

THE PEACE & SECURITY ISSUE



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Ecosprinter Editorial Board

Morgan Henley left the swamp of her native Florida in 2010 to live in Prague, Czech Republic. There she became active with the Czech Young Greens and FYEG, where she joined the Ecosprinter Editorial Board in 2014, later FYEG's Climate Change Campaign and finally was elected as a member of FYEG's Executive Committee in 2015. She currently works for the European Green Party and lives in Brussels. Her family has long worked in newspapers and she is happy to carry on the tradition.

Jakob Hundsbichler likes trains. Although being an avowed atheist, he takes satisfaction in holding bible study sessions, especially late at night. He is active with the Austrian Young Greens and studies philosophy and political science in Vienna.

Paula Keller has been active with the Young Greens for roughly 4 years. Originally from Germany, she moved to the UK for her studies and is now mostly active within the Federation of Young European Greens, the Ecosprinter and Spunk, the publication of the German Grüne Jugend. Studying philosophy, she adores late night pseudointellectual conversations, cats and black turtlenecks. Her article is written in that very same spirit. Aside from Green politics, Paula defines as an angry feminist, despairs capitalism but has a thing for fashion

Simo Raittila recently left his job as the Editor-in-Chief of the magazine (Rönsy) of the Finnish Green Youth (ViNO) to pursue a PhD in sociology at the University of Helsinki. He identifies as part of the digital precariat and an European federalist.

Editorial

Dear readers,

I'm extremely proud to present to you, the second printed edition of the Ecosprinter of the year! Two editions published, all while FYEG had one of its busiest years to date. With activities in Marrakech, Brussels, Istanbul, and Liverpool as well as playing a crucial role in the Global Young Greens Congress, everyone in the FYEG stratosphere has had a busy and productive year.

All of this would be extremely commendable in anytime, but given that this year has seen politics, particularly political parties, change in such fundamental ways, is something astounding. The future of political parties at the moment is uncertain, to say the least. 'Movements' that are vague on their positions or goals and even more vague on their structures, are increasingly gaining popularity. Which leads one to wonder, what will be the future of the youth wings of political parties? Are we still relevant, as Young Greens or as political parties at all? Or are we marching to our graves, while populist movements take over our capitals?

Well, I hope that you see that this year for the Ecosprinter and FYEG as proof that this is not the case. Having a space that is built to empower young people to have a say in politics is what FYEG and the Ecosprinter were built for. And it's working. Both FYEG and the Ecosprinter continue to grow and improve, all thanks in part to those who created the organization before us and continue to see that young people in Green politics is important. Further, that it is through inclusive and supportive places like FYEG that we can empower those who are often excluded from the discussion. This edition is particularly evident that these efforts are not in vain, as there are so many young, female writers whose voices are being amplified and shared across Europe, writing about peace and security, no less.

Therefore, as we end this mandate of the Ecosprinter Editorial Board and head to the next, I would like to first of all say thank you to everyone who made it happen, particularly the EEB and FYEG office and Executive Committee. Our cooperation has been essential! And to those who will be elected at the General Assembly in Madrid, congratulations! It might not always be easy, but I assure you, it's always worth it!

Sincerely,
Morgan Henley
Ecosprinter Editor-in-Chief, 2016-2017



Smashing Patriarchal Structures in the Military Or can Feminism be a Badge of Honour?

'Patriarchy' is the term used to describe a society characterized by current and historically unequal power relations between women and men whereby women are systematically disadvantaged and oppressed. This takes place across almost every aspect of life but is particularly noticeable in women's under-representation in state institutions, decision-making positions and employment with a particular highlight in the Security and Defense industry and the international military compound.

On the other hand, 'militarism'

is the belief that it is necessary to have strong armed forces and that they must be used in order to gain political or economic advantage.

By 1988 there were 250.000 women in NATO armies.

In Europe, legislations in the name of female representation in military structures arose mainly during the 1970s and 1980s. Several European countries adopted laws aggravating the tendency to incorporate women into the ranks of armies of the NATO member states. By the end

of the 1980s, women's voluntary access to armies was regulated in the great majority of the Alliance, although participation in combat units was prohibited in many cases. By 1988 there were 250.000 women in NATO armies. In Spain for example, the PSOE Government in 1988 approved a law by which women could be incorporated into 24 scales of the Armed Forces, but not in combat units; one year later, they had access to all the units and scales of the three different armies, whereas in the U.S. or in the UK these positions were just recently opened.

»If you insist upon fighting to protect me, or 'our' country, let it be understood, soberly and rationally between us, that you are fighting to gratify a sex instinct which I cannot share; to procure benefits which I have not shared and probably will not share (...) For as a woman, I have no country. As a woman, I want no country. As a woman, my country is the whole world.«

Virginia Woolf

In all the forces where women had joined, in the one hand, they failed to #SmashPatriarchy and in the other, by integrating with it, the abuses of power and the sexual aggressiveness of men increased.

This integration process was, and still is, presented as a step forward in the emancipation of women. However, the dilemma arises when these laws do not respond to a request or campaign from the feminist movements back then. In fact, the dominant position among Western feminist movements was that women should not fight for equality with men in all fields, especially in negative structures of power which were as contrary to the identity of women as the hierarchical, antidemocratic and sexist armies they were being integrated in. As a matter of fact, in all the forces where women had joined, in the one hand, they failed to #SmashPatriarchy and in the other, by integrating with it, the abuses of power and the sexual aggressiveness of men increased. To highlight, the discriminations they suffered were permanent and rape was a constant occurrence, more often than in civilian life.

In the past years, Norway became the first NATO country to bring

in compulsory conscription for women. In the United States a military policy was approved by the Senate which requires women to register for the Draft (selective service used during the Vietnam war to send involuntarily militants to war). In the United Kingdom, the ban on female soldiers serving in close combat frontline roles was removed. Romania's access to NATO in 2004 and the EU in 2007 brought reforms in relation to a 20% access rate for women in the armed forces. These advances were all shown as reflecting of the evolving role of women in the military. Why though if they are all steps taken in the wrong direction?

Where will the roles for non-males be and more importantly how do we foresee it?

Today, we live in a world which is heading to a more militarized future. Donald Trump has proposed an increase of \$54 billion to be paid for military expenditure by cutting diplomacy and aid. China has stated they will increase the budget by 7% by the end of this year. NATO European members agreed to spend 2% of their GDP on defense while keeping the enlargement of different security and defense budgets, such as for Frontex (from 3 to 238,7 million euro from 2005 to 2016).

This spotlights the European debate of a joint defense and External Army. Where will the roles for non-males be and more importantly how do we foresee it?

Virginia Woolf said: "If you insist upon fighting to protect me, or 'our' country, let it be understood, soberly and rationally between us, that you are fighting to gratify a sex instinct which I cannot share; to procure benefits which I have not shared and probably will not share (...) For as a woman, I have no country. As a woman, I want no country. As a woman, my country is the whole world."

