

## **Motivation letter for candidature to YES President position from Brando Benifei**

Dear comrades,

we are at an historic turning point for Europe and for our organisation, the Young European Socialists (YES). We are soon to celebrate our congress in a moment of big change happening in our continent: new foreign policy challenges emerging, a growing risk of enduring deflation and recession with unequal income distribution and unemployment still rising, climate change and environment deterioration, attacks to civil liberties and minority rights, extreme rightwing and fascist movements getting more and more support from working class voters.

In such a difficult and challenging moment, we young socialists, social democrats and progressives need to be more active, more present, more recognizable as a movement for our generation, so to have our voice represented everywhere needed, both in the institutions and in the civil society. We need to study more and get deeper to the roots of our present problems to be able to give the right answers, for a change towards more social justice and equality.

To obtain such ambitious objectives, we need a stronger YES with “unity in diversity”, with a big internal reform program and a greater capacity to communicate externally and have a 360 degrees outreach. Until now, only very timid steps towards full transparency of internal functioning and of precise budgeting of our structure have been made, with sometimes limited decisional capacity by member organisations; also, we still need to open a real and frank debate about striking a new and more advanced balance between our being an umbrella organization of national members and a truly european-wide single youth movement; we have to make ourselves more visible externally with a proper communication strategy with media and press, to reach more young people and to build a stronger consensus on our ideas.

Our political relevance in next crucial years is essential: as YES (at the time named ECOSY) Vicepresident for the two terms 2009-2011 and 2011-2013, I was able to work on Youth Guarantee campaign which was launched by the Presidium and Bureau of the time. It was a success: we anticipated the PES actions and shaped its debate and we were able to put a strong spotlight on the growing youth unemployment, being now in the position also to criticise the successes and the shortcomings of what is presently in place as the European Youth Guarantee scheme. We need again and once more to be more present and active in the Party of European Socialists activity and in its upcoming congress, to challenge it and to work with it; the same applies to the FEPS (Foundation of European Progressive Studies), to the USSLRE (Union of Socialist Local and Regional Representatives in Europe) and many other fora where we need a stronger voice for our positions and also to be more of service for our member organisations.

We are not credible if we criticize but don't engage, we must not close ourselves in internal debates or self-indulging but instead we need to make our proposals and try to obtain something concrete, confronting

ourselves with the reality of present European debate to try to change what we don't like: as an example, we should be putting forward our ideas on the rightly much criticised Juncker Investment Plan and bring them to all relevant decision-making spaces (political parties, governments, European parliament), to obtain that money goes to projects where they are really needed, creating jobs and growth for more social justice and not for the usual gainers, also through more EU fiscal capacity with project bonds and taxation for financial transactions.

Bearing all of these reflections in mind, I decided to put forward my candidacy for YES President.

I believe that with the much needed help of all of you I can put all my effort to be the voice of our organization being a member of the European Parliament, representing and fighting for our ideas also in the place where a quite important part of our objectives can be pursued and obtained, bringing our proposals to an higher degree of visibility and relevance. This elected position will prevent me from being a financial burden for our organization and also will help me to be constantly and productively present in Brussels at all the meetings of sister organizations (PES Presidency, FEPS, USSRE etc.) the YES President has the statutory and political duty to attend, to make our voice and presence perceived and heard in all possible occasions. I am sure we can build a great team with the Secretary General and with the Presidium, in a way where everyone can realize its full potential of ideas, passion and political work.

I think we need unity in our movement to be able to be useful for our MOs and to be effective in obtaining our goals: for the reasons mentioned, we need to build a shared responsibility and leadership to keep us together as a cohesive organization, in a common effort where all different political cultures, geographical regions and ideas can feel represented, without sacrificing debate and democratic decision. I can make this commitment as candidate for YES President.

I want to thank member organizations leaderships who have already expressed their support for my candidacy before this official presentation: in this regard I want to thank Roberto Sajeve for FGS Italy, Joao Torres for JS Portugal, Alex Saliba for FZL Malta, Dimitar Mitev for ELYA Bulgaria, Joonas Rasanen for SDY Finland, Hanna Huuonen for SONK Finland, Alexander Grandt for DSU Denmark, Ellinor Eriksson for SSU Sweden, Talla Alkurdi for SSF Sweden.

History for us and for Europe is not a fixed pattern, History is made to be changed. We can do this together.

With socialist regards,

Brando