



2009

2009
Annual Report

2000



European Liberal Forum 2009 Annual Report

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Letter from the President



Dear reader,

I am delighted to be able to present to you the 2009 Annual Report of the European Liberal Forum asbl (ELF), the European political foundation of the Liberal family.

The ELF is affiliated to the European Liberal Democrat Party (ELDR Party) and brings together Liberal think tanks, political foundations and institutes from all over Europe to observe, analyse and contribute to the debate on European public policy issues and the process of European integration.

The European Union is facing a number of major challenges, including the financial and economic crisis, migration and climate change. Within the ELF network, Liberal experts from all over Europe address these and other challenges by exchanging their ideas and expertise as well as developing Liberal policy recommendations. The ELF thereby offers Liberal policy approaches to EU decision-makers.

The ELF engages with citizens throughout Europe by organising conferences, seminars, workshops and summer academies to convey Liberal views on a wide range of European policy issues. Through its training activities the ELF is also committed to strengthening institutional capacity and, last but not least, to strengthening Liberalism in Europe.

By 2009, 28 member organisations from 18 different EU countries had become members of the ELF. Through their expert knowledge, their organisational capacities and their dedication, they have made a considerable contribution to the success of the ELF and made a unique Liberal contribution to European integration.

I am confident that the ELF will further evolve and grow in importance in the years to come.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Alexander Graf Lambsdorff". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Alexander Graf Lambsdorff MEP
President

Foreword by the Executive Director



The ELF Annual Report 2009 is designed to provide you with a comprehensive overview of the various activities undertaken by the association during its first full year of business. In 2009, ELF established itself as a thriving organisation. It organised 25 events and issued 12 publications providing liberal analysis, opinions and comments on a variety of European policy issues. This annual report features short summaries of a selection of ELF conferences, seminars and workshops as well as publications. It also lists all the events organised and publications released.

Throughout 2009, ELF facilitated regular exchanges between member organisations, thus widening and consolidating the liberal network across Europe. Under the auspices of ELF, member organisations were able to expand the scope of their activities at European level and execute joint pan-European projects in cooperation with fellow ELF members.

Working relationships with liberal policy makers, parliamentary groups and institutions were strengthened, resulting in the active participation and support of numerous liberal decision makers in ELF events, including Members of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats (ALDE) in the European Parliament, Members of national Parliaments and European Commissioners.

During the course of the year, ELF continued to establish further guidelines in terms of both content and structure to ensure target-oriented activities and common quality standards. In 2009, the stage was thus set for the effective functioning of ELF, allowing the association to continue to work successfully and to continue to make a liberal contribution to the debate on European public policy issues and European integration.

I hope you find this report both informative and inspiring.

Susanne Hartig
Executive Director



About us

Founded in the fall of 2007, the European Liberal Forum, asbl (ELF) is the non-profit European political foundation of the liberal family.

ELF brings together liberal think tanks, political foundations and institutes from around Europe to observe, analyse and contribute to the debate on European public policy issues and the process of European integration, through education, training, research and the promotion of active citizenship within the European Union.

The ELF currently has 28 member organisations

- Bertil Ohlin Institute | **Sweden**
- Centre Jean Gol | **Belgium**
- CentreForum | **United Kingdom**
- Centrum Liberálních Studií | Centre for Liberal Studies | **Czech Republic**
- Edistysmielisen tutkimuksen yhdistys r.y. e2 | think tank e2 | **Finland**
- European Liberal Youth | LYMEC | **pan-European**
- Fondazione Critica Liberale | **Italy**
- Forum för reformer och entreprenörskap
Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability | FORES | **Sweden**
- Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit
Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom | **Germany**
- Fundació Catalanista i Demòcrata | CatDem
Catalanist and Democrat Foundation | CatDem | **Catalonia, Spain**
- Fundacija Libertas | **Slovenia**
- Fundacja Klub Obywatelski | Civic Club Foundation | **Poland**
- Fundacja Projekt: Polska | Foundation Project: Poland | **Poland**
- Haya van Someren Stichting | VVD International Foundation | **The Netherlands**
- Institute for Liberal Studies | **Romania**
- Kenniscentrum D66 | **The Netherlands**
- Kentro Fileleftherwn Meletwn | KEFIM | Liberty Forum of Greece | **Greece**
- Liberales Institut Österreich | **Austria**
- Lokus | **Finland**
- Movimento Liberal Social | **Portugal**
- Nadácia Liberálna spoločnosť | Liberal Society Foundation | **Slovakia**
- NOVUM – Inštitút za strateške in aplikativne študije
NOVUM – Institute for Strategic and Applied Research | **Slovenia**
- Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting | **The Netherlands**
- Prometheus Liberaal Kenniscentrum | Prometheus Liberal Knowledge Centre | **Belgium**
- Stichting Internationaal Democratisch Initiatief | IDI
International Democratic Initiative Foundation | IDI | **The Netherlands**
- Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy | SILBA | **Denmark**
- Swedish International Liberal Centre | SILC | **Sweden**
- Vsi Atvira visvomenė ir jos draugai | Open Society and its Friends | **Lithuania**

Board of Directors



Alexander Graf Lambsdorff MEP

President of the ELF | 2007 – present

Member of the European Parliament | 2004 – present

1st Vice President of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe | ALDE in the European Parliament | 2009 – present



Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck MEP

Vice President of the ELF | 2007 – present

Member of the European Parliament | 1994 – 1999, 2004 – present

President of the ELDR Party | September 2005 – present

Minister of State | 1995 – present



Dr. Thierry Coosemans

Treasurer of the ELF | 2008 – present

PhD in Political sciences | Université Libre de Bruxelles

Master in European Studies | Université Libre de Bruxelles

Advisor to leaders of the Mouvement Réformateur Party | Belgium

Coordinator of the Centre Jean Gol

Author of various publications concerning the European Parliament

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Selection of events

In 2009, the ELF organised twenty-five events with the support of its member organisations. These ranged from conferences to seminars to workshops to summer academies. They were held throughout the year in various locations across Europe and brought together European citizens from political, academic, young liberal, NGO, government organisation and media circles.

The events covered a wide range of major issues on the pan-European political and Liberal agenda. Subject areas included globalisation after the credit crunch, migration, secularisation processes in Europe, property rights in Eastern Europe, energy policies and EU-Russia relations.

In the following section, you can read reports of a selection of the major events in 2009.

Globalisation after the Credit Crunch

Type of event

Seminar

Dates

18 March 2009

14 July 2009

18 November 2009

Locations

Brussels | Belgium

London | UK

Barcelona | Catalonia, Spain

Supported by

CentreForum

With the support of CentreForum, the ELF organised three events on the financial and economic crisis in 2009. The first of the series was a seminar debate entitled: 'Can the G20 save globalisation?'. The seminar, which was held on **18 March 2009** in Brussels, addressed the key issues that were set to be debated at the G20 summit on 2 April 2009 in London.

The discussion panel comprised MEP Sharon Bowles (ALDE), the European Parliament's Chair for the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs; Andre Sapir, an influential economist and former advisor to the President of the European Commission; and Emil Paulis, Director of Financial Services Policy at the European Commission.

The process of globalisation is not irreversible. Instead, it is a pattern of cooperation which may well yet be reversed. With the spectres of financial retrenchment and economic nationalism beginning to rear their heads in Europe and America, the question of how the world can be saved from the type of globalisation from which it suffered at the beginning of the 20th century is becoming increasingly relevant. Globalisation has brought unprecedented growth worldwide, millions of people have been helped out of poverty thanks to it and economies open to trade have significantly outperformed closed economies. It is up to world leaders to ensure that these advantages are kept intact.

One important difference between our present situation and the situation at the beginning of the 20th century is that we have global institutions designed to encourage cooperation and compromise between nations. However, over the past couple of decades, these elements of global governance have become outdated. They fail to give emerging economies such as China and India their rightful place. Perhaps the most positive result of the global recession is that we find ourselves having a meeting of the G20 as opposed to a meeting of the G7. This signals a new willingness to engage in truly global governance rather than restrict talks to a group representing only 11% of the world's population.

The G20 meeting will not only be about the EU and the US. Asian economies will have their demands too. The G20 meeting is likely to establish a new equilibrium in the shifting balance of power between East and West. The media has focused on the supposed chasm between the priorities of the UK and US on the one hand and Europeans on the other. Sustaining global demand to stimulate economic recovery is the priority for the former two countries whilst the latter are pushing for more financial regulation to prevent another crisis. It is worth pointing out that the political will for regulatory reforms will soon evaporate. Therefore, the opportunity to put in place a credible new regulatory framework needs to be grasped immediately.

The need to agree on an economic recovery plan is clearly becoming more urgent. Although speakers at the ELF seminar pointed out that European countries have made a commitment to do whatever is necessary to restore growth, this has the proviso that any solution must ensure

that debt remains sustainable. There is disagreement about what level of debt is sustainable and whether actions taken by governments so far have already provided enough of a fiscal boost. There will also be a time lag before the effects of the boost become visible. Both financial and macroeconomic imbalances contributed to the crisis and both must be part of the solution. All the G20 countries agree on this to some extent. With so many demands on the table, there is potential for compromise.

The second seminar, entitled 'European finance after the crisis: Make up or break up?', was held in London on **14 July 2009**. The panel was made up of Willem Buiter from the London School of Economics, a founding member of the Monetary Policy Committee of the Bank of England and a regular commentator in the Financial Times; British MP Chris Huhne, a former MEP (ALDE); Professor H  l  ne Rey of the London Business School and columnist for the French financial daily Les Echos; and Nicolas V  ron, research fellow for the Bruegel think tank and columnist for the French financial daily La Tribune.

European Union leaders have failed to build a common response to the financial crisis, acting – to quote the International Monetary Fund – in an “unhelpfully diverse” manner. The fact that bank rescues have been uncoordinated has encouraged instability. The eurozone is creaking as its members’ economic interests diverge. Western governments are not doing enough to help member states in Central and Eastern Europe that are struggling to cope with high levels of debt and collapsing financial flows from the West. With regard to financial regulation, France and Germany want tax harmonisation while the UK is looking for integrated supervision and regulation. Should Europe build a common financial policy and can it do so?

The panel did not agree on the effectiveness of the EU's response to the financial crisis. Whereas Véron argued that the European Union has been effective in co-coordinating macroeconomic stabilisation programmes, Buiter stated that the "value added of Europe has been negligible" even for the purposes of macroeconomic stabilisation. Fiscal stimuli have been the sum of national programmes. However, they did agree that the financial rescue has been patchy and uncoordinated. Rey emphasised the EU's failure to use the crisis to create an international system of financial regulation. In her view, the EU is "wasting the crisis". She argued that regulation needs to become international as a consequence of globalisation.