Adding a gender perspective to a patriarchal structure has proven to be superficial and not productive enough. It is crucial that women become solid actors in the world Security and Defense sphere, plain accessibility to the armed forces is insufficient and contradictory to positive peace, emancipation and gender equality. Therefore, perceptions of security, defense and armies must be reconstructed with integrated and intersectional values at the forefront. The feminists of the past, as Woolf, did not fight for equal rights in a man's world, they fought for a completely new world. In a European Union heading to a more militarized future, we should consider the same aim our sisters had in the past.

Interview with Reinhard Bütikofer MEP

The Ecosprinter sat down with Reinhard Bütikofer to speak about the current state of affairs of defense and foreign policy in Europe and the Greens. He is the current co-chair of the European Green Party and Member of the European Parliament from Germany. He is currently an alternate for the Committee on Foreign Affairs in the European Parliament and was previously in the Committee on Security and Defense.

Foreign policy and defense are not the usual policy profiles covered by Greens. What role do you see that Greens can play in shaping foreign policy across Europe or in their countries? What role do you think Young Greens can play?

I disagree with the point of departure of your argument. Foreign policy has long been an integral part of Green thinking, but we've usually called it different names like peace policy, global justice policy, disarmament policy, fair trade policy, multilateral global governance policy and so on and so forth. One of the most time-honored slogans of the international Green movement has been "Think globally, act locally". For European Greens, a couple of things have been changing over the last years that forced us to take a fresh look. The EU which was described in the 2003 EU security strategy as a homestead of peace and security, has more recently found itself neighboring many zones of insecurity and even openly burning conflict.

The fact, this is a second major change, that the United States have begun to withdraw from their traditional international role and to define its national interest in a much narrower way, is forcing European countries and the European Union to reevaluate foreign and security policy. This is being reflected for instance in the Global Strategy of the EU that was adopted by the Council last year.

Thirdly, it is obvious that the immediate interrelation of geographically quite distant global players forces us to rethink our global involvement also. The new slogan probably has to be "Think globally, act locally and in global partnerships". For Greens, these new realities can be and must

be addressed on the basis of the values that have guided us ever since our movement got first under way. But the application of the same principles has to take account of a changing reality.

The Green Group in the European Parliament has tried to do that with a position paper on the "EU contribution to peace and security" which was adopted with broad support by the members of the Group after some extensive discussions. We try in this paper to translate our guiding principles also into practical answers for specific challenges like nuclear disarmament, arms exports, raging military conflicts and the whole issue of non-military security concerns.

Conceptually, I believe, the most important contribution that Greens have been making over the years has been the emphasis on non-traditional, non-conventional dimensions of security, including climate change related issues and many others. Presently, under the impact of the new US administration, a new focus on European security policy is grabbing a lot of public attention. Greens cannot afford to skip this conversation. Are we for instance in favour of a European army? Some Greens say they are, I am not. But we should certainly support efforts of "pooling and sharing" that can help us to reduce vastly wasteful military spending and to create an effective opposition against the newly reinvigorated stupid philosophy of 2% of GDP spending on military as a NATO and EU dogma.

Many Greens parties evolved from the Peace movement. Do you believe that Greens are still the biggest political advocates for peace and/or pacifism and what does this relationship mean in today's political climate?

For me advocating peace and advocating pacifism is not the same. I support the former, but I do not support the latter. I was convinced to desist from pacifism in the early 70s when the argument was that it is not correct to tell the Vietnamese people that they don't have the right to use military means to defend their country against US aggression. Historically speaking, I would add that I am happy that in the Second World War the countries resisting Nazi aggression were not governed by pacifist leaders and sacrificed a lot to defend their own and to rebuild our freedom. But being a peace advocate, however, forces us as Greens to never rush to the use of military means and to do whatever can be done to avoid this potential means of last resort.

Do you think we will see a EU army within our lifetime?

I am sure I won't, your lifetime will last a bit longer than mine, so you might, but certainly for me this is no ideal. In practical terms, the fact that in Germany we have a parliamentary army that forces the government to ask Members of the German Parliament to agree on every military mission they want to send our soldiers into, I believe this obviously is not an absolute guarantee against military adventurism, but it certainly has a constraining effect because it forces MPs to take decisions knowing full well that their voters might get after them.

What would you predict that Brexit means for EU foreign policy, particularly in regards to defence?

Brexit will certainly have a dual effect because it deprives the EU of the big potential that the UK does bring to the table. Not only in military terms, but also in diplomatic terms. British diplomats have one of the most respected traditions in the world. Not being able to cooperate as closely with

them as in the past will certainly weaken the EU. On the other hand, the Brits have consistently opposed necessary steps towards integration of foreign and security policy efforts within the EU. And getting rid of this roadblock will help the rest of us to move forward with more ambition. Altogether I think though that the decisive factor in moving forward is - whether we have the Brits on board or not - how we organize European foreign and security efforts among ourselves. If we let the defense industry lobbyists define and dictate the course, we have nobody to blame but ourselves.

Donald Trump recently went back on his earlier statements and said that 'NATO is no longer obsolete.' Does his inconsistency on NATO's legitimacy actually prove his initial point, that NATO is no longer as relevant as it once was? Do you imagine an expansion of NATO anytime soon?

Donald Trump on these matters usually doesn't know what he says or what his statements imply. His quotes prove nothing. But they have a factual effect of undermining the European tradition of relying on the US for many security matters and in particular of relying on Art. 5 of the NATO Treaty. In my understanding, NATO has a role to play. Having said that, I would add that this role has to be much more limited than many NATO advocates imagine. Again; building security is not first and foremost a military challenge. It does include a military dimension, but relying on military means alone has never created true security. Do I imagine a NATO expansion any time soon? Yes indeed. NATO is just adopting Macedonia as a new member. And I do think this is a good step. On the other hand, I do not expect and I would not support an expansion of NATO that would grant Ukraine or Georgia NATO membership. Not in the short, not in the medium and not in the long term.

Morgan Henley, Editor-in-Chief of The Ecosprinter





From accountability to reparation: Why women victims of sexual violence should get economic compensation

Irene Vivas Lalinde, Spanish Young Greens

A no one's business

The history of war is a history of men; while women and girls constitute the majority of victims of sexual violence. However, Svetlana Aleksievich¹ reminds us how women have also participated in wars, sometimes as silent accomplices: "When we occupied every town, we had first three days for looting and ... [rapes]. That was unofficial of course. But after three days one could be court-martialed for doing this."

Generally, we understood sexual violence as a fulfilment of sexual desire in which men could abuse women as spoils of war. However, there has been an evolution of the nature of the crime as well as the legal basis for its prosecution. Firstly, women were protected because of the idea of family honor as abusing a woman resulted in the disgrace for the males of the family, and now is a human rights issue. As psychological warfare, rape is being used more and more in a strategic way to undermine present and future generations.

The crime of rape during war time has been prosecutable in some regions since the fifteenth century. Despite feminism and the societal embracement of a more inclusive, caring and modern world, it was not until 2000 that the media and the

1 2015 Nobel Prize of Literature. The fragment belongs to the book "War's Unwomanly Face"

international community started paying attention. Following reports on shaming events in Yugoslavia and Rwanda, the Security Council of the UN finally approved the Resolution 1325 addressing the disproportionate impact of conflicts on women.

