

European Liberal Forum

Annual Report
2013



ELF

European Liberal Forum

Annual Report 2013

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Letter from the President Felicita Medved

When political foundations at the European level were first established seven years ago, the idea was to give European citizens a forum in which European public policy could be debated and discussed. Today, Europe is on everybody's lips and, more than ever, Europeans are yearning for a space in which the future direction of our Union can be debated. The European Liberal Forum (ELF) is dedicated to creating precisely such a platform, thus bringing Europe closer to the citizen and encouraging a political dialogue that shapes decisions taken at the European level. Our aim is to make Europe accessible, interesting and relevant, and we do this by providing citizen and decision-maker alike with Liberal answers to Europe's most pressing challenges.

Since ELF's inception in 2007, the European agenda has changed dramatically. ELF's constant aim is to provide relevant and focused events and publications on European affairs, and to this end we have adopted a refined focus, identifying Liberal solutions for Europe's economy, promoting rule of law and exploring the future of the EU. These three themes, along with our longstanding commitment to capacity-building, will be the focal point of our work in the years to come and will undoubtedly help ELF bring out the essence of the European project and what it means for its citizens.

The pace of European policy-making has also accelerated since the first political foundations came about. To keep pace with the changing times, ELF has dedicated itself to developing flexible mechanisms enabling us to respond to the topics that matter to Europeans. By staying on top of political developments in the EU, we have been able to deliver timely contributions to public debate, be it on the Transatlantic

Trade and Investment Partnership or on possible outcomes of the Vilnius Eastern Partnership Summit.

ELF started with 15 members. We now boast 38 member organisations, and our membership ranks are growing, with new members from Finland, France, Hungary, Italy Lithuania and Poland. Our membership has always been a source of strength. The wealth of knowledge and ideas flowing from our members is the bedrock of our foundation. To allow ideas to flow freely and cooperation to run seamlessly, ELF has taken advantage of new and dynamic modes of cooperation that are quickly set to bear fruit. While cooperation within our foundation has been optimised, 2013 was also spent attracting partnerships with various Liberal-minded stakeholders outside our membership. This increasingly allows us to widen our impact and hone our message.

In 2007 it was still not clear what role the European-level political foundations would play in the development of the European public sphere. I am proud to say that, in the time since, ELF has proved itself an ardent advocate of European democracy, integration and active citizenship, and enabled frank discussions on the meaning and future of Europe. I am grateful to all those who have made this possible.

It is a delight and honour for me to be able to present you with the 2013 Annual Report.

Fmedved
Felicita Medved
President



Foreword by the Executive Director Susanne Hartig

The European Union (EU) dedicated 2013 to the citizen in its effort to strengthen awareness of the boundless opportunities offered by EU citizenship. In times of crisis, gauging the benefits of citizenship becomes ever more important. ELF's underlying mission is precisely to promote active citizenship. Our response to unjust criticism of the European idea was a commitment during 2013 to equip the citizen with the tools needed to respond to populism with confidence and clarity.

Realising the popular interest in a debate on fundamental European values, ELF continued its European Values Series of Roundtables. The goal was to create a space for dialogue on what it means to be European. Acting at the forefront of political developments, our organisation prioritised working in countries such as France and Hungary, where Liberal voices are in dire demand. We also engaged in frank and open discussions with young Moldovans on what European integration would mean for their future. In the course of the European Values Series, media freedom stood out as a crucial topic for the citizen. Dubbed the artillery of freedom, the role of an independent media is unparalleled in ensuring a free society and ELF is dedicated to deepening this focus in 2014.

Needless to say, in times of crisis, the citizen yearns for fresh Liberal solutions. In a Europe characterised by economic stagnation, ELF dedicated considerable attention to developing Liberal solutions for the European economy, particularly on the topic of a European banking union. To this end, we delivered policy recommendations to Liberal decision-makers on how to restore growth and competitiveness in Europe,

as well as one of the most pertinent social issues facing Europe today: the integration of Europe's largest minority – the Roma. ELF will continue to build on the policy recommendations on Roma integration in 2014 by training local politicians for whom Roma integration forms an integral part of their work.

None of the work dedicated to the promotion of active citizenship would have been possible without the tireless devotion of the ELF member organisations. I want to extend my sincere gratitude to them for the work they do. I am also especially grateful for the continued support of the ALDE Party and Groups in the European Parliament, Committee of the Regions and in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Countless other organisations, companies and individuals also contributed to the success of our 2013 activities, and I am indebted to them for their contribution. Beyond 2013, ELF will continue to dedicate its work to the cause of active citizenship.

I wish you a stimulating read!

Susanne Hartig
Executive Director

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About Us

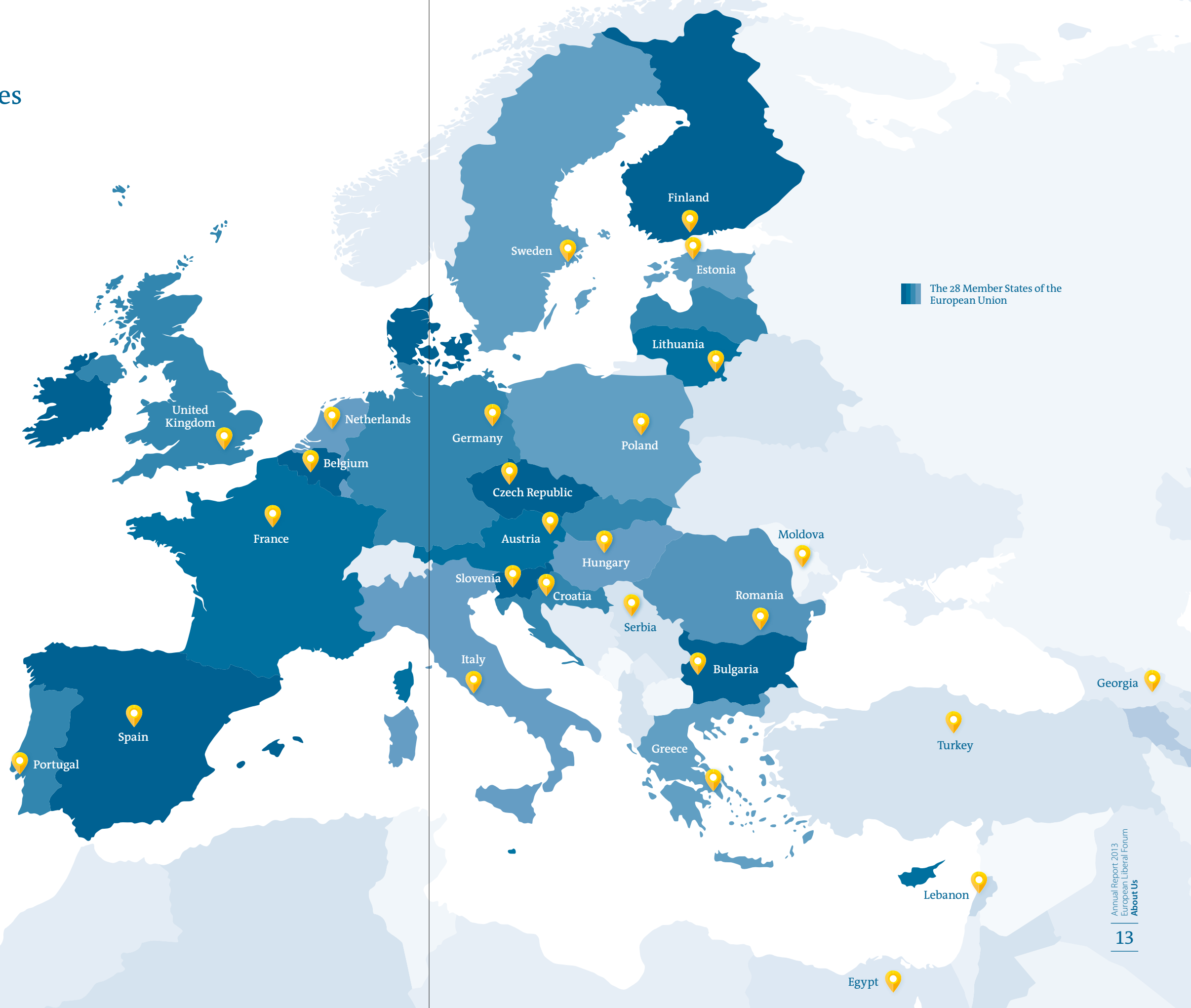
The European Liberal Forum asbl. (ELF) is the foundation of the European Liberal Democrats, the ALDE Party. Our foundation is made up of a number of European think tanks, political foundations and institutes. The diversity of our membership provides us with a wealth of **knowledge** and is a constant source of **innovation**. In turn, we provide our members with the opportunity to cooperate on European projects under the ELF umbrella.

A core aspect of our work involves issuing publications on Liberalism and European public policy issues. We also provide a forum for the discussion of European politics, and offer training for Liberal-minded citizens. Our aim in all of this is to promote **active citizenship**.

We work throughout Europe as well as in the EU Neighbourhood countries. The youthful and **dynamic** nature of ELF allows us to be at the forefront of promoting active citizenship, getting citizens involved with European issues and building an open, Liberal Europe.

Locations of ELF Activities

-  Austria
-  Belgium
-  Bulgaria
-  Croatia
-  Czech Republic
-  Egypt
-  Estonia
-  Finland
-  France
-  Georgia
-  Germany
-  Greece
-  Hungary
-  Italy
-  Lebanon
-  Lithuania
-  Moldova
-  Poland
-  Portugal
-  Romania
-  Serbia
-  Slovenia
-  Spain
-  Sweden
-  The Netherlands
-  Turkey
-  United Kingdom



Board of Directors



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Felicita Medved

President of ELF | 2012 – present
Member of the ELF Board of Directors | 2010 – present
Vice-President of Zares – New Politics | 2007 – 2010
President of the Board of Institute Novum | 2010 – present



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State Minister Dr Jürgen Martens

Vice-President of ELF | 2012 – present
Member of the EU Committee of the Regions | 2009 – present
State Minister for Justice and European Affairs | 2009 – present
Member of State Parliament Saxony | 2004 – present



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Roel Martens

ELF Treasurer | 2012 – present
Ministry of Economic Affairs (The Netherlands) | 2001 – 2012
Ministry of Foreign Affairs (The Netherlands) | 2013 – present
Member of VVD Advisory Committee on European Affairs | 2002 – present



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Andreas Bergström

Member of the ELF Board of Directors | 2012 – present
Deputy Director of FORES | 2012 – present
Political Advisor to the Integration Minister (Sweden) | 2010 – 2012
Political Advisor to the Leader of Folkpartiet Liberalerna (Sweden) | 2006 – 2010



=====

Giulio Ercolessi

Member of the ELF Board of Directors | 2012 – present
Member of the LibMov Executive Committee | 2013 – present
Member of the European Humanist Federation Executive Board | 2013 – present
Secretary General of the Radical Party (Italy) | 1973 – 1974

The ELF Secretariat



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Annual Report 2013

Selection of Events

2013 was a busy and dynamic year for ELF. Many events were organised under the multi-annual project themes launched in 2012: migration and integration and combating populism and nationalism. ELF organised a growing number of **high-quality** events throughout the EU-28, the candidate countries, and the European Neighbourhood.

Capacity-building is an important concept that ELF develops and intensifies every year. In 2013, this had particular resonance in light of the 2014 **elections** to the European Parliament. ELF collaborated with Liberals to develop a clear and effective political programme that is ready to be communicated to Europe's citizens.

The **Ralph Dahrendorf Roundtable Series** concept was actively used in 2013. ELF promotes the achievements of Lord Dahrendorf with a series of exceptional events connected to his name. Lord Dahrendorf was an ardent supporter of a stronger Europe, consistently promoting the role of the EU as a guarantor of human rights and liberty during his time as a member of the Bundestag, European Commissioner, Peer of the British House of Lords and Chairman of the Board of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation. The themes of the roundtables were high on the agenda of Liberal decision-makers and Europe's stakeholders. In particular the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership with the United States, European defence policy and media freedom.

Celebrating Europe

Type of event Conference

Dates 8 May 2013

Location Maastricht (The Netherlands)

Supported by Stichting IDI, Fondazione Critica Liberale, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Fundacja Projekt: Polska, Liberal Future Forum, Liberales, Movimento Liberal Social, Mr Hans van Mierlo Stichting, NOVUM

On the eve of Europe Day, ELF, with the support of Stichting IDI, the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and other Liberal partners, organised an evening full of music and debate to celebrate Europe. Taking place in Maastricht, the event was designed to fuel the debate on Europe and the future of the EU a year ahead of the 2014 European Parliamentary elections. With the elections in sight, many countries in the Union face a similar debate: What is the way forward with the EU and for European integration? How does the Union gain and maintain legitimacy, how do we deal with the democratic deficit? Furthermore, what is the way out of the financial crisis? Can the monetary union thrive without a political union? Taking a different approach from these more common debates on Europe and the EU, the conference was designed to explore with the speakers and audience what it is that we share in Europe, what unites us? Or, as the event posters announced: 'culture, diversity and identity, instead of bailouts and bureaucracy'.

The conference drew a mixed and international audience from Maastricht and the wider region: young and old people from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Norway, the UK and beyond. All shared a common trait: a strong feeling of belonging to Europe, a sense that despite all their differences, Europeans share a common identity and therefore a common destiny.

The evening started with a word of welcome by the Deputy-Major of Maastricht, **Mieke Damsma**, and **Marietje Schaake MEP**. The interactive session that followed featured D66's international secretary, **Robert Farla**, in a discussion with LYMEC's **Igor Caldeira**, ELF board member **Giulio Ercolessi**, and the audience to establish a common European cultural heritage. Supported by the visual input of Rem Koolhaas, partner at OMA architecture practice and a speed cartoonist, the audience gave their own ideas on what constitutes a common European heritage, while engaging in the debate through twitter.

The end result was a mixed one: a wide array of contributions was collected, ranging from noble concepts such as 'human rights' and 'democracy' to more prosaic elements, such as the contents of a typical European 'cheese-platter' and the Champions League football tournament. While the diversity of responses and limited time made establishing a definitive common cultural European heritage quite a challenge, it was, nonetheless, an interesting exploration of the different visions individuals have of Europe's shared identity, and perhaps a good basis for further research.

The evening continued with an in-depth interview with Vice-president of the European Commission, **Dr Neelie Kroes** by Secretary-General of Liberal International, **Emil Kirjas**. In an open conversation, Commissioner Kroes

shared her experiences of a life in the heart of European politics. She mentioned the importance of a common European market, the resilience of European youth, gender-equality and shared her personal insights into the future of the Union.

This was followed by a vivid debate on the current state of affairs in Europe between MEP Schaake and Professor of Financial Geography at the University of Amsterdam, **Professor Dr E.R. Ewald Engelen**. The highly interactive debate centred on the relevance and challenges of the EU in the 21st century. In contrast to Professor Engelen's staunchly eurosceptic view, MEP Schaake emphasised that progressiveness is essential to joint plans for Europe and that looking forward, not back, is paramount. The discussion also touched upon the democratic deficit apparent in Europe's current institutional design. Both debaters and audience agreed that increasing its political and democratic legitimacy was one of the major challenges for the EU in years to come.

MEP Schaake and Projekt Polska's **Lukasz Klejnowski** closed the official segment of the evening by recalling that the European continent is unified in diversity. The EU has been experiencing a bumpy ride at the start of the 21st century, but these times of austerity and euroscepticism also present an unprecedented opportunity for institutional reform and the increase of European legitimacy.

Prompted by the financial crisis, EU citizens are demanding democratic legitimacy of an institutional framework that for too long has been too distant from the citizens it aims to govern. The increasing pressure on the legitimacy of the Union can, if momentum is used to rise to the occasion, result in a demand-driven institutional redesign that closes the democratic deficit that has long been taken for granted in Europe.

The conference was designed to explore with the speakers and audience what it is that we share in Europe, what unites us?

The event served to illustrate that Europe and the EU are not distinct phenomena that simply 'happen' to people, but rather processes that active European citizens can get involved in, just like the democratic processes that take place at local, regional or national levels. To be engaged is to be an active driver of the future path of Europe.

Author

Michiel Hendrix, International Officer, Stichting IDI



From left to right: Dr Neelie Kroes and networking participants

Bridging the Gap: Arab-European Dialogue Forum on the Basics of Liberalism

Type of event Workshop

Dates 17–18 May 2013

Location Cairo (Egypt)

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Forum for Greece

Arabs and Europeans are neighbours – they always have been and always will be. In terms of geography, Arabs and Europeans are very close. In terms of politics and culture, however, the distance at times seems vast. In Europe and the EU a consensus exists that good neighbourly relations are of existential importance. The EU redefined its relations with the eastern neighbourhood in an exemplary fashion after the successful people's revolutions in that part of the world. Now, after the historic changes in the Arab world, it is high time for Europe to redefine its relationship with its southern neighbourhood in earnest.

For two days in May 2013, Cairo became the centre of Liberal debate and attention, as politicians and academics from Algeria, Belgium, Egypt, Germany, Greece, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, the Netherlands, Palestine, Poland, Tunisia and Syria assembled for the first Arab-European dialogue forum on the basics of Liberalism.