The panel was also divided as to how far the fiscal costs of bank rescues should be shared between governments in the future. Rey argued that Europe needs to agree on ex ante rules for sharing the burden of cross-border banking insolvency. Buiters argued that, unless insolvency rules are clarified, European financial integration will go into reverse. Rey also suggested that national treasuries with financial institutions that pose a systemic risk should pay a tax to cover the externality. This money could be used in a crisis. Huhne was unconvinced that rescues of cross-border banks needed to be undertaken through EU-level institutions. He argued for a 'host-home regulation', which maintains fiscal independence by creating common rules about capital requirements for cross-border banks and clarifies the fiscal responsibilities of governments. While this may limit the level of European financial integration, Huhne concluded

that it is more politically feasible. Véron argued that an EU framework of regulation and supervision could be set up to monitor and rescue banks and that resources to rescue cross-border banks could be negotiated on an ad hoc basis.

The last seminar, entitled 'Can Europe build a new Global Economic order?', took place in Barcelona on **18 November 2009**. The panel was made up of MEP Wolf Klinz, (ALDE), who is Member of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Chair of the Special Committee on the Financial, Economic and Social Crisis; MEP Sharon Bowles, Chair of the Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs and Vice President of the ELDR Party; and Wolfgang Münchau from the Financial Times. The speakers discussed whether Europe could play a leading role in a 'G3' of the US, China and the EU or whether infighting will consign it to irrelevance.

Klinz predicted that it would be difficult to get back to stability and that there would be 10 to 14 years of low growth as debts and leverage worked their way out of the system. The issues facing policymakers now are that the US Congress and the European Parliament are moving in opposite directions with regard to the issues of fair value accounting, recapitalisation, regulation and how to reform credit ratings agencies. This may end up in a dangerous mismatch in different countries' regulations, which financial institutions might attempt to take advantage of.

Bowles laid out the key debates facing policy-makers. The first is how to deal with banks that have become too big to fail. Bowles noted that the US was considering a 'tax on size' by mandating progressive capital requirements. She thought that Europe should do the same and stressed that it needs a cross-border resolution regime – perhaps with all cross-border banks providing 'living wills' – so that it was clear where the fiscal responsibility lay for systemically important institutions.

Münchau argued that the G20 should start to operate more like the institutions of the EU – although he thought that this was unlikely. The G20 was good at emergency firefighting for the immediate crisis, in his view, providing a forum to encourage coordinated policy-making.



Spring Academies 2009: Europe in Practice

Type of event Academy

Dates

20–21 March 2009

3–4 April 2009

24–25 April 2009

Location Brussels | Belgium

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and ELDR Party

Europe is often said to be too theoretical, too abstract and too much about statistics. With little in the way of symbols, faces and identity, it is regarded as a bureaucratic apparatus far removed from its citizens. It is high time to change this perception! That is why the ELF organised three Spring Academies in 2009.

What do energy-saving lamps, the emergency phone number 112 or food labelling have in common? All three of them are EU ‘inventions’ that have a direct impact on EU citizens in every Member State. Other examples include the euro, a stable, practical and competitive currency; the Single Market, which has led to the elimination of customs duties as well as to more competition and lower prices; the Schengen Agreement, which means that there are no longer passport controls in EU countries that are party to this agreement; cohesion funds; Erasmus scholarships; and consumer protection. All of Europe’s citizens benefit from these achievements.

The main purpose of the Spring Academies was to provide participants with a practical insight into EU policy-making as well as to inform them about the specific achievements of MEPs from the ALDE Group in the European Parliament during its last legislature. In addition, the Academies were designed to help chart a path forward for Liberal policies in Europe. The participants were Liberal politicians, journalists, entrepreneurs and other Liberal stakeholders from all over Europe.

The Academies also gave participants the opportunity to exchange Liberal views with each other as well as with high-level European policy-makers such as MEP Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, President of the ELDR Party and Vice President of the ELF, and Siim Kallas, Vice President of the European Commission and former minister of Estonia.

MEP Alexander Graf Lambsdorff hosted the event in his role as President of the ELF. The Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom was represented by Dr. Jürgen D. Wickert, Director of International Political Dialogue, and Ulrich Niemann, Head of the Regional office of Central, East and Southeast Europe.

Neyts-Uyttebroeck talked about the role of the European Parliament in citizens’ daily lives. She underlined how important it is for politicians and the media to reach out to voters and to explain to them how much European Union decisions make a difference to their daily lives. Neyts-Uyttebroeck, who is also a member of the European Parliament’s Foreign Affairs Committee, took part in the discussion about the European Union’s Common Foreign and Security Policy.

Kallas gave a presentation about the global financial crisis. He emphasised that the financial crisis did not come about because the free market failed but rather because individual states

failed to regulate the free market. The EU has made some substantial achievements when it comes to market regulation and it should continue its efforts to safeguard free competition within the EU.

Dr. Stefan Melnik, a consultant on Liberalism in Germany, spoke about the strengths and weaknesses of the Liberals and suggested that Liberals should fight euroscepticism by presenting a 'united Europe' front and setting out all the achievements of the EU. He stressed how important it was for Liberals to stand up for their convictions by referring to Liberal principles and not by being antagonistic. He also moderated a debate about the participants' different views and experiences in politics.

The concept of the first Spring Academy was so successful that a second and a third Academy have since been organised.

MEPs Catherine Bearder, Nadja Hirsch, Britta Reimers, Marietje Schaake, Alexandra Thein and Ramon Tremosa, who are now members of ALDE, were among the participants.



The Influence of European Policy on the Local Level | Pt. 1

Type of event
Seminar | Part 1

Dates
14 – 16 May 2009

Location
The Hague, Utrecht, Den Bosch,
Rosmalen | The Netherlands

Supported by
VVD International Foundation

In the first part of the project, seven liberal partners from Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovenia met in The Netherlands.

Participants visited several projects in The Hague, for which Dutch municipalities had used funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), including: the old Caballero Factory, the Fokker Terminal and a renovated tram museum. The projects illustrated the way in which Dutch municipalities use European funds.

In Utrecht, among a number of issues that were discussed, Marianne Kallen, Alderwoman in the Municipality of Houten, and Jules Maaten, former VVD delegation leader in the European Parliament, explained to participants how and why Dutch mayors are appointed to office instead of being elected by their citizens.

The impact of European policy on the local level varies from country to country. For example, the Dutch often see European Union policies as a compulsory administrative task because they have already incorporated EU policy into their national policy. By contrast, Eastern European politicians regard EU policy more as an opportunity for their country because it will bring democratic change, economic change and access to a free internal market across the EU.

The session moderated by Uri Roshenthal, the leader of the opposition in the Dutch Senate, gave a more scientific and international comparative view of the topic. The main conclusion was that the impact of European Union policies on the local level is largely determined by the structure of the state. The more power is delegated to local governments in a given country, the more influence EU policies will have on the local level.

The Influence of European Policy on the Local Level | Pt. 2

Type of event
Seminar | Part 2

Dates
26 – 28 October 2009

Location
Bucharest, Otopeni,
Sinaia | Romania

Supported by
VVD International Foundation

In the second part of the project, some Dutch policy-makers paid a visit to Romania.

Dutch politicians were particularly interested to hear about Romania's flat tax (currently fixed at 16%), which Christian David, MP and former minister of administration and the interior, said has been key to the country's economic expansion. Ever since the introduction of the flat tax, many companies have moved from a grey tax status to a more transparent one. Others have been able to increase their cash flow and been able to make new investments.

In addition, more businesses have moved to Romania and consumers have increased their spending, in particular on real estate.

There was also a meeting with Andrei Chiliman, Mayor of District I of Bucharest, and Lucian Iliescu, Mayor of Giurgiu. In Giurgiu, a city on the banks of the Danube River, the Dutch delegation visited a new harbour that is seeking to generate more tourism and more trade. The harbour project is funded by the EU.

A meeting was organised between Dutch politicians and Vlad Oprea, Mayor of Sinaia, and other representatives of the local council, to exchange ideas on local initiatives that can contribute to the development of tourism in Sinaia. Later, there was a discussion about the differences between Dutch and Romanian local politics with Hans Sandee, a counsellor from the Embassy of the Kingdom of The Netherlands. Sandee commented on the political situation in Romania as it has evolved over the last six years. An important issue he raised was that of property rights, which have not yet been fully secured in Romania.

A debate in the Romanian Parliament was moderated by Betty de Boer, a local party leader from the VVD Groningen. De Boer noted that EU policy can slow down the execution of local projects due to its rules and precise requirements but also pointed out that EU funding can contribute to successful plans such as the Eemshaven harbour in Groningen.

There was also a debate about how to attract funding. This was moderated by Cristian Busoi, an MEP (ALDE) and a Member of the National Bureau of PNL, and Ionel Chirîta, President of the Local Leaders Organisation. Dutch politicians emphasised the importance of lobbyists in Brussels whereas the Romanians explained their difficulties in arranging a local budget for the required co-funding for EU-funded projects.

The Dutch politicians gained more insight into the organisation of other municipalities and learned about their main concerns. The Romanians learned how to deal with EU rules and EU funds as The Netherlands has in-depth experience with regard to the practical application of EU rules.



Migration – Europe's Challenge

Type of event

Seminar

Date

3 June 2009

Location

Stockholm | Sweden

Supported by

CentreForum and FORES

It is particularly important to put forward positive examples of immigration policies and successful integration at the moment, given that we are seeing strong xenophobic undercurrents in many European nations. Such positive examples can help Europeans learn from each other and from Canada, and thereby harness the economic and social gains from migration. The obvious gains that sometimes arise from successful immigration are much less in evidence in Europe than in North America.

Participants from various European countries therefore came to Sweden to exchange their knowledge and experience with Swedish policy-makers and civil society activists. Participants included a large number of ELF members, experts, Members of Parliament, ministry officials and representatives of organisations and journalists in Sweden.

Several studies on migration were analysed and discussed during the seminar.

In the British study, Alasdair Murray, Director of CentreForum, analysed the effect of policies on immigration. The British policy of being open to citizens from the post-enlargement EU Member States and the UK's points-based system (modelled on Canada's arrangements) has mostly been positive for Britain. In fact, unemployment among European immigrants was even lower than unemployment among British-born people, probably due to the flexibility of the UK's labour markets. The contribution to the British economy has been a net gain. This has occurred without there being any deliberate policy and took the authorities by surprise. Despite this positive example, anti-immigrant feelings have increased in the United Kingdom.

In the German study, Dr. Barbara Laubenthal from Ruhr University in Germany spoke about multiculturalism. Laubenthal stressed how important it is for people to be able to have double citizenship, which has not been possible in Germany. Double citizenship would help with the integration of migrants in Germany while at the same time acknowledging the realities of migrants' lives and their links with different countries. She added that we have to be careful not to over-emphasise formal language requirements, which may become a barrier to entry into the labour market and contribute to stigmatising migrant groups.

Martin Adahl, Director of FORES, presented the Swedish study. He underlined the importance of the reception and early integration of refugees. The mass migration to Sweden by Bosnian refugees during the Balkan wars in the 1990s showed that the involvement of civil society, flexibility of labour markets and the immediate availability of work are essential elements in a successful integration process.

