

Written questions and replies

Online Spring Congress 2020

4 April 2020

CANDIDATES for Vice-President

---- Questions from Kasper Jakobsen Langelund (Radikal Ungdom)

Andràs Sztanef

- Why are you running specifically for the position of Vice-President, considering your organisation and your own short-time experience within LYMEC as a full-member?

During the last two years, I put own initiatives into action in Hungary. As an International Officer for two years, I had the pleasure to get to know our Liberal Family and organize cooperations. The upcoming Congress will be my fourth Congresses and I had the honor to represent LYMEC's policies at the ALDE Congress last year in Athens. I feel confident about the internal procedures of LYMEC and the background of our Member Organizations. During my work in my mother party's International Office and EP Election Campaign Team, I gathered experience cooperating with ALDE officials and other liberal parties.

I would like to achieve a Bureau which acts proactively as a Federation and it is my firm conviction that it can be best achieved from the position of Vice President.

- Regarding your centralized campaign platform, why should the team itself identify common topics of consensus, rather than employing the Policy Book? How autonomous will this team be, to form policy away our policy book itself?

The main Agenda for the year is set by the Resolutions adopted by the Congress. The goal of the Bureau with the help of the campaign volunteers is to communicate these policies to the wider public in the most effective way.

I would like to run one or two large campaigns every year where the campaign teams of MO's join forces to spread the message locally besides a federal campaign done by LYMEC and a common Op-ed. The more ambitious individual MO's are about a topic the more dedicated campaigns we can conduct.

The establishment of the centralized campaign team would target the problem, often communicated by Bureau Members, that there are not enough human resources in the Bureau to coordinate among all MO's regularly. The volunteer team would only assist in operative tasks, namely: setting up/ coordinating online meetings, collecting information from MO's and maintaining campaign platforms. Strategic decisions are only going to be made by the elected Bureau. There is not going to be a campaign about a topic where we do not have an adopted resolution on and the Bureau nor the centralized campaign team is not going to deviate from the content of the resolution in any way.

- Regarding your centralized campaign platform, how will team deal with two MO's in the same country running against each other for the election?

My focus is on European thematic campaigns and the EP Elections. In National and Municipal Elections I only intend to provide operational support to MO's through connecting the local campaign teams with other MO's campaign knowledge and smaller-scale social media posts suggesting to support all our local MO's.

For Pan European Campaigns there are going to be two levels: The European level is mainly going to target transnational Media (Politico, Euractive...) in English. Concrete Elements are going to be a

press release, with as many cosigners as possible, a social media/website campaign and lobbying at decision-makers.

On the National Level, the responsibility lies at MO's to spread the message according to a coordinated pattern in their local language. Here, acting in your own name you can freely adjust the narrative to your national needs and use our common logo as an addition to your Member Organization's Branding.

- Regarding the transnational groups, are these group digital-only or is it planned to be similar to your Comms Summit, with different executive members such as treasures, policy advisors etc?

I would love to organize personal events for every executive department since it would bring a lot of added value to Member Organizations. Unfortunately, we can not afford to do so and this is why I propose to make coordinated online sessions where they can exchange their ideas. There should be moderated WhatsApp Groups for the heads of every executive department for exchanging best practices. For the Campaign Officers, I would like to organize the yearly personal Comms Summit and additionally establish a shared calendar where they can mark important events, relevant for pan-European campaigning beforehand.

- Regarding your reinvention of the training system, will these professionals with the same background be selected by a LYMEC team or will the MO's themselves be in charge of deciding who shall go to the events?

The selection of participants would remain a competence of the Bureau. The Member Organizations can pre-select whom they register for the event and recommendations about motivated participants are always welcome. The applicants should study/work in the related field or indicate their fundamental interest in the topic in a paragraph in the comment section when applying.

- Regards to the competition system you want to introduce, what are the criteria to determine who is the best team and who decides?

The decision would be made by the Bureau since they are present at the event locally. The two/three-person teams need to do a presentation or submit an essay on the last day of the event. The Bureau is going to evaluate the work according to concrete categories similar to the ones used in universities, on a 1-10 scale each. The criteria include style/narrative, content (coverage of all relevant topics + level of detail) and implication possibilities.

CANDIDATES for Bureau member positions

Ines Holzegger

---- Question from Laura Fagerlund (Svensk Ungdom)

-What work and volunteer experiences do you have that would be beneficial as a Bureau Member?