Sexual violence has been a no one's business. The aftermath of the Second World War created room for impunity because the International Military Tribunal² (IMT) excluded specifying the crime of rape in its Charter. It is now when shy voices start claiming justice for the German women that were victims of the winning side.

The hard way towards accountability

The International Humanitarian Law (IHL) came into place in the nineteenth century to establish rules in warfare. It was better known as the Law of War as it mainly addressed those participating in the conflict. The fourth Geneva Convention (1949), also provided protection to people hors combat; article 27 explicitly mentioned and prohibited rape. Unfortunately, the legal apparatus of the Geneva Conventions made it difficult to prosecute sexual violence internationally at that time.

After the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal

2 Or Nuremberg Tribunal

Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), the first sentences acknowledging rape as a crime came into scene, establishing a doctrine which serves as inspiration for many worldwide. Before there was no way to protect and compensate victims. National courts are often too weak or non-existent and violence against women is the last priority among a long list of crimes.

The first constraints that the Tribunals faced were of a legal nature. Even though they had international jurisdiction to prosecute crimes committed in those countries in a given period of time, the reality was resource intensive and fragmented. On the one hand they could refer to IHL and the IMT Charter. On the other hand, the horrors of the twentieth century had also led to new international legal instruments such as the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide (1948) and the Convention against Torture (1984). The statutes of the International Tribunals tried to condensate this normative.

Step by step, from Akayesu to Kunarac, their jurisprudence framed sexual violence. It can be defined in different ways: forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, sexual abuse, rape, etc. Rape, for example, can be considered torture, crime of genocide, crime against humanity and/or war crime if different requirements are met.

Currently, the International Criminal Court³ is trying to mainstream accountability worldwide. Unfortunately, despite the formal inclusion in the Rome Statute, there are yet no sentences on sexual violence.

Compensation: surviving sexual violence

Holding the perpetrators accountable is very hard, especially because of the inadequate procedural rules that expose victims and disregard the trauma and stigma behind sexual violence. Once we get a court conviction, what about the negative impact of sexual violence in the long term? Whereas only psychological support is provided, victims around the globe have to face their daily lives without a comprehensive support so they can develop as normal citizens.

In 2014, the UN issued a guidance note on reparations for conflict-related sexual violence, underlining the need of economic empowerment of the victims as well as the reinforcing understanding of compensation as a right.

Every policy and legal effort should aim at protecting the victims of a conflict- including

women and children- and facilitating their recovery. In some case the help arrives quite late; the organization ROSA finally achieved getting compensation for Croatian victims, twenty years after the war. While in others, like in the process following the Peace Agreement in Colombia, a window of opportunity is open.

Whereas legal constraints have been overcome quite easily, it is the political will that has delayed the issue of sexual violence for centuries. It is still a reality: from Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan (Darfur), Syrian Arab Republic to Yemen, these are part of a sad list of countries about which the last report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence (2016) has made recommendations.

There is no excuse not to facilitate economic compensation for victims. It is time for the international community to care about the funding of compensation programs and to pressure States to take action.



3 It was established by the Rome Statute in 1992

Resistance is Fertile:

A Look Back at the Week Long Seminar



IRAN

oil

territorial
religion

IRA

oil

conflict
religion
opportunities
- timing
minorities

From 25th to 29th of March FYEG's activists met in Liverpool for the seminar "Resistance is Fertile". The topic was war, with a special focus on Europe's responsibility, particularly with regards to arms trade. 38 Young Greens from plenty of countries took part in the discussions and since the Global Young Greens Congress took place immediately after the seminar, we had the great and unique opportunity to exchange with other Young Greens from countries as the Ivory Coast, Guatemala, India or Papua-New Guinea. This made the debates more international and introduced a global perspective, considering the topic, this was a big advantage. Aims of the seminar were to get a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that cause, drive and accompany war and, finally, which options all of us have to fight for a more peaceful world. Many participants stated that it was important to them to discuss these issues with other open-minded people from various and different cultural backgrounds.

In sessions such as "What the fact?!" the participants positioned themselves according their approval or disapproval of questions like "Do you think the EU spends more money for security issues or development politics?","Do you think armed interventions can be justified?" and "Is the world getting less safe?". You would be surprised by the fact that there was no universal consensus among this group of Young Greens, regardless of how universal the answers to some of these essentially Green questions might seem to some. Just being confronted with a question and giving a subjective opinion wasn't the the whole meaning of this, though. The session was rather meant to confront the participants with how they might just follow a common narrative and reflect on how other opinions shape their own. After that the group had to do some research to come in contact with some facts. Being then asked the questions again, some people changed their opinion, but only few. Most of the people had a strong and reasoned standing in their opinions.

In another session called "¡Propaganda!" we formed three groups, each with its own allegedly fictional case, which was in fact based on a real international conflict. Each group was supposed to advertise its case to a modeled UN General Assembly formed by all the participants from the other groups in a way that secures them the approval of their demands by the UN General Assembly. The debrief revealed that in fact the task was to create well-functioning propaganda, in order to understand how propaganda works and how easy it is to succumb to it, especially from actors that are very familiar to us and enjoy some degree of trust, based on the exploitation of very specific concepts like human rights, no matter how warped they might get in the process of turning them into propaganda.. There was quite some surprised faces, when it was revealed that the "fictive" cases were actually real ones, with the narrative left completely unaltered, but the names changed.

If you want to understand something, you shouldn't only read and talk about it, but should do it. Therefore during the Seminar reenacted war in a role-play with different parties, including different countries, like some having an internal conflict, some wanting to support the government of the troubled country or some that want to ban arms trade from the conflict-affected country, plus an arms-manufacturing company, an international peace-keeping NGO or your friendly-neighbour smugglers.

During "Resistance is Fertile" we explored a very complex topic: war. Splitting the topic into three distinct objectives - deconstructing the war narrative, driving causes of war and taking action for peace - helped to get a grasp of how each of our lives is deeply connected to conflicts and wars around the world. With a global perspective, we learned to critically evaluate our daily actions, as well as to get active for peace on a daily basis, as well as in our activist lives.



»The Society that moved on but left it's Women behind.«

Chloe Patterson - Green Party in Northern Ireland

Throughout history Ireland has produced many inspirational women; women who stood and fought against the norms of their time; women who took up arms against oppression; women who won their right to vote a decade before their English counterparts. However, the sacrifice that women gave on the island of Ireland over the past one hundred years is one which is defined by tragedy.



The conflict in Northern Ireland, known as “The Troubles”, lasted for forty years and had a profound effect on women in the region, a legacy that continues to thwart our social progress despite nearly two decades since the passage of the Good Friday Agreement. The refusal of the British government to recognise ‘The Troubles’ as an armed conflict has meant that UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security does not apply to women in Northern Ireland and has thus locked them out of the peace process. It is, therefore, important to look at the role played by women in Northern Ireland, from the early civil rights movement, to the armed conflict, through to the ramifications of the conflict on their lives today.

As time has passed, women have been recognised as the backbone of the civil rights struggle.