Most European countries have problems with integration and loud anti-immigration voices in their public debates. This is in stark contrast with Canada. Although Canada has the same immigration levels as Europe and a comparable welfare system, there is hardly any public criticism. Furthermore, unemployment among immigrants in Canada is substantially lower than

in Europe. An explanation for these differences can be found in the successful Canadian 'points system' for economic migrants. The system was adopted in 1967 with the aim of focussing on finding immigrants with the right qualifications for the Canadian labour market.

Successful immigration is possible as long as immigrants have the incentives and opportunities to enter the labour market quickly. We should shift our 'integration' focus to economic and social participation instead of language and cultural adaptation. The state should support civil society in helping migrants to take part in society rather than try to manage the entire process by itself. Xenophobia often takes on a life of its own, irrespective of the numbers of migrants or their success in the workplace.



The Euro as an Instrument of Stability and Prosperity in a United Europe

Type of event

Academy

Dates

18 – 23 August 2009

Location

Jachranka | Poland

Supported by

Friedrich Naumann Foundation
for Freedom,
Civic Club Foundation and
VVD International Foundation

The aim of the event was to discuss various economic aspects of the European Union and to set out some Liberal approaches to the economic crisis and to the introduction and functioning of the euro. Liberals do not have that strong a voice in Eastern Europe, especially in Poland, where they do not have a party that really defines itself as 'Liberal'. The financial and economic crisis has put Europe in a difficult situation in which it is struggling to remain united. The crisis requires firm and coordinated action. Several Liberal-oriented politicians and researchers were therefore invited to provide participants with useful tools and arguments in order for them to gain a fuller understanding of the issues.

The focus of the discussions was on the mechanisms that control the functioning of the euro, such as: the criteria for the adoption of the currency; an overview of countries that have gained or lost out following the introduction of the euro; the reason why some countries see the introduction of the common currency as a threat to their monetary system while others perceive it as a great opportunity and, finally, several aspects concerning the economic and financial crisis.

Peter Cesnik, the Vice Chair of the Liberal Zares Party in Slovenia and an economic expert, discussed the introduction of the euro in Slovenia. Most Slovenians were convinced of the considerable advantages of the euro. Cesnik talked about all the aspects that have to be taken into account when a country introduces the euro. Slovenia was the first of the new Member States to introduce the common currency in 2007.

Mikolaj Dowgielewicz, a former Polish state secretary of the Committee for European Integration, addressed several aspects of the current economic situation, the economic crisis and its consequences for the EU. He underlined the importance of better and more coordination at the European level, for example via the European Central Bank and, in particular, with regard to fiscal policy. He also stated that the EU needs to take coordinated measures to fight the economic crisis. The agreement of all EU Member States is essential for this to happen.

Jan Mulder, a then Dutch MEP (ALDE) and a former treasurer of the European Parliament, described the sense of euroscepticism in The Netherlands and the need to implement and develop an appropriate coordination and information policy at all levels of authority, especially during a time of global economic crisis. The European Commission should, in his opinion, have more power and more influence in shaping the EU's financial policy.

The participants also gave presentations about their own countries or regions, taking into account the current economic situation, the introduction of the euro and economic relations with the EU. This was the basis for further discussion.

The event taught participants that the EU has failed to address the problem of the financial crisis. Leaders of major European states reacted with fear and started to introduce protectionist measures to protect their own country. However, such behaviour is only a temporary solution and does not address the problem of financial instability on a global scale. Therefore, we have to create mechanisms to coordinate the EU's financial policy together. This could be done by the European Commission in cooperation with the European Central Bank.

Apart from these conclusions, the Union has to make sure that it treats its members equally. It cannot make a distinction between those who are allowed to break all the rules and those who are not. Furthermore, as far as the introduction of the euro is concerned, it is very important to pick the right date for accession, to prepare for a worst case scenario, to create sufficient administrative capacity, to communicate openly and honestly with the public and to cooperate closely with non-governmental organisations.



The Future of Individual Participation in European Politics

Type of event
Seminar

Dates
1 – 4 October 2009

Location
Lisbon | Portugal

Supported by
LYMEC and
Movimento Liberal Social

Although the European integration process continues to deepen, political activity still takes place almost exclusively at the national level. In a 21st century Europe, this division by country seems rather outdated. Each political group in the European Parliament is made up of national parties and there is no other way of influencing European politics than through their national equivalents.

Fortunately, most European countries do have Liberal parties and Liberal youth organisations, but a few do not. We should therefore ask ourselves how individual Liberals can participate directly in European politics if they do not have a Liberal party at state level. In other words, how can we plug the gap between individual European citizens and the supranational political structures in Brussels?

To find an answer to this question, 40 young Liberals from all over Europe travelled to Lisbon for a three-day seminar on individual participation in European politics. The participants included young people from different member organisations of LYMEC, individual members of LYMEC and young individuals who take an active role in society. The seminar consisted of workshops, discussions and expert talks.

In the first few sessions, participants had to come up with suggestions for individual participation, such as: petitions, lobbying, protesting and letter writing. Almost all the suggestions were suitable for the local, national and European level. However, there was some concern among participants about the effectiveness of these instruments at the international level given that the decision-maker is that much further away.

Experts representing various civil society organisations, such as Amnesty International and the Portuguese homosexual movement Opus Gay, talked about how their organisations had



brought about a change in individual participation. The participants made a lot of comments about the experts' lectures, which resulted in some interesting discussions.

One of the workshops was dedicated to LYMEC's Individual Membership Section (IMS). This section aims to plug the gap in terms of the individual's direct involvement in the political process at an international level. It is targeted at people who have no member organisation in their home country; who have a Liberal family with very different views; who are perhaps living or studying abroad and do not want to get involved in local or national politics, or for those who have member organisations with a certain age restriction. The idea is that IMS members can subscribe for seminars and other activities and that they have the opportunity to be elected as a LYMEC delegate. The workshop was mainly used as a brainstorming session for the promotion of IMS and the development of its benefits in order to attract more members. It was facilitated by LYMEC's Vice President Alexander Plahr.

The seminar achieved its main goal by successfully launching a debate on this important topic. Several participants decided to become active as individuals at the European level.

Liberty and Civil Society

Type of event

Workshop

Dates

23 – 25 October 2009

Location

Bratislava | Slovakia

Supported by

Friedrich Naumann Foundation
for Freedom and
Liberal Society Foundation

The main aim of this event was to discuss various civil rights' issues, such as the right to freedom of religion and the protection of minorities.

Over a hundred participants from the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy and Slovakia participated in lectures, panel discussions and workshops. The event was chaired by distinguished Slovak Liberal philosophers and policymakers. Participants included young people from Mladi Liberali (a Slovak Liberal youth organisation), students, members from political parties and a few young scholars from the leading free market think tank in Slovakia, the F. A. Hayek Foundation.

Major speakers at the seminar included Pavol Freso, Governor of the Bratislava region, Klara Orgovanova, the former cabinet's plenipotentiary for Roma communities, Dr. Borek Severa, Head of the Eastern European office of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and Jan Oravec, President of the F. A. Hayek Foundation.

During the informal introduction, Matus Posvanc from the F. A. Hayek Foundation talked about Liberal ethics, Martin Chren from the F. A. Hayek Foundation gave a lecture on the moral transition of a Post-Communist Society and Stanislav Fort of Mladi liberali organised a 'political game', trying to come up with some definitions of Socialism versus Liberalism.

Four representatives from different political parties discussed civil liberties issues such as: discrimination, freedom of speech, abortion, the legalisation of soft drugs, the separation of church and state and registered partnerships between same sex couples. The representatives were Richard Sulik, Chair of the Liberal Sloboda and Solidarita Party (a new Liberal party), Pavol Freso from the SDKU-DS Party (Conservatives), Daniel Lipsic, a former minister of justice, and Edita Pfundtner, Vice Chair of the Most-Hid ethnic Hungarians party. The latter is the Party for Hungarian and Slovak Cooperation as 'Hid' means 'Bridge'.



According to Slovak Constitutional Law, the state is not guided by any religion. However, the church in Slovakia is very dependent on the state budget and almost all priests and church dignitaries are on the government's payroll. Participants proposed the introduction of a special 'church tax' or 'tax assignation'. In this case, a taxpayer can decide whether to donate a certain percentage of their taxes to the church or to charity.

This could be the most important step towards a complete separation of church and state in Slovakia. Furthermore, the state should also return church property that was confiscated by the Communist government in the past.

Building a Partnership with the East: Relations between the European Union and Russia

Type of event
Conference

Date
7 November 2009

Location
Warsaw | Poland

Supported by
Friedrich Naumann Foundation
for Freedom and
Civic Club Foundation

The great English statesman Winston Churchill once said that one should look at Russia from various perspectives, not only from the official one or those you get from your first impressions. This principle is still valid today with respect to relations between a community such as the European Union and Russia.

The conference focussed on issues that make it difficult for the EU to approach Russia and was split into two podium discussions that addressed political and economic issues.

MEP Kristiina Ojuland took part in the first podium discussion. Ojuland is an MEP (ALDE), a Member of the European Parliament's Delegation to Russia as well as ALDE Shadow Rapporteur on EU – Russia issues, and a former Estonian minister of foreign affairs. Ojuland said that the EU is divided when it comes to its relations with Russia and that this division is due to the nature of the EU as an organisation made up of nation states. It is often very difficult for EU Member States to look beyond their own aspirations and to work together for the common good, especially when dealing with such a difficult partner as Russia. In her opinion, Russia is still not a country with a Liberal democracy in the European sense. She agrees with the assertion that the Kremlin "needs an enemy" in order to both centralise and maintain power. Ojuland pointed in particular to two potential areas of cooperation at the international level for the EU and Russia: Afghanistan and the Middle East.

The Polish journalist Krystyna Kurczab-Redlich, who is also known as the 'Polish Politkovskaya' for her uncompromising statements on Russia, is a foreign correspondent for the Polish media and reported on the war in Chechnya. Kurczab-Redlich's comments triggered a lively discussion. She expressed strong criticism of the political situation in Russia by referring to the highly restricted freedom of its political parties. In her opinion, there is no chance for civil society to take shape in Russia.

Economic issues were covered during the second podium discussion. Professor Katarzyna Zukrowska, Head of the Chair of International Security at SGH, said that one cannot look at foreign politics without considering the economic issues. Negotiations with Russia are at an advanced stage in many economic areas. After Poland joined the EU, the country became part of the EU's economic agreement with Russia. Before that, Poland had to negotiate directly with Russia on economic matters. Russia's strategy is to hold bilateral negotiations with separate EU Member States. Another problem, according to Zukrowska, is that Russia is not a member of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which means that it can protect its own market by taking protectionist measurements.

Iwona Wisniewska from the Centre for Eastern Studies in Warsaw spoke about economic relations with Russia. The EU is a key trading partner for Russia but there is unevenness in these

economic relations. Russia is not interested in committing itself to concrete obligations or in establishing cooperation through official channels. But Russia is also very much aware of the importance of economic relations with the EU. Russia is a very attractive proposition for the EU with respect to its reserves of raw materials and the EU is a very reliable partner for Russia, not least because of the EU's modern technologies. However, Wisniewska added that Russia needs more than just raw materials to become a highly developed industrialised country.