On the one hand, I bring in my experience in international politics. I used to be the vice president of the Austrian liberal students (JUNOS Studierende) a subsection of JUNOS, where I was in charge of all universities in Austria and also for international student agenda. Afterwards, I was elected onto the national board of JUNOS as International officer and board member in charge of external affairs, such as the Austrian youth council. Furthermore, I was part of two youth campaign boards for two national parliamentary elections (2017+2019) as well as being a candidate in these two and the last EU elections.

On the other hand, I would bring in my new ideas. Through the Master studies I currently do (Public Sector Innovation and eGovernance), I have gathered some experience in analyzing and optimizing processes and organizations, since this is a main part of my studies.

Finally, I also have a Master in English and History/Political Education in the teacher education and taught in schools in Vienna after my graduation and before starting my current Master. This made me even more stress resistant, adaptable to new unforeseen situations and determined to achieve what I set out to do.

Laia Comerma

---- **Question from Laura Fagerlund (Svensk Ungdom)**

-What work and volunteer experiences do you have that would be beneficial as a Bureau Member?

I will start with my volunteer experience, because I think that this kind of community, altruistic work is the most relevant in this case. The latest example is the network of volunteers that I help establish in my hometown to help the population at risk, especially our elderly neighbours, do the shopping and thus not have to go out and expose themselves to the virus; as well as doing babysitting for those parents who work in the health or food sector and their work is essential during the confinement.

I want to underline two other examples of volunteer work. First, during my university years, I collaborated with a community eatery for people with few resources in Barcelona, helping to serve food and collecting food from supermarkets. Second, when I was still in high school, I taught languages and maths to students with learning difficulties who were still in primary years, and seeing them pass their exams and improve their marks by the end of the school year was utterly rewarding. This shows that I care about the people around me, about bringing positive change and building a better world, through commitment and hard work.

When it comes to work, I have broad experience in international topics, as my field of specialization is international relations and, most specifically, EU-China cooperation, on which I will start a PhD as of May this year. I have worked on international digital policies and on internationalization of companies, for what I know how the EU works, what are its key stakeholders and how to leverage our potential to promote our interests.

Marina Sedlo

---- **Question from Laura Fagerlund (Svensk Ungdom)**

-What work and volunteer experiences do you have that would be beneficial as a Bureau Member?

I have been politically active since 2014. Just after my mother party (FDP) lost the national elections and wasn't represented in the Bundestag for the first time in its history.

I was active in the reconstruction of the party. We learned a new way to campaign and promote our liberal ideas because that's what we believe in and not just because we want the minister jobs and the money. We learned how to show the country that Liberalism is a way of life and it benefits everybody.

I have also just took over the presidency of the liberal students at my university in Frankfurt. I used this way of promoting Liberalism to build up the organisation and be present in the very far left university-parliament with a strong group.

As International Officer of the national board of the liberal students, I wanted to create a network, working together with other European young liberals to shape a liberal European education. That's how the ELSN (European Liberal Students' Network) was reactivated at LYMEC. There, I learned how to promote and put forward the content I want to fight for on an European level. We even had a resolution about education that was accepted at the ALDE congress. The group dynamic was really good and we put forward a lot of our ideas at congresses.

That's how I figured that this is what I want to do for LYMEC: put forward our content, work together with progressive young liberals and make Europe a liberal place to live in.

Next to politics, I have also been a member of the German Red Cross for 10 years. Today I am still in charge of the youth of the Red Cross in my local organisation. I have also been doing the Press and Social Media for 3 years, therefore I have been to a lot of seminars on Communication. This gained knowledge will be helpful as Bureau Member to communicate what LYMEC stands for.

Professionally, I work for a Member of the State Parliament of Hesse (Hessischer Landtag). Through that I've gained knowledge about parliamentary life. My boss is also in charge of the topics of Europe and digitalisation, topics I also very much enjoy and part of my job is also to do researches about those topics which has given me some expertise.

Paolo Pelesk

--- Questions from Kasper Jakobsen Langelund (Radikal Ungdom)

-In regards to social media, how will you achieve this openness and demystifying youth organisations? Will you use MO's or the Bureau resources, and how will you attempt to bridge the major issue of cross-european communication which is almost impossible to get traction among nationalities not involved with international politics?