The political and cultural differences in this part of the world have a significant effect on the role of Liberalism in its respective societies. In the Arab world, sadly, the perception prevails that liberal principles stand against local mores and traditions. Some groups, be it out of ignorance or spite, continue to propagate the idea that liberalism and religious freedom are not compatible. They spread the belief that the great idea of personal

freedom is against Islam, thereby pushing all Muslim Liberals into the world of the nonbeliever. The situation in Europe is different: liberal principles have become the mainstream and have found their way into constitutions and legislation. All major political forces, be they socialists, conservatives and democratic religious parties, have adopted basic liberal values.

The organisers had chosen the workshop title 'Bridging the Gap' with hindsight, as the objective of the political dialogue was to identify where Liberals from Europe and the Arab world agree and where this is not the case. In special sessions, the participants – among them, leaders of political parties, academics and civil society leaders – covered the embodiment of basic liberal values throughout history, the role of religion in their respective societies and illustrated liberal economic programmes as a means of tackling the challenges of a globalised world. "It may sound surprising, but I have seen hardly any differences between the programmes of the Liberal parties in Europe and the Arab world", said [Alexandra Thein MEP](#) member of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE).

Speakers from both regions highlighted their commonality. [Dr Osama Ghazali Harb](#), president of the former 'Democratic Front Party' which has merged in December 2013 with the Free Egyptians Party (FEP) said that the origins of Arab Liberalism lie in Europe;



Participants engaged in debate during the workshop

politically, this has become a problem as some enemies of the ideas of freedom depict Liberalism as a 'foreign' ideology, and some even denounce it as being anti-Islamic.

[Dimitris Katsoudas](#), Director of Studies of the Forum for Greece stated that the European-Arab relationship was never a one-way-street. He recalled that Arab scientists translated classical Greek literature, thereby assuring its revival in western societies. [Corentin de Salle](#) from the Centre Jean Gol added: "European liberalism has its roots in Arab civilization." Two years after the historic uprisings in the Arab world, Liberal-minded Arabs are not happy with the turn of events – and avoid the term 'Arab Spring.' In Tunisia – and even more so in Libya and Egypt – Liberal forces feel marginalised. One participant from Upper Egypt said that what started as a liberal revolution has been kidnapped by Islamist political forces.

The workshop agreed that democracy alone is not a panacea. "Liberalism is not possible without democracy, yet there are still democracies which do not respect liberal principles and rights", said [Professor Aris Hatzis](#) from the University of Athens. Egypt is just one of those countries moving in the direction of what has been termed an 'illiberal democracy' in which the freedom of the press and equal rights of all citizens are not always respected, participants noted.

In a final session the workshop discussed how the outside world should deal with these developments on the southern rim of the Mediterranean. [Alexandra Thein](#) had a clear position: Europe and the West need to establish 'red lines', that is, clear objectives, in order to be able to continue to influence the reform process through policy initiatives, such as the support of individual NGOs.

The workshop organisers drew on the presentations as a reference point for future debates. In May 2014, a two-and-a half-day international conference is planned in which experts in Liberal party politics from Europe and the Arab world will come together with academics. The focus will be on the crucial role Liberal political parties' play in promoting Liberalism. By presenting and discussing the various dimensions of the role of organised Liberalism in various parts of the world, the aim is to create a comparative overview of political parties on both sides of the Mediterranean.

More detailed workshop proceedings are included in a dedicated ELF publication, available for free download, and can be found in the publication section of ELF and FNF Egypt websites.

Authors

[Dr Ronald Meinardus](#), Regional Director, FNF MENA Region
[Dirk Kunze](#), Project Manager

Migration and Integration: An eternal topic for Populists, or a Chance for Liberals to Improve Their Human Rights Agenda?

Type of event Seminars

Dates 19 June, 8 – 10 and 22 – 24 November 2013

Location Belgrade (Serbia), Opatija and Osijek (Croatia)

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Liberal Future Forum, NOVUM

The aim of the three Migration and Integration seminars was to increase awareness of young Liberals from the Western Balkans of the political issue of migration, with a view to enabling them to present stronger arguments when debating populists. Participants met renowned experts in the field of migration during the events and learned about the changes that EU accession would bring to the region through presentations illustrating the experiences of Italy, Slovenia and Croatia. The common thread running through the three seminars was that the transformation from being a country predominantly of emigration to one of immigration, as well as outlining the major migration-related human-rights issues in the Western Balkans. Through working groups, the participants were able to formulate several draft strategies on how to better integrate immigrants into their destination communities, as well as how to contend with populists in public debate.

The switch from an emigration country to an immigration country might soon happen in Croatia, mirroring a transformation that has already happened in Italy and Slovenia. In Particular, if Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, or Montenegro - and their numerous youths who now dream of moving to the EU, further advance their EU ambitions. Market forces and the need for economic growth will catalyse movements of labour, making good communication and cooperation

between business, community and government bodies essential for an optimal influx of scarce labour. Civil society, as well as political parties, could help to acclimatise immigrants (and in case of Serbia, ex-refugees or IDPs) into destination communities.

The Balkan Peninsula has, for centuries, been a greater region of emigration than of immigration, with the Balkan peoples migrating to central or western Europe, or further overseas. Notable migration occurred back and forth across the Adriatic Sea, considerably influencing the identity building of populations on both sides. And, of course, migration was prevalent within the Balkans. Not all of this was voluntary migration: some was government-driven and had broader ethnic, demographic, economic or other social engineering intent. Some happened as the dreadful outcome of refugee crises, or as part of a long and painful return-migration process.

Modern migration, including the brain drain, and influx of immigrants of various educational levels, either as asylum seekers or as legal or illegal immigrants, has posed a number of new political challenges. Protecting the human rights of economic migrants is an important issue for Liberal politicians. Liberals encourage the movement of people in pursuit of happiness, to places where they are welcome. Investing in education and linking it to the needs of economic and social

Dr Emilio Cocco and Felicita Medved introducing the seminar

development creates experts capable of disseminating new values. Moreover, investing in education to encourage young talent to stay might be a part of a solution to diminish the negative impact of the brain drain. However, creating a free, open, secularist and tolerant society also matters: few people who are in position to choose would rush to migrate to a country that has unresolved issues with its minorities.

The strategies mentioned above are all equally important in efforts to better integrate immigrants. The focus should be on universal human rights and civil liberties, including economic freedom and opportunities, not on special interests and collective privileges. Subsidiarity should thereby be respected. Regulation should be clear and simple. Politicians should fully accept and assume responsibility for peaceful and integrative resolution of social conflicts. These principles will enable Liberals to successfully counter populist rhetoric against migration, while showing them as responsible political leaders.

The identity (including citizenship) issues still await more sustainable solutions. Two opposing models of identity management, the populist (which demands the acculturation of immigrants) and the multicultural (creating parallel societies) are either unacceptable from the Liberal standpoint or hardly applicable in Europe. Liberals should look for other models, primarily

those which, by protecting collective structures, put individual rights first. Hence, multiple identities belong primarily to the individuals themselves, to be harmonised in an open, free and tolerant society.

As for asylum management, there should be solidarity with people looking for refuge from wars or human rights violations. The EU should not fall into the temptation to isolate or to otherwise act inhumanely. The focus should be on removing the causes of asylum-driven migration, at the very roots of the problem, as well as helping asylum seekers assimilate to their host countries. As for the misuses of the asylum mechanism, again the best strategy would be to address the problem at its root: to enhance domicile communities so that they are more attractive, while offering those migrants, who do wish to move for work or study, a greater number of legal channels. This would satisfy the need for migration in an organised and controlled manner, causing the least disruption to either the domicile or the host country.

In summary, the three seminars were central to produce more sophisticated arguments in favour of freedom of movement, labour mobility and market-driven solutions to the challenges of migration.

Authors

Dušan Gamser, Rapporteur

Dušan Dinić, Project Coordinator, FNF Belgrade

Redrafting Europe: Building and Communicating a Liberal Political Programme

Type of event Workshop

Dates 12 – 14 July 2013

Location Florence (Italy)

Supported by LYMEC, Fondazione Critica Liberale, Movimento Liberal Social

ELF, in cooperation with LYMEC, held a workshop for 30 participants from around Europe in Florence, Italy titled: Redrafting Europe: Building and Communicating a Liberal Political Programme in the Face of Populism. This was the second of three similar workshops in 2013 that aimed to prepare young campaign managers and candidates for the 2014 elections to the European Parliament.

After a word of welcome by LYMEC vice-president, **Vedrana Gujic**, interesting and useful sessions were led by **Marley Morris**, Researcher at Counterpoint, **Elizabeth Drury**, EU Advocacy Trainer from Eye to Eye Insights and **Bonnie Bernström**, SILC Board Member. ALDE Party political advisor, **Mae Liz Orrego Wennick**, presented the ALDE Party plans and strategies for the European Parliament elections.

Marley Morris, began by outlining the traits of various voter groups, focusing on the 'reluctant radicals', the uncommitted supporters of right-wing populist parties. Reluctant radicals vote for right-wing populist parties without feeling close to them. Using graphics, he showed that, while reluctant radicals have a surprisingly small gender gap, they have a significant education gap. In Denmark, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, low or mid-level education is a predictor of a reluctant radical, with less well-educated people more likely to be reluctant radicals

than highly educated people. He also presented the different populist groups from France, Finland and the Netherlands.

The session's conclusion included advice on how to build a response to populism. Quoting George Lakoff's frame-based approach, the following points were highlighted:

- Be respectful
- Don't just deny
- Do reframe
- Provide stories, not statistics

Elizabeth Drury started the next day with an interactive training session called, Effective Responses to Populism: a Communications Seminar. Presenting three broad personality groups, she identified individuals who: base their life choices on facts, those that follow their heart and feelings, and those that follow their beliefs. She explained that the core of a political narrative should be conviction. She stressed that the fight against populism cannot be won by facts only; that convictions play a major role. In winning hearts back from the populists, acknowledging problems and fears is a crucial first step.

Convincing people with facts, and opposing the myths that populists often rely on was stressed as a powerful way to respond effectively to populism. She



Speakers and participants at this year's ELF workshop on Redrafting Europe: Building and Communicating a Liberal Political Programme in Florence

highlighted that facts are an important part of effective communication, as they provide credibility to a political story. Populists often tend to use myths instead of facts, myths which can easily be refuted by asking simple questions about the basis of these 'facts'.

Convincing people with facts, and opposing the myths that populists often rely on was stressed as a powerful way to respond effectively to populism.

Bonnie Bernström then took the floor with her case study on women's rights and gender equality, How to Attract the Female Electorate, Challenges and Strategies. She illustrated that, in order to achieve gender quality in politics, an electoral gender quota system was sometimes necessary. She explained that when populist parties progress, the number of elected women decreases. She also clarified, by using a number of graphs, that women are politically active and do vote in younger age groups, even more so than men.

Bonnie Bernström's presentation was followed by a discussion on the application of the previous sessions to Liberal campaigns. The floor was given to four participants and LYMEC members to present their organisation's campaign activity ideas: **Jarico Vos** from JOVD, the Netherlands, **Josephine Dietzsch** from

Liberale Hochschulgruppe, Germany, **Christopher Røhl Andersen** from Radikal Ungdom, Denmark and **Ab Brightman** from Liberal Youth, UK. What we saw was a plethora of interactive and timely campaigns, which served to enlist new members and evoke public support for Liberalism.

After the discussion, ALDE Party political advisor Mae Liz Orrego Wennick and LYMEC political officer Igor Caldeira discussed and presented ALDE party and LYMEC strategies for the 2014 elections. A lively debate followed on what topics to focus on ahead of the elections.

In a final session, participants were asked to write and present their ideas for the 2014 LYMEC election manifesto, with youth employment, reforming Europe, EU citizenship and human rights emerging as the central values for the proposed manifesto.

Author

Slaven Klobucar, Former Secretary General, LYMEC

Liberalism: Values and Comparative Practices

Type of event Workshop

Dates 11 – 14 September 2013

Location Istanbul (Turkey)

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Haya van Somerenstichting/VVD International, Stichting IDI

The aftermath of the protests in Istanbul's Taksim Gezi Park and Egypt's coup d'état, as well as the ongoing state of terror against Syria's citizens, inspired the backdrop for the ELF workshop: 'Liberalism: Values and Comparative Practices', organised with the support of Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom's Istanbul Office, Stichting IDI and Haya van Somerenstichting/VVD International.

The workshop was organised to promote discussion of liberalism's core values with 18 students invited from a number of Turkish cities. The questions discussed included, 'Does the (liberal) "western" concept of the "secular state" not fail when confronted with deep-rooted religious values?' Is the (liberal) "western" concept of universal human rights indeed adaptable to non-western societies? Taking a different approach from previous seminars, the event was designed to strengthen the case for liberalism and explore differing perspectives on its values and practices with the guest speakers and participants. An emphasis on values and practices underpinned the event, with contemporary issues in particular drawing the attention of the young participants, primarily university students from various social sciences programs. All shared a willingness to discuss current issues in an open platform with well-known liberal intellectuals.

The workshop began with a brief introduction and a session on liberal values. [Dr Bican Sahin](#), associate professor of political science and head of the Association for Liberal Thinking, facilitated a card query session followed by a discussion and Q&A. In the afternoon sessions, [Dr Bahattin Karademir](#), Associate Professor of Strategic Management at Çukurova University, led a working group discussion and a presentation on economic liberalism. Further discussions followed on the market economy, competition, globalisation and entrepreneurship.

The workshop continued with a session on political liberalism. Professor Sahin introduced the basic concepts and moderated a discussion on freedom, rule of law, human rights, and liberal democracy. These sessions helped the students to improve their skills, such as their debating abilities, with the moderators asking them to prepare projects on particular topics.

[Joris Backer](#), a D66 member of the Dutch Senate, gave a speech on the political aspects of liberalism from a European point of view. Senator Backer explained liberal values intrinsically: (a) demonstrate confidence in each individual's inner strength; (b) reward performance and share wealth; (c) encourage thinking and acting internationally; (d) pursue a harmonious and sustainable society; and (e) preserve universal

Young participants exchanging on 'western' concept of secularism

rights and shared values. These values underpin the practical approaches to fiscal, educational, environmental and energy issues developed by individual societies. With this in mind, Senator Backer outlined some core principles: that raising taxes leaves the individual with fewer funds for personal use, an argument for maintaining budgetary discipline; that education improves an individual's life chances and thus should be state supported; and that energy and sustainability issues are important because an individual's choices could impair the quality of life of others.

Addressing the participants' questions on education policy, Senator Backer proposed that, 'fairness' should override 'efficiency', in relation to education, sustained by a belief that market economics should not be applied to this sphere. In answer to questions regarding limited government, he agreed with the idea that a smaller state is preferable because the market cannot be expected to administer justice.

[Dr Atilla Yayla](#), Professor of Political Science and Head of the International Relations Department at Istanbul Commerce University, attended on the special invitation of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom. Professor Yayla made a speech on liberal values from a Turkish perspective and provided the students with an opportunity to examine a different,

domestic, view of liberal values. After summarising the history of the Anabaptist movement, Professor Yayla raised a number of questions, including: 'Which "West"?', 'Whose "West"?', 'Who represents the "West"?'. In answer to his own questions, Professor Yayla explained that there is no single 'West' that can be universally accepted and agreed on wholeheartedly.

Does the (liberal) 'western' concept of the 'secular state' not fail when confronted with deep-rooted religious values?

In addition, the professor raised another question: 'Do the values that are considered "western" belong to a particular culture?' He explained that, as a classical liberal committed to the Hume, Smith, Menger, and Hayek traditions, these values are not essentially 'western', but humanitarian. The profound knowledge of liberalism Professor Yayla was able to share was extremely helpful to the discussion of whether liberal values belong exclusively to 'the West'.

[Arnoud Willemssen](#), policy advisor for economic affairs for the VVD parliamentary group in the lower house of the Dutch parliament, gave a speech about the economic aspects of liberalism from a European standpoint. He briefly explained economic ➤



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liberalism and continued his presentation by illustrating the ideological basis of these concepts from an historical perspective. Following a brief conceptual introduction, he focused on VVD's views on state intervention in economics, outlining that there should be no state intervention, or it should be strictly limited, given it is: (a) immoral and unjust; (b) impractical since governments lack perfect information; (c) distorts markets; and (d) favors some at the expense of others.

As an example, he argued that the increasing role of the government in the Netherlands, especially in recent years, led to a backlash in Dutch public opinion on the role of state intervention. He posited that the state should define and protect property rights and facilitate markets. Having two speakers from two Dutch Liberal parties enabled the students to take in different liberal viewpoints.

The last session was an opportunity to discuss Turkey's contemporary politics. Participants expressed their ideas on a wide range of political issues. Some mentioned the collectivist nature of political ideologies as the country's most pressing problem. Others commented that the state itself has historically become the main source of hate speech against society's minorities. Some participants mentioned their unmet expectations concerning the policies of

the governing Justice and Development Party's (AK Party). Others argued the AK Party is the very first political party to create space for civil politics at the expense of Turkey's tutelary regime. Moreover, the AK Party initiated democratic reforms of minority rights. Another fruitful discussion followed on the Taksim Gezi Park protests in Istanbul. The great majority of the participants agreed that excessive, unjust and borderline criminal police violence against protestors had resulted in a second wave of protests.

The workshop ended with the participants requesting similar future events in order to facilitate continued discussion of the country's contemporary politics.