According to the participants, there may be good prospects in the long term, but the fact remains that even democratic elections cannot guarantee the introduction of a genuine democracy. The problem of political elites who are responsible for the development of the country was another point of discussion. When considering Russia, one should distinguish the elite from the rest of the population. This fact is not always taken into account and it often distorts the way people see Russia.

The conference was an attempt to address the most important issues of the wide-ranging and complex relations between the EU and Russia. The relations are all the more complicated because, when it comes to Russia, it is sometimes a problem for the EU to speak with one voice.



Property Rights in Central and East European Countries: Developments after the Transformation Process

Type of event
Conference

Date
13 November 2009

Location
Berlin | Germany

Supported by
Friedrich Naumann Foundation
for Freedom

The right to private property is a cornerstone of Liberal thinking. Liberal authors have always regarded private property as being directly connected to individual freedom. Private property rights give people a secure claim to the fruits of their own labour, fostering their sense of responsibility and ability to participate actively in social and political life. Additionally, the effective protection of property rights provides a formidable bulwark against despotism and nepotism. In this sense, property rights are often the most reliable indicator when it comes to establishing how far the rule of law is being promoted.

In post-Communist countries property rights have been, and still are, a controversial social and political issue. After the political upheavals and during the transition process, property rights had to be redefined and new protection mechanisms had to be institutionalised. Nearly two decades after the collapse of the Soviet bloc, it is time to evaluate its progress and identify what needs to be done to speed up the move towards more liberty and prosperity in Central and Eastern Europe. How is the liberalisation of goods and capital markets proceeding? Are property rights now effectively and equitably protected? Is there still a wide gap between the legal and real exercise of property rights? How efficient is the protection of property today? And what is the Liberal stance on these issues?

MEP Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Vice President of the ELF, and Dr. Wolf-Dieter Zumpfort, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom gave welcoming addresses. Both of them saw the conference as an opportunity to demonstrate that private property is not an esoteric subject but one with fundamental implications for the individual, for society and for the economy.

Keynote speaker David Schmitz, Professor of philosophy at the University of Arizona, argued that the right to private property constitutes a set of power-conferring rules attributed to individuals. It must, at the same time, fulfil basic requirements of justice and be perceived as being fair. However, he warned that if too many social rights limit the exercise of property rights, you severely limit the extent of self-ownership and the extent to which you actually control what you own. Schmitz stressed that ordering or stabilising property is essential for unleashing the potential for creating wealth.

Panel I focussed on property rights as rights to freedom. Michael Link, an MP from the German Bundestag, criticised recent and excessive incursions into private property rights in the name of anti-discrimination. A short exchange between Neyts and Link drew attention to the fact that the right balance between protection of private property and other important rights is a very controversial issue among Liberals. The issue of restitution was addressed by all the panellists. In many cases, the wrongs suffered by individuals at the hands of the Communist regimes of Central and Eastern Europe have not been adequately redressed.

Panel II took a critical look at property rights and the role that they play in achieving economic transformation. The panellists shared the view that property rights were in fact of great importance for economic transformation, but that this is just part of the explanation.

Grzegorz W. Kolodko, a former deputy prime minister and minister of finance in Poland, talked about transition indicators such as the values that guide policy-makers, the institutions being created and the concrete policies being pursued and enacted. Interestingly, Poland has a high score on these indicators. There has been a considerable amount of progress in the field of property rights. If property rights had not been protected, accession to the European Union would have been impossible.

Alina Mungiu-Pippidi, a Professor of democratisation studies at the Hertie School of Governance in Berlin, explained that the key factors for a successful transition process are modernisation and attention from the West. In most Eastern European countries, expediency and the protection of vested interests have been the rule. A faulty process of restitution and unsolvable situations due to Communist misgovernment are features common to much of the region.

Professor Wolfram Schrettl from the University of Berlin argued that private property is not an essential condition for economic success. For example, China did not rely on private ownership for its rapid economic development and neither did East Germany. Schrettl noted that technology and other factors may change the borderlines between private and public property. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that private property can play an important role in promoting economic and social well-being as long as there is an acceptable distribution of ownership.

Panel III was asked to discuss the effective protection of property rights. Tomasz Marek Mickiewicz, a Professor at University College London, asked whether there should be one policy for the whole of Eastern Europe given that there were considerable regional differences. Mickiewicz argued that, with respect to privatisation, most Eastern European countries are still performing below expectations considering their level of development. He also emphasised the importance of trust in securing the institution of private property rights.

Ruta Vainiene from the Lithuanian Free Market Institute argued that property rights are under attack throughout Europe. Property rights are being violated every day due to price controls, product control, urban planning, environmental protection and many other concerns. For Vainiene, utilitarian arguments in favour of private property are dangerous and may lead to very bad outcomes. Her view was that we must take a principle stand on the importance of the matter.

David Lipka, Director for research at the Liberal Institute in Prague, argued that the protection of private property is not so much a matter of policy but of attitudes. Politics can do very little when it comes to addressing and changing attitudes. Lipka also stated that private property is extremely important in terms of encouraging responsible behaviour and human dignity.

In a final statement, political advisor Dr. Stefan Melnik underlined that trust, participation in the development of wealth and creation of a sense of justice among the public are crucial factors when it comes to increasing public support for the institution of private property rights. At the same time, we must be aware that private property on its own cannot explain the transition process because it is embedded in an institutional framework. Finally, Melnik stated that we must pay tribute to the reformers of Central and Eastern Europe who took enormous risks when embarking on a programme of privatisation. There was little practical experience they could refer to and outcomes were difficult to foresee. It is always easy to criticise in retrospect.



Energy Policy and Strategic Interests

Type of event
Conference

Date
20 November 2009

Location
The Hague | The Netherlands

Supported by
Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting

Energy will be one of the world's most important challenges in the 21st century. In the near future, demand for it will rocket, not only from the West but also from new industrial powers such as China and India. The combination of growing demand and limited resources requires firm steps to be taken. What are the alternatives to our traditional resources? How can a small country like The Netherlands secure its national energy supplies and how can it secure its energy independence?

Around 60 people attended the conference in The Hague, which was chaired by Frits Korthals Altes, a Minister of State and former minister of justice. Various experts in the field spoke about issues such as energy use, alternative energies and renewables as well as the opportunities and challenges presented by different energy choices.

Kees Wiechers, a member of the Dutch Energy Council, talked about the current use of energy in The Netherlands. There are basically three principles for an ideal mix: it should be clean, affordable and reliable. Wiechers said that The Netherlands does not have a good balance of these principles. The country is too dependent on gas imports (70%); only 3% of the energy is from renewable energy resources and 5% from nuclear energy, the largest part of which is imported. There will be little change in the fuel mix in the next ten years because energy policies have been fixed until 2020.

Dr. Ronald Schram from the Nuclear Research & Consultancy Group explained that the discussion on nuclear energy focuses mainly on objections to it instead of what it can offer. He demonstrated that one person using nuclear electricity throughout his whole life generates only a handful of nuclear waste. According to European standards, The Netherlands needs to raise its national share of renewable energy resources up to 14% by 2020. According to some of the speakers, this goal is far too ambitious.

Peter Rauwerda, a management consultant, gave a speech on Dutch energy supplies, in which he argued that the Dutch government relies too heavily on unstable and unreliable countries. He stressed the importance of having a more positive discussion on nuclear energy instead of focussing only on its disadvantages. Rauwerda also stated that The Netherlands has excellent facilities to store nuclear waste, namely in the province of Zeeland. He also stressed the fact that the costs of wind energy are far higher than people realise because its advocates tend not to mention the amount of subsidies that are invested in this renewable source. Thus the real price is even higher.

The conference ended with a panel discussion with Helma Neppérus, an MP from the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), Dr. Hamilcar Knops, a researcher for the think tank related to the Christian Democratic Appeal Party (CDA) and Professor Henk van den Berg, a researcher for the ChristianUnion.

Measuring Secularisation in Europe

Type of event

Workshop

Dates

27 – 28 November 2009

Location

Rome | Italy

Supported by

Fondazione Critica Liberale

As part of its ongoing commitment to subjects relating to the process of secularisation and its complicated socio-political implications, the ELF organised an international conference on secularisation in Europe and the relationship between secularism and the Liberal school of thought. The main objectives to be achieved included the need to urgently debate the following issues:

- Address the current status of secularisation in Europe with the many socio-political and religious differences between countries in the European Union.
- Analyse the dynamics of the composition of the presence and impact of religion and its institutions within strategic environments of social, media, economic and political life in the various countries of the European Union.
- Raise awareness among a vast and heterogeneous public as to the political need to defend the principle of secularism, especially regarding bioethical issues, which more and more frequently crop up in public and in the field of integration policies.
- Define the complex phenomenon of secularisation in its various disciplines and link together the many levels involved.

During the first day of a debate chaired by Giulio Ercolessi from the Fondazione Critica Liberale welcome speeches were made by Dr. Thierry Coosemans, ELF Board member, Leoluca Orlando, ELDR Party Vice President, Enzo Marzo, Fondazione Critica Liberale President, Maria Gigliola Toniollo, Italian Confederation of Labour (CGIL) New Rights Office, and Carlo Cosmelli, Secular Council of Rome coordinator. Speakers included Mario di Carlo; Silvia Sansonetti, curator of the Annual Report on Secularisation and from La Sapienza University in Rome; Piergiorgio Donatelli, Professor of Bioethics and History of Moral Philosophy at La Sapienza University in Rome; Luigi Lombardi Vallauri, Professor of Philosophy of Law at Florence University; Valerio Pocar, Professor of Sociology of Law at Milan-Bicocca University; and MEP Marietje Schaake (ALDE), from the Dutch party D66. The subjects addressed by the speakers were mainly legal, bioethical and political.

In particular, Professor Piergiorgio Donatelli, an authoritative voice in the international bioethical debate, emphasised the serious risks of the Catholic Church's interventionism in 'end of life' choices. He also spoke of the big gap between religious positions and the contemporary world, as well as the ethical and moral challenges that have arisen. The need to guarantee autonomy in decisions concerning life's crucial choices was frequently stressed as was the need to adapt laws to assure full legal validity for the autonomy and freedom of individuals.

On the second day of the conference, Silvia Sansonetti presented the fifth report on the state of secularisation in Italy for the year 2009. For five years, the Fondazione Critica Liberale, in cooperation with the CGIL New Rights' Office, has carried out quantitative statistical sociological research. This tends to emphasise not just the presence of the Catholic Church in

the various sectors of individual and collective life and its influence on Italy's socio-economic and political phenomena, but also achievable changes in the behaviour of Italians and the more or less extensive use of services offered by religious institutions. To do this, we have created a new statistical model that allows us, on an annual basis, to present a single survey drafted on the basis of information gathered by official sources such as: The National Institute of Statistics (ISTAT), the Italian Episcopal Conference (CEI), the Ministry of Education, Universities, and Research (MIUR), the Church's Statistical Yearbook, etc.