During the 1960s civil right movements were springing up across the world, and the people of Northern Ireland drew inspiration for their own – the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA). They focused their demands on an end to the discrimination of the unionist state against Catholics when it came to voting, housing and jobs. It was a peaceful movement and many women came to prominence during this time. Figures such as Bernadette Devlin and Inez McCormack were at the forefront of the movement, and challenged not only the nature of the state and institutionalised discrimination, but also the socially conservative attitudes in Northern Ireland at the time. The movement mobilised at a time when the sexual revolution of the 1960s and early 1970s was in full swing, a notable protest was when a train full of women from the Republic of Ireland travelled to Northern Ireland to purchase contraception with the intent to distribute freely amongst women in Ireland where it was still illegal.

However, even if women were not leading in the front or organising stunts, they were still a vital component to the marches.

Women across Northern Ireland opened their homes to the marchers, fed them and lodged them. As time has passed, women have been recognised as the backbone of the civil rights struggle. It is believed, however, that due to this community resistance and political awakening, women would go on to play a more direct role in the violence that followed.

The Troubles has generated much interest and research around the world, and one facet of it is the role of women in the conflict. The usual trend is one of men taking on violent roles and women, a peaceful role of the ‘victim’. However, if we see women as only victims of violence, but not also as perpetrators of conflict, we are considering only part of the story. In Northern Ireland women on both sides of the conflict, Republican and Loyalist were involved in violence; although a lot more is known about Republican women than Loyalist women, and in the interest of brevity, I will focus only on Republican women.

During the Northern Ireland conflict, their male counterparts did not readily accept women into the armed struggle.

Mairead Farrell and Máire Drumm are known internationally for their senior roles in the Republican movement. Indeed, Drumm served as Vice-President of Sinn Féin until her murder in 1976. They were also prominent leaders and organisers within Cumann na mBan, the women-only wing of the Republican movement that emerged during Ireland’s revolutionary period of the early 20th century. Yet, during the Northern Ireland conflict, their male counterparts did not readily accept women into the armed struggle.

The Republican hunger strikes of the early 1980s are of great political significance in the history of Northern Ireland and bear notoriety across the world. Little known, however, are the Republican women who



also carried out a hunger strike and a 'dirty protest' (no-washing and refusal to obey prison rules) alongside their male counterparts which to this day is not a widely acknowledged in discussions of this period. The 'Dirty Protest', which lasted for nearly a year, had a different element than that of the men – menstrual blood. In a country where the Republican woman was still viewed as a pure being, such an intimate bodily fluid caused public outrage and revulsion. Within the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA), these women were initially discouraged from taking part in the same protest as their male counterparts. Even in an armed group such as the IRA who were engaged in what they perceived as a revolution, the Gender Revolution was slow to happen.

Even in an armed group such as the IRA who were engaged in what they perceived as a revolution, the Gender Revolution was slow to happen.

An important aspect of the conflict and one that has had legacy repercussions today is distrust of the state and the police. This led to "community policing" and community specific "justice" measures put in place, the effects of which are still felt today in many communities. Incidents from 'The Troubles' include the horrific tarring and feathering of women who were believed to have relationships with the police or the British army, kangaroo courts to deal with sexual crime, and disappeared state informants who were taken from their families and never returned. The impact of these tragic crimes still resonates today, and women were often the victims, directly or indirectly.

Nearly two decades after the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, the failure of the British government to recognise the nature of the conflict in Northern Ireland has prevented the formal recognition of UNSCR 1325, which leaves the wounds of many women festering. The UN Security Council Resolution formally recognises women's right to participate in all aspects of conflict prevention and resolution, post conflict reconstruction and peace building. During an inquiry set

up to explore the implementation of the resolution, many witnesses spoke of issues relating to women's safety, fear of crime, sexual violence and domestic violence and how these fears are still widely held today. In the 'post-conflict' era, the issues of women remain neglected by the power-sharing government born from the Good Friday Agreement. The Northern Ireland Executive's treatment of women has only exacerbated these grievances. A lack of a Gender Equality Strategy (2006 – 2016), no domestic violence specific legislation, no Single Equality Act, no reproductive rights and a lack of women in public life are a damning legacy of conflict and gender inequality that highlight the Stormont government's unwillingness to address the lack of equality for women in Northern Ireland. In what is symptomatic of many post-conflict regions across the world, the peace process in Northern Ireland was created for men and is still dominated by men.

In the 'post-conflict' era, the issues of women remain neglected by the power-sharing government born from the Good Friday Agreement.

For a society to truly move on from conflict, every citizen must be included in the recovery and formal recognition for women during and after the conflict must be properly explored and implemented. If there is no political will to implement UNSCR 1325 then a potential solution must be put forward, and there is one which this writer agrees with: re-write the Gender Equality Strategy to address the five themes of prevention, participation, protection, reconstruction and legacy, and advocacy in support of women, peace and security.





Forcibly sterilized Roma women in the Czech Republic keep fighting for justice.

How long can the Czech government ignore their claims?

Zuzana Pavelková - Mladí zelení (Czech Young Greens)

Estimates suggest that between several dozen up to several thousand Roma women have been forcibly sterilized in former Czechoslovakia and later Czech Republic between 1970's and early 2000. Having been subjected to long-term multiple discrimination, ranging from (semi)-institutionalized practices of exclusion from the education system, job market or the housing market to stereotypical presentation in the media and public discourse and low or almost no representation in politics, only a handful of Roma women have had the opportunity to speak up against the wrongdoings they have been subjected to. The continued denial of justice in the area of reproductive health and rights is particularly flagrant in a country which has actively participated in Porajmos, the Roma holocaust during WWII, and which has yet failed to remove the pig farm standing in place of the former concentration camp. Without justice, any policies aiming at Roma inclusion the EU is so keen to promote in Central and Eastern Europe are deemed to fail.

From 1970's to 1990's: between Eugenics and "just racism"

Forced sterilisations appear to have been relatively widespread in Czechoslovakia's public hospitals before the regime change in 1989. The practice resulted from the controversial Sterilisation Decree from early 1970's, which - coupled with a programme of financial incentives - resulted in some of the local authorities' assumption they have now assumed "a mandate to sterilize."¹ However, also in the new, democratic Czechoslovakia which strived to establish itself as a human rights observing entity on the world scene, the abhorrent practices continued in some of the country's local hospitals long after 1991, when the Decree was repealed. The latest case of forcible sterilisation was reported to the European Roma Rights Centre in 2007².

1 Věra Sokolová, "Planned Parenthood Behind the Curtain: Population Policy and Sterilization of Romani Women in Communist Czechoslovakia, 1972-1989," *The Anthropology of East Europe Review* 23, no. 1 (2005): 83.

2 "Coercive Sterilisation of Romani Women - ERRC.org," accessed February 27, 2017, <http://www.errc.org/article/coercive-sterilisation-of-romani-women/3843>.

