

ANNUAL REPORT

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— European Liberal Forum —

14



WELCOME

# Annual Report 2014

—— European Liberal Forum ——

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# Letter From the President

—— Felicita Medved ——



In 2014, the citizens of the European Union elected a new parliament. For Liberals, the election proved a success in the Benelux countries, the Nordics, the Baltics and the Czech Republic. However, it represented a loss for our Liberal friends in Germany and the UK, as well as in my own country, Slovenia.

The aftermath of the elections provides an opportunity for fresh thinking, new ways of cooperation and for the European Liberal network to become a closer-knit group.

2014 was also an election year for the European Liberal Forum absi (ELF). I am proud to have been re-elected as president together with my entire Board of Directors. The fact that all Board members decided to run again is proof of the dedication and enthusiasm they bring to our foundation. I look forward to working together with them, the Secretariat and our member organisations to ensure the progress ELF has made since our foundation was first established continues.

After a long and considered evaluation, ELF re-focused its attention in 2014 towards four competence centres. These encompass core liberal topics that will continue to guide the scope of our activities in the years to come. They also give our member organisation an entirely new forum in which to, from the bottom up, propose uniquely European project ideas. Looking to 2015 these competence centres have already borne fruit.

When I was re-elected President, I stressed that while a founding principle of ELF has been to ensure that we

undertake both training and policy research, the time has now come to strengthen our policy work. I am delighted to see that we are starting to take steps in this direction, evidenced by our budding collection of policy recommendations. My hope is that we will continue to strengthen this aspect of our

work in order to become a true source of ideas for our politicians. In light of the election results, it is only natural that we do more than ever to underpin and complement the activities and objectives of the [ALDE Party](#) and ALDE Groups in the [European Parliament](#), the [Committee of Regions](#) and the [Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe](#).

Election year 2014 was a year of new beginnings, not least for ELF. Looking at the good work we have undertaken last year, I can only trust that 2015 will be a year in which we continue to re-think our role and our activities, distilling what is good and building upon it towards becoming an ever-stronger actor in creating a European public and political space. Now, more than ever, Europe needs a strong Liberal family.

Felicita Medved  
President

# Foreword by the Executive Director

——— Susanne Hartig ———



"Freedom is not a gift to be taken lightly. It is an opportunity which comes with responsibility". In 2014, we celebrated the fall of the Berlin Wall, which more than a quarter of a century ago still separated Europeans. The words of the late German President, Richard von Weizsäcker, that freedom cannot be taken for granted, remain as relevant today as they did 25 years ago. Promoting civic responsibility is an integral aspect of European political foundations and of ELF in particular.

In this spirit, ELF chose three central themes crucial to furthering European integration in 2014. We dedicated one Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable Series to European Values, one to Europe in the World and one to Innovation Through Digitalisation. This was in the knowledge that European freedom is underpinned by common values, joint global purpose and a successful single market. Fundamental challenges to freedom, such as the repression of free media and the steady advance of corruption in Europe, are examples of topics we addressed during the year. Ultimately, activities such as these help fight the emergence of illiberal democracy, ensuring that the freedom won 25 years ago is not squandered.

2014 was not just a year to reflect on the fundamental challenges to freedom; it was also a year when negotiations really got underway for a transatlantic trade agreement (TTIP). ELF was quick to respond to the unfolding debate and will continue the focus on TTIP in 2015. Unfortunately, 2014 was also a year of crises, notably the ongoing

ramifications of a fourth year of civil war in Syria. We therefore convened a roundtable of migration experts and activists in Istanbul to discuss and identify ways for Europe to tackle this refugee crisis in a manner respectful of individual human dignity and freedom.

"Freedom is not a gift to be taken lightly. It is an opportunity which comes with responsibility". As a political foundation, our responsibility is to bring our liberal message to as wide an audience as possible. This was made possible through the unyielding support of our member organisations, the ALDE Party and our partners in the Liberal groups in the European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, [Liberal International](#) and [IFLRY](#).

However, it was also achieved through strong partnerships with external organisations, such as [AT&T](#), the [European Endowment for Democracy](#) and the [German Marshall Fund of the United States](#). Our contribution to ensuring that freedom in the EU is not taken for granted would not materialise without partners such as these. Beyond 2014, ELF's core mission remains to help create a responsible, open, diverse and tolerant European civil society.