This part of the event focussed on the Italian situation in detail and opened up a fruitful debate as to the possibility of extending this research to other European countries. There was considerable interest, especially from the representatives from Poland and Slovenia, in accepting this proposal, which could make it possible to compare how the various religious denominations take part in and influence political and social life in European countries.


The event compared very different situations in different countries, increasing the possibility for future scientific exchanges. From a strictly national perspective, the event made it possible to explain the slow but inexorable process of secularisation, which is totally in conflict with the view reported by the Italian media. Furthermore, the conference encouraged political and intellectual cooperation such that Italy might move towards a greater separation of the state and the church, as is the case in other European countries.



Complete list of events

Date	Title of event ELF member organisation/s involved	Venue	Language of event
March			
04/03/09	Stalin's Ghost: the Legacies of Soviet History and the Future of Russia Prof.mr. B.M. Teldersstichting	Utrecht The Netherlands	English
18/03/09	Can the G20 save Globalisation? CentreForum	Brussels Belgium	English
20–21/03/09	1st Spring Academy: Europe in Practice Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, ELDR party	Brussels Belgium	English
April			
03–04/04/09	2nd Spring Academy: Europe in Practice Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, ELDR party	Brussels Belgium	English
24–25/04/09	3rd Spring Academy: Europe in Practice Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, ELDR party	Brussels Belgium	English
May			
14–16/05/09	The Influence of European Policy on the Local Level Part 1 VVD International Foundation, Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting	The Netherlands	English
19/05/09	Germany, France and Turkey: How does Europe look in the Future? Book reading tour Part 1: Grenzgänge Reden über Europa Crossing Borders in Europe	Berlin Germany	German
27/05/09	20 Years of a united Germany in Europe Book reading tour Part 2: Grenzgänge. Reden über Europa Crossing Borders in Europe	Cologne Germany	German
28/05/09	Europe and Energy Transition: Possibilities and Impossibilities Kenniscentrum D66	Utrecht The Netherlands	Dutch
June July			
03/06/09	Migration- Europe's Challenge CentreForum, FORES	Stockholm Sweden	English
08–12/07/09	Summer School on Leadership Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and Foundation Project: Poland	Ustroń Poland	English
14/07/09	European Finance after the Crisis: Make Up or Break Up? CentreForum	London United Kingdom	English

Date	Title of event ELF member organisation/s involved	Venue	Language of event
August			
19–23/08/09	The Euro as an Instrument of Stability and Prosperity in a united Europe Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, VVD International Foundation, Civic Club Foundation	Jachranka Poland	English
October			
01–04/10/09	The Future of Individual Participation in European Politics LYMEC, Movimento Liberal Social	Portugal Lisbon	English
23–25/10/09	Liberty and Civil Society Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Liberty Society Foundation	Bratislava Slovakia	English Slovak
26–28/10/09	The Influence of European Policy on the Local Level Part 2 VVD International Foundation, Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting	Bucharest Romania	English
November			
07/11/09	Energy Security in Europe LYMEC, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, ELDR Party	Zagreb Croatia	English
07/11/09	Building a Partnership with the East: Relations between the European Union and Russia Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Civic Club Foundation	Warsaw Poland	English Polish
12/11/09	Book reading tour Part 3: Grenzgänge. Reden über Europa Crossing Borders in Europe	Berlin Germany	German
13/11/09	Property Rights in Central and East European Countries: Developments after the Transformation Process Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom	Berlin Germany	English
18/ 11/09	Can Europe Build a New Global Economic Order? CentreForum	Barcelona Spain	English
19/11/09	Is Multilateralism the Solution? Think tank e2	Barcelona Spain	English
20/11/09	Energy Policy and Strategic Interests Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting	The Hague The Netherlands	Dutch
26–27/11/09	Measuring Secularisation in Europe Fondazione Critica Liberale	Rome Italy	English
28/11/09	La Polémique du Retour des Frises du Parthénon à Athènes Centre Jean Gol	Brussels Belgium	French English



Selection of publications and studies

In 2009, with the support of its member organisations, the ELF produced eleven publications, including conference proceedings, a series of printed interviews, research papers and studies.

The publications discuss a wide range of major issues on the European political agenda, including the future of multilateralism, health care policy, fundamental rights and Liberal answers to the economic and financial crisis.

Grenzgänge: Reden über Europa |Crossing Borders in Europe|



This book was published by the ELF and was edited by MEP and ELF President Alexander Graf Lambsdorff and MEP and journalist Karin Resetarits.

At the beginning of the European integration process in 1957, when the world was still recovering from the aftermath of World War II, there was a strong desire for peace. Today, we are proud to say that we have experienced the longest period of peace in human history.

However, the 'European' enthusiasm we have experienced in the earlier years of the integration process has become less clear-cut in the past few decades. Today, the European Union is often regarded as very bureaucratic and therefore increasingly criticised by its citizens. It is argued that Europe threatens our national identity, that Europe is taking away the sovereignty of its members and that Europe is encroaching too much into the daily lives of its citizens.

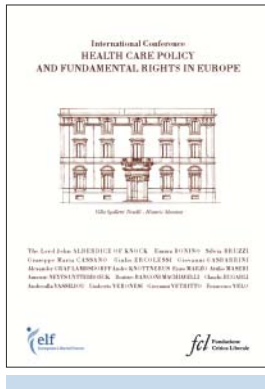
Despite all this criticism, this book shows us something that we should not forget. It shows us that the European integration process has delivered many achievements that have brought us wealth, not just in terms of money but also in terms of freedom.

This book contains twelve interviews between prominent people from the political and cultural world. Each interview is based on the question: Does a Europe without borders really imply more freedom for the individual?

The book includes contributions from Neelie Kroes, former EU commissioner for competition; Hans-Dietrich Genscher, former minister of foreign affairs and former minister of the interior in Germany; Pascale Hugues, a French journalist living in Berlin; and MEP Kristiina Ojuland, former minister of foreign affairs of Estonia. They all explain what a Europe without borders means for their personal lives.

MEP Alexander Graf Lambsdorff promoted the book during a book tour in Germany. During the tour, he discussed different cross-border issues with Turkish feminist Seyran Ates, Pascale Hugues and Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

Health Care Policy and Fundamental Rights in Europe

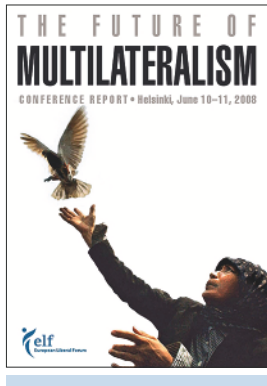


This publication contains the proceedings of the international health care conference organised by the ELF in 2008. Edited by Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli, member of the Board of Fondazione Critica Libera and patron of Liberal International, and Dr. Francesco Velo, researcher of the University of Pavia and member of the Italian Council of the European Movement, the publication focuses on the Liberal project of cross-border health care treatment.

The creation of a single European market in which European citizens enjoy the freedom to seek and obtain health care treatment across borders is finally on its way. In July 2008, the European Commission published a proposal for a directive on cross-border health care. The European Parliament voted in a first reading on this proposal, which is meant to enable patients to pursue their right to seek health care abroad more easily and to be reimbursed for the costs that they incur in the process.

Besides an introduction speech by MEP Annemie Neyts Uyttebroeck, President of the ELDR Party and Vice President of the ELF, the publication includes expert contributions from Lord John Alderdice, psychiatrist and President of Liberal International; Emma Bonino, Vice President of the Senate of the Republic of Italy; Androulla Vassiliou, the then EU commissioner for health, as well as Umberto Veronesi, Scientific Director of the European Institute of Oncology (IEO) and former minister of health of the Republic of Italy.

The Future of Multilateralism



This conference report includes the major speeches given at a conference entitled 'The Future of Multilateralism', which was organised by the ELF with the support of think tank E2 on 10–11 June 2008 in Helsinki.

The report provides the reader with a more in-depth understanding of the importance of multilateralism and the challenges that multilateral organisations are facing at the dawn of the 21st century.

ELF President and MEP Alexander Graf Lambsdorff set out his vision for effective multilateralism in the future. Graf Lambsdorff explains how the international world order has changed a lot in recent decades. The nation state, which dominated 20th century politics, has lost a lot of its influence. In such a new world – with many more actors, sources of power and influence – international cooperation between state actors is more necessary than ever before.

Professor Tuomas Forsberg from the University of Tampere analyses the concept of multilateralism and the changing international environment. Forsberg explains that multilateralism is much more than plain 'cooperation by many'. He also emphasised that multilateralism is a politically loaded concept that should not be confused with legitimacy.

Professor Dr. Joachim Krause from the Christian-Albrechts-University in Kiel, Germany, writes about the crisis of multilateralism. He talks about the different approaches to multilateralism in the US and in Europe. He pleads for a critical European debate about multilateralism, which avoids both the uncritical support of all kinds of multilateralism (the ideology of multilateralism) and the hypercritical disdain of any kind of multilateralism (the ideology of unilateralism). Krause emphasises that the debate should also be led with the US's involvement because the critical appraisal of multilateralism has a much longer tradition in the US.

Finally, Kai Sauer, Director of the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, explains the challenges for the United Nations (UN) as a guarantor of international security and development. He argues that we should stay within the existing UN. Even with all its shortcomings, the UN remains the most important body and framework for discussing issues such as global security, climate change and the food crisis.

Strengthening the Stability and Growth Pact with a Common Eurozone Bond



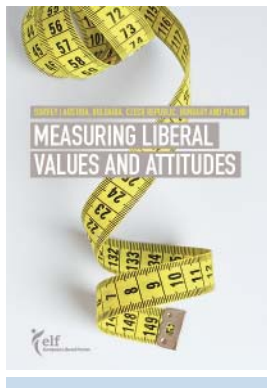
In August 2009, with the support of CentreForum, the ELF published a research paper on a common bond system for the eurozone. The author is John Springford, a researcher on globalisation for CentreForum.

The financial crisis has revealed how susceptible many European member states' finances are to a severe recession. Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain are struggling with extremely large budget deficits, an increase in the cost of servicing their debts and mounting debt stocks. At the beginning of 2009, there were fears that a eurozone country might default, which could lead to increases in the cost of servicing debt elsewhere and further financial turmoil. The European Union's Stability and Growth Pact (SGP) was supposed to encourage governments to run budgets close to balance over the economic cycle. Since the launch of the Euro, the EU's governments have become increasingly ill disciplined, however, which has negative consequences for the eurozone as a whole. The Commission was given the job of policing the pact by recommending sanctions to the European Council but it has rarely applied them. Thus, transgressors have usually avoided punishment.

This paper proposes a new system, by which an incentive would replace an extremely blunt stick. Several economists and policy-makers have suggested that the eurozone should quickly create a common bond system to help countries that are currently struggling with their debts gain access to cheaper financing.