Author
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European Think Tank School: Liberalism in the 21st Century

Type of event Workshop

Dates 11 – 13 October 2013

Location Prague (Czech Republic)

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Centre for Liberal Studies, Mr Hans van Mierlo Stichting, Open Society and its Friends

The purpose of think tanks is nothing short of ambitious: bringing light to fresh new ideas that will ultimately change the world for the better. Liberals, who have always believed in progress and the power of ideas, have a strong tradition of influential think tanks. Creating a platform for like-minded people to learn from each other is very powerful. Examples from the 20th century, such as the Austrian School or Freiburg School, inspired the creation of the first think tanks which went on to become politically influential. But, while the post-war period resulted in just a few think tanks, there are hundreds today.

Many of Europe's Liberal think tanks, some of which come under the umbrella of ELF or are part of the 4Liberty.eu network, plus several other organisations from all over the Europe, came to Prague in October 2013 to participate in the European Think Tank School. The aim of the event was to strengthen the position of Liberal think tanks internationally.

Conceived as a follow-up to the first Think Tank School organised by ELF and FNF in Vilnius in April 2012, the Prague event brought together 18 junior and senior representatives from a number of Liberal think tanks. The weekend workshop combined both a more ideological section (looking at the positioning of various Liberal think tanks) and a practical

(capacity-building) section. The project enabled all participants to exchange ideas and good practice, to strengthen their skills and to encourage future coalitions among their institutions.

Liberalism is an expansive concept and Liberals can be prone to pointing out the insignificant differences separating them, rather than establishing common ground. Mutual tolerance and understanding for the wide diversity of Liberal approaches was, however, the overwhelming principle that emerged from the workshop. Representatives from all think tanks were asked by event moderator **Wulf Pabst** of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom to visually categorise their organisation by positioning it on a dual-axis diagram drawn on a large sheet of paper. The x-axis expressed the range of opinions regarding economic liberties (classical liberal versus libertarian); the y-axis expressed the differences on social issues (from civic to economic liberties).

By the end of this initial exercise 15 post-it notes were distributed along the two axes. The task was designed to trigger a discussion on whether the diversity of liberal ideas, concepts and values is a blessing or a curse. The ensuing discussion proved that debates between libertarians and social liberals can be enriching if both sides are respectful and open-minded.



Participants joining working groups to discuss think tank fundraising

The workshop's main aim, though, was not to remain solely in the sphere of ideas, but to deal with the practical aspects of the everyday work of Liberal think tanks. **Hugo Brady**, senior analyst from Centre for European Reform (CER), pointed out there are few more challenging jobs than being a successful think tanker. The role requires combination of very unique skills: one must think as an academic, write as a journalist, act as a diplomat, talk as a politician and raise money as a businessman. That is why **Žilvinas Šilėnas**, Director of the Lithuanian Free Market Institute, encouraged everybody to embrace the concept of intellectual entrepreneurship. He contended that only by merging a love of freedom with brilliant thinking and the use of entrepreneurial methods, can the ambitious goals of the participating think tanks be achieved.

The first focus must be on the bigger picture. The day-to-day business of think tanks often obscures their long-term goals and purpose, not just for the public, but also for the members of these institutions. Hugo Brady reminded everybody that if the job description of think tankers is to refine ideas into bulletproof concepts and arguments, then it is a profession much older than we might think. Henry VIII of England asked the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, to dig deep into the archives to find arguments to support his intention to divorce. While he succeeded, the fact that he later reversed

his position shows that some ideas live only as long as they fit with political expediency.

Think tankers must be proactive and have a clear communication strategy if they are to overcome an information-overloaded world. Therefore, communication must be planned, targeted and measured.

Indeed, timing is crucial, especially when communication is concerned. Any 'product', be it an event or policy paper, must be timely. A policy paper cannot come too early, (when hardly anybody recognises its relevance) nor too late (when competitors may have already seized the opportunity). Think tankers must be proactive and have a clear communication strategy if they are to overcome an information-overloaded world. Therefore, communication must be planned, targeted and measured.

Good media relations are one of the key factors for the success of any think tank. As Hugo Brady put it, "journalists tend to quote you if they know you well." Finding the right balance between being open, but not too close, is a challenge for think tankers. Sensitive information should not be quoted if that does ➤



European Think Tank School: Liberalism in the 21st Century

not add anything new to the intellectual debate, otherwise the meticulously built relationship with politicians or journalists alike risks being destroyed.

Hugo Brady went on to argue that the biggest challenge is the fact that people have less time for reading in the present day, politicians, journalists and think tankers included. Being brief, concise and using plain language is a must for any written output. Another response is the use of blogging, podcasting and video casting. Media-friendly projects, such as the Lisbon Scorecard (issued by CER from 2001 to 2010) are successful because of their simplicity. The Lisbon Scorecard index benchmarked all EU member states on their economic competitiveness. It used a relatively easy methodology from open-source data provided by the European Commission. The scorecard regularly named (and shamed), the best and the worst countries. The media response was overwhelming.

Using info-graphics (simple visual tools to present abstract data) is yet another method of attracting attention. Žilvinas Šilėnas, who explained the idea of a Municipal Performance Index, mentioned this. Apart from using info-graphics, this benchmarking index and a series of press conferences focused on municipalities proved successful since it focused on geographically peripheral areas. Normally, think tanks neglect these areas and organise events only in major cities. All

think tanks organise events from time to time. Yet another important skill is the ability to chair panels and manage event timings, since all speakers are prone to overrunning.

Liberalism is an expansive concept and Liberals can be prone to pointing out the insignificant differences separating them, rather than establishing common ground.

Good ideas, the driving force of any think tank, do not come from events and media-oriented projects, though. They are the result of thorough research. In the Anglo-Saxon tradition, high-quality output is based on a merciless editing system: each piece of writing is edited and rewritten several times. “Poor writing equals sloppy thinking”, said Hugo Brady, whose background is in journalism. An effective peer review process requires a flat organisational structure (a hub and spoke system), which is more appropriate than a hierarchical system. **Ivo Thonon** from the Mr Hans Mierlo Foundation in the Netherlands confirmed that the flat structure of his think tank works well. Besides that, he mentioned the important role of volunteers.

Fundraising was extensively dealt with during a lecture led by experienced fundraiser, **Nick Allen**, founder of Alma Consulting. He showcased various tools,

focusing on digital methods. He also shared the latest crowd-sourcing trends, inviting the participants to check their own websites for a clear call for donations or membership. Events can also be an effective fundraising tool. The concept of Flagship Events, where all donors are invited once a year to meet the most important people in a given field, was explained.

While some think tanks employ a special fundraiser, most of the organisations represented shared a joint effort model whereby all staff members contributed. Hugo Brady argued, however, that the director should play a special role, particularly during high-level events, such as the Davos Economic Forum. If the director of a given think tank gets CEO support, then the lengthy communication generally required with corporate public affairs departments might be avoided.

The fundraising lecture was followed by a lecture on email marketing led by **David Kirš**, an author of marketing software tools from the Czech Republic. He began his lecture by giving Barack Obama as an example of someone who managed to gather 16 million email contacts in his second presidential election campaign. This proved key to his re-election, as Mitt Romney gathered only 2-3 million email contacts. These contacts were used not only to recruit volunteers for campaigning, but more importantly, for fundraising. Obama gathered most of the contacts through a simple contact form placed on his website. David Kirš invited everybody to consider this system as the cornerstone to building a large database of valuable contacts. If think-tankers are intellectual entrepreneurs, they should be able to offer an interesting product (analysis, video, e-book, info-graphics, etc.) that can be exchanged for an email contact. The growing database of email contacts can be later used for automated campaigns for various projects, events and fundraising.

Radovan Ďurana, a researcher from the Slovakian Institute for Economic and Social Studies (INESS), proved it is possible to reach a big audience using

a relatively difficult topic. The organisation’s video campaign, ‘Slovakia Will Be Richer’, attracted more than 200,000 views and generated a real media buzz. It drew attention to excessive and irresponsible state spending by satirically mimicking government-advertising campaigns. Only at the end of the video did INESS confess its authorship. This succeeded in drawing attention to a project called priceofthegovernment.sk (cenastatu.sk), with social media the key communication channel used.

The workshop participants also had the opportunity to meet **Dr Hermann Otto Solms**, the then Vice President of the German Bundestag. He chaired a panel of experts from the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom on the future of the European Union and outlined the recommendations from the A Europe of Freedom for and by its People manifesto, which resulted from this expert group. He underlined the important role of think tanks, since politicians and state administration often outsource the expert part of their job to various external bodies, including leading think tanks.

As well as lectures, the workshop also featured working groups facilitated by Wulf Pubst. All participants were encouraged to consider ways of implementing the ideas expounded during the three days. The final evaluation revealed that all participants returned home, not just with many new contacts, but also with many concrete ideas on how to achieve the goals of their home organisations.

Author

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Growth and Competitiveness in Europe – Mission Possible

Type of event Conference

Dates 25 – 26 October 2013

Location Sofia (Bulgaria)

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, LIPA

The aim of the Growth and Competitiveness in Europe conference was to address the economic, political, ideological and social issues exposed by the current European crisis. Furthermore, its intention was to advance the policy and reform agenda needed to achieve the economic growth and competitiveness that will make Europe a pivotal global leader in the 21st century.

The current financial crisis and economic slowdown have widened the gap between Europe's more competitive and its less-competitive economic regions and threatened the EU's economic and social convergence and cohesion. There is a distinct risk that developing factions within the EU are vying to achieve their short-term national goals at the expense of the EU's long-term vision. A new and threatening confidence deficit has developed between EU member states and European citizen's vis-à-vis the EU.

The event's first panel, Transform Europe: Economies in Crisis, Communities in Transition, addressed the expectations of troubled markets and people and drew representatives from the spheres of economic science and public policy. With the help of a moderator, participants drew up various proposed solutions to the current European crisis. **Gabriele Molitor, MP** from Germany and Member of the Parliamentary Committee on Affairs of the European

Union 2009-2013, emphasised the importance of SMEs, education and reforms. **Professor Dr Aristides Hatzis**, Associate Professor at the University of Athens, Greece, and **Professor Dr Miguel Anxo Bastos**, Political Science Faculty, Universidad de Santiago de Compostela, Spain, emphasised the importance of the free market and the negative role that subsidies play in the economy. Professor Hatzis elaborated on the Greek experience, with hostility towards entrepreneurship and an over-reliance on the public sector, while Professor Bastos addressed the issue of the ECB's role as a political institution. **Marius Gustavson**, economic historian and author from Norway, presented a Keynesian reading of the current crisis by illustrating that lack of demand could be addressed with more spending by Germany to reverse the negative trade balance with the southern member states of the EU.

Guy Verhofstadt MEP, Leader of ALDE Group, and Prime Minister of Belgium 1999-2008 delivered the keynote speech on the second day of the conference. His immediate dissection of Europe's crisis was that neither the financial markets nor the EU are entirely to blame, as the inadequacies of both had led to the current difficulties. The way forward must be the completion of the single market, a joint digital agenda and an agreement for a transatlantic free zone. We are currently not faced with too much Europe or too much integration, just the opposite.



From left to right: Iliya Lingorski, Susanne Hartig, Mia Morero, Gabriele Molitor MP and Cristian David

However, the Europe of the future must be governed in a different way. If we look at the way the EU works today, it is surprising that it is able to take any decisions at all. Using the American federal model as a comparison, MEP Verhofstadt evaluated the current level of governance in Europe. Fifty governors of fifty states, meeting a few times a year to make important decisions, do not govern the US. Europe's current model is doing too little, too late, thus fuelling euroscepticism. Only a more integrated Europe can defend our principles and values, and helps us regain sovereignty because most of the problems we face, including dumping from China, damaging financial products from the US and environmental problems, must be resolved together.

Furthermore, the consequences of inaction could be extremely serious, leading to a situation in twenty years in which there is no European country in the G8. "Either we integrate or we become irrelevant". MEP Verhofstadt argued that a more united Europe is needed to find solutions to the crisis. Further, he stated that the banking crisis is at the heart of the continent's current problems. Banks are not fulfilling their main function, which is to lend money to businesses. The transmission of funds from the banks to SMEs, the backbone of EU economy, is broken. Cheap money brings profits to the stock market, but is not helping SMEs. The only remedy is a banking union, with a

single supervisory body, a single resolution system, and a system via which institutions contribute to a fund according to a determined risk factor. Without this, there is no point in a single supervisory body in the first place, he claimed.

Integration should go even further, what is needed is a political and economic union. If we want a single currency and the advantages this brings (lower interest rates, no transaction costs) we need to create a political union behind the currency, otherwise the consequences could be catastrophic. We need a European treasury and a resolution fund.

The main takeaways from MEP Verhofstadt's keynote speech were:

- A more integrated Europe: deepen the common market, establish a European treasury, economic and political union;
- A new governance model: break the current model of 'too little, too late', with Europe's leaders meeting too seldomly to resolve problems;
- A banking union: a single supervisory body and resolution system and an arrangement where institutions contribute to a fund according to individual risk.

The keynote speech was followed by a discussion between MEP Verhofstadt and the host of the ➤



Growth and Competitiveness in Europe – Mission Possible

Vrana Economic Council 2013 and former Liberal prime minister of Bulgaria, **H.M. King Simeon II**. He was very much in agreement with the position that the current structure of the EU makes it difficult to govern, he also pointed out that we should not forget the importance of a united Europe for peace on the continent. MEP Verhofstadt further said that the crisis has shown that we cannot spend our way out of a tough situation and that Europe needs governments to follow a much stricter fiscal policy targeting zero deficits.

What is needed is a political and economic union. If we want a single currency and the advantages this brings we need to create a political union behind the currency, otherwise the consequences could be catastrophic.

The conference's third panel, Energize Europe: U.S. Energy Self-Sufficiency – the Consequences for Europe and for Global Growth focused on the fall in gas prices, the US's energy self-sufficiency, the EU's growing gas imports and the impact of shale gas on US foreign policy. An Asian dimension was given by an analysis of the competitive pressures on Japan and Europe from declining US energy prices. Other topics included the prospects for a single energy market, global trade deals and the reduction of current regulatory burden

on business. Speakers included **Jonathan Allen**, the UK's Ambassador to Bulgaria; **Takashi Koizumi**, Japan's Ambassador to Bulgaria; **Daniel Berg**, Director of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in Bulgaria and **Sergey Penev**, Managing Partner and Founder of PENEV LLP and Honorary Consul of Monaco to Bulgaria.

The fourth panel, Enterprise Europe: The Next-Generation Economy featured notable Bulgarian entrepreneurs sharing their vision of the local and European business environment. Opinions converged on the importance of SMEs, entrepreneurial initiative and a policy environment that does not hinder progress and new ideas. Speakers included **Lyuben Belov**, Founder and Managing Partner of LAUNCHub; **Hristo Guentchev**, Founder and Managing Director of PROTOTYP Ltd.; **Georgi Kamov**, social entrepreneur and author and **Ivo Varbanov**, Deputy President of CEVI-European Confederation of Independent Winegrowers. Georgi Kamov emphasised the need for people who create positive change in their social environments, using tools and organisations to find solutions for local, national and global problems in new and more effective ways.

Author

Iliya Lingorski, former Executive Director, LIPA

Strengthened Organisational Capacity through Democratisation and Integration in Liberal Youth Organisations in the South Caucasus

Type of event Seminar

Dates 13 – 17 November 2013

Location Batumi (Georgia)

Supported by SILBA, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Haya van Somerenstichting/VVD International, Open Society and its Friends

The aim of the seminar was to provide tools to young people from youth organizations between the ages of 18 and 30, which they can use to increase the effectiveness of their own organization and society at large. It is imperative to ensure younger people actively work with democracy and its benefits, therefore, 28 participants were selected from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Denmark and Georgia through an open call, which allowed a range of organisations to be reached, and ensuring a dynamic and industrious seminar.

The event enabled participants to gain knowledge of a number of democratic and liberal themes and gave them the opportunity to learn about different working methods.

The theme of the seminar was integration, so there was an equal distribution of women and men among the participants. Seven group leaders from Denmark were chosen and participants were split into working groups.

The programme utilised a variety of working methods including lectures, group work, plenary discussions and more interactive activities and energisers. Various teaching methods created variety and maintained a stimulating learning environment. Six speakers from four countries (Denmark, Georgia, Hungary and

the Netherlands) contributed presentations to the seminar, enlarging the participants' knowledge of the following topics:

- Democratic organisational processes;
- The importance of developing female leadership;
- When do members of minorities stop thinking of themselves as a minority and see themselves as part of a larger community?
- How to increase the integration of minorities through participation in democratic organisations;
- Reducing the risk of fragmentation through democratic involvement at all levels of an organisation;
- Using democratic organisations as a tool for resolving conflicts in local communities.

After the presentations, the participants worked in assignment groups on a number of agendas:

- Democratic dilemmas;
- Creating organisations with a focus on including minorities;
- Resolving conflicts in local communities, using prisoners' dilemma game theory as an illustrative tool;
- Creating the ideal democratic organisation via public consultation.



Liberal-minded participants learning how to run and set up NGOs

The variety of group work facilitated free discussions on democracy and liberalism; furthermore, it gave the participants insight on the differences between the participating countries and equipped them with tools that can be used in their own organisations. Liberal values and democratic ideals were discussed throughout the workshop as the participants came to realise that liberal democracy should be understood in a wider way, by means of inclusion, integration, transparency and openness.

