

T1 Andrej Zlatović

Agenda item: 2. Candidates for Treasurer

Introduction

Andrej Zlatović (any pronouns) is a 26-year-old Serbian and Croatian candidate for Treasurer nominated by the Green Youth of Serbia. They have a bachelor's degree in archaeology and are currently pursuing a master's degree in culture studies at the University of Belgrade. Currently they are serving as Co-spokesperson of the GYS, are a member of the main decision-making board in their mother party, the Green-Left Front and Andrej was a candidate for a city councillor position in Belgrade. Alongside this, they have coordinated multiple projects and assisted others, often with financial management. Within FYEG, their most famous contribution was being part of the campaign team for the 2024 European Parliament elections as part of the Green Base Coordinators, where they worked on organising the Discord server and member retention. Other than this, they were also part of the ten activists arrested in early May for protesting in the European Parliament against fossil fuel subsidies.



Member Organisation:
Zelena omladina Srbije - Serbia

Supporters

Kristiana Bruce (Protests); Salih Tuna (Genç Yeşiller); Saúl Lara (Juventud Verde); Anna Winkelmann Larios (Joves Ecosocialistes); Vilma Jaatinen (Vihreät Nuoret); Renata Liliana Anetska (Ostra Zieleń); Karl Reimer (Grüne Jugend Österreich); Iason Paschalidis-Gerostergiou (Νέοι Πράσινοι); Ana Apakidze (Young Greens of Georgia); Mariia Patrul (Green youth of Ukraine); Josefina Kubinova (Mladi zeleni); Francesca Cucchiara (Giovani Europeisti Verdi); Soesha Sandker (DWARS); Amy Winandy (déi jonk gréng)

Motivation Letter

Name: Andrej Zlatović

Subject: Candidacy for Treasurer

Growing up in the Western Balkans, in a country that was under sanctions and bombed, has permanently changed the way me and people from my region see the world. This has even affected my family, allowing me to grow up in a very antifascist and anti-authoritarian household, where I realised the necessity of political struggle against oppression very early on. During my life I have faced discrimination because of my mixed Serbian and Croatian heritage, because of questioning of gender norms through my appearance and expression, and due to my openly leftist political views. With my story being one of many such examples, amplifying the unique worldview of people coming from the Balkans and Eastern Europe will only aid us in disentangling the current geopolitical situations we are facing. We, as those who have had conflicts on our mind since childhood, need to make sure these mistakes are not repeated. Once our experiences are represented and critically discussed in a safe environment, conversations will naturally move in more fruitful and reconciliatory directions. This is especially important considering the pressing issues of the war in Ukraine and the invasion of Gaza, bellicose right-wing politicians and the neo-colonialism of the Global South.

It was not until I found the green movement, that I was able to feel comfortable within a community of people. In this regard, FYEG, which forms the backbone of our movement, has the power to foster that diverse community for so many people, like it did for me. This has materialized at many of the events I've participated in and helped facilitate, as well as during my role on the campaign team. All of this was only possible due to the privilege I had to be able to afford time off to attend events and volunteer, as well as find money for transport and participation fees. While promoting FYEG with other volunteers of the Green Youth of Serbia, I have often found that money was at the forefront of their worries when deciding whether to participate. This has culminated in this decision to run for EC, specifically to be Treasurer for the next mandate, to address the issues many of our members are facing.

Despite my social sciences background, economics and statistics are fields I have been involved with, whether it was conducting statistical analyses on the effect COVID-19 had on household income or doing budget analyses with NGOs for multi-year projects. Additional activist experiences, such as working in food banks, or with children of marginalized backgrounds in impoverished areas, have allowed me to address the issues of poverty and homelessness, and these are the topics I always try to come back to in my work. While FYEG works within a different kind of field than organisations I worked with before, economic privilege continually dictates who is, and who is not able to participate in activism and politics. We must address the financial differences of Eastern and Western MOs and find ways to make sure that all feel equal in the spaces we create and this I aim to do as your Treasurer. Additionally, despite these glaring economic inequalities, I know we can strive towards more representation and to create more accessible spaces for those with disabilities. If elected as Treasurer, the EC will be able to have a more balanced outlook with crucial context from a non-EU/EEA perspective. Since economic differences can manifest themselves in many forms, from the ability to commit to a timeline of long-term volunteering, to even coming to this very general assembly, we should have a perspective that more accurately represents the median European.