Susanne Hartig  
Executive Director

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# Get to Know Us

## — European Liberal Forum —

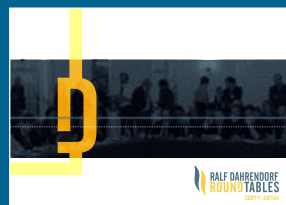
The EU alone has 500 million citizens, and ELF works both in the EU and in the European neighbourhood countries. Reaching as wide an audience as possible is our priority and you will find us on our website, as well as on social media and in print form. Click your way through to get to know us better!

# Our Brochures

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— European Liberal Forum —



— Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtables —

## Connect With Us

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### — The Website —

*Do you want to get to know ELF even better? Our website covers everything you could ever want to know about us. Read our event reports, download all our publications and find updated information about our Member Organisations, Board and Secretariat.*



### — Facebook —

*Liking us on Facebook allows you to stay up to date with our work on a daily basis, all year round. Catch the latest photos from our events as they become available, get notifications when we organise an event near you.*



### — Twitter —

*Do you have a question for us? Are you keen to follow the discussion at our events? Twitter lets you take part in an event, even if you aren't in the city where it is happening. Join the conversation!*



### — YouTube —

*Did you miss one of our events? Selected events are recorded and uploaded to our YouTube Channel. Check it out and you may be able to catch up with an event you couldn't get to in person.*