This paper suggests a medium-term solution instead: the common bond system should be linked to the Stability and Growth Pact. Governments would be able to issue debt through the system only once their debt to GDP ratio has started to fall. This would encourage governments to consolidate once the recession is over; help to prevent high government debts in some countries causing problems for others; and make it less likely that a highly indebted government will have to be bailed out to save the European economy in the future.

Measuring Liberal values and attitudes



At the end of 2009 the ELF, with the support of the ELDR Party, conducted a survey in Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to examine people's perception and understanding of some selected key Liberal values. The survey was undertaken against the backdrop of the European elections in 2009, which resulted in European Liberals ending up without representation in ten out of 27 member states. As the third strongest political force, European Liberals must have an interest in strong member parties across Europe.

For financial reasons, the scope of this survey was limited to five countries.

This survey looked into some of the causes for the weakness of Liberal parties in Central and Eastern Europe. It sought to establish whether the causes are valued-based (Liberalism is misunderstood/not accepted) or whether they are related to party politics (i.e. the public's expectations of a political Liberal party).

Among the values that are important to citizens in the abovementioned countries are those of civil rights such as freedom of expression and equality before the law, that of tolerance and that of having a strong and competitive economy.

Complete list of publications

Title of publication ELF member organisation/s involved	Name of Author/s Editor/s	Language of publication
Grenzgänge. Reden über Europa Crossing Borders in Europe	MEP Alexander Graf Lambsdorff MEP Karin Resetarits editors	German
The Future of Multilateralism – Conference Report think tank e2	Think tank e2 editor	English
‘Europe: Passion or Ordeal?’ – Special edition on Europe of ‘idee’ magazine Kenniscentrum D66	Hinke Stallen Maurice Eykman Annelou van Egmond Heleen Uijt de Haag editors	Dutch
Health Care Policy and Fundamental Rights in Europe Proceedings of the International Conference on November 27, 2008 Fondazione Critica Liberale	Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli Dr. Francesco Velo editors	English
A detailed Summary of Major Works of the Liberal Tradition Centre Jean Gol	Corentin de Salle author	French
Assured Energy Provision. Dutch Energy Politics between Power and Market. Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting	Peter Rauwerda Patrick van Schie Hala Naoum Nehme Derk-Jan Haverkamp Fleur de Beaufort authors and editors	Dutch
Liberal Reflections on Life Chances and Social Mobility in Europe Bertil Ohlin Institute	Ingemund Hägg editor	English
Strengthening the Stability and Growth Pact with a Common Eurozone Bond CentreForum	John Springford author	English
Migration: Europe’s Challenge CentreForum, FORES	Alasdair Murray Martin Adhal editors	English
Measuring Liberal Values and Attitudes in Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland. ELDR Party	dimap communications	English
Konstitutionalisierung und Normativität der europäischen Grundrechte Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom	Dr. Jörg Philipp Terhechte author	German





In March 2009, the European Liberal Forum relaunched its website. The newly designed page features information on ELF activities and structures. Furthermore it provides:

- Reports on past ELF conferences, seminars and workshops
- Newly issued ELF publications
- A platform for member organisations to exchange liberal views and ideas with fellow members

Visit us on www.liberalforum.eu!



Member organisations

The ELF was established in 2007 by 15 founding member organisations. More liberal organisations have since joined, bringing the current number of members to 28.

Membership of the foundation is open to those think tanks, national political foundations, institutes and leading liberal personalities that promote liberal, democratic ideals and values.

The current 28 member organisations of the European Liberal Forum present their activities on the following pages.

Bertil Ohlin Institute | Sweden

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OHLINinstitutet

The purpose of the Bertil Ohlin Institute is to initiate research and debate in critical areas of public policy along traditional Liberal lines of thinking. The institute is named after Bertil Ohlin, who was the leader of the Liberal Party of Sweden (Folkpartiet) between 1944 and 1967. In 1977 he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics, thus capping a successful career as a political leader with recognition of his academic credentials.

A Liberal think tank

By building a network of scholars, participants in the public debate and persons from private and public working life, the institute – as a think tank – contributes to broadening the basis for Liberal opinion formation and the renewal of Liberal thinking.

Independent

The institute is independent of political parties and interest groups, organisationally as well as financially. Its activities are financed from private and corporate contributions as well as project grants from foundations.

International cooperation

The institute seeks international cooperation in order to improve the way in which policy issues of importance for our time are addressed. The institute is active in the international network of Liberal think tanks and became a member of the ELF in 2008.

Grounded in research

Our projects should be applicable and practical. They should build on scientific approaches, which implies close contact with high quality university departments. Four out of nine seats on our board are reserved for scholars from relevant fields, mainly the social sciences.

Organisation

The institute is a foundation, the Stiftelsen Bertil Ohlin-Institutet, founded in 1993.

Public events, debates and seminars, which are open to the public, are organised on a regular basis. We also publish papers and books on different topics. Most of our activities are in Swedish but some of the papers are written in English. They can be found at or ordered from our website.

Centre Jean Gol | Belgium

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Opened in December 2004, the Centre Jean Gol is, at one and the same time, the guardian of the archives of the Reformist Movement and some of its directors; an interdisciplinary library boasting over 4,000 volumes (Liberal 'seminal' writings but also less well-known works); a design office; a think tank and research unit; a publisher of numerous collections; a proactive political force; a centre for training the Reformist Movement's representatives; and the organiser of events, seminars, conferences and symposiums. The Centre Jean Gol's objective is to generate discussions on important social issues, thereby enabling the Reformist Movement to promote new ideas as part of a message that is accessible to all. In other words, the Centre Jean Gol allows the Reformist Movement to express itself as a vital creative force.

Apart from reference works on Liberalism, the Centre Jean Gol publishes 'Cahiers', the fruit of an interdisciplinary discussion process involving political authorities and experts from academic & socio-economic spheres or from civil society. It possesses a database of electoral results since the early 1990s, on the basis of which it produces in-depth analyses. It also places itself at the disposal of the Reform Movement's elected representatives to carry out surveys and work on specific election projects.

Finally, the Centre Jean Gol has a website, designed to serve as a communication tool for the activities and publications of the centre. It offers: online access to our library catalogue and to the inventory of our archives; the option to download certain parts of our publications free of charge; a 'Liberal portal' providing several hundred links to other websites (Liberal or otherwise) of possible interest; plus a section entitled 'La Pensée libérale', which gives access to analyses of major Liberal works, bibliographical references, etc.

CentreForum | United Kingdom

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CENTREFORUM

CentreForum is an independent, Liberal think tank seeking to develop evidence-based policy solutions to the problems facing Britain. Since our launch in 2005 we have established ourselves in the top tier of UK think tanks, being named runner-up in Prospect magazine's 2007 'Think-tank of the year' awards.

We aim to provide a progressive forum for innovation and debate. Alongside our research we run seminars, conferences and fringe meetings, aiming to engage policy-makers, academics, the media and voters in debate.

CentreForum is determined to begin with reference to data and not dogma. But we do have certain key values at our core. These are progressive, rooted in the same quest for justice that has motivated all British Liberals for more than 300 years. In the social sphere, justice has never, for Liberals, been about equality of outcomes but has instead focused on equality of opportunity – the belief that everyone should enjoy an equal chance in life, regardless of background, wealth or connections.

CentreForum's research focuses on four broad themes: the politics of aspiration, empowerment, globalisation and Liberalism.

A belief in the politics of aspiration has focused our social policy work on expanding life chances, spreading opportunities and boosting social mobility. Already much of our work, particularly on education and welfare, has been guided by a desire to help people 'get on', make the most of their talents, fulfil their potential and realise their ambitions.

Liberals have long been committed to decentralising power to the local level in the name of individual and community empowerment. At CentreForum we want to explore ways of spreading decision-making and purchasing powers among those directly affected by the consequences rather than concentrating them in the hands of politicians and bureaucrats. Our belief in the supply side liberalisation of public services is coupled with the vision of an enabling, rather than a minimal, state. We advocate a progressive approach to public spending and a redistributive approach to taxation to ensure that all are able to realise their ambitions and their goals, regardless of earnings or wealth.

As well as devolving power downwards, we also advocate the pooling of power at the international level. This is based on a commitment to the 'internationalist' tradition in Liberalism – the commitment to establishing a rules-based global order, governed by international law and, where possible, maintained through multilateral institutions. We intend to set out a confident, forward-looking agenda that champions the free movement of goods, capital, services and people. We believe that migration, trade, development and 'green capitalism' can all make Britain richer – financially, ecologically and culturally.

Centrum Liberálních Studií Centre for Liberal Studies | Czech Republic

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The Centre for Liberal Studies (CLS), established in 1994, is a non-governmental, non-partisan, non-profit think tank. The main objective is to develop contacts between exponents of Liberal thoughts; to contribute to clarifying the definition of Liberalism; and to apply a Liberal approach in the political, economic and social transition of the Czech Republic. Due to a long-term absence of any stable Liberal political party in the Czech landscape, CLS is the only promoter of Liberal ideas in Czech society. CLS is open to cooperation with all interested institutions, organisations and individuals.

The CLS's activities come under three main pillars:

- Research and publications on topical issues: tax system reform, social insurance, rent-deregulation, healthcare system reforms etc.
- Education: panel discussions, round tables, conferences, awarding grants to undergraduates and graduates, sponsoring degree papers, translations
- Cooperation with established experts and with other think tanks

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The Society for Progressive Research was established in early 2006 to run a think tank based on progressive values and Liberal ideals. The think tank is called Think Tank e2 and is headed up by Dr. Karina Jutila, D.S.Sc.

The think tank, run by the Society:

- Acts as a forum for debate by bringing together experts from different fields and disciplines for innovative social discussions.
- Initiates conversation on current issues and introduces new themes for open debate.
- Aims to foresee social phenomena outside the field of daily politics.
- Contributes to the strengthening of think tank activities in Finland and their internationalisation.

Its activities are divided into four programmes:

- Sustainable development and society's ability to change.
- Equality of opportunity and prevention of social exclusion.
- Enhancing citizens' political participation and grassroots democracy.
- Finland as part of the EU and the international community.

European Liberal Youth | LYMEC | Pan-European

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The European Liberal Youth body (LYMEC) was established in 1976 in The Hague (The Netherlands) as the 'Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Community'. LYMEC supports the development of political and educational understanding of young people throughout Europe.

Moreover, it plays a political role within Europe by acting as the youth organisation of the ELDR Party and its parliamentary group in the European Parliament, ALDE. With 59 member organisations in 37 countries and around 210,000 members, LYMEC aims to:

- Create a liberal and federal Europe.
- Promote tolerance between cultures and individuals.
- Increase the level of political awareness and involvement of young people in politics.

LYMEC's Annual Congress brings together young people from all over Europe. It is the organisation's highest decision-making body and is where its members meet to discuss policies and to decide on the organisation's future actions.

LYMEC's Executive Committee meetings take place twice a year and deal mostly with organisational matters. We also organise many seminars throughout the year on various topics such as human rights, migration policies, agriculture, regionalism, the environment and Liberalism. We do not only offer membership to organisations, but also to individuals who want to participate in the European integration process.

