

EC1 Aislinn Hughes

Agenda item: 1. Executive Committee Candidates

Introduction

Hi!

My name is Aislinn Hughes, I am 23 years old, and I am writing this from a bar in the Hague, the Netherlands. Through this short introduction, I hope to provide a peek into who I am, in case we haven't had the pleasure to meet yet. I have been active within the Dutch Greens for nearly two years, and with this opportunity, I hope to expand my activities to a European level. Besides my green activism, committee work and internship, the other green facet in my life is my Irish heritage. This has played a part in my studies, namely, English literature, and my current Masters in International Relations. Besides that I have an undying love for music, cooking, tattoos, social media, and most of all, people such as yourself, who share the green messages. You will find my motivation and vision for FYEG in separate documents, so I hope you enjoy the light reading material. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Green greetings,

Aislinn



Member Organisation:
DWARS GroenLinkse
Jongeren - Netherlands

email - aislinnh12@hotmail.com

TELEGRAM - [@aislinnhughes](https://t.me/aislinnhughes)

INSTAGRAM - [@aislinn.ech](https://www.instagram.com/aislinn.ech)

LINKEDIN - [/aislinnhughes](https://www.linkedin.com/company/aislinnhughes)

Candidate for the Executive Committee

Aislinn Hughes

Dear Member Organisations of the Federation of Young European Greens,

I am delighted to share that I am running for the current opening at the Executive Committee of FYEG. My decision to apply for this position is a combination of timing, ambition, and most of all, the passion I have for the movement. You may not know me as I have not been active at FYEG for long, with the Youth Assembly last April being the first event I attended. In this short time, FYEG has become the perfect marriage of the main forces that drive my political involvement, this including an intercultural community, green activism, non-formal learning and a safe environment. Since the Assembly, my involvement has taken shape in being involved in the Prep Team for the Influencelection Games, the Beyond Growth Platform, and the Prep Team of the Summer Camp. I am eager to continue making friends from all over the place, learn more about the Green Family, and continue to work on making Europe a better place. I hope that reading this letter will give you insights into my motivations and vision for FYEG.

My main motivation to join the Executive Committee is driven by excitement for the upcoming elections: I do not have to convince you about the importance of the upcoming elections; how the time is now, how the climate needs us, and how we must ensure that our continent can be a safe home to anyone. You know this. Which is exactly why I consider this a vital moment during which we need to capitalize of the common awareness, mobilise like-minded people, and form a strong movement to work towards better lives for all. The moment is now, and I would love to do my part in driving us towards where we need to be; a stronghold which is able to amplify the young, green voice so it can really enact change in the system. The change we strive to implement is sourced from, and influential on a greater sphere than just Europe. Therefore, this is also the time to open up our circles to more people from outside the EU and ensure that what we work towards betters humanity as a whole, not just the lives of European citizens. There is no 'I' in system change (nor is there a 'u'), but you get my point: **shared goals require shared resolutions.**

My own 'Green Base'

But who am I to say this, and where does it come from? My activities at DWARS started some two years ago. Since then, I have organised all our General Assemblies and was in charge of recruiting committee members. Currently, I serve as campaign and social media manager on my local board, participate in writing our new Political Platform and work as Political Advisor for International Affairs. I also worked towards recovering the status of an international presence at DWARS since our International Board Position was removed. These experiences have given me insight into designing a campaign, activism mobilisation, network building and youth participation. I am currently continuing my internship period at the Greens in the Dutch House of Representatives. My parliamentary work is focused on managing two policy portfolios: circular economy and climate which fall under the jurisdiction of a member of parliament (MP) who was elected helped by DWARS' campaign as she is our only MP under thirty. I have learnt a great deal from her about persistence, self-care and empowering communities, and she remains an example of what it takes to fight a system which is not structured to serve you. I prepare debates, go on work visits, draft parliamentary

inquiries and engage with lobbyists to form our 'political line'. Most notably, the last months were marked by the judicial persecution of Chemours and Tata Steel, two companies whose activities have greatly damaged the environment and public health of their surrounding areas. Attending the hearing of these two companies and seeing them leave and be allowed to continue their work without repercussions was tough, but a needed reality check.