Relying on my experiences from the campaign team of FYEG which included both direct work with volunteers, as well as digital organizing, I am aware of my capabilities in both front facing roles as well as in capacity building, and this is experience I plan on using when budgeting. Additionally, in my role as co-spokesperson of Green Youth of Serbia, I always prioritised member growth and retention, managing to take an organisation of 9 members to now over 90 members, making it the largest opposition political party youth organisation in Serbia. In this role I have also created yearly budgets and reports, both for our organisation and for three successful projects done in the past year. Alongside this, I regularly had meetings and coordinated with the presidency and general secretary of our mother party, the Green-Left Front, submitting requests when necessary and ensuring that those requests are reported on afterwards.

As your Treasurer, cooperation with the FYEG office will come naturally and enable us to optimally allocate our budget, while also ensuring the necessary level of transparency that an organization such as FYEG should provide. Working on capacity building and forming a strong network of volunteers in multiple countries will assuredly benefit our fundraising efforts and establish easier access to grants and donations, which is a clear and efficient strategy to ensure that organizational funds will not be an issue.

I hope that in this letter I was able to convey my dedication and expertise in order to take on this daunting role. I aim to help FYEG develop in this new term, which has developed after the European Parliament elections and the best way for me to do so would be through work with our finance team. Within our green family we can reach our united goal of a solidary, inclusive Europe. It would be my honor if you gave me your trust to be your Treasurer and present your voices and ideas in this decisive year.

Vision for FYEG

Name: Andrej Zlatović

Subject: Candidacy for Treasurer

Let our network speak for itself: In order to best support our member organisations (MOs) we need to know their needs and problems. Only with direct communication with our MOs can we ensure that we are able to properly provide assistance, and that our efforts are properly focused. In this manner, FYEG often lags behind the Cooperation and Development Network (CDN) when it comes to the relationship between MOs and their umbrella organisations. With proper coordination, we can better learn from the practices of CDN. Only with proper communication can we accordingly address the monetary needs of our network and set proper goals and priorities. As treasurer, I will make sure that executive committee (EC) members have the funds for MO visits, and that, when possible, increased time commitment and initiative from MOs is stimulated with project and grant proposals. More oral communication with well-recorded minutes will ensure increased cohesion and representation within FYEG. These steps will also ensure that our MOs feel heard and that their members are able to express their opinions.

FYEG as a network and facilitator for our MOs: Many of our MOs face daily issues due to a lack of skills that are necessary for any modern organisation. We must find ways to address issues that MOs deal with, and there is a myriad of ways to do this while not overburdening event organisers too much. One clear method is for FYEG to facilitate cross-organisational trainings on topics such as regionalism and representation, social media, or budget management. Because within our network of MOs there is a bevy of experience, we can engage those that have successfully solved these issues to share their knowledge with representatives from other MOs which are currently struggling. Our future treasurer, aside from knowing how to spend funds, needs to keep in mind how to achieve our goals by sometimes avoiding unnecessary costs and burdening staff. In this way, FYEG will be more represented outside of the in-person events and annual General Assemblies to the whole network with minimal financial requirements and time commitment, while also strengthening inter MO relationships.

An accountable voice from an underrepresented MO and region:

With my past work as co-spokesperson of the Green Youth of Serbia and role in the campaign team, I have systematically been an accountable team player, making sure all tasks are done on time, while also striving whenever possible to speak about the issues of underrepresentation. The Balkans have slowly started fostering a home for the Green idea due to the emphasis it places on reconciliation, ecology, pacifism and feminism in a region that has too often lacked political options which champion these ideas. If we are able to systematically support and finance green movements in this region, I know there is significant potential to spread our network in **Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria and Kosovo**, while supporting our current MOs in Albania, Greece, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Türkiye. This will lead to breaking the stigma that the Balkans as a region usually face, and will help us foster a stronger atmosphere of cooperation and reconciliation within FYEG.

