

Motivation letter

for **EGP Committee Member**

Markus Drake (he/him)

Vihreät - De Gröna - Finnish Greens

Dear Green friends,

We can't do Green change alone, none of us can. So I am asking for your support for a position on the Committee of the European Green Party, at the kind nomination of the Finnish Greens. My name is Markus Drake, and I believe there is a very specific task ahead of us. I am a veteran Green activist from Finland, living and acting all over the European continent for over three decades.

Since 2007 I have spent time in the European Parliament, from intern to spouse, and feel at home in the corridors of Brussels. I have had the pleasure of serving as a member of the board of my national party, as secretary general of the Young European Greens, and the privilege of following the past four European Parliament elections closely.

Things are tough right now. I live for the tough times. Our political family is under pressure, challenged, as the far right rises and singles us out as their targets of hatred. They try to shout us down, digitally and physically, east, west, north and south. Our transformative demands and accomplishments are being pushed back. I have worked on these issues that we all face. I was fighting for housing rights and against homelessness in my youth. I was active in the movement for digital rights at the very beginning, in independent media and on privacy issues. We built mass movements for greater democracy and basic income. I have campaigned on energy politics and built solidarity with refugees. I have had a role shaping crucial European issues where we are currently being challenged. And as all of us, I have fought for our core Green topics: protecting the environment and climate.

Previously, we Greens have been the avenue where new social movements have brought new questions and identities into the political realm. I was a part of that in 2000, organising busloads of activists to travel across Europe to demand a debt Jubilee from the World Bank and the IMF to the poorest countries. At the Genova G8 in Italy, we protested with hundreds of thousands against state violence, demanded freedom of movement, and a socially just Europe. But this was over 20 years ago, and while in several countries we are used to seeing ourselves as a party of the future, we are now losing the youth vote. I want to see Greens again serve as a platform for youth changing the world, while telling stories of hope across generations. I think I am a decent listener, who knows when to let others speak. Together we can find courage to bring new ideas into the political realm again.

For the past years I have lived in a small village and found a local community and strength in it, joining the volunteer firefighters, a pretty conservative bunch, and in them found allies for both welcoming refugees and fighting forest fires. It is by the same tools we European Greens must face our challenges. Through determination and solidarity, but also in our refusal to give up our ideals against overwhelming odds. The EGP is how we share our local realities, connecting and lifting up political demands to the European and global levels, from protection of exposed and threatened minorities to energy and climate policy. As a former squatting activist now in party politics I want to make sure that different methods in reaching the same goal do not divide us, but makes the shared fight stronger.

The task ahead of us, I find, is to deepen our roots. Storms and droughts, political and physical, sweep across Europe. We must weather them. I ask for your trust in me to serve this party so that together with civil society and movements, we are a seed, a sapling, for a Green and socially just Europe.

Markus Drake