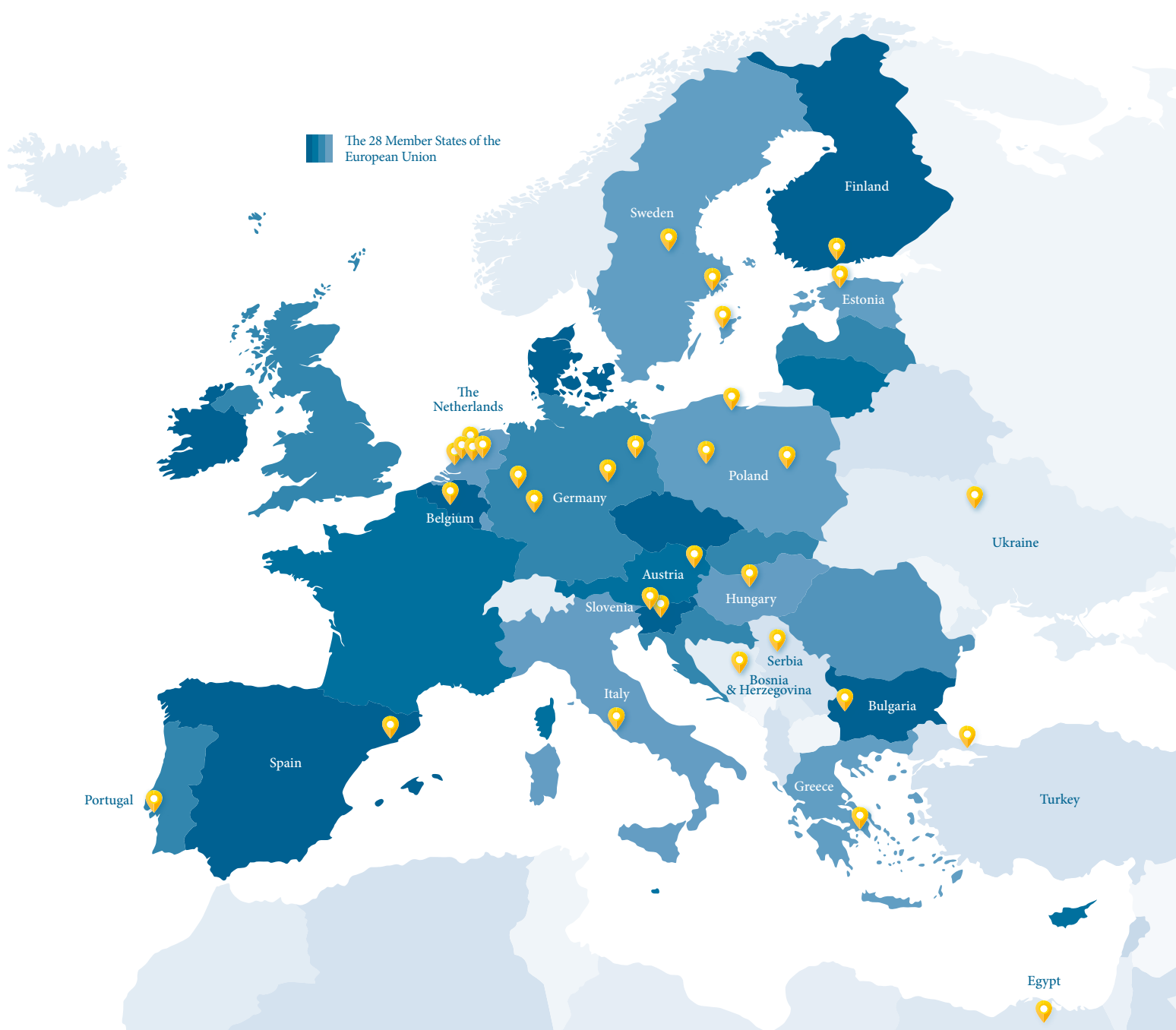
### — LinkedIn —

*Are you interested in staying in professional contact with ELF? Do you want to stay up to date with our activities? Follow us on LinkedIn at the click of a button.*

# Where Did You Meet Us in 2014?

— ELF brings European politics closer to you —

*In 2014 we travelled Europe to host workshops, roundtables and conferences, with the aim of getting citizens talking about the major political issues facing the EU. By taking European issues beyond Brussels we link EU matters with local realities.*





# Twitter

## Highlights in 2014



**Bildningsförbundet**  
@bildningsf · May 7

"The events in the Ukraine show why we can't afford to fail in any other of the countries neighboring the EU" @Calle\_Haglund at #ELFevent



**Jimmy Loomos**  
@LoomeyToons · Jun 16

Spending the afternoon learning about the Greek start-up scene and wondering if I'm in Athens or Silicon Valley #ELFevent #startups #athens



**ELF**  
@EurLiberalForum  
Nov 11

@Lambsdorff "We need a more factually based #TTIP debate #ELFevent"



**Ajit Jaokar**  
@Ajit.Jaokar · Sep 25

@horvathdorka #elfevent every blog is a conversation ..



**euromania**  
@euromaidantwit · Feb 26

In April #ELF organize the Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable about The Sanctity of Free Media in Kiev, #Ukraine #ELFevent [adf.ly/e5XTU](http://adf.ly/e5XTU)



**Horvath Dorka**  
@horvathdorka  
Sep 25

In 2011 people were more likely to contact a politician / political party online than offline #clicktivism #ELFevent



**Gabriela Keseberg D.**  
@gkdavalos · Nov 13

"#freedom of expression is the worst enemy of the Islamic State #elfevent #Syria



**Francesca Binda**  
@francescabinda · Nov 14

Linnea Hincks inspires. Her feminist values motivate political action at #elfevent @SILCfDemocracy @MartinAngeby



**Lousewies v d Laan**  
@LousewiesvdLaan  
Nov 13

democracy is like air: when plentiful you take it for granted, when it's gone, it's too late, you suffocate #elfevent #illiberalHungary



**Captain Europe**  
@captain\_europe · Nov 22

@tom\_nuttall says 'süüvillains' including outdated thinking are obstacles to Digital Agenda. We shall defeat them! #elfevent



**Maria Choupres**  
@MariaChoupres · Jun 16

#Truckbird CEO J. Papageorgiou talks #startup location & how that effects funding #elfevent @ATTpolicyintl @EEathina

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# — Our — Focus

*ELF's work is organised around four focus areas.  
These are long-term focus areas which reflect core liberal  
issues of strong European relevance.*

1

The Future  
— of the —  
European Union

3

Liberal Solutions  
— for the —  
European Economy

2

Promoting Rule  
— of —  
Law in Europe

4

Capacity  
—  
Building

20  
14

# The Future —— of the —— European Union



The Future of the European Union concerns all of Europe.  
The development of EU institutions and the role of the EU in the world all help  
shape its future and this is why ELF has chosen to focus on the issue.  
The following pages will give you a snapshot of our work on the future of the EU.

# Europe in the World

## Series

Shaped by one global crisis after another, 2014 was a tumultuous year. The EU was put to the test in foreign, security and trade terms like never before. Realising the importance of the future role Europe and the EU would continue to play, ELF decided to dedicate a Ralph Dahrendorf Roundtable Series to discussing the role of Europe in the world.