The focus was laid squarely on active participation, with the speakers aiming to serve more as facilitators than educators, and all participants encouraged to actively contribute.

The focus was laid squarely on active participation, with the speakers aiming to serve more as facilitators than educators, and all participants encouraged to actively contribute.

The final assignment on day four tasked the groups with creating an ideal organisation using consultation. This was a huge success. The participants had learned new theoretical tools during the seminar. In a valuable practical exercise, the groups gained first-hand empirical knowledge by spending a number

of hours in the city of Batumi in active consultation with Georgian citizens on their own created organisation. The seminar's final product was an outline of the seven groups' ideal organisations, which are published on the ELF website.

Authors

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Sine Mainz, Project Coordinator, SILBA

Developing a Liberal Strategy Against Online Nationalism

Type of event Conference

Dates 15 – 16 November 2013

Location Krakow (Poland)

Supported by Fundacja Projekt: Polska, Fundació Catalanista i Demòcrata, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, NOVUM, Open Society and its Friends

ELF, with support of Fundacja Projekt: Polska organised the Developing a Liberal Strategy Against Online Nationalism conference as a response to one of the biggest problems of present-day Europe. Nationalists and extreme right-wingers are using online communication professionally and creatively in order to disseminate their ideology. Social media provides them with a perfect opportunity to increase their reach.

The goal was to discuss the issue of online nationalism from a local perspective, encompassing the history of the far right in Europe and the legal hurdles to fighting the movement. The conference was a part of multi-annual project, which in 2014 will involve young people to create an online Liberal strategy against nationalism.

Both Polish and European students of political and social science were invited, university teachers and representatives from NGOs fighting nationalistic movements or online hate speech. A substantial debate was enabled by the breadth of speakers, which brought together lawyers, researchers, activists and historians, as well as government representatives, to discuss the problem from a wide range of perspectives.

The first part of the conference looked at the examples of Poland's problems in-depth, with the

aim of creating a universal approach to combat them. Macedonian researcher, [Orhan Ceka](#), international journalist and coordinator of the Liberal Alternative Institute, [Anna Żamejc](#) and Executive Director of the Jewish Community Center in Krakow, [Jonathan Ornstein](#), shared their experience of nationalistic and racist movements in their own societies.

Hate speech is growing on the internet because this is the easiest tool for young people to access and because anonymous posting enables views to be disseminated that would not be acceptable in face-to-face communication. While hate speech and nationalism have always existed, the internet has allowed its proliferation. Young people who have grown up with social media can be easily influenced by the radical ideas contained within it, which is why today's situation is so dangerous.

Polish nationalism is rampant, particularly on the internet. The number of websites and blogs promoting nationalistic and racist views is rising, with new online magazines created every week. The most spectacular increase is in the spread of right-wing content aggregators featuring contributions from anti-Liberal journalists and authors seeking to stimulate online debate. The sites count on an impressive number of contributors and active online forums. Spurred by the belief that the mainstream media does



From left to right: Danuta Głowacka-Mazur, Dr Katarzyna Lasota Heller and Katarzyna Szymielewicz

not represent them, these groups create their own online 'free space'.

One of the main problems identified by the panel is the lack of a Liberal response. Liberals should be more dynamic and innovative in their digital presence. Solutions must be found at the local, rather than the European level. Europe can, of course, provide general guidelines, but since it cannot provide solutions encompassing such different countries and communities, the work should be done at the local level.

Examples of local actions include:

- Awareness campaigns: Educating children and teenagers around Liberal ideas and teaching them to promote them;
- Dialogue is key: No movement should be boycotted, debate is necessary to present anti-nationalist and anti-racist arguments;
- Liberals must use original methods and simple messages: this avoids the trap of appearing 'boring';
- Reaction is necessary: A lack of reaction equals tacit agreement;
- Education should promote tolerance amongst all young people.

The second part of the conference was based around a lecture on the history of Europe's far-right movement

and on Liberal actions to combat it: How to Defeat the Far Right and Nationalism: Lessons from the Past, Lessons for the Future, presented by [Professor Dr Russell Deacon](#) from Welsh business think tank, Gorwel. According to Professor Deacon, history indicates that the

One of the main problems identified by the panel is the lack of a Liberal response. Liberals should be more dynamic and innovative in their digital presence.

far right's appeal is cyclical in nature. It is more successful in periods of economic or social distress than in periods of economic prosperity. Its appeal is greater in some EU countries than others and can be aided by factors such as the prevailing electoral system, historical and religious traditions and perceived internal or external threats to culture and the voter's way of life.

The factors encouraging unfettered extreme right-wing movements in Europe are:

- Lack of Liberal propaganda;
- Lack of the will to integrate;
- Opponents are not active enough, and cannot actively identify the threats;
- A financing advantage, with contributions to these groups from companies and the wealthy. ➤



» Developing a Liberal Strategy Against Online Nationalism

Miłosz Hodun, former Project: Polska International Officer and current Board member moderated the next panel, Liberalism against Nationalism Online. While it is very easy to promote hatred, there are only a few people who are strongly active in the hate speech and nationalist actions. A sense of humour should be used to fight nationalism, while at the same time building a Liberal community on the internet and using the same tools as the nationalists do.

Borbála Tóth, a freelance researcher involved in various projects, such as the Open Society Foundation's Mapping Digital Media and Freedom House's Freedom on the Net, said: "The solution against nationalism and hate speech online is not to hold websites liable for the posts, comments or blogs, because they might disable the commenting option, depriving citizens insight into the plethora of views, but rather other means should be used."

She also recommended the following Liberal solutions:

- Anti-trolls could be used on forums to encourage debate and to avoid the 'spiral of silence';
- Organising boycotts of particular websites;
- Introducing user-based moderation, where users decide on acceptability rather than the editorial board.

Participants in the final panel, Public Security vs. Freedom Online: How to Fight Online Hate Speech, discussed the legal aspects of hate speech and the difference between it and free speech. According to **Dr Katarzyna Lasota Heller**, President of the European Digital Media Association, high online traffic is often connected with hate speech's attractiveness to users. **Katarzyna Szymielewicz**, Executive Director of the Panoptykon Foundation, said that the courts should draw the line separating hate speech from free speech, stressing that this would not be easy, given the boundless creativity of internet users.

A sense of humour should be used to fight nationalism, while at the same time building a Liberal community on the internet and using the same tools as the nationalists do.

According to a United Nations report, one of the threats of filtering internet content is the descent into censorship. The Panoptykon Foundation is concerned that, by taking control of the problem, governments will utilise censorship tools that will highly limit freedom of speech. **Igor Ostrowski**, Poland's former Deputy Minister of Administration and Digitisation, suggested that not only should the act be punished, but also the consequences. **Danuta**

Głowacka-Mazur, Director of Department of Control at Poland's Ministry of Interior, reminded participants that the Polish judiciary has not been able to draw up a definition of hate crime, and therefore has not been able to pass any laws to combat it.

The end of the conference featured two groups presenting Polish examples of projects fighting hate speech connected to nationalism and xenophobia, both online or in the real world.

The project administrators of Hetjstop.pl and the Facebook page Wielkie sprzątanie FB. Stop mowie nienawiści, faszyzmowi i agresji (translated as Great Facebook Clean-up: Stop Hate Speech, Fascism and Aggression, and which gathered over 9,000 fans in just two days) illustrated how nationalistic content can be combated by using internet users to locate content and either report it to Facebook or to the local municipal police (Hetjstop.pl).

The conference concluded that understanding local problems and using local jurisdictions should build European strategy. It should be flexible, because the European experience varies and the same strategies cannot be applied everywhere. Educating and campaigning using creative and original methods could be combined with more radical methods, such as boycotts.

Historical movements are cyclical, and as such, looking back to similar situations in which Liberals previously fought nationalistic groups could combat the groups brought up by today's global crisis.

Author

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Mobilizing Private Funds for the Transition to a Green Economy

Type of event Seminar
Dates 28 November 2013
Location The Hague (The Netherlands)
Supported by FORES, Mr Hans van Mierlo Stichting

The transition to a low-carbon society will not be possible at a reasonable cost without technological change. The investment required is massive, clearly beyond anything that heavily indebted nations could mobilise. Hence, private capital investments are essential.

The aim of the ELF Green Funding project is to document the extent to which European private capital markets provide climate funding, examine the economic rationale and discuss the policy instruments, methods and strategies needed to redirect private investment to increase the scale of green corporate venturing. The project's first milestone, the 'Mobilizing Private Funds for the Transition to a Green Economy' report was launched at a seminar in The Hague on 27 November, 2013. The report was written by Maria Adenfelt, Research Director at Swedish Entrepreneurship Forum, Mark Sanders, Assistant Professor at Utrecht School of Economics and Ulrika Stavlöt, Research Director at FORES.

The report discusses recent developments in the global cleantech industry, as well as in a few key countries. In addition, it presented a number of theoretical and empirical findings on investment decisions and policies encouraging cleantech entrepreneurship and investments in Sweden and the

Netherlands. The report concludes that, while both countries spend significant amounts of money and effort to promote early-stage cleantech investment, their chosen strategies differ. Whereas policies in the Netherlands are oriented towards economic instruments, in Sweden more effort is put into creating industry networks, industry promotion and information sharing. While the research recognises the importance of behavioural biases of investors and the real-life options regarding investment decisions (i.e. the value in terms of flexibility when delaying an irreversible investment) it can be argued that neither policies in Sweden nor the Netherlands address these issues.

The aim of the seminar in The Hague was to discuss the report with Dutch investors, entrepreneurs and policymakers and to relate the findings to the Dutch policy debate. Following a brief summary of the report, [Hans van der Spek](#), Programme Director Clean Tech, FME, and [Hugo Groenemans](#), CEO, XEMC-Darwind, were invited to comment on the conclusions of the report. Both commentators emphasised the importance of a well-functioning market and a good business case, with a consistent and stable long-term policy and fair carbon costs. There was a special focus on the institutional differences between Sweden and the Netherlands affecting the application of an efficient policy.



Andreas Bergström welcoming participants



The discussion also included thoughts on the benefits and challenges of different financial vehicles and policy instruments for overcoming the financing 'valley-of-death'. These include crowd funding, network promotion, government procurement, a tolerance for failure and a push versus a pull strategy by markets.

Research shows that entrepreneurs and small, new firms are important drivers of economic development and innovative processes.

to policy from both the perspective of the investor and the entrepreneur. Guided by the findings from the first study, the second will focus on information issues, real-life options and behavioural biases influencing the investment decisions of both green investors and entrepreneurs. Based on the empirical findings and theoretical framework outlined in the first study, the hypotheses will be tested using a survey of investors and entrepreneurs in green venturing, validated by interviews.

Author
Ulrika Stavlöt, Head of Research, FORES

The project will continue in 2014. While the first study has a macroeconomic perspective and a focus on investment flows, cleantech sectors and policy differences in an international context, the follow-up study will have a micro-oriented perspective, focusing on investors and early-stage entrepreneurs.

Research shows that entrepreneurs and small, new firms are important drivers of economic development and innovative processes. It is also well known that the single most prominent obstacle to entrepreneurial progress is finance. Making effective policies to mobilise and leverage private funding for greentech innovation requires an understanding of entrepreneurial investment decisions and an approach

Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable: Pooling and Sharing in the EU – Pipe Dream or Converging Reality?

Type of event Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable

Dates 23 March 2013

Location Vienna (Austria)

Supported by Liberal Future Forum

While the European economic and financial crisis drags on, Europe continues to spend money on a multitude of different national defence programmes. Simultaneously, pooling and sharing has been brought up at nearly every defence cooperation summit since the beginning of the crisis. Pooling and sharing have long been buzzwords in the transatlantic security and defence community, but specifically refers to the sharing of military resources, as well as the pooling of acquired weapons systems.

Despite the strong rhetorical focus, very little concrete progress has been made. Do technological advances in the weapons industry facilitate or hinder pooling and sharing? What are the political implications, and why has rhetoric not yet translated into action? Finally, what is the liberal-democratic way forward on this complex defence issue? Is substantial pooling and sharing of military resources in the EU really just a pipe dream, or is it in fact a converging reality?

Organised as a part of the Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Series, the roundtable's focus on the challenges and opportunities of EU pooling and sharing sought to bring top-level decision-makers together with academics and an interested young audience to explore a substantial step on the way to European defence integration.

A New European Defence Reality

Europe faces a diametrically different defence reality to that of the Cold War or its immediate aftermath. **Joachim Spatz MP** from Germany emphasised that, due to the US 'pivot to Asia' and the economic crisis embroiling Washington, Europe might not be able to rely on the kind of US military assistance it has in the past. This new defence reality means a need to re-think European pooling and sharing, not in competition to NATO smart defence, but, as Centre for European Policy Studies Visiting Researcher **Giovanni Faleg** pointed out, to complement NATO structures.

Towards a Common European Defence Market

Former Swedish Defence Minister, **Sten Tolgfors**, outlined the changing European defence market, partially as a result of the different national reforms undertaken since the end of the Cold War. Pointing to Sweden, he argued that reform there has driven a transition by Swedish defence contractors from delivering almost exclusively to the domestic market to an export-oriented industry responsive to wider European demand.

Seeing this as the future of a truly common, market-driven European defence market, he stressed the



Discussing the dynamics of pooling and sharing

need not to politicise the centres of excellence in the defence materials sector. Instead, work must concentrate on creating a level playing field and a true well-functioning EU market for defence materials must continue, with the market allowed to operate as freely as other markets.

Angelika Werthmann MEP from Austria shared Sten Tolgfors' message of Europeanising as long as this is undertaken alongside the distribution of a consistent level of basic information of defence policy to European citizens. Sten Tolgfors also pointed out the substantial potential, given the spending levels on European defence. The challenge is to pool and share in a way which avoids duplication and puts an emphasis on increasing capabilities.

Crisis – Changing the Dynamics of Pooling and Sharing

It would be natural to think that the economic and financial crisis might increase incentives for pooling and sharing. However, as former Austrian Defence Minister **Dr Friedhelm Frischenschlager** argued, this has not been observed so far. As the crisis endangers private sector workplaces, governments may be tempted to hold on to military jobs to stave off local unemployment. Communicating the benefits to citizens of dual use and of pooling and sharing is

therefore crucial. Devoting more resources to joint research and development could improve dual use output.

CSDP: At Home at the European Level

All speakers agreed on the need to take more overarching decisions on security and defence issues at the European level. Interestingly, as Dr Friedhelm Frischenschlager discussed, Europe does not yet have many competencies in the realm of security, defence and foreign policy, although these are areas, which, according to the subsidiarity principle, should rest principally at the European level. Pooling and sharing still might be most feasible as a regional strategy, as Sten Tolgfors emphasised, regional cooperation works due to shared trust.

Europe does not yet have many competencies in the realm of security, defence and foreign policy, although these are areas, which, according to the subsidiarity principle, should rest principally at the European level.

He highlighted NORDEFCO as a very successful Nordic collaboration, which should serve as a model for other regional projects. Still, formulating the aims, ➤



Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable: Pooling and Sharing in the EU – Pipe Dream or Converging Reality?

tools and strategy of the Common Security & Defence Policy should rest firmly at the European level.

It's a Matter of Trust

Interestingly, all the speakers identified a lack of trust between EU partners preventing effective pooling and sharing of resources. As Giovanni Faleg mentioned, if there is no basic trust and shared interests between member states, it will be difficult to lay the groundwork for effective pooling and sharing. Sten Tolgfors asserted that trust can best be built between countries with similar interests in similar regions, taking the Nordic Battle Group as a prime example. To improve trust, Angelika Werthmann also addressed the necessity of developing a comprehensive white paper, which outlines the goals and aims of CSDP.

Towards the Future

The key message that emerged from the roundtable was the vast under-communication of the message of the benefits of more integrated security and defence cooperation in Europe. As all panellists echoed, politicians need to show leadership in bringing this topic to the European public. Angelika Werthmann noted that a true paradigm shift is needed in the Austrian defence debate, as elsewhere in Europe, from a national focus to a stronger emphasis on the

European arena. She also stressed the need for a stronger European defence profile, especially one focusing on the humanitarian aspects of military operations. In this context Europe can, and should, make a difference on the global stage.

Author

Håvard Sandvik, Programme Officer, ELF Secretariat

Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable: Entrepreneurship – How to Unleash France’s Potential

Type of event Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable

Dates 6 April 2013

Location Paris (France)

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Alternative Libérale

A large audience of Liberal-minded Parisians gathered for a round table discussion on Entrepreneurship: How to Unleash France’s Potential. Forming part of the Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Series, the event was organised by ELF, with the cooperation of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and Alternative Libérale. The event aimed to promote entrepreneurship both in the French and European context.

Sir Graham Watson MEP, President of the ALDE Party, set the stage with an interesting keynote speech titled, Promoting Innovation and Entrepreneurship across Europe. He pointed out the need for a revival of European entrepreneurship, while stressing the good work done by Liberals throughout Europe in putting in place policies, which enable entrepreneurs to do what they do best.

Following the introduction, a mixed panel, including entrepreneurs **Armand Bogaarts**, **Denis Jacquet** and **Hervé Lambel**, as well as ALDE Party Vice-President **Alexander Graf Lambsdorff MEP**, took the stage.