While the legal situation on sterilisations and informed consent evolved, accounts collected by several dissidents from the Charta 77 group before 1989 and various non-governmental organizations from the beginnings of early 1990's reveal recurrent patterns of practice. Typically, sterilisations would be carried out when women visited the hospital in order to give birth. They would not be properly informed about the procedure and its consequences, with consent being lured from them in particularly stressful circumstances or by other deceitful means. Cases were reported where women were convinced to sign consent forms believing that sterilisation was a necessary or even life-saving treatment. In other cases, underage women were forced to sign without their guardians being present. Some accounts reveal instances of signing while still in labour or otherwise under pressure. In several cases Roma women were promised significant financial payments if they undergo sterilisation. And in possibly most appalling of the cases, women who visited hospitals for regular checks or in order to deliver birth went home without being informed about being sterilized at all³.

The numbers of forcibly sterilized vary among the reports. As many of the women lack effective access to justice, do not have trust in public authorities or may not even know they have been sterilized, the numbers can remain only estimates. In the course of his own investigation in early 2000, the Ombudsman suggested that thousands women may have been sterilized since 1972. In his 2005 report for which he received about 87 complaints, the Ombudsman came to the conclusion that sterilisations committed before 1991 were directly inspired by Eugenics and recommended non-judicial compensations. For victims of forced sterilisation after 1991, he recommended to bring criminal and civil claims against the hospital personnel⁴. Looking backwards, the distinction proves not only less viable but also impractical. It is not only evident that state-sponsored racism is one of the main causes for the continuation of the

practice after 1991, as it remains widespread in the Czech society and is thus embedded in its public institutions and their practices. Judicial claims have only rarely proven successful in practice.

Why judicial approaches fail: ill-treatment but no discrimination?

As most other legal systems, the Czech criminal and civil law operates with so-called statutory limitations. These require the claimants to bring action within three years after the incidents at stake take place. Otherwise, the claim is deemed time-barred. The institute of statutory limitations has its justification. It would be impractical if people could flood courts with minor claims years after the events have passed, where evidence may have gone lost and memory of those involved is fading.

Nevertheless, in the cases of forcibly sterilized Roma women, the statutory limitation has amounted to at times unsurmountable obstacle to seek justice. Having been misled by the medical personnel, the women may become aware of the precise nature of the consequences only years later. Based on their past experiences, they may have also good reasons not to trust public authorities. They may be hesitant to consider filing an official complaint or to even seek assistance of NGOs in the first place. Some of them may be also unaware about the legal remedies available to them. Moreover, class and educational background are likely to play an important role in the women's ability to seek support.

While the statutory limitation enables only for limited remedies within the domestic legal system, three Czech cases were so-far brought to the European Court of Human Rights. Roma have been of particular concern to the Court, following the accession of Central and Eastern European countries to the Council of Europe in early 1990's. In the Court's language, Roma are to be considered as a "particularly vulnerable group." While the expression may sound strange for those particularly sensitive towards victimization, this simply means that the Court will undertake a more rigorous assessment of the alleged human rights violations⁵.

Two of the three cases concerning the Czech Republic ended up with a friendly settlement between the government and the applicant⁶, with

3 "HISTORICKÉ OKÉNKO: Dokument Charty 77 'Opostavení Cikánů-Rómů v Československu', Z Prosince 1978 - Romea.cz," accessed March 4, 2017, <http://www.romea.cz/cz/zpravy/historicke-okenko-dokument-charty-77-o-postaveni-cikanu-romu-v-ceskoslovensku-z-prosince-1978>; Human Rights Watch, *Struggling for Ethnic Identity: Czechoslovakia's Endangered Gypsies*, A Helsinki Watch Report (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1992); Center for Reproductive Rights and Poradňa pre občianske a ľudské práva, *Body and Soul: Forced Sterilization and Other Assaults on Roma Reproductive Freedom in Slovakia* (New York, NY: Center for Reproductive Rights, 2003); European Roma Rights Center, ed., *Ambulance Not on the Way: The Disgrace of Health Care for Roma in Europe* (s.l: European Roma Rights Centre, 2006); "Coercive Sterilisation of Romani Women - ERRC.org"

4 Veřejný Ochránce Práv (VOP) [Public Defender of Rights], "Final Statement of the Public Defender of Rights in the Matter of Sterilisations Performed in Contravention of the Law and Proposed Remedial Measures," 2014, 3.

5 See e.g. "[A]s a result of their turbulent history and constant uprooting the Roma have become a specific type of disadvantaged and vulnerable minority [and] therefore require special protection." D.H. and Others v the Czech Republic, App. No. 57325/00, (2007) ECHR, par. 182.

6 R.K. v the Czech Republic, App. No. 7883/08, ECHR. Ferenčíková v the Czech Republic, App. No. 21826/10, ECHR.

the third remaining pending at the moment⁷. Nevertheless, some important lessons can be learned from a series of similar cases relating to Slovakia. The Court has recognized the severity of the human rights violation at stake by bringing the victim's claims within the ambit of art. 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights – prohibition of torture, inhumane or degrading treatment⁸. In fact, treating forced sterilisations as a violation of art. 3 which is an absolute right and one of the most crucial rights under the Convention, the Court could have hardly afforded the victims a higher level of protection within the existing Convention framework. The Court has thus sent a clear signal to the member states that forced sterilisation is under no circumstances acceptable within the European legal space.

Beyond individual claims: towards non-judicial mechanisms

Admittedly, some minor improvements could be observed on the domestic level in the past eight couple of years. In 2011, the government adopted a new Act on Specific Health Services. This introduced several safeguards against forced sterilisation, including guidelines for medical staff on how to obtain informed consent and how to consult the permanent nature of the treatment with their patients. Nevertheless, it appears that even the current regulation leaves significant gaps and Roma advocates have in particular criticized the law for not involving a proper definition of informed consent in the first place⁹.

In addition to that, in 2009 the government has for the first time ever issued public apologies¹⁰. In 2009 and again in 2012, the Czech Government's Council on Human Rights – a body under the Office of the Government of the Czech Republic involving NGO representatives and governmental officials – called upon the government to work out a specific plan for indemnity¹¹. Following

the government's inaction, the Czech Helsinki Committee submitted to the Ministry of Justice its own action plan proposal in 2014, its main feature being the abolishment of the distinction between the pre-1989 and post-1989 period. And chances for improvement did look promising back in 2014, as the head of the Helsinki Committee, Anna Šabatová, got appointed the Ombudswoman and Jiří Dienstbier (Social Democrats – ČSSD) became the Minister for Human Rights following the elections in late 2013. Both promised to make forced sterilisations their top priority¹².

The establishment of a compensation mechanism has proven a thorny issue in the Czech political context,

Nevertheless, the establishment of a compensation mechanism has proven a thorny issue in the Czech political context, as not even all members of Dienstbier's own party would be ready to back his proposal¹³. The Draft Law on Compensation submitted in February 2015 envisaged that the claims would be reviewed by a special independent commission, composed of at least one practicing lawyer, a practicing gynecologists, one social worker and six other individuals. Each forcibly sterilized women would be awarded an official apology and compensations around 300 000 CZK (approx. 10.000 EUR). In addition, they would be entitled to free of charge rehabilitation or artificial fertilisation. The law would be applicable to women sterilized between 1966 and 2012 when the new Act on Specific Health Services entered into force¹⁴.