The liberal commitment to rule of law, respect for international institutions and human rights knows no boundaries, so the topic of Europe in the World naturally found its place as one of three dedicated roundtable series in 2014. Furthermore, by dedicating a series to this topic, we also honoured and contributed to one of ELF's major focus areas, 'The Future of the European Union'.

From events unfolding in Ukraine, to the turmoil caused by civil war in Syria, to the exciting negotiations underway to make the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) a reality, 2014 was a year in which Europe's global role was challenged in a way not seen since the passage of the Lisbon Treaty.

We made the decision to host our roundtables in a variety of major cities across the continent. Europe in the World was effectively discussed in such diverse cities as Helsinki, Berlin, Brussels and Istanbul. The aim was to make sure a wide variety of liberal-minded voices were heard on a plethora of EU foreign, security and international trade challenges. We consciously aimed for a wide target audience, spanning everyone from experts working on the topic to interested citizens. Roundtables enable a discussion among equals and for this reason it is important that our audiences bring together both those with a long track-record on a particular topic, as well as those just discovering their own interest in the issue at hand.

A hallmark of Lord Dahrendorf was his ability to engage with all levels of society on any political issue. In his spirit, we aim to bring European policy discussions closer to the citizen, to engage them in conversation and hear their voices. The four topics chosen for this series, notably: EU-Russia relations, how to handle the refugee crisis at Europe's borders, how to strengthen democracy and civil society in the Middle East and North Africa and the progress towards TTIP were

— Panel and audience enjoying the welcoming words of Dr Wolf-Dieter Zumpfort —



# Europe in the World

— Series —

all chosen, not only because of their importance for Europe, but also because of their resonance with audiences in Helsinki, Berlin, Brussels and Istanbul, respectively. This local angle has helped us to involve a wider audience in our discussions on Europe's role in the world today.

Our topics spanned a wide array of foreign, security and trade questions. Each debate gave a nuanced look at the topic being discussed. The discussion on EU-Russia relations was hosted right at the outset of the crisis in Ukraine and given the Finnish context, there is no surprise that the Finnish Defence Minister, **Carl Haglund**, stressed the need for Finland and the EU to keep the pathways for dialogue with Moscow open. At the same time, as Liberal International President **Dr Juli Minoves** pointed out, events in Ukraine would prove to be a litmus test for European unity in the face of the threat to the international order.

Decrepit ships loaded with refugees arriving at the shores of Europe have become a depressingly familiar feature of the European news agenda. The deepening civil war in Syria has created one of the worst refugee crises in recent years. For Europe, this means greater challenges at the borders of the Schengen area and an even greater need for Europe to coordinate with partners such as Turkey. Discussions in Istanbul quickly made clear the societal impact an increased influx of refugees has, both for Turkey and the EU. Former German Federal Human Rights Commissioner and Chair of the Liberal International Human Rights Committee **Markus Löning** was one of several panellists arguing for greater coordination between partners, as well as a Europe-wide asylum distribution key which would relieve some of the more exposed countries on Europe's borders. By stressing this point, Markus Löning again reiterated an important European Liberal policy goal.

Another factor which has been feeding the refugee crisis in Europe is the continued turmoil in North Africa following the much-touted Arab Spring. The EU has long been involved as a partner for democratic change in the region, promising strong financial support and institutional know-how to promote change in the region. However, in the aftermath, progress has been tempered and the role

of the EU and EU institutions in democracy support much debated. A key finding of the panellists is that EU institutions must work together in the Middle East and North Africa, bestowing more trust in local partners and tailoring their support to fit the relevant country profile. With panellists discussing countries as far afield as Egypt, Syria and Tunisia, it soon became evident that democracy support in the Middle East and North Africa cannot be aggregated.



*EU institutions must work together in the Middle East and North Africa, bestowing more trust in local partners and tailoring their support to fit the relevant country profile.*

With topics dominated by ongoing crises, it was refreshing to take in a topic imbued with optimism – the passing of a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). The event's Berlin and German setting was especially relevant, given that emotions have run high on everything from the potential influx of chlorine-treated chickens to the role of investor-state settlement dispute mechanisms. The event served as a contribution to an objective debate on TTIP and its ramifications for small and medium-sized enterprises, Europe's economic backbone. Investor-state settlement disputes (ISDS) have been an especially hot potato in Germany, and it was no different at this roundtable.

