EC5 Martin Velichkov

Proposers:
Agenda item: 6. Executive Committee Candidates
Status: Withdrawn

Introduction

My name is Martin Velichkov, and I am the founder and co-president of Youth of a Green Future. Over the past two years, I have also been actively involved with CDN – attending two GAs and two Summer Camps, including being part of the prep team for the hugely successful 2025 Summer Camp in Moldova.
Seeing the impact of CDN on young people motivated me to run for the EC. I see enormous potential in CDN and I believe I have the knowledge and skills to help bridge the gap between where we are and where we could be. With a PhD in Psychology, a Master's in Political Science, and experience as a Youth Delegate to the Council of Europe, I am ready to help CDN increase its capacity, empower its member organisations, and achieve lasting positive change in Eastern Europe.
Whatever I put my heart into, I work hard to make it a success – and I would bring that same energy and commitment to CDN. I am genuinely excited about what we can achieve together. I hope to earn your trust and your vote.
Yours,
Dr Martin

Age:
31

Gender:
male

Organisation:
Youth for a Green Future, Bulgaria

Your E-mail Address:
marvelichkov@gmail.com

Dear CDN members,

I am pleased to present my candidacy for the Executive Committee of CDN – a network that has meant a great deal to me personally and to my organisation. I have participated in two General Assemblies and two CDN Summer Camps, including being part of the prep team for the hugely successful 2025 Summer Camp in Moldova. Through this involvement, I have had the privilege of getting to know CDN's wonderful members, the dynamics in the organisation, its strengths and areas for improvement. CDN has supported my organisation *Youth of a Green Future* right from the start, and I want to give back by helping take the network to the next level.

I believe CDN stands at an important crossroads. The network has grown in recent years, the political landscape in Eastern Europe is shifting, and the need to amplify progressive youth voices has never been more urgent. I see enormous untapped potential in CDN and I want to help bridge the gap between where we are and *where we could be*.

What I bring to the table

My background spans research, civil society leadership, and political experience – a combination I believe is uniquely suited to CDN's mission. I graduated from the University of Oxford, and I hold a PhD in Psychology and a Master's in Political Science – an academic foundation that has sharpened my ability to think rigorously about complex social, political, and organisational challenges. As founder and co-president of *Youth of a Green Future*, Bulgaria's first green youth organisation, I have acquired solid experience in strategic development and oversight, project management, fundraising, and partnership-building. I know what it takes to build a resilient and thriving youth organisation, and I want to bring that knowledge to CDN.

My work as a Youth Delegate of Bulgaria to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe has given me expertise in youth participation and the institutional structures of the Council of Europe. My traineeship at the European Commission has made me fluent in EU processes, funding mechanisms, and the opportunities available across the European youth sector. I have also been involved in electoral politics, as the second ever openly gay candidate for parliament in Bulgaria, which has sharpened my understanding of political processes, campaign management, and strategic communication.

My priorities for CDN

If elected to the EC, my work will focus on three areas. First, I want to strengthen CDN's operational capacity by securing EU funding – particularly through Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps and by expanding partnerships with organisations such as Green Forum, the Green European Foundation, FYEG and Heinrich Böll Foundation. My second priority would be the professionalisation of the network: working with experts, developing internal capacity, and supporting member organisations to grow and be impactful. Third, I want to strengthen CDN's strategic positioning in European youth and civil society spaces, ensuring that progressive Eastern European voices are heard where decisions are made.

Whatever I put my heart into, I work hard to make it a success — and I would bring that same energy and commitment to CDN. At the same time, I am approachable and outgoing: I build relationships easily, and I am always eager to help. I believe these qualities are exactly what is needed to be an effective EC member. I am genuinely excited about what we can achieve together. I hope to earn your trust and your vote.

Dr Martin Velichkov
PhD, MSc, CPsychol, ANutr, AFHEA
Founder & Co-president, Youth of a Green Future, Bulgaria

Martin Velichkov, PhD, MSc, CPsychol, ANutr, AFHEA

Psychologist, political scientist, nutritionist, youth leader

marvelichkov@gmail.com

Professional experience

July 2024 – present

- **Association "Youth of a Green Future" – Founder and Co-president**
  - Co-leading Bulgaria's first green youth organisation focused on strengthening youth capacity and participation in environmental protection, social justice, human rights and democracy
  - Designed and delivered impactful non-formal education activities for over 120 people

March 2025 – February 2026

- **Youth Delegate to the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe**
  - Representing Bulgarian youth in debates on local democracy, rule of law and youth participation. Delivering speeches and contributing to policy discussions that amplify youth perspectives in decision-making

April 2025 – present

- **Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences**
  - Research assistant in sociology with a focus on political participation, environmental attitudes & inequality

October 2024 – March 2025

- **European Innovation Council & Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Executive Agency (EISMEA)**
  - Blue Book Trainee at the European Innovation Council of the European Commission – assistance with evaluation and management of projects for innovative products and start-ups

April 2024 – September 2024

- **Center for the Study of Democracy, Sofia – Blue Energy Fellow**
  - Acted as an ambassador for the Black Sea Renewable Energy Coalition, contributing to the visibility and outreach of a project aimed at enhancing offshore wind energy governance in Central and Eastern Europe.