Fondazione Critica Liberale | Italy

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The Fondazione Critica Liberale was established in January 1994. The foundation's aim is to promote Liberalism through the organisation of conferences, seminars, research and study activities, workshops and meetings.

The foundation is actively involved in publishing contributions and in the promotion of research studies and debates. The foundation publishes the monthly review 'Critica Liberale' and its quarterly supplement 'Gli Stati Uniti d'Europa' ('The United States of Europe'). The Foundation is also editor of the collection 'Libelli vecchi e nuovi', published by Dedalo Editore, and of several books and publications.

The foundation works with the Consulta Laica of Rome and with Coordinamento Nazionale delle Consulte Laiche of Italy. The foundation has created, together with the 'Ufficio Nuovi diritti' (New Rights Office of the CGIL association, an 'Observatory on secularisation', which produces research on secularisation in Italy on an annual basis and organises 'Conversazioni laiche' ('Secular conversations') meetings.

Critica Liberale Foundation is a member of CRIC (Coordinamento Riviste Italiane di Cultura), the coordination of Italian culture magazines.

Forum för reformer och entreprenörskap Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability | FORES | Sweden

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Founded in 2007, FORES is an independent research foundation dedicated to encouraging entrepreneurship and sustainable development through market solutions. The goal is to adapt the micro-economic incentive structures to meet the challenges of accelerating globalisation and global warming.

FORES's main activities are to initiate research projects that will result in concrete reform proposals in relevant policy areas such as:

- Market solutions for environmental issues.
- Harnessing the positive potential of immigration.
- The role of civil society in entrepreneurship.
- The flexibility of labour markets.
- The protection of the integrity of the individual.
- Modernising public services.

For its activities, the FORES is heavily reliant on a vast network of academics. The business model is that of a modern network organisation with a small core of research managers and communication officers supporting and coordinating a vast network of researchers and experts. Papers and books from the institute are subjected to peer review processes.

FORES draws on researchers at universities and research institutions in Sweden (and some abroad), including regional universities and especially those with particular expertise in empirical social sciences.

The institute is also making full use of new media, with the home page being its most important communication tool, supplementing written reports and books with audiovisual material and interactive forums.

To ensure the independence of the institute, it was set up as a foundation with a Board of Directors made up of academics, experienced former politicians, business people and opinion leaders.

Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom | Germany

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The Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom – established in 1958 by the first president of the Federal Republic of Germany, Theodor Heuss, and a group of committed Liberals – is an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation that is committed to promoting Liberal policy and politics in Germany, Europe and worldwide. Based in Potsdam, Germany, the foundation has seven offices in Germany and more than 40 offices worldwide through which it promotes its core concepts such as the protection of human rights, civil society, market economy, free trade and rule of law.

Over the last 51 years, the activities of the foundation have expanded beyond their original civic educational task in the young Federal Republic of Germany. A scholarship programme, a think tank (the Liberal Institute), a press and media department and its engagement in international politics have become important parts of the foundation's assignments.

Together with our partners – which include Liberal political parties as well as non-governmental organisations – we support the development of constitutional and democratic institutions as well as civil society.

The principles of Liberalism as a political philosophy underpin all the foundation's work. In the 2008–2011 period we will focus on the following issues:

- Freedom and property: private property and its protection through the legal system are essential conditions for wealth creation, economic growth and, furthermore, for a self-confident civil society.
- Freedom and civil society: active citizens are the lifeblood of a Liberal society. It is people, not government bureaucracies, who can bring freedom to life and secure it on a lasting basis.
- Freedom and the rule of law: only a state governed by the rule of law can sustainably perform the core functions Liberals assign to it, namely, the protection of freedom, security and property.

The main objectives of our international work are:

- To disseminate Liberal ideas and concepts in all political areas.
- To strengthen civil society, particularly Liberal organisations and parties.
- To bring Liberal approaches and solutions from abroad into German political discussion.

Our activities are as varied as our cooperation partners or the regions we work in. They are based on long-standing experience and are constantly evolving.

Fundació Catalanista i Demòcrata | Catalanist and Democrat Foundation | CatDem | Catalonia, Spain

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The Catalanist and Democrat Foundation (CatDem) has taken on the challenge of driving forward the restructuring process of Catalanism. The modern world raises a whole new set of important challenges, to which Catalanist thought has to be capable of giving adequate answers; for example, answers to the consequences of globalisation; to the increasing and unstoppable diversity and pluralism of developed societies from a social, cultural, linguistic and religious point of view; to the emergence of new technologies and the impact of those in areas such as education or the economy; to the demand for new policies to face emerging needs; to the new geopolitical situation; to the newly emerging economic interdependency; to the regeneration of democracy; to the role of states and the distribution of sovereignty and political power in this new context. To sum up, Catalanism has to be competent enough to provide some answers to anything that shapes economic development and citizens' wellbeing.

The CatDem Foundation wants to make its contribution to this process by driving forward ideas for debates and proposals. This is open to the whole of Catalan society with an understanding of the essential values of Catalanism and democracy – it is a debate that goes beyond strictly political and partisan lines. Basically, the foundation offers a broader space – what we call a 'Casa Gran' – which is open to dialogue, participation and creativity. It relies on professionals, intellectuals and technical experts from different traditions of Catalanism.

In order to structure the debates in an efficient way, the foundation set up three broad areas of reflection and six working groups. The aim is, from now on, to focus on the participation and contribution of more than a hundred people from the social, intellectual and academic world of Catalonia. The areas of reflection are designed to rethink Catalanism from an ideas point of view. The working groups offer an appropriate framework to define concrete proposals and projects on more specific issues.

Fundacja Klub Obywatelski Civic Club Foundation | Poland

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The Civic Club Foundation was founded in December 1998 by people connected to the Polish Democratic Movement 'Solidarity'. We are an independent, non-profit and non-governmental organisation.

The foundation's priorities are as follows:

- The dissemination and protection of human rights and freedoms, as well as civil liberties.
- The propagation of a market economy and entrepreneurship.
- The promotion of European integration and the development of contacts and cooperation between societies.
- Action in the field of education, especially democracy, human rights, social policy, foreign relations and economic affairs.

We implement our statutory aims through:

- The organisation of seminars, conferences, workshops and debates.
- The preparation of publications.
- Cooperation with public administration and non-governmental organisations who act in the field that corresponds with the foundation's statutory aims.

The foundation's key programmes:

Liberal Academy

- This is the foundation's flagship project. Run since 2002, it has been an extremely valuable platform for discussion, the exchange of ideas and as a source of knowledge. Over 130 young European Liberal leaders have participated in the Academy so far. Each year, we pick the most up-to-date title for the main topic of the event. It reflects the mainstream discussion which is taking place in Europe and on the world stage. The Academy provides Liberals with the opportunity to discuss relevant issues and develop their own positions in accordance with the Liberal values they represent.

Direction Europe

- It consists of academic circles and non-governmental organisations and aims to disseminate knowledge about the EU and to find common solutions with regard to Polish foreign policy.

Liberal Institute

- It aims to develop up-to-date solutions for problems in education and health policies.

Democracy without Women is half a Democracy

- It is dedicated to disseminating, propagating and protecting the equal rights of men and women.

Fundacja Projekt: Polska Foundation Project: Poland | Poland

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Foundation Project: Poland's mission is to bring together experts and young leaders to promote public policy solutions for Poland based on the free market, free society, European values and the rule of law.

Foundation Project Poland is a joint initiative of two different groups of people. The first group consists of business and media people who were in their teenage years shortly after the collapse of Communism and the second group consists of young people from Liberal youth and student associations.

We think that public life in Poland needs more projects and constructive ways of thinking. Why projects? Each project has precise aims, costs and profits. Every project has a timetable and therefore it is possible to evaluate how successful it has been. A project can only be successful when it is created and implemented by competent people.

We want to act as a platform to give young people the chance to professionalise and to prepare – in a politically impartial way – to take part in public life. We also want to give young professionals and business people who entered the labour market in 1989 the chance to get involved in public issues and civil society and to pass on their skills and knowledge to the next generation. We support and advocate changes in Poland by establishing unique and independent think tanks. The main goal of our foundation is to initiate changes in Poland with the help of professionals, think tanks and projects which are promoted by the civic actions of our partners.

Our main target group is young people. We cooperate with them through:

- Research, publications and conferences
- The power of the internet: www.napiszmydoeuropy.onet.pl
- Cooperation with NGOs such as www.21pazdziernika.pl, www.7czerwca.org.pl, www.razem89.pl
- Student and education programmes – for example, we have started to campaign for reforms in the Polish higher education system: www.wyborcza.pl/student

Haya van Someren Stichting VVD International Foundation | The Netherlands

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The VVD International Foundation aims to develop international relations with Liberal parties in democratic transition areas. The main objective is to maintain and strengthen relations with Liberal parties and to contribute to democratisation in Eastern Europe and developing countries.

The foundation's priorities are as follows:

- Worldwide bilateral contacts with like-minded parties and organisations
- International networks (the ELF, the ELDR Party and Liberal International)
- Public support activities on international cooperation
- The Central and Eastern Europe Program (CEEP)

The International Secretary, who also is a member of the VVD National Executive Committee, heads the VVD International Foundation.

Institute for Liberal Studies | Romania

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The Institute for Liberal Studies (ILS) Association was created by a group of high-ranking Liberals, including ministers, Members of Parliament and even the Prime Minister, in order to promote Liberal values in Romanian society.

The institute organises public debates and conferences on hot issues. At the same time, it organises seminars on Liberalism and the EU institutions throughout the country. In the future, the institute aims to develop its own library of basic texts on Liberalism and even to publish its own studies and books.

The Institute of Liberal Studies is a founding member of the ELF and works closely with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and VVD International Foundation.

In 2007, ILS was declared an association of public utility.

Kenniscentrum D66 | The Netherlands

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D66 Kenniscentrum

The Kenniscentrum D66 works as a knowledge, expertise and ideas broker for the Dutch Liberal Democratic Party D66 (Democraten66). With three staff members, the main focus of our work is to find and implement the talents of sympathisers of a Liberal democratic (also often called: Social-Liberal) train of thought. It was originally founded in the 1970s, when it served as a traditional research centre.

At the turn of the 20th century, our approach changed to being a broker but our aim has remained the same: to generate concepts and ideas to strengthen the intellectual profile of D66 and to be a place where political thinkers look at developments in a more thoughtful manner.

Kentro Fileleftherwn Meletwn | KEFIM Liberty Forum of Greece | Greece

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The Liberty Forum of Greece aims to promote activities to broaden the study and dissemination of Liberal ideas and policies in Greece, Europe and the rest of the world. We also support associations, non-profit organisations and other agencies as well as individuals who contribute to the fulfilment of our aims.



Liberales Institut Österreich | Austria

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The Liberales Institut Österreich regards itself as a driving force for ideas and as part of the European Liberal network. The aim of the Liberales Institut Österreich is the long-term establishment of the idea of freedom and liberty in Austria, which is the homeland of the Austrian School of National Economics and a country that has produced some great Liberal thinkers.