Full house for a discussion on democracy promotion  
— in the Middle East and North Africa —



# Europe in the World

— Series —

Speakers all agreed on the need for modernising the mechanisms for ISDS, and while **Dr Stormy-Annika Mildner**, Head of the Foreign Trade Department of the German Federation of Industry (BDI) pointed out that her organisation has spoken out in favour of ISDS, entrepreneur **Burkhard Stein** was more sceptical, referring to the high costs associated with ISDS. Vice President of the European Parliament and founding President of ELF **Alexander Graf Lambsdorff MEP** (ALDE) especially emphasised the need for fair and accurate reporting on ISDS, which puts it into its proper perspective. He referred to the existence of ISDS agreements between Germany and several Central and Eastern European countries, arguing that opposition to EU-US ISDS would, by extension, mean opposing country-to-country ISDS within the EU. He also clarified the true cost of ISDS for SMEs, arguing that looking at the average costs of the settlement mechanism, rather than the median, distorts the true cost involved for smaller SMEs.

Through this series, ELF has made a small contribution to lifting the public discussion towards Europe's role in

the world. Often overshadowed by the internal market and home affairs aspects of the EU, Europe in the world is increasingly emerging as a key topic for the coming years. As Europe shapes its instruments of foreign policy, international trade, as well as security and defence, the need for a public discussion on the role Europe should play remains high. Moreover, the series cemented ELF's focus on TTIP, which first emerged in 2013.

The TTIP roundtable in Berlin helped shape our TTIP series for 2015, which will culminate in ELF issuing policy recommendations, aiming to inspire Liberal decision-makers as they position themselves on TTIP. From TTIP to democracy support to EU-Russia relations, it is clear that as the EU's responsibilities grow in an increasingly globalised world, the need for in-depth and level-headed discussions on the topic remains. In the spirit of Lord Dahrendorf, ELF has attempted to bring 'Europe in the World' a little closer to Europe's citizens, encouraging reflection on issues which are certain to be discussed at the next meeting of the European Council or European Parliament.

## DATE AND LOCATION

March–November 2014

Helsinki (Finland) · Berlin (Germany) · Brussels (Belgium) · Istanbul (Turkey)

## SUPPORTED BY

[FNF](#) · [SBF](#)

## WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

[European Endowment for Democracy \(EED\)](#)

## REPORT BY

Håvard Sandvik (Programme Officer, ELF)



# Europe or Visegrád?

## — Complementary or Parallel Liberal Identities? —

Does the Visegrád group complement EU integration? The Group was set up as a loose alliance of four countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) to promote greater integration in Central Europe following the end of the Cold War. In 2004, all the members of the Visegrád Group joined the EU and the question has since then been whether or not a Visegrád identity among the countries has proved complementary to an EU identity among liberals in the region. This was the topic for discussion as liberals from across the region came together in Budapest for this roundtable.

Following welcome speeches by **Gábor Horn**, Chairman of the Board, Republikon Foundation for Science, Education and Research and **Felicita Medved**, ELF President, the discussion began. Participants included **Gordon Bajnai**, former Prime Minister of Hungary, Felicita Medved, **Leszek Jazdzewski**, Editor in Chief of *Libertél*, Poland and **Dr Grigorij Meseznikov**, President of the Institute for Public Affairs, Slovakia. The discussion was moderated by **Dr Csaba Tóth**, Director of Strategy of the Republikon Foundation.

Gordon Bajnai began by comparing the EU to Noah's ark, and warned that those who are not in the ark could be swept away by globalisation. He also warned that the EU must constantly innovate in order not to fall behind in its global competitive position. He posited that European identity does not need an artificial genesis because it is already a self-reinforcing process.

”

*The EU is a political entity, imbued with various identities, and this is probably the greatest challenge to the formation of a unified European identity.*

What is needed is the strengthening of common foreign, defence and security and fiscal policy. However, events such as the economic crisis or the violence in Ukraine put heavy pressure on the EU's ability to find solutions for these problems, which may actually result in the strengthening and further development of the EU, he said.

— Felicita Medved welcoming the roundtable audience —



# Europe or Visegrád?

— Complementary or Parallel Liberal Identities? —

Dr Grigorij Meseznikov pointed out that the EU is one of the most successful integration projects in history. National political parties articulating and protecting national interests in opposition to EU interests constitute a significant obstacle to the formation of a European identity. This is exacerbated by the fact that the EU is not yet effective enough in protecting its own basic values and principles. Referring to the community of Visegrád countries, he identified this as a political project, similar to the EU, rather than a bottom-up movement with the citizens of these countries having a strong Visegrád identity. However, he voiced his strong conviction that these countries could contribute to the construction of a joint European identity by aiding each other on the path to a more tightly integrated European community.

