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Draft

Title: **Daniela Bozhinova**

Tabled by: Zeleno dvizhenie

Photo



Video

https://www.youtube.com/shorts/FeEaP43eONw

Motivation Letter [PDF]

From **Daniela Bozhinov**a PhD, Zeleno Dvizhenie(Green Movement), Bulgaria
Candidate for the GEF GA vacancy

To the EGP Leadership and 41-st Congress

Motivation Letter

Dear fellow delegates of the 41 congress of the EGP,

I am writing to express my interest in becoming a Member of the General Assembly of the Green European Foundation (GEF).

Having been involved in the European green movement for nearly two decades, through both politics and civil society, I see this as an opportunity to contribute to the Foundation's work and bring the experience of Bulgaria and the Black Sea region into our common European discussions.

I was one of the founders of the Bulgarian Zeleno Dvizhenie (Green Movement) party, originally called ZELENITE, in 2008. Since then, I have held several leadership positions, including that of Co-Chairperson. During my first term as Co-Chairperson (2011-2013), I succeeded to strengthen the party's international ties and helped it become a full member of the European Green Party.

My cooperation with GEF goes back to that period. Together with GEF, we organised two international projects in Bulgaria: a workshop on the European Citizens' Initiative and a seminar on asylum, migration and the EU's external borders. These experiences gave me a good understanding of the GEF's work and its role in raising awareness and bringing people together to exchange ideas and discuss the challenges facing Europe.

My background combines political experience, legislative work, many years in civil society, as well as cultural diplomacy and international business experience.
As a Member of the Bulgarian Parliament from 2023 to 2024, I authored and passed amendments to the taxation legislation reducing administrative burden on small producers, amendments to the Black Sea Coast Spatial Development Act aimed at curbing over-development and protecting vulnerable coastal ecosystems. I also proposed a climate amendment to the Bulgarian Constitution and worked on reforming the legislation on direct citizen participation in decision-making.

Earlier, as a municipal councillor in Burgas, I worked to develop local legislation on the right to environmental information, public consultation, right to protest, LGBTQI+ rights and the protection of urban green spaces.

My work in civil society has been equally important. I co-founded Democracy International in 2011 and have served in several leadership and governance roles. I also founded the Bulgarian Association for the Promotion of Citizens' Initiatives, which works on participatory democracy, environmental justice and human rights. I have also considerable experience

with B2B assistance programs and business representation through the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Bulgaria and the Eurochambers.

My PhD in Political Science and my research on electoral democracy have further shaped my commitment to making institutions more open and responsive to citizens.

Curriculum Vitae [PDF]

I believe that the European green movement has much to gain from sharing experiences across countries and learning from different political and social realities.

Bulgaria and the Black Sea region face serious challenges related to climate change, biodiversity loss, coastal development and public participation in environmental decisions. And with the Russian aggression in Ukraine most recently escalating in maritime and drone attacks, a host of new problems has topped the regional agenda - problems of safety and security for people and trade in the Black Sea.
These issues are closely connected to wider European challenges, yet the experience of our region is often underrepresented in European discussions.

As a member of GEF's General Assembly, I could contribute to the Foundation's strategic direction and help strengthen its connections with green political actors and civil society in South-East Europe.

I would bring my experience from Bulgarian politics, my work with international organisations and my long-standing commitment to environmental protection and citizen participation.

I would be glad work with the Green European Foundation in this new capacity and to contribute to its mission.

Yours sincerely,

Daniela Bozhinova, PhD
Bulgaria

DANIELA BOZHINOVA PhD



CURRICULUM VITAE

Postal address: 41 Han Asparuh Str
Burgas 8000, Bulgaria

Phone: (359) 899 145652
daniela.bozhinova@gmail.com

Relevant competences and experience with regard to candidacy for GEF GA vacancy

EDUCATION

Ph.D. Political Science, New Bulgarian University, Sofia 2020
Post Masters, International Business, University of National&World Economy, Sofia
M. A., Middle East Studies and Arabic Language/ English Philology St. Kl. Ohridsky University of Sofia
High School Diploma, English Language High School, Burgas. With High Honors and High Distinction

FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS
Fulbright scholarship, Washington D.C., National Initiative for Democracy, research project "Direct Decision-making in the USA through Initiative, Referendum and Recall", 2009-2010
Raul Wallenberg Institute, Sweden, Scholarship in Human Rights and Status of Women
Access to Information Foundation, Bulgaria – "Defender of the Right to Information" award, 2009
Helsinki Human Rights Committee, Bulgaria –"Human of the Year"nominee, 2011
National Award, Biodiversity Foundation "The Environment&Climate Most Devoted Politician" 2024

POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

Co-chairperson of Zeleno Dvizhenie (Green Movement) political party 2023- present

Member of Parliament 2023-2024 (49-th National Assembly of Bulgaria)
Tabled and passed changes in the Excise Duty Act so as to streamline customs control and prevent recurring practice of punitive usage of inspection; legalized and exempted the Bulgarian home beer brewers from excise duty in line with the respective EU legislation.
Co-authored and passed key amendments to the Black Sea Coast Spatial Development Act curbing commercial over-development and defending the natural coastal ecosystems, especially sand dunes and wild beaches, as well as amendments to other environmentally sensitive pieces of legislation.
Tabled and submitted legislative proposal to reform the Direct Participation Act summarizing 20-year experience of research of legislative systems and practitioner's work in observing and organizing referendum campaigns and initiatives, including the ECI.
Submitted a climate amendment to the Bulgarian Constitution. The latter two legislative efforts did not come to fruition due to early dissolution of parliament.

Elected City Councilor in Burgas (the Black sea port city of Bulgaria) **2021-2023**
Introduced local legislation safeguarding the right to protest, LGBTQI+ rights, advancing the right to environmental information and public consultation, improving the management of the city greenery, opposed and stopped controversial land-use deal, safeguarding green areas from excessive urbanization.

Co-chair and member of governing bodies of Zeleno Dvizhenie political party
Co-founded the party - originally called ZELENITE - in 2008.
Elected co-chair back in 2011-2013. In my term managed to achieve full membership in the EGP, also:
Organized a Black Sea Greens conference in Sofia (co-organizer GroenLinks) - 2012.
Completed jointly with the Green European Foundation and its then director Ms Leonore Gewessler two international projects in Bulgaria – workshop on the newly introduced (2012) European Citizens' Initiative and study visit on Common Asylum, Migration and External Borders of the EU, including visit to asylum centers in Bulgaria.
Partnered with the Greek greens and the Green Institute of Greece to co-produce seminars and a book "Populism, Political Ecology and the Balkans" which also co-authored.

Supporters
Partidul Verde, Romania, Demokrat? s?junga, Vardan Lietuvos", Die Grünen - Die Grüne Alternative, Bündnis90/Die Grünen, Germany

NON-PROFIT SECTOR EXPERIENCE

2011-present – **Democracy International, Germany** - co-founder and consecutively Vice President, Member and Coordinator of the Executive Board, Trustee
DI is an international NGO, platform for direct and participatory democracy, striving to serve as a hub of democratic change-makers. Co-producer and co-organizer of the Global Democracy Forum along with International Idea, CoE, Swiss Democracy Foundation.

1999 - present - **Bulgarian Association for the Promotion of Citizens Initiative**s – www.initiative.bg
founder and consecutively Executive Director, Chairperson, Honorary Chair and Trustee
BAPCI is a non-governmental organization, based in the Black Sea region of Bulgaria, active in the area of deliberative democracy, e-participation, environmental justice and human rights. Member of the Citizens Council attached to the Parliament, representing NGOs for Digital Transformation.

1995 - 1999 - **Citizens Democracy Corps Inc. USA** - Regional Director of business assistance programs
CDC was a 5000 member volunteer non-profit providing management knowledge to transitioning economies worldwide.
Directed the delivery of management and marketing expertise to fledgling private businesses in Bulgaria, completing over 200 B2B projects in Bulgaria, co-funded by the USAID.

1990 - 1994 : Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce & Industry - International Relations Officer
Worked to restore the regional network of chambers and re-establish international relations for this important business representation NGO after the fall of the totalitarian rule.

MULTICULTURAL AND INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EXPERIENCE
Gained invaluable international communication and cultural experience as well as business savvy in the employ of major civil engineering companies and infrastructure building projects in North Africa (mainly Libya) as an interpreter, negotiator and company liaison officer immediately after university graduation in the late 80-ies.

RESEARCHER, AUTHOR AND EDITOR
Author of the book "The People Decide. Referendum, Initiative and Recall in the USA", Trud, Sofia 2014, "Highlights of the European Constitution", BSNGI 2004. Co-author, editor and publisher of the books "Digital Democracy"(2015), "Yes and No Cases. Eleven Referendum Stories from Around the World" (2016), "23 Remarkable Women in the Regional History" (2007), "Maritime Dimensions of the EU Accession of Bulgaria" paper policy series (2005).
Workbooks: "Marketing for Tourism and Catering SMEs", "Rural Development".
Discussion papers: Green Paper on the Development of Digital Democracy in Bulgaria; Reclaiming the Historical Heritage of Early Populism; The Bulgarian Protest Wave of 2020 and the Greens etc.