first term as a Protests board member, I started developing relations with Estonian Young Greens, who back then were not members of FYEG. Now they are candidate members and close friends to us. Now, as the international secretary of Protests, I met up with the Lithuanian organization that wishes to become the Lithuanian Young Greens and gave my feedback to the EC. Although I do not know how this relationship will develop further, the possible full representation of the Baltic States would be a key development for FYEG.

However, I have noticed that smaller organizations tend to struggle to develop relations with other Young Greens, as there often is a limited financial capacity. Therefore, the EC should encourage regional collaboration with events that are held together. That would make the FYEG a lot less abstract to members of different member organizations and develop their capacity.

If given the opportunity to work in the EC, I am confident I can help the member organizations to be more understood, more united, and more integrated into FYEG. However, that also requires feedback from you. Therefore, I would be more than happy to hear your thoughts on my vision.

In solidarity for a Green future,

Klāvs (he/him)

Klāvs Veselūns (he/him)

Environmental and Climate Policy

LinkedIn Profile:
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Work Experience



Part-Time Parliamentary Assistant | Parliament of Latvia

January 2023 to Present

- Organizing communications
- Policy research regarding climate and environment
- Work to halt the LNG terminal project in Skulte, Latvia

International Secretary | Youth Organization "Protests"

January 2023 to Present

- Managing the international relations of "Protests"

Climate and Environmental Advisor | UN Youth Delegate Program of Latvia

February 2022 to December 2022

- Advising the delegate regarding environment and climate

Board Member | Youth Organization "Protests"

January 2021 to January 2022

- Representing "Protests" internationally
- Coordinating political position writing
- Organizing a Climate Camp

Education



BSc in Environmental Policy | Wageningen University and Research

Expected to graduate in 2024



Highschool Diploma, Specialization in Natural Sciences | Riga State Gymnasium No. 2

Class of 2021

Skills & Specialization

- Social media
- Position writing and coordination
- Light video editing
- Campaigning

Volunteer Work and Affiliations

Co-Chair of the Youth Politics Working Group | The Progressives

2022 to Present

Co-Chair of the Environmental Working Group | Youth Organization "Protests"

2022 to 2023

COP27 Delegate | FYEG

2022

Campaign Volunteer | The Progressives

2022

Languages

Latvian | C2

English | C1

German | A2



Riga, 20th March 2023

Dear Young European Greens,

On behalf of Protests, I am beyond thrilled to announce our nomination of Klāvs Veseļuns as a member of the Executive Committee of the Young European Greens.

I have come to know Klāvs as a very dedicated, hard working and competent individual. He has been very active in FYEG previously to this candidacy and also has been involved at every level of Protests. He has the experience of working in the board, leading a working group, managing our mother party's social media and so on. We are certain that Klāvs would be a very valuable asset to your Executive Committee not only because of his previous experiences, but also because of the passion and dedication he has shown towards FYEG. Klāvs encompasses the perfect mix of qualities of being strong-willed, cooperative and motivated, that I believe would be very valuable in the work of EC.

There is no doubt that he is a very qualified candidate and has our full support.

Yours sincerely,

the Chairwoman of the board of “Protests”

Marta Bogustova