Felicita Medved, in turn, extolled her hope that the ever-elusive European identity will materialise in the hearts and minds of the majority of Europeans. In order to define it, it is necessary to first clarify what national identity and national interest mean. It is possible that European identity must also be constructed from the top down, although it is still unclear which way will prove the most expedient. She emphasised the importance of education and mentioned the 'empire model' as a possible new context for the European identity. But for now, she agreed that EU identity has primarily been conceived as a political identity.

Leszek Jazdewski intervened at this point to stress that a European identity can, and shall, be constructed in the same way as a national identity, and that it had not itself had any historical antecedent before the 18th century. He underlined that the main reason for introducing compulsory primary education was to create a national identity, and agreed that the EU should use the power of education to develop a European identity. The EU is a political entity, imbued with various identities, and this is probably the greatest challenge to the formation of a unified European identity, given the contradiction of liberal, national and other identities. The speakers and audience all agreed that more collective thinking is necessary to construct a European identity and to reform and develop the EU, and that the cooperation of the Visegrád countries have an important role in this process.



## DATE AND LOCATION

29 April 2014  
Budapest (Hungary)

## SUPPORTED BY

[Republikon Foundation](#)

## REPORT BY

Réka Csaba  
(Project Manager, Republikon Foundation)



# Pooling and Sharing

## — The Frontline of Harnessing Common Potential —

European defence budgets are in decline at a time when security challenges are multiplying at its borders. Liberal International, the international umbrella organisation of organised liberalism, chose Rotterdam for the 59th Liberal International Congress. One of the first fringe meetings to inspire lively debate with the delegates was the much-anticipated ELF conference on pooling and sharing of military resources in the EU. The eminent panel included Dutch Minister of Defence **Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert**, as well as former British Minister of State for the Armed Forces, **Sir Nick Harvey** and former Finnish Defence Minister **Stefan Wallin**. The panel was moderated by security and defence researcher **Dr Giovanni Faleg** from the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS). Pooling and sharing is not a new topic for ELF, which hosted its first roundtable on the issue in 2012.

One key message echoed by the entire panel is that the EU needs a pragmatic approach to pooling & sharing, which would allow EU member states to benefit from pooling of resources and sharing of technology. As Sir

Nick Harvey pointed out, pooling and sharing does not mean compromising national interests. He argued that perspectives on pooling need to change to a point where leaders see the opportunities it promises, rather than the potential challenges.

”

*Pooling and sharing does not mean compromising national interests.*

There is a need for more countries to help in improving the EU's military capabilities and as Defence Minister Hennis-Plasschaert points out, “there is no free ride in international military cooperation.” Getting to that point, the panel echoed a need to change perceptions. Stefan Wallin eloquently summarised the paradigm change needed as follows, “As defence material becomes ever more costly and complex to acquire, we need to start thinking in terms of joint procurement”. However, in light

From left to right: Defence Minister Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert,  
——— Stefan Wallin, Sir Nick Harvey and Giovanni Faleg discussing pooling and sharing ———



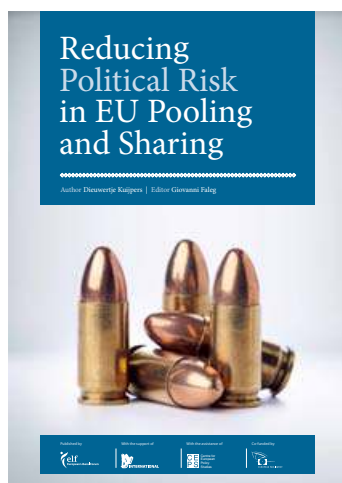
# Pooling and Sharing

— The Frontline of Harnessing Common Potential —

of the escalation of violence in Ukraine, it has become ever more important that Europe uses its defence budgets and capabilities sensibly. The discussion in Rotterdam made clear that much is still to be done in the realm of EU pooling and sharing. Top-down and bottom-up initiatives both have merit, but for decision-makers it can often be hard to identify the best way to support pooling and sharing efforts. With this as a backdrop, ELF has published a set of policy recommendations which aim to give

decision-makers a clear-cut path to more successful EU pooling and sharing.