Over the course of my internship, I was also allowed to help out GroenLinks' PR and social media. I helped with making TikTok's, preparing press releases and editing our posts. This has made me aware of the power of social media in shaping communities, and the power it can yield in informing and activating. Rather unexpectedly, working in parliament has helped me intensify my activism as I have seen how slow and tedious the progress is. Following the collapse of my government, I am currently assisting the campaigning team of the Dutch Green Office. This consists of a number of events, including marches, canvassing, Town Halls, and other actions to spread the message of our campaign. Overall, I'd say I am **well organised**, apt in **planning events**, **writing policies**, **political strategy** and **community building**. My current involvement in the election campaign, as well as having contributed to the political program help with the upcoming tasks associated with the profile.

Good morning girlboss, let's get this bread:

Though I generally despise national stereotypes, it has been said to me that I present a funny mix of traits associated with the Dutch and the Irish. On the one hand, I value direct communication, I work well under pressure and with deadlines, and I am very pragmatic. On the other, I strive to keep my working environments enjoyable, I love meeting new people, and I would like to think of myself as a good friend and pleasant person to know. I am well aware of the systems and build ups of MOs and how each unique organisation can benefit from 'personal' attention. My main driver is the fact that **I, quite simply, care**. I care about our shared cause, I care for the people we impact and the people who put in the work, and I care that MO's can function as a safe space for the people we tackle our challenges with. This shapes my prioritization of communication and interpersonal connection, despite the challenges of language and distance. I consider myself very competent in maintaining my communication channels, ensuring that needs and demands are met, and most importantly, that people feel heard. I think my (sometimes excessive) care can contribute to stronger bonds within FYEG and hopefully also help shape new connections outside our network.

I work systematically, clearly stipulating long-term goals and setting up smaller measurable objectives along the way, which drive cooperation and cohesion at the same time. I have generally had to juggle a lot of functions also makes sure I take into account durability, assuring there are also checkpoints on ensuring the longevity of plans in the contexts of people who are involved in carrying them out. Finally, my work in drafting campaign plans and as a policy officer especially help with this, as it requires a deep understanding of the challenges and roadblocks ahead of the experience. I am by no means a perfect planner, but as I do love doing it, so I am very much open to advice and excited to keep honing my craft. Finally, to address the big elephant in the room in context of the tasks of this function; I am evidently not from the South. Not being from a Southern MO means there is a lot to learn about different ways of communicating, organising and the unique cultures within the organisations. I am well aware that this requires effort, but I would be incredibly excited to immerse myself and interact with people from outside my own region. As mentioned before, I consider myself a good communicator, and hope that through a lot of interaction, I will be able to provide, assist and of course also hang out with the MOs. As per the call, this will also be assisted by the Secretary-General, and I have full trust in that through shared work and interest, I could be a good and fun South Regional responsible.

Going with the tide but remaining on course

My vision on the role of a European political youth organisation is twofold. On the one hand, I think it is important to remain flexible; the current political status quo, as well as the global 'situation' is instable and marked by unprecedented events and challenges. On the other, there are core tasks we should fulfil, most importantly: promote the voice of the youth and create a network of young active people. If we want durable politics which make decisions which benefit society in the long term, we need age diversity. Though people from other generations can imagine the circumstances which young people live under, they do not live the lives we do. **This generation will live on this earth the longest, therefore we should have a substantial role to play in decision making, as we have to live with the consequences the longest.** For this we need to train, equip and nurture leaders, but we also need an active and motivated participants from across places to spread the word. This requires they are cared for, informed, and feel at home in the organisation. Empowerment should be the key task of a European organisation, to ensure young people feel supported and safe enough to create a positive impact.

There is no legitimacy in a political organisation if you don't do the work you promise to do. This means we should always make sure we respect people, work on the issues that are important to a specific organisation and stand up for our values. This can be done through informative events, campaigns, networking events, protests; whatever, but **saying you believe in something and actively working to achieve and expand on the goals and values of an organisation are what matter most.** Finally, I think it is very important to keep our eyes and channels open. Globalisation is a funny thing, and the concept of Europe is complicated to begin with. Of course, European politics and European communities are important to FYEG, but interacting with organisations, people and events outside of what we consider 'Europe' is vital to remain effective and relevant. Climate, migration and social rights are issues which aren't retained by borders, and I do believe solutions and the knowledge behind them can be found through international cooperation and exchange. Therefore, its important we look outside of our European sphere to find likeminded people and organisations to work with. The change we wish to enact is ultimately the product of international schools of thought, and we should continue expanding our presence and interaction to make due diligence and keep developing.