With open communication between MO's and LYMEC we can pool resources and best practices. Regular formal and informal meetings between international officers with experience sharing. Also, developing new methods, tools and campaigns to explain and motivate people in international politics. Demystifying youth organizations can be done by opening to the public and becoming more active in society (live stream of a meeting, offline campaigns and just talking about YO's and what they can do.)

-As it seems like you are running for both communication and training officer (according to the plans you have in your motivation letter), we would like to ask if you have any additional plans of reviewing the current selection process made by LYMEC for events, is it satisfactory or should there be changes?

At this point I don't have any plans for the current selection process for events.

--- Question from Laura Fagerlund (Svensk Ungdom)

-What work and volunteer experiences do you have that would be beneficial as a Bureau Member?

I have been a volunteer for 3 years now as a Youth council member in Pula (dealing with policies and youth work). I have also been a volunteer for NGOs as a graphics designer and project facilitator. I've also been an activist on the #thistimeimvoting campaign for the EP elections last year.

Ida-Maria Skytte

--- Question from Laura Fagerlund (Svensk Ungdom)

-What work and volunteer experiences do you have that would be beneficial as a Bureau Member?

I have been a member of the national and regional board of Svensk Ungdom, which has given me a lot of understanding about how a Member Organisation works. In my current job at the Finnish Parliament, I am mainly working with external communication. During my internship at Liberal International, I worked a lot with administration and event planning as well as with internal and external communication. As a candidate in both local and European Parliament elections, and as a participant of LYMEC's Young Changemakers Academy, I have also gained a lot of knowledge about running campaigns.

Thanks to this experience, I have also had the chance to grow my political network. A strong network to both politicians and stakeholders is definitely something that would be beneficial in the LYMEC Bureau.

Ruslan Abdurakhman

--- Questions from Kasper Jakobsen Langelund (Radikal Ungdom)

-You do not mention in your motivation letter which organisational role you would like to have in the Bureau. Could you clarify what you see as being your role in a new bureau organisationally? Communication officer, training officer, policy officer etc?

Answer: I think that we should be more flexible as we can, and don't reason just on roles. Once the team is formed, we can discuss on what role would suit us the most. Since we don't know until Saturday, who will be in the New Bureau, we cannot tell about roles. I personally consider myself good in negotiations, good in acquiring knowledge useful to the team, good as an advisor. One thing is sure, I came with the intention to expand Lymec, not just at the Youth Wing of ALDE, but as beacon of liberalism across Europe. Since we know Liberalism is plenty of different views, and there's no standard liberal, Lymec could be what we're missing. ALDE is present mostly in every country belonging to the single market. Still, it may happen easily that the local party associated/member with the ALDE party is not representing me at all. That's why there's Lymec. Moreover, having a one European reference for Liberals is what we need, because in this way we represent Europe in all its diversities of views, something that with a national party / association we could not reach. So to sum up, I don't see a specific role for me, or better, the project I have in mind could mean an entire role on that. If I'll get elected, and I'll have this project as my function in the Bureau, I see me interfacing with all the Bureau, presidency and Vice presidency of Lymec, with ALDE party and other organizations. I'm not saying it's gonna be easy, it depends if You believe in this vision I have, and You wanna help me make it real. Thank you.

-You mention in your motivation letter that "the state is the problem", would you mind adding some more nuances towards this statement. What role do you see the state have in liberalism? Are all states inherent a problem (and if yes, how so), or are we specifically talking about authoritarian states?

"The state is the problem", is a simple sentence with a very broad meaning. I'll try to explain not with theories but with practice which is the approach I prefer the most. I mentioned there two issues. Immigration and Environmental policies. I'll start with the environment which is easier to discuss. Left-