France remains a major economic player. It ranks 5th worldwide in terms of GDP per capita and is in 4th position in attracting foreign direct investment. However, preoccupation about the future of France is growing in Paris and Brussels. Indeed, job creation is

stagnating, unemployment rising and entrepreneurs encounter heavy burdens hampering their efforts to do business and thus contribute to economic growth.

Interestingly, the event took place at the Société d’Encouragement pour l’Industrie Nationale, a private association created in 1801, counting numerous famous members such as the Montgolfier brothers, Louis Lumière, Gustave Eiffel and Louis Pasteur. It is the place where the Lumière brothers presented their cinématographe for the first time to a room full of interested investors. Léon Gaumont, the father of cinematography, was sitting in that room on that crucial day.

Yet, what is left of the entrepreneurial potential and investment France experienced at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century? Social and labour mobility in the country is low compared to its European neighbours and it lacks political efforts to simplify business creation and entrepreneurship. Compared with other European member states, Sir Graham Watson MEP rightly pointed out that politicians in France could and should do more to support entrepreneurs.

He presented examples of other Liberal policies aimed at facilitating entrepreneurship throughout Europe, such as the newly created young enterprise foundation



From left to right: Susanne Hartig, Aziz Senni, Armand Bogaarts, Denis Jacquet, Hervé Lambel, Frédéric de Harven, Alexander Graf Lambsdorff and Sir Graham Watson

in Denmark or public-private clusters known as the ‘innovation box’ in the Netherlands.

The lack of Liberal policies promoting French businesses can be summarised in an American joke: “there are no French words for laissez-faire!” In view of the current lack of interest from politicians to boost entrepreneurship in France, the panellists, entrepreneurs and politicians, called for more Liberal policies. Fiscal policies aiming at incentivising

The lack of Liberal policies promoting French businesses can be summarised in an American joke: ‘There are no French words for laissez-faire!’

businesses to employ young people, reforming laws regulating the labour market in order to boost labour mobility, public programmes supporting innovation and reducing bureaucracy were a few of the proposals put forward by the panel. These would create the necessary context to promote business creation in France, especially for SMEs.

In concluding the event, ELF Executive Director, **Susanne Hartig**, thanked all parties involved in the roundtable, especially the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom for its financial support for the

Ralph Dahrendorf Roundtable and Alternative Libérale for helping to organise ELF’s first Ralph Dahrendorf Roundtable in France. Welcoming Alternative Libérale as the newest ELF affiliate member and the first French organisation to join ELF’s network, she underlined plans to complement the public policy discourse in France thorough activities to analyse European public policy issues from a uniquely Liberal, future-oriented perspective.

Authors

Frédéric de Harven, President, Alternative Libérale

Julie Cantalou, European Affairs Manager, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom

Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable: TTIP'ing in the Right Direction – What does the New Free Trade Agreement mean for Growth in Europe?

Type of event Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable

Dates 30 November 2013

Location London (United Kingdom)

Supported by Centre Forum, Fundacja Projekt: Polska



From left to right: Marietje Schaake, Aleksander Tarkowski, Claes Bengtsson and Sharon Bowles

According to the Centre for Economic Policy Research, the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Protocol (TTIP) would, if concluded, boost European GDP by €120 million, or 0.5% of European GDP. This is the promise held by TTIP, or the transatlantic trade and investment partnership, and also what drew ELF to convene a roundtable assessing the progress made and the obstacles to a new transatlantic free trade agreement. In 'TTIP'ing' this way, what does Europe stand to gain?

The ALDE Party Congress, the largest annual gathering of European Liberal Democrats, gave us the opportunity to involve key, high-level politicians and EU officials with expert knowledge of the intricate TTIP negotiations. As the foundation of the ALDE Party, ELF wished to highlight this important topic to the congress delegates, especially in light of the recent developments in transatlantic relations following the National Security Agency scandal and threats to halt TTIP negotiations. Key was also our audience, around 80 Congress guests and delegates, all from various Liberal institutions, at national, regional or European level.

The roundtable was opened by ELF President, **Felicita Medved**, who emphasised the treaty's potential in alleviating many of the problems faced throughout Europe as a result of the financial crisis.

In particular, she identified strong Liberal leadership on this issue, especially from Commissioner Karel De Gucht and TTIP spokesperson Marietje Schaake MEP. Promoting free trade is a key issue, high on the European Liberal agenda.

Keynote speaker and adviser to Commissioner Karel De Gucht, **Claes Bengtsson** set the stage by explaining the staggering benefits a bilateral transatlantic free trade agreement would translate into for the European economy. Nevertheless, the preferred EU track is for multilateral negotiations, which involve more partners and could hold more promise if realised. However, following the slow death of the Doha Round of trade talks, Europe must pursue a dual-track strategy. Commissioner De Gucht is hard at work pursuing other agreements with MERCOSUR, India and Brazil, among others, but the greatest potential can be found in a transatlantic trade agreement. In response to a question from the audience on how TTIP would affect Europe's neighbours, he explained that, while the negotiations are strictly bilateral, the EU encourages all its neighbours, including the EFTA countries and Turkey to intensify their own trade negotiations with the US.

Claes Bengtsson also emphasised the importance of timing in ensuring that this agreement is passed. Given the changing nature of the global economy, Europe

and the US might not be in the same position to set product and services standards at a later stage. **Sharon Bowles MEP** emphasised that an agreement would have a wide impact on everyone from diary producers to bond traders. In fact, one of the most important sectors to include in the TTIP is the financial services sector, where an agreement has tremendous potential for Europe and the US alike.

A potential stumbling block to negotiating treaties of this magnitude is ensuring that public consultation is far-reaching and open. Claes Bengtsson also recognised this as one of the big challenges ahead, but assured the audience that the Commission has made public consultation a priority. **Marietje Schaake MEP**, ALDE spokesperson on TTIP, reiterated the concern regarding public consultation, and noted that consultations of this magnitude are likely to be a complex and challenging task for any institution.

On questions from the audience on how the TTIP consultations would avoid the pitfalls of ACTA, she pointed out that ACTA was in many ways a transitional case – a treaty where negotiations started before the passing of the Lisbon treaty, and concluded after its ratification. This meant that the European institutions had to redefine their role vis-à-vis each other and the European citizen. This was a learning process also for the European institutions and she

doubts that TTIP will falter on the same shortcomings of public consultation.

A potential stumbling block to negotiating treaties of this magnitude is ensuring that public consultation is far-reaching and open.

To conclude the roundtable, MEP Schaake put the treaty into perspective by showing it would go far beyond trade benefits, impressive as they may be. As a Liberal, she especially underlined the importance of trade in promoting mutual tolerance and respect. While the transatlantic project for previous generations were defined as a politico-military cooperation, TTIP'ing in the right direction might allow the younger generation to re-define the relationship in a more positive light.

Author

Håvard Sandvik, Programme Officer, ELF Secretariat

Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable: The State of Media Freedom in Greece and Turkey

Type of event Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable

Dates 14 December 2013

Location Thessaloniki (Greece)

Supported by Forum for Greece, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom

The State of Media Freedom in Greece and Turkey roundtable promoted an interesting discussion between speakers, students and moderator. Eight university students joined the speakers, four from Greece and four from Turkey, with diverse backgrounds ranging from undergraduates to PhD candidates. **Yiannis Boutaris**, Mayor of Thessaloniki, gave the welcome address and set the tone for the event with a speech on the importance of objectivity and impartiality in journalism.

Speakers included noted Turkish journalist **Yavuz Baydar** who writes for 'Today's Zaman' and blogs for the 'Huffington Post', among others; **Filios Stangos**, who worked for the now defunct Public Broadcaster, ERT, as well as some of the big Greek TV channels before his current position as the General Manager of Thessaloniki's municipal radio and TV stations and **Bill Echikson**, Head of Free Expression of Google (EMEA), via Google Hangout. **Ljubisa Vrenchev**, Director of Media Programs at Symbiosis moderated the event.

Although the students had been provided with reading materials on the topic of media freedom in Greece and Turkey, it was obvious that the group was very knowledgeable. A fruitful discussion ensued between students and speakers, which centred on their experiences and concerns for the future. It was interesting to note that, regardless of age or

experience, each brought a unique and nuanced perspective to the discussion. Yavuz Baydar, who lost his job after 'clashing' with the government and publishing his honest views, shared experiences, which have been many decades in the making.

Filios Stangos shared his perspective from working in both the public and private media domains in Greece, and illustrated how business and other interests have infiltrated Greek media. He spoke about choosing his subject areas carefully, opting for foreign/international topics to avoid the backlash that can result from reporting on interior and/or political matters. Bill Echikson reminded the group that he, too, worked as a journalist prior to Google. He raised the issue of who should ultimately bear legal and other responsibility for online content, the individuals who post the materials or companies like Google which host it.

This point prompted discussion on how legitimate or verifiable information on social media or in anonymous posts can be in general. Yavuz Baydar commented that when information is posted without a 'by-line', the dynamic can often be quite different given that 'professional' journalistic standards are not necessarily being upheld. Ljubisa Vrenchev talked about his experiences on matters of free expression and hate speech working in Serbia, and concluded that posting anonymously encourages violent and



Greek and Turkish journalists debating media freedom

From left to right: Yavuz Baydar, Ljubisa Vrenchev and Filios Stangos

negative online commentary, something that has been seen across the board. However, the freedom to post without fear of government or other retribution is also protected when names are not attached to comments.

The closure of the Greek public broadcaster, ERT, also prompted interesting commentary. Although the subject was suggested as too complex to discuss, it ultimately engaged the entire group. Students from both countries contributed their views on the closure; the furore that resulted from the undemocratic measures that the Greek government took and what that means for the public.

Filios Stangos raised hopes that a smaller media would result in the dominance of 'good' journalists, rather than the 'many' of before.

Filios Stangos raised hopes that a smaller media would result in the dominance of 'good' journalists, rather than the 'many' of before. The group concluded by noting the importance of both citizens and journalists in reporting on events or informing the public, and how this will be increasingly important, either to combat austerity (as in Greece), business interests (both Turkey and Greece) or a heavy-handed state

(most notably Turkey). This last point elicited many examples from both Greece and Turkey, including the journalists who was removed from his position on the orders of the Minister of Public Order and Citizen Protection, Nikos Dendias because he reported on police torture, as well as the Turkish government's aggressive stance against journalists during 2013's Gezi Park protests.

Ultimately, grassroots efforts, citizen initiatives, journalistic integrity, and a climate of transparency and accountability were all elements identified as essential in upholding media freedom.

Author

Maria Choupres, Director of Public Affairs and Policy, Forum for Greece

Complete List of ELF Events
in 2013

Date	Title of Event ELF member organisations involved	Venue	Language(s)
March 2013			
15 – 17	Building the Perfect Liberal Campaign LYMEC Fondazione Critica Liberale Movimento Liberal Social	Helsinki (FIN)	English
23	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Pooling and Sharing in the EU – Pipe Dream or Converging Reality? ELF Secretariat (Liberal Future Forum)	Vienna (A)	English German
April 2013			
6	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Entrepreneurship: Unleashing France’s Potential ELF Secretariat (Alternative Libérale)	Paris (F)	English French
8	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable You Cannot Walk Straight When the Road is Bent – Integration of the Roma in Central and Southeast Europe: Liberal Policy Recommendations ELF Secretariat (Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom)	Brussels (BE)	English
14	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable All on Board – Promoting Women in Private Enterprise ELF Secretariat (ALDE Party Gender Equality Network, International Network of Liberal Women)	Beirut (LB)	English
18	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Quo Vadis Moldova? On the Way to the 2013 Eastern Partnership Summit ELF Secretariat (Institute for Liberal Studies)	Chisinau (MD)	English Romanian
May 2013			
8	Celebrating Europe Fondazione Critica Liberale Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Fundacja Projekt: Polska Liberales Liberal Future Forum Movimento Liberal Social Mr Hans van Mierlo Stichting NOVUM Stichting IDI	Maastricht (NL)	English

Date	Title of Event ELF member organisations involved	Venue	Language(s)
11	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Illegal Immigration: the Crossing Point Haya van Somerenstichting/VVD International FORES SILBA	Pula (HR)	English
17 – 18	Bridging the Gap: Arab-European Dialogue Forum on the Basics of Liberalism Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Forum for Greece Fundació Catalanista i Demòcrata	Cairo (EG)	English Arabic
24 – 26	Is European Union a Herald of Transparency and Anticorruption Measures: a Quest for Best Practice Tools Open Society and its Friends Academy of Liberalism	Birštonas (LT)	English Lithuanian
31	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Cutting the Gordian Knot – Extracting Europe from the Crisis Centre for Liberal Studies	Warsaw (Poland)	English Polish
June 2013			
6	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable European Values: The Media – the Artillery of Freedom? ELF Secretariat (Republikon)	Budapest (HU)	English
19	The Countries of the Western Balkans Between Emigration and Immigration, and the Consequences of it on the Political Development in the Region Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Liberal Future Forum NOVUM	Belgrade (RS)	English Serbian
25	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Banking Union – a Blessing or a Curse? ELF Secretariat (Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom)	Munich (D)	English

Date	Title of Event ELF member organisations involved	Venue	Language(s)
July 2013			
12 – 14	Redrafting Europe: Building and Communicating a Liberal Political Programme in the Face of Populism LYMEC Fondazione Critica Liberale Movimento Liberal Social	Florence (IT)	English
August 2013			
09 – 11	Is European Union a Herald of Active and Responsible Civil Society: a Quest for European Civil Society Open Society and its Friends Academy of Liberalism	Birštonas (LT)	English Lithuanian
September 2013			
5	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Smart Solutions to Demographic Decline – e-Solutions and their Potential for Local and Regional Government ELF Secretariat (Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom)	Dresden (D)	English German
06 – 08	Training for European Parliament Candidates and Leaders of the Youth Organisations LYMEC Fondazione Critica Liberale Movimento Liberal Social	Lisbon (PT)	English
10 – 14	Liberalism: Values and Comparative Practices Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Haya van Somerenstichting/VVD International Stichting IDI	Istanbul (TR)	English Turkish
19	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable: Instantly Online? Connectivity and its Implications for e-Governance ELF Secretariat (Academy of Liberalism, Fundacja Projekt: Polska)	Brussels (BE)	English
25	It's the Narrative, Stupid! – Towards a New Political Frame for Europe Stichting IDI ALDE Party Liberales Mr Hans van Mierlo Stichting	The Hague (NL)	English

Date	Title of Event ELF member organisations involved	Venue	Language(s)
27 – 28	Southern European school of Liberalism GALIDEM Movimento Liberal Social	Santiago (E)	English Galician
October 2013			
04 – 05	Developing Communication Initiatives to Combat Populism and Nationalism Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Institute for Liberal Studies LIPA	Sofia (BG)	Bulgarian English
09 – 11	Political Foundations in Europe: Mobilising the Citizens and Raising political culture NOVUM Academy of Liberalism Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Liberal Future Forum Stichting IDI	Ljubljana (SLO)	English Slovenian
11 – 12	It's the Narrative, Stupid! – Towards a new Political Frame for Europe Stichting IDI ALDE Party Liberales Mr Hans van Mierlo Stichting	Brussels (BE)	English
11 – 13	European Think Tank School: Liberalism in the 21st Century Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Centre for Liberal Studies Mr Hans van Mierlo Stichting Open Society and its Friends	Prague (CZ)	English
12	Urban Integration – Living Apart Together? Haya van Somerenstichting/VVD International FORES SILBA	The Hague (NL)	English
24 – 25	Nationalism & Populism in the Context of the Economic Crisis Fundació Catalanista i Demòcrata Fundacja Projekt: Polska	Barcelona (E)	Catalan English

Date	Title of Event ELF member organisations involved	Venue	Language(s)
25 – 26	Growth and Competitiveness in Europe – Mission Possible LIPA Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom	Sofia (BG)	Bulgarian English
30	The Economic Impact of the Danube Strategy in a European Macro-Region Institute for Liberal Studies Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom LIPA	Bucharest (RO)	English Romanian
November 2013			
7	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable The Great Aid and Trade Debate Haya van Somerenstichting/VVD International	The Hague (NL)	English
08 – 10	Migration, Minorities, Integration, Borders. Case study Croatia Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Liberal Future Forum NOVUM	Opatija (HR)	Croatian English
12	What Can We Learn From Economic Reforms in Greece and Sweden? FORES Forum for Greece	Athens (GR)	English
13 – 17	Organisational Capacity-Building: Strengthened Organisational Capacity through Democratisation and Integration in Liberal Youth Organisations in the South Caucasus SILBA Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Haya van Somerenstichting/VVD International Open Society and its Friends	Batumi (GE)	English
15	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Young Voices: Towards a Centripetal or Centrifugal Europe? LYMEC Movimento Liberal Social	Bucharest (RO)	English

Date	Title of Event ELF member organisations involved	Venue	Language(s)
15 – 16	Developing a Liberal Strategy Against Online Nationalism Fundacja Projekt: Polska Fundació Catalanista i Demòcrata Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom NOVUM Institute Open Society and its Friends	Krakow (PL)	English Polish
16 – 17	Migration: Economic and Social Impact Institute for Liberal Studies Fundació Catalanista i Demòcrata Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom LIPA	Barcelona (E)	Catalan English
21	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Pathways to Growth: Education and Economic Growth – Two Sides of the Same Medal Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Alternative Libérale	Aix-en-Provence (FR)	English French
22	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable The future of Europe and Liberalism Academy of Liberalism	Tallinn (ET)	English Estonian
22 – 24	Migration, Minorities, Integration, Borders. Case Study Migration and Integration of Minorities in Eastern Croatia Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom Liberal Future Forum NOVUM Institute	Osijek (HR)	Croatian
27	Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Protecting Privacy in Europe Fundacja Projekt: Polska	Warsaw (PL)	English
28	Mobilizing Private Funds for the Transition to a Green Economy FORES Mr Hans van Mierlo Stichting	The Hague (NL)	English
28	Growth and Competitiveness in Europe – Mission Possible LIPA Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom	London (UK)	English

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Annual Report 2013

Selection of Publications

ELF produced a variety of publications during 2013, all providing Liberal **analysis** on issues vital to the future of Europe. The year's focus was consistent with our multi-annual theme of combating populism and nationalism and the current political debates regarding the economic crisis.