We hope this meeting helped advance a common liberal position on pooling and sharing. Pooling and sharing remains inextricably linked with the successful development of an ambitious European Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and the completion of an internal defence market.



## DATE AND LOCATION

24 April 2014  
Rotterdam (The Netherlands)

## SUPPORTED BY

[Haya van Someren Stichting/VVD Internationaal](#) · [LYMEC](#)

## WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

[CEPS](#)

## AUTHOR

Dieuwertje Kuijpers

## EDITOR

Dr Giovanni Faleg

## REPORT BY

Wouter Schröer (International Officer,  
[Haya van Someren Stichting/VVD Internationaal](#))

# Stand Up for Liberalism!

Liberal values are under threat in Europe and these threats can only be addressed if Europe's younger generation stands up for their beliefs. Around 30 young aspiring politicians (over a third of them candidates in the May 2014 European elections) came to Brussels in March to discuss the role of the EU in protecting civil rights and individual freedoms.

The first day kicked off with welcome speeches from LYMEC President **Jeroen Diepemaat**, ELF Executive Director **Susanne Hartig** and European Affairs Manager at the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF) **Julie Cantalou**. The participants engaged in a debate on the meaning of the EU and of its significance in the protection of civil liberties. After the debate, they had the opportunity to get to know each other in an informal context at a dinner showcasing Belgian cuisine.

The following day's event was hosted by Microsoft, at its Executive Briefing Center in Brussels' EU Quarter. After the

welcome address by **Sebastian Gerlach**, Senior Manager External Affairs, Microsoft EMEA, **Hans Hofkens** from the social networking platform Yammer presented the opportunities that professional social networks present to organisations, as they facilitate working cooperation and collaboration.

”

*In the 38 years since the predecessor of the ALDE Party was founded, Liberals have been at the forefront of the defence of civil liberties for all.*

The next session was led by LYMEC Campaigns Officer **Sissel Kvist** and focused on secularism and sexual minorities in Europe. Executive Director at ILGA Europe **Evelyne Paradis** presented the victories and the challenges that

——— Sir Graham Watson MEP together with a motivated LYMEC audience ———



# Stand Up for Liberalism!

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the LGBTI (Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex) movement faces in the EU. Executive Director of the European Humanist Federation **Pierre-Arnaud Perroudy** spoke about the lack of representation in European institutions of non-confessional groups, contrasted with the privileges that religious organisations enjoy. In the debate that followed the presentations, speakers and participants had the opportunity to exchange further ideas on these and other issues facing LGBTI and non-confessional citizens.

Among the problems under scrutiny, was the recurring strategy by conservative forces of using false accusations, exemplified in the rejection of the Estrela Report on Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights and the Lunacek Report on LGBTI Rights.

ALDE Party President, **Sir Graham Watson MEP** addressed LYMEC's participants in the final morning session, moderated by LYMEC Vice-President **Vedrana Gujic**. Sir Graham pointed out that in the 38 years since the predecessor of the ALDE Party was founded, Liberals have been at the forefront of the defence of civil liberties for all.

Jeroen Diepemaat and Vedrana Gujic then led the participants in a role-play exercise, in which participants had to argue in favour or against LGBTI rights and secular values. This allowed them to better understand how

conservative political forces think and trained them on how to better counter arguments from this angle.

The topics under discussion turned in the afternoon to privacy and data protection. Microsoft Director for EU Institutional Relations **Cornelia Kutterer** and European Digital Rights (EDRI) / Bits of Freedom's **Janneke Slöetjes** took the stage to discuss the role of trust in politics and business. The session was moderated by LYMEC Press Officer **Ed Sanderson**.

EU legislation and practice were explained to the participants, who had the opportunity to challenge the speakers with questions on issues such as how to guarantee data privacy or how business models influence corporate stances on data protection or net neutrality.

Ed Sanderson led the participants in a second role-play debate on privacy, where participants again had an opportunity to put into practice lessons learned in the previous session.

The seminar ended with the closing remarks by Microsoft Senior Director EU Institutional Affairs **Afke Schaart** and LYMEC Secretary General **Igor Caldeira**. Secretary General of the ALDE Party, **Jacob Moroza-Rasmussen**, graciously hosted the participants at a farewell reception at the Party's headquarters, closing the event.