One euro is not worth the same everywhere: When discussing differences and privilege, we too rarely comment on the economic inequalities. While people in Germany are earning a median 3500 euros per month, the median salary in Serbia is a measly 630 euros. Additionally, as studies have repeatedly shown, financial struggles disproportionately affect people from underprivileged backgrounds, such as women, migrants, racial and ethnic minorities and people with disabilities. We will not be socially equal while we are economically unequal. We must observe the reality of economic inequalities, and account for them at our events, making sure they are maximally accessible for all. We have to strive toward a more decentralized approach to offering funding and grants. This also applies when we determine participation fees or which participants can have their travel costs covered in advance, while making sure that they do not feel shame due to requesting support. Having a non-EU/EEA perspective when allocating finances is necessary in order to achieve a more accurate picture of Europe within our network.

More activities to supplement statements - activism, to strengthen politics: While we have the visibility of a political party youth organization, our status as an autonomous non-government organisation gives us much more power and potential when performing actions, as well as the ability to work with Civil Society Organisations. When spreading the Green idea, we have the freedom to do actions which a lot of our MOs cannot. Therefore, we should liberally take activism as part of our development strategy and keep this in mind also when budgeting and fundraising. We too often lean into the comfort of the statement, neglecting the value of direct action as a way of showcasing dissatisfaction through civil disobedience of the capitalist regime. We must have one leg in institutions and the other on the streets. Especially for organisations working within authoritarian systems (such as the one I come from), as well as those currently facing active invasions or occupations such as Georgia and Ukraine, typical political engagement will not bear fruit in the same manner as in Western democracies and this should be reflected in our financial plan. We need to strive for a way to enable those in underrepresented positions, to voice their struggles, and continue their fight against authoritarianism, war and all forms of oppression.



ANDREJ ZLATOVIĆ

Treasurer candidate
from Serbia

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EDUCATION

Regional Centre for Talented Youths Zemun - 1

English Language and Literature module
Received state diplomas due to good
tournament placement.

2012 - 2017

University of Belgrade Faculty of Philosophy

Bachelor of Archaeology - 9.05/10 GPA
Recipient of a state scholarship

2017 - 2022

University of Belgrade Faculty of Political Science

Masters of Culture Studies
Working on the correlation of
economic and culture change

2023 - ongoing

PRONOUNS

Any - no strong preference

WORK EXPERIENCE

Festival assistant and technical support Annually since 2019

International festival of Ethnographic film

- Worked with guests and directors. In later editions of the festival I was of the production team for the festival.
- Managed social media profiles, wrote speeches and organized volunteers. Did logistics and video and sound support.

Data collection, labeling and analysis

2021

Microsoft Development Centre Serbia

- Worked on collection of different data samples and marked them accordingly, afterwards sorted the data and kept track of progress.
- Mentored new hires and provided online onboardings.

Freelance statistical analyst

ocassionally since 2021

- Worked in SPSS to conduct statistical analyses and represent it as necessary.
- This was mostly done for students writing their masters thesis.

Curator and assistant museum guide

2022

October Salon - 59th edition

- Worked with guests and in technical support for art exhibitions in locations belonging to the Museum of Belgrade.
- Assisted in marketing the exhibitions, in person and on social media.

Assistant educator and teacher

2024

Group 484 - local action

- Worked with children, mostly from marginalized Roma backgrounds.
- Assisted in creating workshops and teaching them about the pillars of local action and civil disobedience.