June 2023 – December 2023

- **Climate Connections Fellowship, Das Progressive Zentrum, Berlin**
  - Actively contributed to a selective programme aimed at developing the next generation of climate leaders from Eastern Europe, fostering cross-regional collaboration and understanding
  - Underwent comprehensive training in policy advocacy, strategic communication, and organizational management, significantly enhancing my abilities to design and implement effective climate action strategies

June 2020 – May 2021

- **University of Reading Students' Union – Environment and Ethics Officer**
  - I was elected to represent the student community on all issues related to sustainability and ethical practices, providing independent advice to the university administration and ensuring that student perspectives are included in decision-making processes

October 2017 – September 2018

- **Pharmaceutical Product Development (PPD) – Medical Communications Specialist**
  - Provided scientific information on a broad portfolio of pharmaceutical products to healthcare professionals across Europe, ensuring accuracy, clarity, and compliance with regulatory standards

Education

October 2019 – March 2024

- **University of Reading, UK – PhD in Psychology**
  - Managed an interdisciplinary research project, focusing on the relationship between nutrition and mental health. Demonstrated an ability to oversee complex research endeavors from conception through to execution

September 2022 – August 2023

- **Complutense University of Madrid – Master of Political Analysis (Grade 8.5)**
  - Completed a rigorous academic programme encompassing electoral studies, geopolitics, political systems and governance, negotiation and mediation, leadership, economic policy, and international relations

September 2018 – July 2019

- **Karolinska Institute, Stockholm – Master of Nutrition Science (Distinction)**
  - Excelled in a cutting-edge programme that bridges the disciplines of nutrition science and sustainability. Deepened my understanding of the relationship between food production, dietary choices, and their health and environmental consequences.

October 2016 – September 2017

- **University of Oxford, St Catherine's College – Master of Science in Pharmacology (Distinction)**
  - Gained an understanding of pharmacological principles and their application to human and environmental health, allowing me to make critical assessments of the effects of chemicals on organisms and ecosystems.

September 2013 – June 2016

- **Amsterdam University College – BSc in the Liberal Arts and Sciences (summa cum laude)**
  - Received a full scholarship worth €15,000 and graduated with the highest honours with a focus on biomedical science, public health and neuroscience.

Additional Qualifications

- **European Climate Pact Ambassador –** Guest speaker in a Europe-wide webinar on Youth Climate Leadership as part of the EU Climate Action Academy, promoting climate action and youth engagement across the EU
- **Chartered Psychologist (CPsychol) –** Accredited by the British Psychological Society (BPS) for achieving the highest standard of psychological expertise and knowledge
- **Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr)** – Accredited by the British Association for Nutrition, recognizing professional competence in nutrition science and practice
- **Associate Fellow of Advance HE (AFHEA)** – a teaching qualification, demonstrating excellence in higher-education teaching, learning support, and student engagement
- Languages: **English** (C2), **German** (C1), **Spanish** (C1), **Dutch** (C1), **Bulgarian** (native)

Letter of Support for Martin Velichkov's Candidacy for the CDN Executive Committee

On behalf of the Executive Committee of *Youth of a Green Future*, I am writing to express our support for Martin Velichkov's candidacy for the Executive Committee of CDN.

Under Martin's leadership, *Youth of a Green Future* has grown from an idea into a recognised youth organisation delivering impactful non-formal education activities, representing Bulgarian youth in European spaces, and advocating for youth participation, environmental protection, social justice, and human rights. Martin's vision, dedication, and tireless effort have been central to everything our organisation has achieved.

Beyond his strategic and organisational abilities, Martin is a supportive and reliable leader with a genuine commitment to Green and progressive values. He leads with purpose, builds trust easily, and follows through on what he sets out to do.

We believe he has the skills and experience to contribute meaningfully to CDN's Executive Committee, and we are confident the network will benefit greatly from his contribution.

With warm regards,
Tsvetelina Garelova
On behalf of the Executive Committee
Youth of a Green Future, Bulgaria