Candidates' Questionnaire – GB Elections 2019

Personal details

First and last name: Nikola Popović
Age: 20
National Committee: Serbia
Nationality: Serbian-Bulgarian
Current occupation: Student

Member platform: [Is your profile on the Member Platform updated?] Yes
(https://www.members.eyp.org/users/nikola-popovic)

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Availability: [Are you able to dedicate 3-6 hours per week for the GB?] Yes
[Are you able to physically attend at least four events each year?] Yes

Questions for candidates

1. **What would your aim and priorities as a GB member be, and with what mind-set will you pursue them?**

   Since the foundation of the European Youth Parliament over 30 years ago, we have striven for an impactful organisation that gives a voice to young people all across Europe. We have been successful in working with young people all over Europe. We have created a structured organisation around youth empowerment throughout Europe and the inclusion of young people in debates of today, the promotion of values of democracy, equality, freedom of expression. The EYP has changed many lives, and now it is our turn to give back and to have a tangible impact on the world around us more than just through conferences. As a GB member, my primary goal would be to apply for an NGO consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC). ECOSOC membership would allow the European Youth Parliament to participate in high-level meetings in our field of work, contribute to the development of Youth policies on an international level. It would also allow us to put forward resolutions in the Human Rights Council, where the EYP could be a great facilitator, as the largest organisation for youth democratic participation in Europe, that has debated and adopted many resolutions on precisely the problems that the Council addresses.

   A presence within the ECOSOC would allow the EYP to be in contact with other NGOs in the field and would permit us to establish long-term partnerships with several UN agencies such as UN Women, UN Environmental Program (UNEP), UNESCO, UNICEF and other specialised agencies. We have seen the positive impact that our partnership with UNFPA and UNHCR had, namely by bringing in experts, as well allowing us to reach vulnerable groups. I believe that recognition within the ECOSOC would make our Organisation stand out as a real contributor to the civil society with the likes of Amnesty International, European Youth Parliament.
Doctors Without Borders, International Alliance For Women and many others. The EYP would, have greater **visibility** when it comes to external partners and donors. More significant **interaction** with other NGOs, and a **recognition of our work** in the field of **non-formal education** and youth, would, in turn, benefit our members and NCs, granting them access to **professional opportunities and partnerships** respectively. Secondly, as a GB member, I would work on **transparency** of the Governing Body. I firmly believe that with the new procedure for GB elections, there is a clear need for transparency of the work of the Governing Body towards both NCs and members of the Network. A process for transparency has begun by the previous GB members, most notably in the area of direct communication through social media groups.

Moreover, during my mandate I would be strongly committed to ensuring that the GB **publishes detailed three-month reports on the work** of the GB, as opposed to the current system of publishing minutes of the meetings. The current system does not take into account the continuous work that the GB does on a daily basis, therefore, I believe that there is a need to make this information more accessible and visible, allowing for a more **open and frequent communication with the members** of our Organisation, as well as NCs. The main goal of this new proposal is to allow members to give their input on the work of the Governing Body.

With ending of the **International Strategy** for the Network, I would like to participate in the **multi-level evaluation** of our current strategy encompassing **stability, educational value, mobility, etc.**, and to identify successes and challenges when it comes to **implementation** of the goals. Furthermore, when discussing the strategy for the next five years, I strongly believe that the GB must adopt a more **localised, inclusive and democratic approach** towards the members and NCs.

**2. In your view, which EYP projects deserve more resources and which projects are less of a priority?**

In my view, the projects that should be given more resources are the **International Sessions**, as well as the **International Forums**. The International Sessions are the **cornerstone** of most of the work of the GB and the network. As such, they demand **constant work, fundraising, and direct engagement**. Furthermore, they allow for the network to come together and **connect all NCs**. Moreover, much like the International forums, ISs provide for a greater platform for topic exploration, committee cooperation, and fruitful debates that end in resolutions that bring fresh perspective which should be used in policy shaping in the ECOSOC or the Human Rights Council, as a collective voice of the largest European youth Organisation.

In my opinion, as a network, we should also focus more on **capacity-building projects**. The Summer Academy, Members’ Weekends, T4ET and President’s meeting provide excellent spaces for **knowledge sharing** between members of different levels of experience and backgrounds. I am a strong proponent of **peer-to-peer learning**, and I am convinced that there is an **outstanding potential** when it comes to utilising pre-existing knowledge concerning **NC management**, operational tools and the institutional framework to build a cohesive and integrated network of NCs. Concerning the Members training project, I believe there is much work to be done to **connect** experienced trainers with NCs organising the members training, and providing NCs with a guide on how to best pass on the knowledge and training the future
generation of EYPers.

Thirdly, I believe that our recent cooperation with the Innogy Foundation for the Powershifts Project, and our continuous partnership with UNFPA, provide exceptional opportunities to expand the reach of the EYP topics and have a more innovative approach when it comes to academics at sessions, and the format of the events. There is a need for EYP to continue to develop new strategies, most notably when it comes to the cooperation with other NGOs and foundations as to expand our reach and external impact, as well as to increase the know-how from other NGOs in diverse sectors.

3. What personal skills, knowledge or experience will you bring to the board that will be needed to face the challenges that EYP is likely to encounter?

I see myself as a patient, understanding and professional person. I highly value both team-work and personal responsibility when it comes to solving problems and project that our network faces and will face in the future. I think that I can contribute most to the work of the GB with my experience of three years within the internal structures of EYP Serbia. I first worked with the fundraising team where we managed to secure funding for the year’s projects, as well as establish partnership agreements and donor relations. Later on, firstly as the assistant to the International Coordinator and then as the International Coordinator of EYP Serbia, I had two years of experience in navigating international governance structures. During these two years, I was able to witness the evolution of the work of the BNC, GB, Councils and Working Groups, which helped me be fully immersed and become knowledgeable in the inner workings of EYP Governance when it comes to NC management and the international nomenclature. During my time on the Board of EYP Serbia, I emphasised the importance of transparency which I would like to set as an important goal of my GB candidature. I helped establish more direct communication with the members, allowing them to take an interest in the work of EYP Serbia both nationally and internationally.

Another strong skill set of mine that I consider valuable to the future work of the EYP is my previous experience with UN agencies and the work of the Human Rights Council. During my ongoing studies in Geneva, I have had the opportunity to meet and collaborate with young people working in the NGO sector in Switzerland, and in Europe in general. Observation and help from people from the outside could greatly benefit the network as a whole, having a neutral analysis of our problems, and inspiring us to overcome our difficulties and disparities that we see between NCs.

4. What experience do you have of non-profit management?

In terms of non-profit management, I would like to emphasise my time as a Board member of EYP Serbia, where I was responsible for International Coordination. In one year of being a Board member, EYP Serbia directed its focus on the importance of communication between the Board, the internal structures and with members. At that time, I was and I still am firmly committed to establishing an open and sincere dialogue between the IO, GB, NCs and members. In my time as the International Coordinator, I created video-materials and took a personal approach in communication with members. Such a step was taken as to include our members in the decision making the process for the BNC and making policies more understandable, allowing our members to participate in the democratisation and inclusivity of EYP Serbia.

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