CITIZENSHIP

Serbian & Croatian

LANGUAGES

Serbian - Native

English - B2 diploma, C2 in practice

German - B1 diploma (expired)

CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE

Video Games as a Common ground

Organized by the University of Zadar - held online - 2022

EKOnnect Young Greens Initiative

Organized by Youth Forum URA during the Cooperation and Development Network Eastern Europe (CDN) Summer Camp held in Ulcinj - 2023

SELECTED EVENT EXPERIENCE

CDN - In person Let's Train

meeting - Prep Team

Skopje, North Macedonia - 2023

FYEG - Team Leader's

Retreat - Held Sessions

Brussels, Belgium - 2023

FYEG - Green Rave - Participant

Rome, Italy - 2024

FYEG - European Train Tour stop -

Local prep team

Belgrade, Serbia - 2024

Group 484 and truAktiv - Bridging

Cultures: Empower & Engage -

Participant

Prizren, Kosovo - 2024

ACTIVIST EXPERIENCE

EKO3 co-founder and organiser

2021-2022

- A Belgrade based ecological organization which is no longer active.
- Worked on guerilla gardening, social media marketing with the aim of talking about ecological issues in Serbia.

Solidarity Kitchen field assistant

2021-2023

- Informal food bank organization based in Belgrade.
- Helped with the preparation of meals and the handing out of meals and sanitary supplies to those who need it.

Member and Co-spokesperson of GYS

2022-ongoing

- The Green Youth of Serbia (GYS) is the youth wing of the Green-Left Front (ZLF) opposition political party. As co-spokesperson I am part of the large council, the main decision making body of ZLF.
- My duties are to represent the GYS in public, including various media and organize meetings, workshops and events. Includes regularly writing press releases for local media.

FYEG Campaign team member

2023-2024

- Worked on on-boarding and recruitment of volunteers, digital organizing of online platforms and managing volunteer tasks. Oversaw work of Researchers, Knowledge Guardians and Techies teams.

Campaigner and Candidate for ZLF

2023-2024

- Collected signatures, held on street actions, did interviews and managed certain campaign finances elections. I was also a city councilor candidate.

PROJECTS

A New Approach to Mental Health (FYEG)

2023

- Head coordinated the project and managed finances
- Worked and hosted panels with mental health experts.
- Drafted a mental health policy paper which has formed the basis of the Green-Left Fronts strategy for mental healthcare.

Let's Train - a Balkan railway project (CDN)

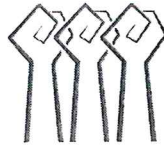
2023

- Completed the project with the CDN member organizations from North Macedonia, Greece, Croatia and Montenegro
- Calculated cost benefit analyses and strategies of development for rail travel and worked on its promotion.

GYS Summer Camp (Int. found. GroenLinks)

2024

- Aims to promote green values and ideas for young activists in the form of an educational summer camp on Goč in late July.
- Doing logistics, finances and will hold non-formal education sessions.



Zelena omladina Srbije - Green Youth of Serbia

Dear Delegates of Member Organisations,

We are writing to express our enthusiastic support for Andrej Zlatović's candidacy for the position of Treasurer in the FYEG executive committee on behalf of Green Youth of Serbia.

Andrej has been an integral part of our organization since 2022, consistently demonstrating outstanding organizational skills, collegiality, and a deep commitment to advancing Green values. His contributions were recognized when he served as a member of the Main Board and a co-spokesperson during the 23/24 term, along with his active involvement in the FYEG campaign for the EU24 elections, working in the core team in the capacity of a Green Base Coordinator. Andrej has also spent nearly a year working closely with our office, gaining a comprehensive understanding of our organization's operations. Additionally, as co-spokesperson, regularly had meetings with both the presidency and the general secretary of our mother party, the Green-Left Front, in order to secure funding for our events, actions and projects.

We strongly believe Andrej deserves the opportunity to further develop his contributions within FYEG, leveraging the skills and insights he has accumulated over the years. In addition to his valuable experience, we believe Andrej will bring crucial regional balance and enhanced representation from the Eastern region to the newly formed EC.

As a seasoned activist with a nuanced understanding of Eastern cultural contexts, Andrej is dedicated to fostering strong, constructive collaboration among Member Organisations, with a particular focus on enhancing support for Eastern Member Organisations.

We wholeheartedly encourage you to support Andrej Zlatović's candidacy with your vote.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Anđela Marković". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anđela Marković

Co-Spokesperson and Member of the Main Board of the Green Youth of Serbia