In addition, ELF supports publications in which the **traditions** and origins of liberal thought are explained and from which lessons can be learned. Of particular note, ELF published a communication guide on how to formulate a **Liberal response** to the populist rhetoric being proliferated in Europe today.

ELF remains dedicated to the dissemination of liberal ideas to as wide a **network** as possible by producing translations as well as teaching materials on classical liberal ideas in a variety of languages.

Communicating With Confidence and Clarity: Liberal Responses to Populist Rhetoric

Publisher: European Liberal Forum

Cooperating member organisations: Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, Centre for Liberal Studies, Stichting IDI, Svenska bildningsförbundet
For further information: info@liberalforum.eu



Populism thrives on easy, repetitive and emotive messages. Far too often, mainstream political messages are drowned out by the foul cry of populist rhetoric. The far right and far left are offering simplistic solutions which threaten the future of the EU. To help combat such sentiments ELF collected contributions from key speakers from its 2013 series of workshops and seminars dedicated to developing communication strategies to target populist rhetoric. The leitmotiv of this publication is to encourage Liberal-minded Europeans to voice their views with confidence and clarity.

Counterpoint researcher, Marley Morris, introduces the topic by showing what makes some populists such terrific communicators. He uses practical examples to show how framing your message in a way that is easy to relate to is key to getting your ideas across. He explains that framing is not just about telling your story in a different way, but in connecting with the challenges faced by those he terms reluctant radicals, the populist swing-voters.

Elizabeth Drury, an experienced EU Advocacy Trainer with EyetoEye Insights, continues by looking at how we can effectively communicate our Liberal message. She emphasises that it is important to move beyond the pro- and anti- European debate, connecting with the voter using emotive as well as factual language. She explains the importance of using personal examples and humour in bringing your message across. As she points out, it is important that you connect with your own message and pronounce it with confidence, while still ensuring that it is not clouded in technocratic speech.

Communications expert Andor Admiraal reinforces this point by explaining how accepting populist discourse

can be very damaging to the Liberal cause. He instead reiterates Marley Morris's support for thinking of your responses in terms of framing. Further, he argues that there are five layers of political communication (motivation, themes, issues, priorities and policy), and that there is a definite danger of politicians failing to distinguish the third, fourth and fifth layers. Failing in this, he argues, can be detrimental to getting your ideas across. As he emphasises, it is up to politicians to create a powerful narrative and story from our set of political beliefs.

Finally, Astrid Thors, former Finnish Minister of Migration and European Affairs and former Vice President of the ALDE Party and Annika Arras, Estonian Reform Party Campaign Manager, bring their vast experience to the table, relating the story of how they themselves have successfully beaten populist forces, either in the course of an election or as a government minister. Astrid Thors tells a vivid story of the challenges from anti-migrant forces in Finnish society when she was a minister.

Annika Arras, in turn, points out a very different political reality in Estonia, where she notes no outright populist parties, a story very different from Finland, where the Finns Party/True Finns have made political waves. Still, both authors argue that the key to Liberal success is that we stick to our true Liberal message, listen to the concerns of the citizen and communicate in a clear manner.

Hopefully this will prove an inspiring and useful read for you as you prepare for the next elections. The Liberal message is desperately needed in Europe today, and the techniques outlined by our authors will hone your message and ensure it lands in the hearts of every voter.

What Can We Learn From Economic Reforms in Greece and Sweden?

Publisher: European Liberal Forum

ISBN: 978-91-87379-13-0
Cooperating member organisations: FORES, Forum for Greece
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In countries hit by deep economic crises, such as Greece, the population is facing tough decisions in order to make their country competitive and prosperous again. This volume therefore appears in the midst of the worst financial and economic crises for decades.

Nevertheless, it is often through crises that countries can reconsider their economic policy and institutional structure and become stronger in terms of economic development. Sweden for example, experienced a severe economic crisis in the 1990s that resulted in a number of product and labour market reforms. Just a few years after the crisis, the Swedish economy was prospering with booming productivity growth.

The central purpose of this book is to investigate and compare labour and product market reforms in Greece and Sweden since the early 1990s in order to identify what these two countries – both relatively small though very different in terms of culture and institutional settings – can learn from each other. The results suggest that Sweden has undertaken a number of important market reforms to increase its economic competitiveness. In addition, there has been a dual development in the Swedish labour market, with strict protection for permanent contracts and less strict protection for fixed-term contracts and temporary agencies.

Greece is currently following this lead, making its labour market more flexible and starting the process of deregulating a number of markets. This is, as the authors conclude, a development in the right direction. Taking a long-term perspective, Greek policy makers must also start developing a strategy to improve

incentives for innovation and thus, attract more investment in research and development. Moreover, there are also areas where the Greek market is more liberalised than the Swedish, such as the rental housing market. Furthermore, the need for reform remains strong due to the ever-globalising world. During the last decades globalisation has led to tremendous opportunities for diffusion of new technology, international expansion of firms and collaboration among people. However, it has also resulted in increased international competition, something that has created problems for some European countries.

Provided these countries can restructure and implement efficient institutions for well-functioning markets they will be able to realise the positive opportunities of globalisation in the long-term.



La Tradition de la Liberté – Tome III

The Tradition of Liberty - Volume III

Publisher: European Liberal Forum

ISBN: 978-2-930650-07-4

Cooperating member organisation: Centre Jean Gol

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This publication posits that ‘neoliberalism’ does not exist. Rather, it is an aggregate of caricatured proposals, contradictory, distorted ideas, cynical statements and myths (such as the survival of the fittest, market dictatorship, reproduction of inequalities etc.), mangled citations and lies attributed to other Liberals or taken out of context. Yet, modern liberal thought exists and is rich, complex, consistent and overlooked, having developed over the past hundred years in the same spirit as the liberal thought of previous centuries.

The last part of a trilogy devoted to the ‘tradition of freedom’, this is the completion of an ambitious project to synthesise 10,000 pages of liberal doctrine from its origins to today. This third volume covers the period from the crisis of 1929 to the crisis of 2008-09. The author has selected ten great works which overturn accepted orthodoxies. It is a resolutely optimistic book that calls for the achievement of ‘liberal utopias’, such as free immigration.

Poverty has always been the rule and prosperity always the exception. During the twentieth century, a revolutionary event occurred: prosperity has become the rule and poverty the exception. In 1820, 85% of the world’s population lived below the absolute poverty line (\$1 a day). In 1950, this figure dropped to 50%. In 1980, it was 31%. And now it is 20%. At the same time, life expectancy has more than doubled, education has increased (70% of the third world was illiterate in 1950, compared with 25-30% today); the purchasing power of the western worker has multiplied by 40. The explanation lies in the prodigious development of one of the grandest achievements of the human mind: capitalist globalisation.

While, liberalism seeks to preserve and enhance freedom, capitalism seeks to create, to preserve and to increase prosperity. Capitalism is one necessary condition (but not by itself sufficient) for freedom. However, there is no freedom without prosperity. Wherever there the freedom is, there is also capitalism. Liberal democracy, having almost succumbed to the collectivist madness of the twentieth century, has become the norm today. A century ago, no country had universal suffrage. Today, there are 118 democracies with a multi-party system and universal suffrage. Among these 118 democracies, 90 of them can be considered ‘free’, encompassing 46% of the planet’s population.

A liberal system necessarily includes some thought in opposition to capitalism. Currently dominant is Keynesianism, which, far from being the solution to the crisis, has instead been the cause, then Malthusianism (the basis of numerous measures affecting or destroying growth), protectionism (which causes considerable harm to the third world), nationalism, often linked to it and which generates economic downturns, tensions, conflicts and wars. Finally, ‘crony capitalism’, a monstrous form emanating from interventionism and the state’s hyper-regulation, that eventually heralds a considerable erosion of fundamental liberal values, such personal responsibility.

Southern European School on Liberalism

(proceedings)

Publisher: European Liberal Forum

Cooperating member organisations: Asociación Galega para a Liberdade e a Democracia (GALIDEM),

Movimento Liberal Social (MLS, Forum for Greece)

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This publication argues that everyday politics is becoming more and more short-sighted by the day. National political establishments are increasingly absorbed in the task of winning decimal fractions of a point in opinion polls in their daily fight for survival in a more and more hostile and ‘liquid’ social environment, infested by demagoguery and quackery. And, more and more, the first quality required of a would-be politician appears to be that of not caring too much about his/her reputation, as personal negative campaigning appears to have become one of the most usual tools of electioneering. The relative decline of western liberal democracies is also a result of a consistent decline in the quality of political debate and political personnel.

Countering this trend, reconstructing the conditions for more far-sighted and reliable political establishments should be the duty of all those concerned with the lot of our democracies, with the place of Europe in the global world and with the very future of our civilisation. As the European Liberal Forum, we seek to fulfil our duty in this effort, particularly with regard to young Europeans. The Schools of Liberalism are designed to inspire new generations of Liberals to actively engage in the traditions of great liberal thinkers.

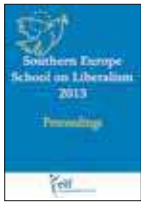
The 2013 ELF Southern European School of Liberalism held in Santiago de Compostela on 27-28 September was a successful example of this effort. A committed group of students gathered for two days of intensive discussions, lectures and debates, revealing the existence of a real school of thought at the local university. Speakers and lecturers from six European countries contributed to the success of the School,

realised thanks to Galician member organisation GALIDEM, with the contribution of Movimento Liberal Social, Forum for Greece and the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung.

Outstanding representatives of European Liberalism attended, including Kirjas Emil, president of Liberal International, who spoke about the complex relationship between nationalism and liberalism. Giulio Ercolessi, ELF board member, reflected on the various definitions of Liberalism. Gerard Boekenkamp, historian of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, reviewed the experience of the German model of social market economy. Maria Choupres, member of Forum for Greece, analysed the opportunities for social enterprises in Greece. Fernando del Río, president of GALIDEM, explained the virtues and operation of competitive markets, while Miguel Pérez-Nievas, professor at the University of Santiago de Compostela, questioned the myth of market failures. Eduardo Giménez and Miguel Bastos, professors respectively of the universities of Vigo and Santiago de Compostela, reviewed the life and work of Adam Smith and Murray N. Rothbard.

The event was also an opportunity to discover Galicia’s capital city and a European region struggling to find its particular place and identity in a democratic Europe. Known to many only as the final destination of traditional religious pilgrims, this enchanting and captivating medieval and modern city combines an intriguing past and eminent historical heritage with lively university life and delicious cuisine.

Extract from the preface by G. Ercolessi, Board Member of ELF



Complete List of ELF Publications in 2013

Title	Name of Author(s)/Editor(s)	Language(s) of publication
A Tradição da Liberdade – Volume II Translation (The Tradition of Liberty Volume II)	Corentin de Salle	Portuguese
Bridging the Gap: an Arab-European Dialogue on the Basics of Liberalism (proceedings)	Guilio Ercolessi Aristedes N. Hatzis Asteris Huliaras Andrzej Kondratowicz Yousef Mansur Ronald Meinardus (editor) Hala Mostafa Mounir Rached Sven Speer Mohammed Tamaldou Alexandra Thein	English
Communicating with Confidence and Clarity: Liberal Responses to Populist Rhetoric	Andor Admiraal Annika Arras Elizabeth Drury Marley Morris Astrid Thors Peter Schröder (editor)	English
La Tradition de la liberté – Tome III (The Tradition of Liberty Volume III)	Corentin de Salle	French
Mobilising Private Funds for the Transition to a Sustainable Economy	Maria Adenfelt Mark Sanders Ulrika Stavlöt	English
Säkularismus in Europa Secularism in Europe Translation	Professor Dr Yves Bizeul	German English
Southern European School on Liberalism (proceedings)	GALIDEM (editor)	English
Tradycja Wolności – Volume II Translation (The Tradition of Liberty Volume II)	Corentin de Salle	Polish
What Can We Learn From Economic Reforms in Greece and Sweden?	Maria Choupres Harald Edquist Anders Forslund Christos Genakos Magnus Henrekson Evangelia Vourvachaki	English Greek



liberalforum.eu



The website tells you more about the European Liberal Forum (ELF) as an organisation, as well as its activities. Moreover, it provides:

- Reports on past ELF events
- All ELF publications, which are available to download
- Member organisation profiles

Visit us on www.liberalforum.eu

 facebook.com/europeanliberalforum  twitter.com/EurLiberalForum

Annual Report 2013

Member Organisations

ELF was established in 2007 by 15 founding member organisations. More Liberal organisations have since joined, bringing the number of current members to 38.

Membership of the foundation is open to think tanks, political foundations, institutes that **promote Liberal, democratic ideals and values**. ELF exists out of full members and affiliate members. All member organisations present their profiles, including their mission, vision and objectives on the following pages.

Asociación Galega para a Liberdade e a Democracia Galician Society for Freedom and Democracy (GALIDEM)

Contact information

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GALIDEM has two main purposes: First, to encourage serious debate on Galician public policy issues by proposing ideas grounded in academic research; Second, to promote education by organising seminars and publishing non-technical reports and articles, as well as publishing teaching materials on Liberalism and economics, this can be used for young students in classrooms.

On Liberalism

Our idea of Liberalism stems from our confidence in individuals, each freely pursuing his/her own interest as the way to promote that of society as a whole. This is based on a long academic tradition in economics, which is also found in British liberal thinkers such as Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill.

Activities

In order to accomplish our goals, we organise conferences, book presentations and meetings, publish articles in the media and issue non-technical reports, as well as teaching materials for students. GALIDEM organised the 'Southern Europe School on Liberalism' ELF project, in a joint effort with Movimento Liberal Social, Forum for Greece and Friedrich Naumman Foundation. The school was mainly aimed at college students interested in doctrine and liberal policies.

Atvira visuomenė ir jos draugai Open Society and its Friends

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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 development 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 pursue 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 political intelligence?

The organisation is involved in disseminating Liberal ideas on an ongoing basis and in 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; we carry out opinion polls and finance the publication of academic literature.

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OHLIN institutet



The Bertil Ohlin Institutet is a foundation founded in 1993. It is named after Bertil Ohlin, who was the leader of the Liberal Party of Sweden (Folkpartiet) between 1944 and 1967.

The purpose of our institute is to initiate research and debate on important social and political issues. We regularly organise lectures, debates, and conferences that are open to the public. We also commission research reports and other publications. 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.

In 1977, Bertil Ohlin was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics, in recognition of his academic achievements. The institute maintains 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.

By building a network of scholars, politicians, journalists and public debaters, the institute contributes to and broadens Liberal opinion formation in Sweden.

Although the institute's founders were affiliated with the Liberal Party of Sweden we operate independently of parties and interest groups, organisationally as well as financially. Our activities are mainly financed through grants from Liberal foundations.

Contact information

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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 a number of its directors; an interdisciplinary library boasting over 4,000 volumes ('seminal' Liberal 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 an 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 and socio-economic spheres or from civil society. It updates a database of electoral results since the early 1990s, from 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.

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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 its launch in 2005, CentreForum has established itself in the top tier of UK think tanks. Its influence has grown since the formation of the UK Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government in 2010.

CentreForum's research covers four broad themes: education and social policy, economics, globalisation and Liberalism.

CentreForum's social policy work is directed towards a single objective: to ensure that people's chances in life are determined not by their family background or income, but by their talents and efforts. This has led CentreForum to focus, above all, on education – the engine that powers social mobility. The 'pupil premium' was developed at CentreForum and is now a flagship policy of the UK coalition government. CentreForum has also been at the forefront of the debate on academies and free schools, arguing that supply-side liberalisation will boost parental choice and drive up educational standards.

Since the start of the economic crisis CentreForum has focused relentlessly on ways of boosting growth and rebalancing the economy. It has explored the deeper causes of the UK's soaring debts, scrutinised government fiscal policy and set out proposals to boost spending in the real economy. It has also looked at ways of making capitalism fairer and more inclusive.

CentreForum's plan to give the British public a share in the bailed-out banks has received cross-party support. The coalition government is piloting its proposal for community land auctions to promote local involvement in development.

As a Liberal think tank, CentreForum views the phenomenon of globalisation positively. It believes that the greater movement of goods, capital and labour across national boundaries has made the world both richer and freer over recent decades. But, as the financial crisis and recession showed, globalisation brings threats as well as opportunities. CentreForum believes these can be tackled only by international cooperation. It is dedicated to finding Liberal, cooperative solutions to issues ranging from climate change, international terrorism and organised crime, to tackling the spread of disease or establishing water and food security.