oriented area, tells you that we have to act for climate change, environment and so on. They talk about sustainability, and they in the state the solution. The state has to change behaviors of people and businesses (which are by the way made of people). I'm an optimist, I believe that by empowering people, giving them knowledge about serious risks for the environment, and showing them simple actions that could help preventing to harm what's around them they would follow these rules not because there's someone sanctioning them but because we as human being need good living conditions that come also from a livable environment. Just think about how many countries are dealing the actual CoVid crisis. I understand that in the beginning it was unknown how the virus worked and spread, but now we know that. I doubt there's a place in the World where these infos aren't available, so it's up to us, as individuals to deal with the virus, and try not to get in contact with it. Some countries (unfortunately many) imposed a lockdown, they did not suggest or advise for a lockdown, they've imposed it. What's the difference? That if you don't respect the lockdown you get sanctioned by the state, this is a serious threat to our freedom, because individual freedom comes before everything (for a Liberal). Most countries in the world are now acting in an authoritarian manner because of the crisis, something which I can't stand, and which I fear more than the virus, because the moment we give up our freedom, our liberties, we aren't sure when we'll have them back and how. Just think about how many countries reacted to 9/11. They made a counter-terrorism legislation which breaks and invades our privacy, with the excuse of security. Now we've got the virus, and with the excuse of health our individual sphere is once again invaded. My question is, how much should we wait? Because if we don't say stop, we're gonna end totally owned controlled by the state. I could stay here for hours to make example where the state intervention instead of bringing a solution, it creates more problem, because for a Liberal, the "state" is working for its citizens and not the contrary. We are not subjected to the state (or better We shouldn't be) but it's the state which is working for us because it lives with our taxes, and so without our money the state wouldn't sustain itself. Thank You.

---- **Question from Laura Fagerlund (Svensk Ungdom)**

-What work and volunteer experiences do you have that would be beneficial as a Bureau Member?

I had the chance to experience many times a multicultural environment, which make me suitable for this position where you need to deal, work and relate with people with a total different background, speaking different languages, with different experiences and mindset. Moreover, I'm good at building relations with people which is vital in politics. I'm more an analyst/advisory person, so I believe I could use my knowledge to help the team. If you wanted more specific details there's my CV. If instead you wanted some insights, I think I told you what you wanted to know. If not, tell me so! Thank you.

CANDIDATES for IFLRY Representative

Benjamin Fievet

---- **Question from Laura Fagerlund (Svensk Ungdom)**

-In your motivation letter you mention you have a connection to IFLRY - could you please explain this connection?

Thanks for the question and the possibility to elaborate on this. In my motivation letter I mentioned "my connections in both [LYMEC and IFLRY]" by which I was referring to my network and personal relationships in both organisations and their MOs, including with several members of the current IFLRY bureau as well as the current and the previous LYMEC representatives.

But I think this question is meant to be about my involvement and experience in IFLRY, so I will try to shed some light on that. I have not been quite as active in IFLRY as I have been in LYMEC, but I have a good grasp of its structure and internal working as well as practical experience from events including statutory events i.e. the GA, which I have actively participated in. Furthermore, I have collaborated with the editor of Libel and supported some member organisations and advised them in membership matters.

Anna Komziuk

---- Question from Laura Fagerlund (Svensk Ungdom)

- Could you please explain in more detail why the IFLRY representative should have voting rights in the IFLRY Bureau? Would this apply to the other Regional Bureau Members in the IFLRY Bureau?

LYMEC representative to IFLRY Bureau should not have voting rights in the IFLRY Bureau because IFLRY Bureau is performing administrative functions on internal level and the idea of Lymec representative is to build the friendly and healthy relations between both organizations. My main idea is to give the voting rights to regional members (all, not only LYMEC) since under the IFLRY Statute they all have equal status now. That is the way how to raise the voice of all regions on international liberal area.

APPLICANT ORGANISATION

---- Questions from Kasper Jakobsen Langelund (Radikal Ungdom)

Associate membership – Swiss Green Liberals

-Which position will handle Young Green Liberal's international affairs? Are there any plans of having an official international officer written into your statutes?

As a recent young party, we were not able to work on an official international officer in our statutes yet. However, if we are accepted as associate member, it will be the first step for us to start the whole process. We are willing to have more connections with other countries in the future, particularly in Europe. We are a party that promotes openness to the world and collaboration, it also should start with politicians.

-What is your stance on the EU? And Switzerland relation to it?

The party Green Liberals was the first to openly promote good relations with the EU in the Swiss parliament. They also became member of the ALDE party.

As our mother party, we share the same values regarding the EU. Switzerland is geographically in the very center of Europe; it is just common sense that we take part somehow in the EU's life. So why should we not try to be more active in our relationship with them? The EU is Switzerland's first economic partner, we share trains with our neighbors. Many swiss decisions affect the EU and vice versa. In the future politicians will have to work together to build a sustainable society for all. This sustainability will only work if we work together as countries.