These plans got scratched as the government quickly rejected the law, arguing the state was not involved in the practices and that women who were subjected to such treatment can seek justice with the domestic courts¹⁵. Hereby, the government clearly ignored the practical difficulties posed by the statutory limitation. Assuming that as of the amended Act on Specific Health Services from

7 Maděrová v the Czech Republic, App. No. 32812/13, ECHR, case communicated on 26 June 2015.

8 V.C. v Slovakia, App. No. 18968/07 (2011) ECHR. N.B. v Slovakia, App. No. 29518/10 (2012) ECHR. I.G. and Others v Slovakia, App. No. 15966/04 (2013), ECHR.

9 "Marek Szilvási: Snad Vláda Přestane Hazardovat S Reputací Země. Boj O Odškodnění Za Sterilizace Nekončí. - Romea.cz," accessed February 27, 2017, <http://www.romea.cz/cz/zpravodajstvi/marek-szilvasi-snad-vlada-prestane-hazardovat-s-reputaci-zeme-boj-o-odskodneni-za-sterilizace-nekonci#15>.

10 Vláda České republiky [Government of the Czech Republic], "Usnesení vlády České republiky [Decision of the Government of the Czech Republic] No. 1424," November 23, 2009.

11 Rada vlády pro lidská práva [Czech Government's Council on Human Rights], "Podnět Rady vlády ČR pro Lidská Práva Ke Sterilizacím Žen v ČR Prováděným v Rozporu S Prámem [Resolution of the Czech Government's Council on Human Rights Relating to the Sterilisation of Women against the Law]" (Úřad vlády České republiky [Office of the Government

of the Czech Republic], February 17, 2012), <https://www.vlada.cz/cz/ppov/rp/cinnost-rady/zasedani-rady/zasedani-rady-dne-17--unora-2012-98737/>.

12 European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), Coercive and Cruel: Sterilisation and Its Consequences for Romani Women in the Czech Republic (1966-2016) (Budapest: European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), 2016), 36–37, <http://www.errc.org/cms/upload/file/coercive-and-cruel-28-november-2016.pdf>.

13 "Marek Szilvási: Snad Vláda Přestane Hazardovat S Reputací Země. Boj O Odškodnění Za Sterilizace Nekončí. - Romea.cz."

14 Úřad vlády České republiky [Office of the Government of the Czech Republic], "Návrh Věcného Záměru Zákona O Odškodnění Protiprávně Sterilizovaných Osob [Draft Law on the Compensation of Illegally Sterilized Individuals]," accessed March 6, 2017, <https://apps.odok.cz/veklep-detail?>

15 "Marek Szilvási: Snad Vláda Přestane Hazardovat S Reputací Země. Boj O Odškodnění Za Sterilizace Nekončí. - Romea.cz."



2012 the practice was probably to a large extent put on hold, most of the cases in question would be already time-barred in 2015. Consequently, ways for seeking justice on the domestic level will remain closed at least until the next legislature period. Such result is clearly unacceptable. For the Roma women and their allies, the question poses what next?

Justice will be won through cross-class, minority-majority alliances

In the past 15 years numerous human rights bodies have assessed or have been assessed with the matter of sterilisations. All have denounced the practice, requiring the Czech state to ensure non-repetition as well as due compensation¹⁶. Most recently, in February 2016, the European Roma Rights Centre and the League of Human Rights have launched yet another a joint complaint on behalf of six applicants under the Convention on the Eliminations of All Forms of Discrimination against Women¹⁷. Nevertheless, while the decisions of international bodies are relevant for furthering the domestic debate, the experience shows they will hardly be enough to enable for an institutionalized compensation mechanism.

What we really need are cross-class, minority-majority alliances which will upheld the momentum and encourage the women to continue their struggle.

I personally believe that justice, or at least the kind of emancipatory, participatory justice I wish to see in the world, can only be brought if more Roma women get collectively organized and stand up for their rights. In the past, the government has compensated political victims of the previous regime with no statutory limitations. There is no reason why Roma women should not be entitled to the same treatment. In this regard, successful claims in the international area can have potentially empowering effects. But what we really need are cross-class, minority-majority alliances which will upheld the momentum and encourage the women to continue their struggle. As a network subscribing to feminist politics, we can and we have to be Roma women's primary allies. A good starting point could be to bring the voices of the oppressed at the debate. I can thus only hope that one of the next articles in the Ecosprinter will be written by the survivors of this outrageous treatment.

16 For a detailed overview see European Roma Rights Centre (ERRC), *Coercive and Cruel: Sterilisation and Its Consequences for Romani Women in the Czech Republic (1966-2016)*, 18–19.

17 *Ibid.*, 21.

Finish the Finnish Mandatory Service

Young men are still forced to take up military training or face jail-time in Finland and other EU countries. Male draft is a gendered issue, and one not even close to being resolved.

Simo Raittila - Ecosprinter Editorial Board

Conscription (also: draft), is the forced enlistment of people into national service, most commonly military service. Amnesty International holds conscientious objectors, people who refuse to take up arms due to their beliefs, to be prisoners of conscience if imprisoned due to their beliefs. They have also stated that 'the excessive length of the alternative civilian service is punitive and discriminates against people who choose not to perform military service on the basis of their conscientiously held beliefs'.

In the European Union, conscription is still enforced in Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Lithuania, and Norway. I

In the European Union, conscription is still enforced in Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Lithuania, and Norway. In some of them most – for example, generally over 70 % in Denmark – are volunteers. Globally conscription is not always state-led and even children are forced to wage war in many areas: adult male conscription in peaceful countries is not as big a human rights violation, but a human rights violation nonetheless.

My perspective is from Finland. The country is celebrating its 100-year nationhood in 2017 mainly by remembering its wars. Recently, we saw the Minister of Finance cancel a celebratory

coin showing a civil war era recreation, in which a nationalist shooting squad executed leftists (on a sidenote: another cancelled coin showed the drowned Syrian refugee child Alan Kurdi). In the meantime, little voice has been raised to remember Arndt Pekurinen, whose continued refusal to take up arms led him to hunger strikes, multiple prison sentences, and finally to be executed during WW2, in 1941.

Ten years before his murder a law – dubbed Lex Pekurinen in his name – created an alternative to military service. People currently doing civil service work typically in NGOs, churches, and the government's ministries. In Pekurinen's day civil service was an option only in peace-time. Following complaints from the UN, the law was changed in 2008 to allow for civil service also in times of crisis.

A feminist issue

Contrary to what one might read from some not-so-feminist online sources, the feminist position should be clear: a person's gender should not matter when thinking about forced labour. For example, The Feminist Association Unioni (established in 1892) has demanded at multiple times an end to conscription. Overall, feminist organisations tend to often also be antimilitarist.

In 2014 there was a citizens' initiative to end the Finnish conscription. Its name 'OHION'

translates roughly as "IT'S OVER" playing with a common celebratory slogan of people who've finished their military training. During the campaign, Unioni's then Secretary General Milla Pyykkönen noted that equality would not come closer if the service was made mandatory for non-males too. Instead, the aim should be a situation in which everyone is better off.