CentreForum believes that Liberalism forms the common ground on which all mainstream British political thought lies. With Liberalism very much in vogue and Liberals back in government for the first time in a generation, CentreForum is seeking to stimulate debate about the relevance of Liberalism's defining ideas in the 21st century.

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The Centre for Liberal Studies was established in 1994 as foundation and then re-established in 1999 as civil society organisation. It is a non-governmental, non-partisan, non-profit think tank. The main objective of the CLS is to develop contacts between exponents of Liberal thought, to contribute to clarifying the definition of Liberalism and to define its place in contemporary society, and to apply this Liberal approach to the political, economic and social transition of the Czech Republic.

Due to a historical absence of any stable Liberal political party in Czech political landscape, the CLS, along with the Liberal Institute, is the only promoter of Liberal ideas in Czech society. The CLS is open to cooperation with all interested institutions, organisations and individuals.

The activities of the CLS consist of three main types:

- Policy advocacy in areas such as: tax system reform, social insurance, rent deregulation, healthcare system reforms, etc.;
- Educational: panel discussions, round tables, conferences, awarding grants to undergraduates and graduates, sponsoring degree papers, translations;
- Cooperation: with established experts (university teachers, scholars, government officers etc.) and with other think tanks (Liberal Institute, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom).

In 2011, the CLS was actively involved in preparing the webzine 4Liberty.eu, which serves as a platform for communication of Liberal-oriented think tanks in central and Eastern Europe towards media and decision-makers.

Edistysmielisen tutkimuksen yhdistys r.y. e2

Think Tank e2

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The Society for Progressive Research (Edistysmielisen tutkimuksen yhdistys ry) was established in 2006 in order to oversee the management of Think Tank e2. The director of the organisation, which is based on progressive values and Liberal ideals, is Dr Karina Jutila, D.S.Sc.

Think Tank e2:

- Provides a forum for debate by bringing together experts from different disciplines for innovative social discussions;
- Initiates the dialogue 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 improving contacts with think tanks in other countries

Think Tank e2 emphasises two subjects:

- The future of democracy
- Environmental sustainability (including for example bio economy in the Baltic Sea)

European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)

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The European Liberal Youth, abbreviated as LYMEC, is a pan-European youth organisation seeking to promote Liberal values throughout the EU as the youth organisation of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE Party) and its parliamentary group in the European Parliament (ALDE, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe).

Involving about 210,000 members from 58 organisations in 33 countries, LYMEC is made up of Member Organisations (MO) and Individual Membership (IM) and it is active across the breadth and diversity of the European continent. Our central aim is the creation of a Liberal and federal Europe.

LYMEC was established in 1976 as the 'Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Community'. As a youth organisation, LYMEC supports the development of political and educational understanding of young people throughout Europe. LYMEC strives to play a political role within Europe by cooperating with other Liberal and radical organisations – such as ALDE – and to represent Liberal interests in European youth movements.

In brief, our organisation aims to:

- Create a Liberal and federal Europe;
- Educate its member organisations and individual members through the realisation of seminars, publications, group travel, symposia, courses and meetings;
- Increase the common understanding of Liberal ideas among young people throughout Europe;
- Promote tolerance between cultures and individuals;
- Increase the level of political awareness and involvement of young people in politics including the promotion of active citizenship.

Recent activities include seminars organised in various European countries, conferences and symposia organised in the European Parliament, travel groups and demonstrations.

We gather together for Congresses and Executive Committee meetings in various locations throughout Europe during the year to exchange ideas and meet our fellow Liberal colleagues. These events are listed on our website.

Contact information

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The Fondazione Critica Liberale was established in 1994. The foundation's aim is to promote Liberalism by organising conferences, seminars, research and study activities, workshops and meetings.

The foundation is actively involved in publishing and in the promotion of research studies and debates. It publishes the monthly review Critica Liberale, established in 1974, that originated the entire organisation, and its supplement Gli Stati Uniti d'Europa (The United States of Europe), advocating European federalism.

The foundation is also editor of the Libelli Vecchi e Nuovi collection, published by Dedalo Editore, and of several books and publications; it also operates a website.

The foundation works with the Consulta Laica of Rome and with Coordinamento Nazionale delle Consulte Laiche of Italy. It has, together with the Settore Nuovi Diritti (the 'New Rights' Office of the CGIL trade union), created a 'secularisation monitor', which produces research on secularisation in Italy on an annual basis, now covering a period of 19 years, and a new yearly report on the religious information in the Italian media, funded by the Italian Waldensian (Protestant) Church.

The journal of the foundation, Critica Liberale, is a member of CRIC (Coordinamento Riviste Italiane di Cultura), the coordination body for Italian culture magazines.

The foundation is one of the founding members of the Pannunzio Society for Freedom of Information, and part of the Open Media Coalition, a network of Italian organisations promoting transparency in the media system, supported by the Open Society Foundations.

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The Forum for Greece is an independent think tank based in Athens that engages in policy and lobbying, as well as events and initiatives. Through our partnerships we seek to impact political and civil discourse and encourage non-traditional collaborations, both within Greece and beyond its borders.

Founded in November of 2010, the Forum for Greece serves as a resource for government officials, business executives, journalists, educators and students, civic leaders, and other interested citizens.

Our thematic areas for 2012 – 2014 include, in part, economic reforms and entrepreneurship in Greece, with a view towards civil society's role in these efforts; cohesive migration policy that addresses the positive potential of immigration, respect for human rights, and better border strategies; and diplomatic efforts in northern Africa and the Middle East through fostering relationships and executing projects with government officials, private sector actors and the NGO community.

To accomplish our challenging objectives and maintain rigorous integrity, we rely on an international network of experts and partners to assist our staff and members.

Forum för reformer och entreprenörskap

Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

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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 microeconomic 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-based 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.

FORES is heavily reliant for its activities 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 subject to a 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 also makes full use of new media, the homepage being its most important communication tool, supplementing written reports and books with audiovisual material and interactive forums.

In order to ensure its independence, FORES 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 (FNF)

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Friedrich Naumann
STIFTUNG **FÜR DIE FREIHEIT**



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 nine regional offices and is active in over 60 countries worldwide to promote its core concepts, such as the protection of human rights, civil society, market economy, free trade and rule of law.

Over the last 56 years, the activities of the foundation have expanded beyond their original civic educational tasks in Germany. A scholarship programme, a think tank (the Liberal Institute), a press and media department and its engagement in international Liberalism have become important parts of the foundation's remit.

Together with our partners – which include Liberal political parties as well as think tanks – we support the development of constitutional and democratic institutions as well as civil society. We do so not only with our dialogue programmes in Brussels, but also with local FNF offices and joint events in various member states of the European Union.

The Foundation's key focus areas for the 2012 – 15 period are:

- Freedom and progress: Progress means the unhindered realisation of the potential to improve living conditions and enhance the understanding of the world in the wake of advances in scientific knowledge;
- Freedom and religion: The right to freedom of religious and ideological belief is considered a human right for all faiths in equal measure;
- Freedom and participation: Liberal civic education must take up this subject. "Only when the individual interferes, can a liberal society grow" (Friedrich Naumann). Freedom and democracy thrive on participation.

The main objectives of our 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 in which we work. They are based on long-standing experience and are constantly evolving.

Fundació Catalanista i Demòcrata (Fundació CatDem)

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The CatDem Foundation is a platform for political thought that spreads ideas and encourages debate to promote democracy and Catalanism. Between 2007 and 2010 the CatDem Foundation helped build the Meeting House of Catalanism to encourage a more mainstream debate on the consequences of globalisation and the increasing diversity and pluralism in Catalan society from a social, cultural, linguistic and religious point of view. Nowadays, our aim is to help provide the necessary arguments to move towards full sovereignty. The challenge is to move from traditional nationalism – based on the defence of the Catalan language and culture – to a cosmopolitan and inclusive nationalism based on dialogue and integration that encourages individuals, regardless of their origin, to identify with a shared national project.

By the end of 2010 the CatDem was commissioned to add content to the proposal of a National Transition made by the President, Artur Mas, during his inaugural speech in November 2010. The National Transition is the transition from autonomy to sovereignty, which can only be achieved by strengthening the sense of Catalan identity for Catalans. But the transition from one state to other will probably be made in stages, and this is something we are working on. At present, our primary goal is to exercise the right to decide and, thus, hold a consultation that would allow Catalans to freely decide about their immediate future.

Catalonia has experienced many forms of indifference throughout history. The Spanish indifference to Catalonia has increased since Spain grew and modernised itself economically and politically. The positive aspect of this indifference is that the Catalan national awakening is becoming more solid. The

number of people who believe that something must be done so that the country does not collapse grows daily. The negative consequences of the economic crisis helped, of course, as it has exposed the limitations of self-government. It was a good argument for opening the eyes of the indifferent Catalans, even though they still are many. Surely, a great majority of people do not understand “the metaphysical right of being”, but the effects of inequality can be seen, because often the Catalan people are the ones who suffer first-hand, due to an outdated principle of solidarity.

The mission of the CatDem Foundation is to encourage the national awakening to face the future with optimism. The road to the National Transition will not be easy, it will be difficult, but ensuring the social, political and economic welfare of Catalonia requires patience and resilience. And it is necessary to be intellectually prepared first.


More information about our work can be found at www.catdem.org

Fundacja Klub Obywatelski Civic Club Foundation

Contact information

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Contact person: Piotr Hubert Kowalski, piotr.h.kowalski@klub-obywatelski.org.pl



 Activists connected to the Polish Democratic Movement ‘Solidarity’ founded the Civic Club Foundation in December 1998. We are an independent, non-profit and non-governmental organisation. In today's changing world we believe in the power of argument not the argument of power.

We stand for liberty limited by the liberty of others and common sense. We promote the values of trust, responsibility integrity, solidarity and tolerance of diversities. We are certain that people of great vision have the ability to change the world around us.

The foundation's priorities are as follows:

- Dissemination and protection of human rights and freedoms, as well as civil liberties;
- Propagation of the ideas of a free market economy and entrepreneurship;
- Promotion of European integration and the development of contacts and cooperation between societies;
- Acting in the field of education, in particular democracy, human rights, social policy, foreign relations and economic affairs.
- We implement our statutory aims through:
 - Organising seminars, conferences, workshops and debates;
 - Issuing publications;
 - Cooperation with public administration and non-governmental organisations acting in fields that correspond to the foundation's statutory aims.

The foundation's two key programmes are:

Direction Europe

This programme is run especially for academics and non-governmental organisations and aims to disseminate knowledge about the EU and find common solutions with regard to Polish foreign policy.

Liberal Institute

This programme aims to develop up-to-date solutions with regard to economics (especially energy and environmental policy), human rights and rule of law. Within this programme we have also dedicated a special framework of cooperation with other organisations in matters related to the current global economic crisis.

Fundacja Projekt: Polska

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projekt:polska®



The mission of Fundacja Projekt: Polska 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.

Fundacja Projekt: Polska is a joint initiative between two different groups. 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. Each project has precise aims, costs and profits. Each has a timetable and it is therefore 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 the young professionals and business people who have entered the labour market since 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 promoted by the civic actions of our partners.

Fundacja Projekt: Polska has created the państwomiasto a multidementional hub in central Warsaw. It is a vibrant coworking space for NGOs and creative professionals and a place where members of civil society can develop their projects and present their results. A gallery and café complete the facilities.

Additionally, Fundacja Projekt: Polska invited preeminent Polish experts to join forces in the creation of Centrum Cyfrowe (Digital Centre), offering expertise and know-how on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to enhance social capital in Poland, civic engagement and state efficiency.

Haya van Someren Stichting VVD International

Contact information

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Haya van Someren Stichting is responsible for the international activities of the Dutch Liberal party (VVD) and is based at the Headquarters of the VVD in The Hague, The Netherlands.

The Haya van Someren Stichting concentrates on supporting activities that strengthen Liberal-minded political parties and groupings in central and eastern Europe, without making a financial profit. This is facilitated by the Political Parties Programme of the Matra Programme of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Matra Programme aims to support the transition to a multiform, constitutional society in countries in central and eastern Europe and North Africa. VVD International has already almost twenty years of experience in the field of capacity building of political parties in eastern and southeast Europe.

The parties and/or political groups we support should emphasise Liberal principles and ideas. Preferably they are, or intend to be, a member of the Liberal International, and/or the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party (ALDE). There are some other basic conditions: the political party or grouping should aim to strengthen the rule of law, guaranteeing the individual rights of man and promoting peaceful relations with neighbouring countries.

The Haya van Someren foundation works on a demand-driven basis and organises and facilitates several training programmes:

- Training on various party-related subjects;
- Regional seminars, providing keynote speakers;
- Visitor's programmes in the Netherlands;
- Regional and national discussion fora.

Projects have been successfully implemented in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Egypt, Georgia, Kosovo, Libya, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Morocco, Romania, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey and Ukraine.

The VVD is, as well as an ELF member, also a member of other worldwide networks of Liberals: Liberal International and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party (ALDE).

Descriptions of the countries, organisations, activities and background information on VVD International's cooperation with its international partners can be found on our website: www.internationaal.vvd.nl.

Institute for Liberal Studies

Contact information

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The Institute for Liberal Studies association was created by a group of high-ranking Liberals, Ministers, Members of Parliament (including the Prime Minister), in order to promote Liberal values in Romanian society. These distinctive figures close to Romanian and European Liberal values created the Institute as a specialised apparatus for the administrative and doctrine training of Romanian citizens and for research in the area of Romanian Liberalism.

The Institute organises public debates and conferences on the latest issues concerning Romania and the EU agenda. At the same time, it organises seminars, workshops on Liberalism, EU institutions, public administration, and media campaigns throughout the country.

The institute is also focused on socio-political research on current topics.

In the long term, the Institute aims to continue its research on public administration, political science and history and to publish its own studies and books.

The Institute for Liberal Studies is a founding member of ELF and works closely with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom as foreign partner and with TNL (Liberal National Youth), CSL (Liberal Student Clubs), Murray Rothbard Centre for Political Economy and Business as domestic partners.

In 2007, the Institute for Liberal Studies was declared an association of public utility.

Kentro Fileleftheron Meleton (KEFIM) Liberty Forum of 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.

The means for achieving our aims are the organisation of training and educational programmes to educate the officials of associations, leagues, non-profit making organisations or other agencies, as well as single personalities in order to promote the principles of a free economy, individual rights and an open society.

Liberaal Kennis Centrum

Contact information

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

Liberaal Kennis Centrum seeks 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.

Liberaal Kennis Centrum aims to formulate a clear vision of today's Liberalism in an era marked by great challenges such as globalisation, ageing of the population, migration and climate change. It does so by means of progressive research, study sessions, meetings and lectures. By taking an innovative interpretation of contemporary Liberalism, Liberaal Kennis Centrum has found a place among the international think tanks in Brussels.

Liberal Institute for Political Analyses (LIPA)

Contact information

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LIPA is a Bulgarian non-governmental organisation, a think tank, with the non-profit purposes of promoting the expansion of liberal democracy and active civil society in Bulgaria, supporting the proper integration of Bulgaria within the EU, contributing to EU cohesion and strengthening European citizenship and identity on the merits of freedom, personal responsibility and the rule of law.

Our mission:

- To demonstrate how the change in our mentality results in a change of our lives;
- To support the development of conditions for a civilised dialogue in society;
- To contribute to tolerance and continuity in politics;
- To show the priority of Classic Liberalism over leftism, populism, and extremism;
- To encourage political parties in Bulgaria to embrace the values of Classic Liberalism

We debate and analyse current socio-political issues and propose alternatives for the development of a society of free and responsible individuals.

We organize public forums and publish political, economic and social studies defending personal freedom and the rule of law.

We provide training on:

- Leadership and public communication for young politicians and leaders of tomorrow;
- Rights and responsibilities of European citizens;
- Working with EU institutions and non-governmental organisations;
- Election campaigns, internal party development and communication;
- Local government and modern local self-governance.

Liberales Zukunftsforum

Liberal Future Forum

Contact information

Address: Neustiftgasse 73-75/7, 1070 Vienna, Austria
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Contact persons: Alice Vadrot, lab@neos.eu



Liberal Future Forum was created as non-profit organisation to promote Liberal ideas and to develop new concepts for contemporary societies. As in most central European countries, Liberalism does not have a long tradition in Austria. Hence, there is a particular need for countries with weak Liberal traditions to increase the capacity of Liberals to influence public debate. Liberal movements are quite distinct from traditional conservative and social democratic concepts, combining the claim for open societies based upon strong individual freedom and a strong understanding of individual citizens' rights with the call for an efficient and effective market economy based upon competition.

Liberal Future Forum promotes the idea of a progressive, democratic, strong, efficient and ecological European Union and its continual deepening and widening.

Liberal Future Forum understands itself as think tank for Liberal movements. It aims at developing evidence-based policy solutions to the problems facing Austria and Central Europe. Running in parallel to the research programme are public events. Through meetings, conferences, seminars and lectures, the Forum aims to engage policymakers, academics, the media and public at large in lively and provocative debate.