My involvement within the green movement is adding up to two years this January. Though this might not seem like that long, it sure does feel like it, and I feel like have evolved through positions at both DWARS and FYEG rather intensively. My **committee work, volunteering, campaign experience** and **internship** have prepared me for the next step, and it seems the timing is lining up well. I feel motivated and prepared to deepen my commitment to FYEG and continue my learning journey, all whilst meeting new inspiring people. At the end of the day, the people make the movement, and the movement makes the people, and I am incredibly motivated by the prospect of continuing to be inspired by our people, and hopefully, inspire someone else along the way. Should I be elected, I would be honoured to do my part in the EC and for the organisation, the MO's and all those involved. I am ready to work on the tasks associated with this function, and I am more than happy to fail, adapt and improve along the way. In an association marked by such perseverance and unchallenged willingness as ours, I have no doubt we will continue sharing stories, organise communities, and kick ass. I hope this overview has given me insight into my political stances, personal profile, skills and learning points, and you share my opinion of myself as a suitable candidate for this position.

Love, hugs and kisses,
Aislinn

email - aislinnh12@hotmail.com

TELEGRAM - [@aislinnhughes](https://t.me/aislinnhughes)

INSTAGRAM - [@aislinn.ech](https://www.instagram.com/aislinn.ech)

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Candidate for the Executive Committee

Aislinn Hughes

Dare to Care

From the streets to the Parliament: Activism as the primary foundational springboard for enacting political change.

Heading into the EU24 elections, the pressure to fortify our movement and to take action now is increasing. I truly believe diamonds are made under pressure, and though it will require a lot of work, now is the perfect time to redefine our future. The recent success of the climate movement in my own country saw activists blocking the highway next to the House of Representatives every day, until Parliament agreed to policy change, has reinforced the idea that change takes more than words. If we want a political environment which protects our environments, secures human rights, fights for equality, we cannot be ignored: it is our fucking future and it is up to us to demand the system listens and adapts to us. I also believe activism is key in creating tight knit communities where new ideas are shared, plans are formed and people become engaged. Activism should not just be the vehicle for change, but also the cradle for expanding our movements. Politically, I want to make FYEG a vested presence in the activism sphere, so we have a greater platform to work from, but also find new partners to work with. I want FYEG to keep pushing for change until politics takes care of society instead of distrusting it, until all children can enjoy their rights despite the circumstances in which they were born, until climate justice equals social justice, and until Europe can consider itself a place where justice and freedom are non-negotiables.

Norms and values don't stop at borders: International solidarity.

Current and ongoing crises have made clear that the issues we are individually experiencing are signs of a greater process. It is important to reiterate that there is no European future without a future for people outside what we consider Europe. I envision FYEG as a amalgamation of the point of views of all the MOs, creating a consolidated, diverse platform from which we advocate for inclusive proposals. In this sense, the better the bonds within FYEG, the better the developmental capacity to expand and establish new connections with movements in progress. Nuance, deliberation and dialogue lie at the centre of keeping this social contextualization going, which is needed in an organisation consisting of as many traditions, cultures and characteristics as FYEG. As tough as this can be, finding consensus within the movement is important if we aim to challenge the status quo which is rooted in diametrically opposed values. Thus, I would rather see difficult but necessary discourse amongst FYEG to create a more robust understanding and bonds built on mutual respect. Internal solidarity is needed to emit external solidarity, which eases visibility and helps to inspire others. This includes non-negotiables such as support for Ukraine, protecting human rights and fighting fascist

systems. FYEG needs to be vocal on issues such as democratic backsliding, infringement of human rights, far right movements to express solidarity and empower young activists. At a time where basic civil rights such as self-determination and access to humanitarian aid are not guaranteed, FYEG must take a stance in the face of injustice, and speak up as one, unified, voice.