Some have argued that women should be exempt from service due to them carrying and caring for children, but this is a terrible argument. First, not all women become mothers and not only women should carry the burdens of care. Above all, having children should not be something they owe to the state, but a free choice.

Unsurprisingly, the 6–12-month service, plays a part in recreating normative gender norms and toxic masculinity.

Traditionally military service has been held to make 'boys to men'. Unsurprisingly, the 6–12-month service, plays a part in recreating normative gender norms and toxic masculinity. Putting men for months in a situation that teaches them to value strength and male power hierarchies can make them more misogynistic, homophobic, and conservative. It is an outrage, that for example in the US military, sexual violence has for

long run rampart. Ending male draft would not leave only men better off but society in general.

Greens yielding under pressure?

Lithuania which abolished draft in 2008, brought it back in 2015. Sweden, which gave up conscription in 2010 and made the law regarding it gender-neutral, decided on bringing it back in May – this even with a Green blessing as Sweden’s Miljöpartiet de Grönä is in a weak minority government with the Social Democrats.

Changing the way Finland would deal with outside threats is currently seen as too radical. Many of the Greens’ members have changed their views (possibly in fear of Russia).

The ‘OHI ON’ citizens’ initiative described multiple alternatives to mandatory service, one of which was a model by a men’s organisation working inside the Finnish Greens. The model would be based on 18–21-year-old peoples own will to take part regardless of their gender. Money saved from training less people would be used to compensate the one’s taking part and modernizing the defence force. The model is very similar to the one currently being downgraded from in Sweden.

Changing the way Finland would deal with outside threats is currently seen as too radical. Many of the Greens’ members have changed their views (possibly in fear of Russia). Also, the party has managed to show expertise in these issues (through for example the peace work by presidential candidate Pekka Haavisto) – expertise to

which, in some people’s view, pacifism or even non-mandatory service do not fit. People say things like ‘the timing is wrong’.

With tensions risen between Russia and the EU, the Greens in Finland have been quieter on their official stance to end mandatory service. The party has held for long that conscription should first be made more selective (fewer people but more fitting for service would be selected each year) and gender-neutral, but that the aim should always be to end involuntary service altogether.

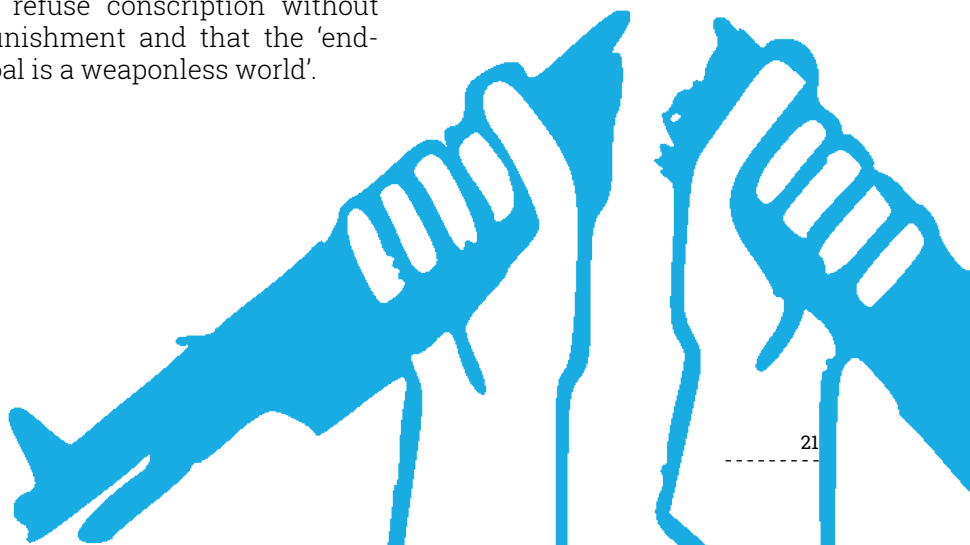
Last Autumn, when the Party Council discussed a paper on foreign and security policy, the chair Ville Niinistö expressed a strong view that the party’s stance should not be ‘advertised’ sparking outrage especially in the young Green members of the council. There was a fear that, if included in the policy paper, the party’s view on military service would be the only thing taken up from the paper by the press.

The fear about the media came true. The meeting voted in favour of a strict stance demanding completely voluntary service. And while the 18-12 vote against just ‘taking steps’ and ‘looking into’ might seem insignificant, it indicates a wider disagreement: should the Greens bend on their antimilitaristic and liberal values when faced with a changed security situation or do we uphold our values even now? The Finnish Green Youth stress that people should be able to refuse conscription without punishment and that the ‘end-goal is a weaponless world’.

The Finnish Green Youth stress that people should be able to refuse conscription without punishment and that the ‘end-goal is a weaponless world’.

The party meeting coming up in June will also vote on an initiative to change the party’s position to be expressively more ‘long-term’: the goal would still exist in principle but the party would only aim for more minor changes in the coming years. The initiative argues that the ‘almost all Finns see issues of national defence as issues of survival, not through equality-thinking’.

But is it too radical for Greens to think that people should not be punished for refusing to take up arms? Is it too radical to uphold human rights? When many countries, including Finland, already have voluntary military service for women, it’s hard to find reason in adding to the compulsion by including women in the forced defence force. Rather, men too should have the undeniable right to choose not to kill, even in times of war.



SELF-DETERMINATION, VESSELS AND FISH OIL

Western Sahara is one of the last colonies to be still on the UN list for non-self governing territories. It was occupied by Morocco in 1975, after Spain's withdrawal, which resulted in a war between Morocco, Mauritania and the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic – proclaimed by the Front Polisario in 1976, and the exodus of the Sahrawi people to Algeria, where they still live in the refugee camps of Tindouf. Mauritania withdrew its claims in 1979, but Morocco annexed the territory and has deployed a policy of economic colonization ever since.

Now, 40 years have passed, and the area has been re-populated with Moroccan people, who have settled there attracted by the boosting phosphate and fish oil industries. And the celebration of a referendum for self determination is more complicated than ever before.

But there is still hope. And it has come in the form of an European Court of Justice (ECJ) Council v. Polisario ruling issued on the 21st December 2016, where the Court annulled the application of the EU-Morocco Liberalization and Association Agreements to the territory of Western Sahara, paving the way to economic self-determination. For the first time in years, there is a meaningful debate on the European level about the implications of doing business with an occupying power, like Morocco is. And the fact that the EU and its Member States are trading with Western Sahara's resources and buying them to Moroccan companies is in the Greens' view helping Moroccan occupation of Western Sahara.

We are now waiting for the amendment of the EU-Morocco treaties, but, unless it has the consent of the Sahrawi people as expressed by their lawful representative, the Front Polisario, it will not be acceptable from a legal point of view. Until then, we will continue to expose the illegal trade with Western Sahara goods, which continue to arrive to our ports in vessels like the Key Bay, the BBC Magellan or, more recently, the Albiz.

My Day as an FYEG Intern

Being a FYEG intern can sometimes be challenging in terms of time managing and workload. However, it is a very enriching experience, as it allows you to see and take part in the whole process of policymaking, from advocacy and training to the actual writing of legal drafts in the European Parliament.