Liberal Future Forum focuses on issues related to:

- Europe's role in the world with respect to the economic and financial crisis and the consequences for a more efficient organisation of the world economy beyond this crisis;
- The improvement of European democracy by enhancing informed participation of citizens and protecting their right for privacy by clearly limiting state control of individuals (control of electronic communication, bugging operations, CCTV data storage, etc.);
- Populism, xenophobia, and the extreme right-wing parties and movements;
- Other topics to be addressed, including migration, asylum and the rights of minorities.

Liberal Future Forum is in touch with other think tanks in the Liberal milieu in order to participate in the international exchange of Liberal ideas and solutions. As well as forging links with the major Liberal think tanks across Europe, its principal aims are to strengthen the links between Liberals in central Europe.

Liberal Future Forum will become NEOS Lab in 2014.

Liberalismi Akadeemia

Academy of Liberalism

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The Academy of Liberalism is an independent Liberal think tank founded by the Estonian Reform Party in 2006. It has a 12-person board, including Ministers, Members of Parliament and entrepreneurs. The purpose of the Academy is to promote a Liberal worldview to oppose the emergence of socialist ideas in society. The Academy of Liberalism is focused on civic education and research projects to promote Liberalism in Estonia and EU neighbourhood countries.

The activities of the Academy include three main types:

- Publishing: translations of acknowledged works in Estonian (L. Mises, Liberalism, J. Munkhammar, The Guide to Reform, etc.) and publications on topical issues;
- Events;
- A sophisticated training programme for Reform Party Youth;
- Academy of Liberal Future: seminars for young Liberal political leaders aged 20 to 30 from Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and the Netherlands;
- The Day of Liberalism;
- Liberal of The Year Award;
- Think tank in Estonia: The Chamber of Free Thought
- Round tables, conferences, training series on Liberalism (Liberal economics, government spending and economic growth, state intervention in economic crisis, etc.);
- Cooperation: various joint projects with other think tanks (Institute for Market Economics – IME, Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, ELF, 4liberty.eu etc.).

Tankesmedjan Magma

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Magma is a Finnish think tank that was founded in 2008. It supports liberal values and is independent of party politics. Since the beginning Magma has focused on issues such as integration, minorities, media, and the consequences of structural and economic change. Magma's activities are based on the fact that Finland has two official languages, Finnish and Swedish, and on the understanding that multilingualism and ethnic diversity are important features of today's Finland and of Europe.

Magma performs an analytical function and serves as an arena for discussion. Our studies, as well as our impact and risk analyses, provide a basis for decision-making. Magma also organises conferences and seminars. The results are presented on our website, in our own publications, in articles and at public events. Magma also undertakes comparative studies within a European context and cooperates with think tanks both in Finland and abroad.

Movimento Liberal Social (MLS)

Contact information

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MLS, which was officially founded in 2005, aims at promoting social-liberalism in Portugal. The movement is a platform for individuals who believe that the old left-right dogma makes little sense today and that it is possible to secure a different and more constructive type of politics in Portugal.

In summary, MLS stands for:

- The sovereignty of the individual: the inalienable right to live one's life and to seek happiness;
- A fairer 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 before the law, always with respect for the right to differ;
- A state that focuses on the essential things, but 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 healthcare and social security services, high quality education and the protection of cultural and environmental heritage;
- The Market economy, but always with state control as a corrective mechanism to counter the inevitable disequilibria.

Mr. Hans van Mierlo Stichting

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Mr. Hans
van Mierlo
Stichting



The Mr. Hans van Mierlo Stichting works as a broker of knowledge, expertise and ideas for the Dutch Liberal Democratic Party D66 (Democraten 66).

With three staff members, the main focus of our work is to deepen and develop our liberal-democratic (also often called social-liberal) thinking.

Our foundation 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 that of a broker, but our aim has remained the same: to generate concepts and ideas that strengthen the intellectual profile of D66 and to be a place where political thinkers can look at societal developments in a more considered manner.

Nowadays, the organisation employs dozens of volunteers, working on projects varying from very concrete policy advice to fundamental studies of the basic social-liberal principles of D66. We also publish a magazine called 'Idee'.

Furthermore, we act as secretary to D66's permanent programme committee, which is charged with writing the party programmes for both national and European elections. It is in this arena that the link is forged between ideological awareness and everyday practice.

Nadácia Liberálna spoločnosť Liberal Society Foundation

Contact information

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Phone: +421 910 946 164, www.libspol.eu
Contact person: Ph.Dr Viera Gajová, liberalna.spolocnost@gmail.com



The Liberal Society Foundation was established in 1995 as a non-governmental and non-profit think tank. It was founded because of a real need for objective evaluations of social processes, with the aim of promoting Liberal values and to create space for social and expert discussion in the transition period. The Liberal Society Foundation's activities have been very important in supporting Liberalism in Slovakia, especially during the short period without any Liberal party representation in the Slovak Parliament (2006-10).

Co-founders are the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF), the Forum Foundation, the Foundation Gaudeamus and Ing. Viliam Vaškovič, CSc.

Its mission:

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 group meetings;
- Research studies and expert opinions;
- Editorial and publishing activities;
- Education, promotion and adult education activities;
- The development of foreign contacts.

Its importance since 1995 has been in promoting Liberal thinking and strengthening the democratic process in Slovakia through seminars and workshops (supporting the discussions of politicians and experts on current legal, economic, political and other social topics), educational and publishing activities (aiming to raise citizens' awareness and influencing the legislative process via Members of Parliament).

The Liberal Society Foundation currently maintains its efforts to contribute to improving the political climate in Slovakia.

NOVUM – Inštitut za strateške in aplikativne študije (Inštitut Novum)

NOVUM – Institute for Strategic and Applied Research

Contact information

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Institute Novum 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.

Institute Novum 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, policymakers 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 10 members with economic, political, public and scientific backgrounds, which makes the Novum Institute a powerful advocacy group.

Prof.mr. B.M. TeldersStichting

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TeldersStichting
omdat kennis ertoe doet



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, who was a lawyer and philosopher and chair of the Liberal State Party (a predecessor of the VVD Party). During World War II he was arrested by 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 Frans Engering, who previously was Director-General Foreign Economic Relations at the ministry of Economic Affairs and Dutch ambassador to South Africa. The current director 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, 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, 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 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 Prof.mr. B.M. TeldersStichting. The quarterly journal of the Prof. mr. B.M. TeldersStichting is Liberaal Reveil, which is edited by researcher Charlotte Maas. Most of our publications and debates are in Dutch, although some are available in English.

The Prof.mr. B.M. TeldersStichting does not adhere to one exclusive variant of liberalism, although liberalism's classical thinkers 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 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.

Republikon Foundation for Science, Education and Research

Contact information

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Republikon Scientific, Educational and Research Foundation (Republikon Foundation) is a liberal think tank organisation based in Budapest, focusing on analysing Hungarian and international politics, formulating policy recommendations and initiating projects that contribute to a more open, democratic and free society. The goal of the Foundation is to promote discussion and implementation of liberal ideas, approaches and policies.

Republikon believes that Hungarian politics can take a turn to the better only if liberal ideas and opinions are formulated in the policy area and the public discourse. Although there is no significant liberal party as of this moment, liberal ideas and approaches can still enter public discourse through think tank institutions.

This is exactly the role Republikon Foundation has been playing: independent from any political party but committed to liberal values, Republikon has been endeavouring to shape policy thinking and public debate with its innovative approach to politics and policy. It is the mission of Republikon to articulate new ideas and to find ways of making the values of liberal democracy, human rights and tolerance more popular.

Stichting Internationaal Democratisch Initiatief (Stichting IDI)

Contact information

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Stichting IDI is an important pillar in D66's international work. In 1989, IVSOM, the Central and Eastern Europe Foundation of the D66 party, was founded to support democratisation and economic transition in central and eastern Europe. In October 1997, IVSOM was renamed the Stichting Internationaal Democratisch Initiatief (Stichting IDI). The foundation is independent but also forms an integral part of political party D66. Its office is located at the D66 Party Bureau.

Over the years IDI'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 Western Balkans, Turkey and the MENA (Middle East and North Africa) region. Furthermore, the IDI foundation maintains and develops relationships with likeminded political organisations in many countries around the world. IDI cooperates with liberal-democratic parties and organisations that respect human rights and the rights of minorities.

Democratic movements and progressive or social-liberal political parties are natural partners for the IDI foundation. The relationships are mutually beneficial. On the one hand, IDI offers practical knowledge for political partners in the project countries. On the other hand, ideas and experiences from abroad deepen and strengthen the liberal concept D66 adheres to while at the same time D66 learns from the tactics and strategy employed by likeminded parties. The Matra Political Party Programme of the Dutch Ministries of Foreign and Home Affairs financially supports most IDI projects.

Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy (SILBA)

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SILBA Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy is a Danish NGO established in 1994. SILBA is currently working on projects together with Russia, Kaliningrad Oblast, 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 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 organising 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)

Contact information

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SILC cooperates with struggling Liberal parties and democracy activists in Belarus, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Tunisia and the Ukraine. SILC also has an ambitious programme to support dissidents in Cuba. Currently, SILC is exploring engagement activities in Egypt, Libya and Venezuela and has implemented pilot activities in these three countries.

SILC has its own publishing house, SILC Publishing, which publishes two books a year on the work of democracy activists in challenging environments. SILC takes a visible part in the Swedish debate on development aid and foreign policy.

SILC currently has a staff of seven, of which two are working from the Belarus programme office in Vilnius, Lithuania. SILC's annual turnover is approximately €1.5 million (2011).

Contact information

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Alternative Libérale is a young association founded to give voice to classical liberal ideas in France.

As opposed to the existing conservative and socialist think tanks and associations, we put the emphasis strongly on values such as freedom of choice, trust, self-confidence, a federal Europe and entrepreneurship. We aim to return classical liberalism to the presence it deserves in the French political debate. We believe classical liberalism to be a universal philosophy and therefore we believe that each willing individual can take an active part in building the 21st century.

We call this desire for change an Alternative Libérale a classical liberal alternative – an idea of a society based on freedom of choice for each and every one of us, leading to prosperity for all. It means choosing a France that trusts its citizens, that believes in its future and flies the flag of liberty – the ideal that lies at the heart of its heritage.

We want something better than a hierarchical society overseen by dogmatic bureaucrats and an archaic corporate establishment. We want a society where individuals organise their lives as they see fit, where they can make their own choices and take on their own responsibilities. Tired of the bad old ways and the hollow solidarity imposed by a fully centralised, worn-out state. The people need to take back the initiative in all areas of their lives.

France is a great country in bad shape: unemployment, public debt, stagnation in buying power, widening deficits, impossible reforms,

and marginalised position on the European and international scene. Paralysed by doubt, French society is falling deeper into crisis and is in denial over what is really at stake.

In modern-day France, anybody who falls off the career ladder faces years in the job wilderness, with welfare money as her/his only means of survival. Entrepreneurial spirit is discouraged, and yet support for the most disadvantaged in our society has morphed into a kind of state-organised charity, leading to chronic apathy. Work is no longer seen as a mutually beneficial form of production, a means for personal achievement, but rather as a tiny scrap of privilege that must be protected at any cost.

French society, shocked and in a state of fear, hiding behind the closed doors of a resurgent and xenophobic nationalism, seeks refuge in outdated solutions, leading to accusations against its traditional scapegoats. Rejecting the economic reality of a globalised world, the French people are letting the problems of public deficit pass them by, placing their children's future at risk. The French corporate establishment favours isolationism, promising a modern-day Maginot line to defend us against a world, which would in reality, bring us a wealth of opportunities.

If we are to regain some optimism, confidence and a willingness to face the future, if we want to win back our place among democratic nations, if we want to build a France, a Europe and a world in which our children can flourish, we need to make a new kind of society possible. This is what we call for with our Alternative Libérale.

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LibMov is a new think tank, formed by Italian ALDE associate members, with the aim of promoting liberalism in Italy and of reassembling all the Italian Liberals who believe it is high time for their renewed presence in the Italian public debate and in the Italian political system. LibMov was not born in contrast or in opposition to any existing Liberal organisations.

In order to achieve our mission, we think that the preliminary step should be the elaboration of a set of political principles and reform proposals capable of reassembling the diverse traditions and cultural sensitivities existing within the Italian Liberal family that has been scattered for years across many different political organisations, and is therefore much weaker today than it could be.

Given that European integration has been – in the last 150 years – the common ground for almost all Italian Liberals, we think, given that our target are mostly educated Liberal-minded citizens and electors, making a direct reference to our European common family could be very effective in Italy.

In addition to this, we have set four basic principles more directly related to the present Italian public debate: the resumption of the traditional role of Italy in pushing forward European integration (a role miserably neglected in the last two decades); turning the page on the two muddy decades marked by political populism, continuous breaches to the rule of law and indecent public ethical standards; a resolute modernisation and liberalisation of the Italian economy also as a way to curb corruption, patronage and vested interests; separation of state and religion and related individual freedom.

Centre for Liberty Studies

Laisvės studijų centras

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Laisvės studijų centras (LSC) is a Liberal think tank aiming to promote individual freedom and responsibility as the most important values in a democratic society. LSC is committed to the following goals of fostering the emergence of young leaders, popularising liberal values, promoting civil liberties and providing platform for every citizen to engage in democratic process.

LSC has its primary interest on strengthening civil society by organising educational activities: visits and open lectures for high-school students, leadership and political communication training for youngsters and for liberal community in Lithuania.

The most notable recent projects, among the others, are the constantly ongoing discussions in regions of Lithuania about freedom, Liberalism and the future of the European Union.

LSC aims to establish itself as a profound institution of public policy analysis and proposals. Having a wide network of the reform-makers in Lithuania, we seek to contribute in various public policy spheres, education, health and public administration issues in particular.

One of the key objectives for LSC is to build a long-lasting platform of training for public sphere leaders not only from Lithuania, but also from other countries in Europe.

In doing our activities we cooperate closely with the Liberal Movement of Lithuania and other Liberal organisations in Lithuania and abroad.

Fundacja Industrial

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The mission of Fundacja Industrial is to promote an open society, liberal-economic ideas and liberal culture and to organise a social movement around these ideas. Our partners are well-known institutions such as The Stefan Batory Foundation, The Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom, National Center of Culture, and The Polish Confederation of Private Employers Lewiatan. At the same time we partner the biggest public events in Poland concerning business and politics, such as the Economic Forum in Krynica, Wrocław Global Forum or the European Forum of New Ideas.

The focus of all our activities is publishing the expert, ideological social-political magazine Liberté!. We publish the online webportal: www.liberte.pl and a quarterly printed magazine. Liberté!'s patron council includes, among others, professor Marek Safjan (Judge at the Court of Justice of the European Community), Jerzy Pomianowski (head of the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), Janusz Lewandowski (Member of European Commission), Professor Zbigniew Pełczyński, Professor Wojciech Sadurski, Professor Jan Winiecki, Henryka Bochniarz, Professor Paweł Śpiewak, Professor Ireneusz Krzemiński and many other outstanding people from Polish public life. Our magazine is directed at public opinion leaders, NGO representatives, the academic world, politicians, media, entrepreneurs and young people involved in building civil society in the country.

The foundation also implements other think tank projects, including: The creation of a vision of liberal social policy, Elite and modern education, The philosophical and political science debate series. Furthermore, we coordinate with Fredrich Naumann

Foundation platform 4liberty.eu. This is a joint project of 11 think tanks from central Europe and the Baltic States, with a number of them (including Poland's Foundation Industrial, FOR, Projekt: Polska, Slovakia's INESS, Hayek Foundation, Hungary's Republikon Institute, the Czech Republic's Liberalni Institut, Lithuania's LFMI, Estonia's Academy of Liberalism, Germany's Liberales Institut and Bulgaria's IME) regularly publishing analysis and comments, focusing mainly on free market economics.

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The Swedish People's Party together with its women's and youth league formed Svenska Söföbundet in 1973. The initial goal of SBF was to organise local workshops and provide training for volunteers and campaign staff in fields relating to the activities of the party. Today the role of Svenska Söföbundet has grown and matured to an organisation that provides political support in a wider context. SBF wants to drive the conversation in society towards creating spaces where political and societal matters can be discussed from a liberal point of view.


As a strong advocate of liberal solutions to today's societal challenges Svenska Bildningsförbundet hosts seminars, both short weekday-evening-seminars and full day more comprehensive seminars on a wide range of topics. SBF also commissions opinion polls and surveys to gain a better understanding of how society views different topics.

Szabadságért Alapítvány
For Freedom, for Liberal Thinking Foundation

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 The For Freedom Foundation was brought to life on 23 January 2012 with the primary goal of promoting and facilitating the dissemination of liberal thinking in Hungary. Its main objective is to strengthen liberal values, so that the fundamental human rights and liberties can become part of the everyday life of all members of society. In the course of its activity, the foundation fights against segregation and for the strengthening of an open, tolerant and receptive society.

The foundation gives special attention to minorities, primarily the problems of Roma society and its goal is to facilitate equal opportunities for disadvantaged groups. The foundation is committed to the cause of environmental protection. It seeks to reinforce the right of the pursuit of individual happiness.

It cooperates with and supports every organisation whose objectives correspond to its own. In order to reach its goals, the foundation makes full use of publicity and the media.

The foundation carries out the following activities:

- Educational programmes, training and lectures;
- Exhibitions and cultural events;
- Publications;
- Scholarships for organisations and individuals;
- Promotional campaigns in public areas;
- Awarding individual support or grants.

Publisher

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Layout & production

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