Community, Ideology, Communication: Call a spade a spade, and move to improve. Who and what we represent determines who we attract. As within my own Member Organization, our membership does not reflect the diversity of the social environment of Europe. A diverse input of knowledge and experience is needed to make due on the ideologies at the heart of FYEG. To continue pushing for proposals and organising campaigns which ensure rights for everyone, no matter their gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age or any other characteristic, we need representation to develop our ideology. I believe mobilisation is made possible by assuring FYEG's structures and organisations embody open and safe spaces, welcome to everyone. This can be achieved through accessible, clear and honest communication, both within MOs and through FYEG's own communication channels. This can be achieved through working with partners with the same values and creating a joint platform from which we reach and hopefully inspire those who feel a lack of agency, as well as including narratives highlighting inclusive community building. This is especially important for the EU24 campaign, which will require an increase of visibility to mobilise and inspire those further away from the Brussels Bubble. Moreover, I hope to contribute to strengthening and supporting MOs from Southern Europe and Central Easter Europe, and expand interaction with organisations from MENA. Listening is vital, but in order to listen to stories we must first create a sense of trust and acceptance so our membership becomes more diverse and inclusive.

Being critical of something just means you care enough about it to want it to improve. Let's stay sharp, stay kind and create an organisation for and about everybody.

**All the best,
Aislinn**



Aislinn Hughes



Leiden, the Netherlands

aislinnh12@hotmail.com

+31 6 25014402



EXPERIENCE

Intern Policy Officer GroenLinks., House of Representatives Jan 2023 -

- Portfolios: Circular economy, Environment and Energy. In charge of writing proposals for legislation, preparing parliamentary debates, work visits, social media posts, press releases, lobbying and public relations events for Kauthar Bouchallikht and Suzanne Kroger.
- Supporting other Members of Parliaments and Policy Officers in the Green/International Affairs Department. Include the aforementioned MPs, plus Tom van der Lee and Laura Bromet.

Team Online Campaigning

- Creating the campaign for the Parliamentary Elections of 2023. Includes planning the Assembly, social media content, back office support and campaign strategy.

Trainer, International Foundation GroenLinks

April 2023 -

- Youth Representative MENA summit: providing input on how to organize a political youth movement.
- Youth Trainer Strategy session North-Macedonia: DOM. Prepared a two day training of the members of DOM, creating a long term vision, yearly agenda, youth platform and campaign strategy.

Committees, DWARS., GroenLinks youth division

Jan 2022 -

- Member General Assembly committee: in charge of the location, program and overall organisation of the GA.
- Writer Political Program: Economics and Democracy. In charge of renewing DWARS' Platform on issues such as democracy, housing, loans, financial relief, loans, etc.
- Member Recruitment committee: scouting members for committees or board positions, as well as helping new members integrate within DWARS.
- Member DIRT (DWARS International Representatives Team): creating proposals for the FYEG GA.
- Political Advisor International Affairs: preparing board members for press releases on topics relevant in ongoing international politics.
- Board of Local Division: Promotion and Member Acquisition: curating our social media page, planning events, integrating new members and leading the local campaign for the national elections.

Writer and Editor, EU&U., social media EU movement Jan 2022 -

- Junior editor and writer: culture and politics division: contributing articles to our magazine.
- Member of the Social Media Division: writing and creating content for our Instagram page (19k), often related to Dutch or Irish politics, or subjects I find interesting.
- Chair EU campaign Netherlands: in charge of mobilising members in the Netherlands for campaign events.

Member, Federation of Young European Greens., Youth division of the Greens/EFA in the European Parliament

April 2023 -

- Prep Team for the Summer Camp
- Prep Team for Influenceelection Games
- Member of the Workgroup on Degrowth\ - Campaigns and Media division.

Committee Member, Dutch United Nation Student Association (DUNSA)

Sept 2021 - 2023

- Member of MUN committee: organising and representing my local chapter at national MUN conventions
- Member Lustrum assembly committee: Organising a lecture on the history and future of the UN
- Chair Travel committee: organising a week long trip to Skopje, visiting multiple cities, governmental bodies and NGOs.

SKILLS

- **Event Organisation**
- **Online Campaigning**
- **Social Media Management**
- **Formal Writing**
- **Political Communication**

EDUCATION

Propaedeutic diploma: Teacher Education Utrecht University of Applied Sciences: 2018-2019

- Trained to become a teacher in English language at secondary school level.
- Internship at Cals College Nieuwegein.

BA English Language and Culture (cum laude) Leiden University 2019-2022

- Core courses on Language Acquisition, Linguistics, Philology and Literature.
- Thesis: The Changing Use of Nationalism, Identity and Trauma in Irish Literature of the Great War
- Minor in Global Affairs. Courses on Terrorism, Globalisation and Policy, Humanitarian Intervention, War and Media and European Union Studies.
- Essay Prize "EU in Practice" on the changing position of the Netherlands in the EU following Brexit.
- Honours Program: courses on Politics and Religion, Quantified Data Analysis, Cultural Cold War, War and Remembrance and a Capstone Project on Euroscepticism.