The Liberales Institut Österreich organises events and publications together with Austrian, European and international institutions. The aim is to stimulate the political debate for more freedom, liberty, tolerance and a free market economy in Austria. The Liberales Institut Österreich wants to disseminate Liberal ideas in order to give life to the values of liberty and freedom.

In addition, the institute is striving to have an in-depth exchange of ideas and to organise joint projects in cooperation with Liberal institutes in other countries. We focus especially on cooperation with the new EU Member States and current EU candidate countries.

Lokus | Finland

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Lokus is a Liberal think tank that operates on civil society activities, with the following focus: The think tank Lokus focuses on the Swedish minority in Finland. We support an inclusive interpretation of the Swedish people, where language serves as a central point for active citizenship.

The think tank Lokus thinks big about small issues, about human beings, contextuality and democracy. Citizens are mostly interested in political questions that are 'glocal' – a mixture of local and global. Lokus works for dynamic relations between big and small democracy.

The think tank Lokus is an inclusive meeting place for citizens who speak one or more languages. The Swedish in Finland need positive metaphors rather than threats.

The think tank Lokus sketches out a desirable future with a Social Liberal profile. The whispers of today are the calls of the future. Values and ethics should be important guidelines in politics too. It is important to rediscover and renew basic ideologies. Lokus has a Social Liberal profile and we defend the welfare state.

Lokus is linked to the Svenska folkskolans vänner (SFV) association and was founded in 2006. We publish caricatures, research reports and arrange meetings and seminars within an ideological framework.

Movimento Liberal Social | Portugal

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The Movimento Liberal Social, which was founded in 2005, aims to promote Social Liberalism in Portugal. The movement is a platform of individuals who believe that the old left-right dogma makes little sense today and that it is possible to have a different and constructive type of politics in Portugal.

In brief, this is what the Movimento Liberal Social stands for:

- The sovereignty of the individual: the inalienable right to live one's life and to seek happiness.
- A more just society, based on merit, where everyone can freely exercise their talents and develop their potential, free from any control or pressure, in an environment of solidarity and respect between individuals.
- Equality for the law, always with respect for the right to differ.
- A state which focus itself on the essential things but that ensures (in a sustainable way and following the subsidiary principle) the defence of the individual and of society, private property, justice, the existence of basic health and social security services, high quality education and the protection of cultural and environmental heritage.
- The market economy, but always under state control, as a corrective mechanism to counter the inevitable disequilibria.

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The Liberal Society Foundation, which was known as the Institute for Liberal Studies until 2002, was established in 1995 as a non-governmental and non-profit think tank. It was established because of a real need for objective evaluations of social processes and with the aim of promoting Liberal values and to create space for social and expert discussion in the transition period. Co-founders are the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, the Fórum Foundation, the Foundation Gaudeamus and Ing. Viliam Vaškovi, CSc.

To promote, strengthen and apply Liberal thinking and develop Liberal values, targeting the development of democracy, tolerance, culture, humanity and civil society, especially through:

- The organisation of discussions, seminars and working meetings
- Research studies and expert opinions
- Editorial and publishing activities
- Education, promotion and adult education activities
- The development of foreign contacts

Its importance in 1999: Promoting Liberal thinking and strengthening the democratic process in Slovakia through seminars and workshops (supporting discussions of politicians and experts on current legal, economic, political and other social topics).

Its importance later on: Its educational and publishing activities (aiming to raise citizens' awareness and influencing the legislative process via Members of Parliament).

Its importance now: Given that the political situation in the Slovak Republic is starting to be more and more influenced by nationalistic tendencies and that there has not been a Liberal party in the Slovak Parliament since 2006, the activities of the Liberal Society aim to contribute to improving the political climate in Slovakia.

NOVUM – Inštitut za strateške in aplikativne študije NOVUM – Institute for Strategic and Applied Research Slovenia

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The Novum Institute is a non-profit, educational and policy research organisation established in Ljubljana, Slovenia. It aims to support the political decision-making process, to promote democracy, to foster public dialogue, to communicate new policy ideas and to develop new methods and approaches in political advertising.

The Novum Institute pursues high standards of research and discourse. Through its activities, which include conceptual studies, public education and administrative and technical assistance, the institute contributes to the stock of knowledge available to political parties, policy-makers and a targeted audience in Slovenia and abroad.

We promote and protect Liberal values, which include: democracy, the rule of law, good governance, respect for and protection of human rights, economic and social development and sustainable development.

The Novum Institute disseminates its research findings through its website, the media, publications, seminars, round tables, workshops, forums and conferences.

The Novum Institute is registered as an NGO under Slovenian law. Its board consists of 13 members with economic, political, public and scientific backgrounds, which makes the Novum Institute a powerful advocacy group.

Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting | The Netherlands

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The Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting is a Dutch Liberal think tank affiliated to the VVD political party. The foundation is named after Benjamin Telders, a lawyer and philosopher who was chair of the Liberal State Party (a predecessor of the VVD) and who, during World War II, was arrested by the German (Nazi) occupiers. He died in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp shortly before The Netherlands was liberated.

The Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting was founded in 1954 as a completely independent Liberal think tank by a board under the chairmanship of Johan Witteveen, a Professor in economics who was to become vice prime minister of The Netherlands in the 1960s and director of the International Monetary Fund in the 1970s. In 1972 the Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting established a link with the VVD, but, as an organisation and in its policy formulation, the think tank remained independent. The current President of the board is Frits Bolkestein, who in the 1990s was the most successful leader of the VVD ever and who was an EU commissioner from 2000 to 2004. The Director of the Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting is Patrick van Schie, a historian who wrote his dissertation on the history of Dutch Liberalism from 1901 until 1940.

The Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting publishes policy papers and books on all kind of political and societal topics, from the market economy to environmental issues and from crime fighting to defence policy. In addition, together with a commercial book publisher, the foundation publishes books for a wide audience on the history of Liberalism and its leaders, on the political philosophy of Liberalism and on the leading minds in Liberal (political and economic) theory.

Each year several conferences and seminars on various topics are held. An annual Telders Lecture is held, in which we invite an influential scholar or politician from abroad to stimulate the debate in The Netherlands with original Liberal thoughts and insights. Talented, promising students of Dutch (and Belgian) universities are selected to take part in the Liberal summer school of the Telders Foundation, which is held annually in the last week of August. The quarterly journal of the Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting is *Liberaal Reveil*, which is edited by researcher Fleur de Beaufort. Every two months we publish an electronic newsletter called *Vrijpostig*. Most of our publications and debates are in Dutch, although some are available in English.

The Prof. mr. B.M. Teldersstichting does not choose one exclusive variant of Liberalism but the classical thinkers of Liberalism always appear to be an important source of inspiration. For us the freedom of the individual is the most fundamental point. We therefore consider it essential that a free and democratic society, in which there is no accumulation of power and in which public power is always democratically controlled and legitimised (via checks and balances), survives. It is not the US type of Liberalism as it has developed in recent decades that we embrace but a Liberalism that is vigorously opposed to Socialism, religion-based politics and other kinds of communitarianism.

Prometheus Liberaal Kennis Centrum Prometheus Liberal Knowledge Centre | Belgium

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Prometheus, the knowledge centre of the Flemish Liberal Party (Open Vld), is a Liberal think tank that aims to define Liberalism in the 21st century and that aims to put important, current topics high on the political agenda.

Prometheus aims to respond proactively to different challenges in the near future. In this way, we want to lay the foundations for political Liberalism in Flanders, Belgium and Europe.

Prometheus aims to formulate a clear vision of today's Liberalism by means of progressive research, study sessions, publications, meetings and lectures.

By giving an innovative interpretation to contemporary Liberalism, Prometheus is a leading institute among the international think tanks in Brussels.

Steven Vansteenkiste is the Director. He is a former head of staff of the Flemish Minister Marino Keulen. Rik Daems is Chair of the Board. He is a former Belgian minister and currently Member of the Belgian Parliament. The International Coordinator is Philippe Cuylaerts.

Stichting Internationaal Democratisch Initiatief | IDI International Democratic Initiative Foundation | IDI The Netherlands

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The IDI Foundation is an important pillar in D66's work across borders. In 1989, IVSOM, the Central and Eastern Europe Foundation of Democrats 66 (D66), was founded to support democratisation and economic transition in Central and Eastern Europe. In October 1997, IVSOM was renamed the International Democratic Initiative Foundation D66 (IDI).

After it was renamed, the organisation's field of operation was expanded to include countries outside Central and Eastern Europe. Nowadays, the IDI Foundation is mainly active in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East and Northern Africa. Furthermore, the IDI maintains and develops relationships with like-minded political organisations in almost every country in the world. The IDI co-operates with democratic parties and organisations that respect human rights and the rights of ethnic minorities.

Democratic movements and progressive or Social Liberal political parties are natural partners for the IDI. The relationships are mutually beneficial. On the one hand, IDI offers practical knowledge for political partners in the project countries. On the other hand, D66 benefits by gaining new ideas and experience concerning democratisation and international cooperation. IDI projects are financially supported by the Matra Political Party Programme of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy | SILBA Denmark

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The Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy (SILBA) is a Danish NGO that was established in 1994.

SILBA is currently working together with Russia, Kaliningrad, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. We focus on cross-organisation and cross-border activities such as large summer camps, seminars, website projects as well as providing some core funding for our partner organisations. We have also organised election observation missions in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

SILBA is represented in Denmark by five local branches. Our activities consist of the organisation of conferences and lectures on various topics for the countries mentioned above. Our members are young people from different Danish political youth organisations and students.

Swedish International Liberal Centre | SILC | Sweden

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The Swedish International Liberal Centre (SILC) is a liberal foundation that promotes democracy. SILC supports activities by organisations and individuals that promote democracy. SILC works mainly with political parties, youth, women's and human rights' organisations as well as with independent journalists.

The bulk of SILC's work is in totalitarian and post-totalitarian states such as Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cuba, Russia, Serbia and the Ukraine.

Vsl Atvira visuomenė ir jos draugai Open Society and its Friends | Lithuania

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Founded in 2005, Open Society and its Friends is a non-profit organisation that aims to spread Liberal ideas and values, stimulate the growth of an open civil society, extend and deepen democratic traditions, promote citizenship and strive for more private sector involvement in public administration.

Apart from the implementation of various projects and initiatives, we mainly aim to provide an opportunity for other people and organisations to reach their mutual goals together. Therefore, our organisation is often a supporter of ideas and initiatives as well as a partner in projects.

However, we always stick to our goals and, before we consider taking part in any initiative, we ask ourselves the following questions:

- Will it disseminate Liberal ideas and values?
- Will it promote citizenship?
- Will it strengthen the culture and awareness of democracy?
- Will it encourage public and political activity?
- Will it build up political intelligence?

The organisation is involved, on an ongoing basis, in disseminating Liberal ideas and their implementation. With our goals in mind, we initiate research on important social, political and public issues; we create concepts for Liberal reforms; we organise conferences, discussions and public lectures for society; we carry out opinion polls and we finance the publication of academic literature.

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