As an intern in the Green Group, I am working under the supervision of Raphael Fisera, the group's advisor for Human Rights and International Relations with Northern Africa and the Mediterranean region. I follow mainly the Western Sahara file, which touches many different committees, from DROI (Human Rights) and AFET (Foreign Affairs) to AGRI (Agriculture), PECH (Fisheries) and INTA (International Trade). Since most of our files are related to international relations in broad, the work I have to do is not as strictly legal as most of the other interns'. Instead, it is a more political one, working on statements, letters and parliamentary questions, rather than amendments.

9:00 - I go to the European Parliament and check the agenda for the day with my supervisor. As I work in AFET and DROI issues, we do not have as many legislative deadlines, but, on the other hand, it is usual to have overlapping meetings and unforeseen events altering our plans.

12:30 - I go for lunch with the other interns at the EP canteen. We are a group of around 30 interns (to MEPs and the Group), and there is a very friendly atmosphere.

13:30 - I go to FYEG. There I have mainly been working on the preparations for our General Assembly in Madrid in May. However, I also do other things and help in any of the other tasks, like helping with policy statements.

18:00 - I normally meet other interns and we go for a drink or for a walk. I try to spend the mornings in the Parliament and the afternoons in FYEG, to make sure that I have all my tasks on track. But it is not a strict schedule. The work in the Parliament is very different in intensity from one week to the next, depending on its colour:

1) Pink week: Committee week. These are the busiest ones for me. It is when the different committees meet to discuss different issues and then send them to the plenary.

2) Red week: Strasbourg week. Normally, it is not busy for me in Brussels, as my supervisor is in Strasbourg for the plenary. However, sometimes he needs an extra hand managing last-minute files.

3) Green week: Constituency week. The Parliament is empty and that is when we plan our work for the next committees, in absence of pressing deadlines.

I am very happy with the opportunities that this internship is giving me. In regards with the Western Sahara file, I try and coordinate FYEG's project Greening the Sahara with the Greens' actions in the Parliament. It is a perfect example of win-win co-operation, where FYEG can take care of more direct actions and civic engagement in the cause and the Green Group advances in the EU position on Western Sahara. So far, our approach is different in the sense that we have chosen to focus on natural resources and economic exploitation rather than more strictly human rights campaigns.

Most of our work is related to the European Court of Justice Ruling Council vs. Polisario of 21 December 2016. In that ruling, the ECJ states first, that Western Sahara should be regarded as a third party in the EU - Morocco agreements; second, that the prior consent of the Sahrawi people is needed for all economic activities regarding their territory and natural resources; third, that the Polisario is the rightful representative of the Sahrawi; fourth, it annuls the application of the EU-Morocco agreements to Western Sahara. Such ruling represents a huge step forward in the recognition of self-determination to the Sahrawi people and it is proving to be a useful tool in the positioning of the EU, albeit with strong resistance within the Commission and other groups in the Parliament.

MEET THE WRITERS



Michelle Delgado Van Demen, is a green pacifist activist who's path has crossed different countries from the Argentinian Patagonia to the Norwegian woods. Currently, she is in Brussels as Project Assistant for African-European Projects related to Security and Governance. Previously, she has been monitoring and analysing military budgets and European defense. Among her passions we can find facts, art and the search for bridges between communities, generations and genders. In FYEG, you can find her coordinating the Future of Europe Working Group and in her life planning to recreate Europe.



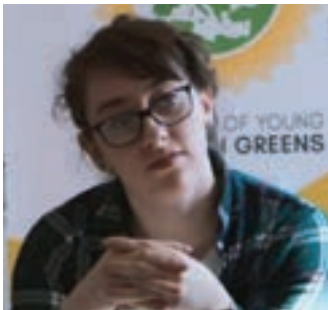
Morgan Henley currently works as Event Assistant for the European Green Party. She is originally from Jacksonville, Florida, USA, but has been living in Europe since 2010. Before coming to Brussels, she lived in both Paris, France and Prague, Czech Republic where she was working on her Master's studies in Political Science and International Relations. In this period, she became active with the Czech Young Greens and was elected to be on FYEG's Executive Committee. In this capacity, she worked on energy, climate, and global trade, which she is still passionate about today.



Irene Vivas Lalinde (1993, Valencia - Spain) is starting to develop a career in the field of public policy, focusing on human rights and environment. She currently lives in Maastricht, but her professional and academic experiences around the world have enriched her in many ways. She describes herself as a young European woman, deeply optimistic. She is volunteering in the Climate & Energy Working Group of FYEG and she is member of the Permanent Commission of the Spanish Young Greens. Despite the darkness of today's reality, Irene believes that concepts such as sustainable development or demasculinisation of politics can bring new opportunities to our worn down societies.



Fabian Wagner is a Global Justice activist passionate about Refugees, Human Rights and global justice. In FYEG he's been active in the working groups and the Ecosprinter. Besides that he worked for think tanks and international organisations in Africa, Latin America and South Asia. Currently he's fighting for land rights for indigenous peoples around the world for a human rights NGO in Berlin. Whenever he hasn't been online for more than a couple of hours he's probably working, studying or traveling somewhere in the jungle. His home base is Mainz in Germany.



Chloe Patterson is a Green Party activist from Northern Ireland and has studied law whilst at University. She was elected to two consecutive terms as a Student Officer in Queen's Students' Union, after which she took up a role working with the Green Party in Northern Ireland. Her political interests include post conflict societies, reproductive rights and gender politics.



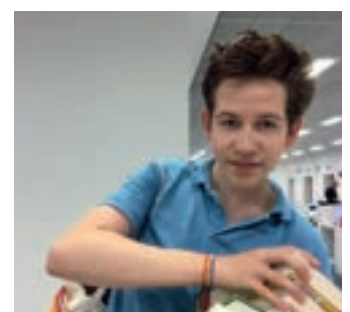
Paz Serra was born in Mexico but raised in Madrid. She holds a MD in Political Science by the Complutense University of Madrid, and specializes in International Affairs and Latin American studies. She has always been involved in political activism of any sort, especially working with migrants. She joined the Spanish Green movement in 2011. She's a member of Red Equo Joven's Permanent Commission and is also involved in their mother party Equo. She's part of the researching team at Spanish Green thinktank, Ecopolitica and the Migration WG at FYEG.



Zuzana Pavelková is member of Mladí zelení (Czech Young Greens). Having finished her B.A. degree in International Relation at Dresden University of Technology, she is at present pursuing an M.A. in Human Rights at the Central European University, Budapest. She likes to think law can be used as a tool for social change.



Simo Raittila is a member of the Green Party Council in Finland. Ten years ago, he was exempted from military service due to type-I diabetes. He is currently working as a PhD student in Sociology and as a journalist. He is a member of the Ecosprinter Editorial Board.



Jan Schmid is a 19 year-old pupil (not for long anymore) in German high school, fights for the acceptance of neurodiversity because of the experience of being autistic, loves a good malt beer.

THE PEACE & SECURITY ISSUE



STOP
SWARS