MA International Relations: Global Conflict in the Modern Era

Leiden University | 2012 -

- Courses on Histories of Southeast Asia, Humanities in IR, Global History of War, Military Strategy in Perspective, Regionalism in Practice
- Thesis on Changing Interpretations of Sectarian Murals in Belfast
- Social Chair - study association ISSA
- Organisational committee Humanities Faculty
- Honours track Leiden Leadership Program: consultancy project at an entrepreneurial institute looking to shift its mission from sustainable to regenerative business strategy.

VOLUNTEER WORK

- **Researcher LGBTQIA+ Library:** National Foundation for Elderly research project into the lives of elderly members of the LGBTQIA community. Research was then used in literature for social work syllabi, and a podcast.
- **Taskforce Member, Climate Defence Force.** Coordinating protests with local XR divisions
- **Student buddy, Senior & Student**
- Supporting isolated senior citizens through weekly visits aimed at social reintegration.
- **Buddy, IncLUsion Leiden,** Supporting refugee students with the integration into Dutch society and the university.
- **Alrijne Hospital: palliative care.** Working as a volunteer in cases of a definitive declaration of end of life. Supporting patients in their last moments.
- **European Solidarity Corps**

LANGUAGES

- **C2:** English, Dutch
- **B1:** French, German, Irish, Icelandic

DWARS, GroenLinkse Jongeren

Sint-Jacobsstraat 12
3511 BS Utrecht
The Netherlands

Federation of Young European Greens

34 Rue du Taciturne
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Utrecht, 12 October 2023

Letter of support for Aislinn Hughes, Candidate-Board Member

Dear Federation of Young European Greens,

DWARS, GroenLinkse Jongeren fully endorses the candidacy of Aislinn Hughes as member of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Young European Greens.

Passionate, dedicated, and hardworking – qualities we strongly believe Aislinn embodies. Additionally, Aislinn often demonstrates a strong commitment to green and red ideals.

Currently, Aislinn serves on the board of the local chapter of DWARS Leiden-Haaglanden. As a member, Aislinn has tirelessly worked to ensure that international perspectives have a greater influence within DWARS. Aislinn submitted a proposal to amend the Internal Rules of Procedure to reintroduce the International Politics portfolio. Furthermore, at the recent DWARS congress, Aislinn delivered a presentation on FYEG. Aislinn has also been actively involved with organizations linked to GroenLinks, including the international foundation. Aislinn also did an internship with the second chamber faction of GroenLinks in the Netherlands.

We have complete confidence that Aislinn can further develop FYEG into an even more professional organization. We also believe that handles the MOs adeptly and, from a political standpoint, can further advance FYEG.

DWARS sees Aislinn as a passionate, intelligent, and inspiring candidate board member, and we are proud to endorse her candidacy. In green solidarity,

Ruben Bals

Board Member of DWARS, GroenLinkse Jongeren



Óige Ghlas- Young Greens

16/17 Suffolk Street,
Dublin 2,
County Dublin,
D02 AT85,
Ireland
oieghlas@gmail.com

16th October 2023

Federation of Young European Greens

34 Rue du Taciturne
1000 Brussels
Belgium

Letter of Support for Aislinn Hughes, Candidate Board Member

Dear Federation of Young European Greens,

Óige Ghlas endorses the candidacy of Aislinn Hughes as member of the Executive Committee of the Federation of Young European Greens.

During Aislinn's involvement in formal politics and green activism, she has proven herself to be a skilled, dynamic and thoughtful leader. Her active participation in FYEG events such as the Youth Assembly and Green Base shows her motivation and passion for the organisation.

Through Aislinn's role as a prep team member for the Influencelection Games, Beyond Growth Platform and Summer Camp, she has demonstrated her competency as well as care and commitment for youth empowerment and green activism.

Her role in DWARS has shown her to be an organised, compassionate and valued team player along with being a strong communicator.

Aislinn's experiences in committee work, campaigning, volunteering and internship make her an effective and hardworking candidate for the Executive Committee.

We are confident that she can help develop and push forward FYEG to become a better organisation. We are happy to endorse and support her candidacy.

Green Regards,

- Sarah Seymour

International Officer, Óige Ghlas