## DATE AND LOCATION

25–26 March 2014  
Brussels (Belgium)

## SUPPORTED BY

[LYMEC](#) · [ALDE Party](#) · [FNE](#)

## WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

[Microsoft](#)

## REPORT BY

[Igor Caldeira](#) (Secretary General, LYMEC)



# Too Big to Fail?

## — Problem Child Banking Regulation —

What can we do to restore trust in the European banking sector? Will banking regulation remain a problem child? FNF and ELF organised a Roundtable event in Frankfurt, inviting experts to discuss banking regulation in light of the ongoing global financial crisis. **Dr Hermann Otto Solms**, former Vice-President of the German Bundestag and **Dr Jürgen Martens**, Saxon State Minister for Justice and European Affairs, introduced the event on behalf of the partners by pointing to the immense loss of trust that the market economy and banks have suffered as a result of the crisis.

Major parts of the finance industry and many European states remain heavily indebted to this day; banks still have insufficient capital ratios and an excessive proportion of government bonds on their balance sheets. State Minister Dr Jürgen Martens continued that politics must urgently create a new regulatory framework that would reunite the accountability of financial institutions with their actions. Therefore the EU requires the authority to break up and restructure banks and a restructuring fund that would also make it possible to break up larger banks.

**Paulina Przewoska** from Brussels-based Finance Watch believes the European Banking Union to be the right step, but considers the instruments too weak to be able to break up an internationally connected major bank. She also spoke in favour of a separate banking system so that risks can effectively be isolated.

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*Politics must urgently create a new regulatory framework that would reunite the accountability of financial institutions with their actions.*

**Markus Henn** from the NGO, World Economy, Ecology & Development (WEED), doubted the validity of the stress tests carried out by the European Banking Authority and regarded already taken regulatory measures as still inadequate. Not only must the break-up of insolvent banks be regulated, but the business practices of banks must also be looked at critically and the growth of banks must be effectively stopped.

— State Minister Dr Jürgen Martens welcoming the audience —



# Too Big to Fail?

—— Problem Child Banking Regulation ——

**Dr Hans-Dieter Holtzmann**, Deutsche Bank's Head of EU representation, countered that the financial crisis had not been triggered by the major banks, but by the smaller institutions. Thanks to numerous regulatory measures, relating to bank liquidity for example, the situation today is significantly better than in 2009. Misconduct by financial institutions is penalised and is thus being effectively combated. A changed remuneration system, including longer holding periods for bonuses, has improved risk behaviour. In Dr Holtzmann's opinion, ending the universal banking principle would be counter-productive, because it was precisely the universal banks that had been the most robust during the financial crisis.

**Dr Wolf Klinz MEP** (ALDE) highlighted the global dimension of the crisis, but pointed out that it had hit the Eurozone, as a new currency union, especially hard. Politics would have to find solutions that would restore citizens' trust to the banking sector. The important thing was firstly to separate states and banks from one another. There must not be any regulatory arbitration

between countries and there must be a cultural change in the management of financial institutions. Laws and regulations continue to be circumvented by the banks, for example Basel III regulation can be thwarted by new remuneration structures. However, he emphasised that, regulation notwithstanding, the European internal market must continue and the global competitiveness of the EU must not suffer.

From left to right: Dr Wolf Klinz MEP,  
State Minister Dr Jürgen Martens, Dr Hermann Otto Solms  
—— discussing banking union ——



## DATE AND LOCATION

28 April 2014  
Frankfurt (Germany)

## SUPPORTED BY

FNF

## REPORT BY

Dr Peter Altmiks  
(Research Officer, Liberal Institute, FNF)

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# Promoting Rule — of — Law in Europe

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Europe can be proud of its tradition of honouring the rule of law. Nevertheless, it is not something to be taken for granted, and ELF therefore dedicates itself in part to promoting the principles of rule of law in Europe.

This focus has a long-standing tradition within our organisation, springing from our work on European Values as far back as 2012. This section gives an overview of our work in this area during 2014.

# European Values

## Series

The foundation of a society is its fundamental values. ELF has paid heed to this by organising events under the European Values Series of Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtables since 2012.

Our most ambitious work in this series to date came about in 2014, with four events dedicated solely to topics which all broadly fall under this category. As a cornerstone of the EU, we hosted journalists for an expert roundtable on media freedom. Given the detrimental influence of corruption on all values held dear in Europe, we invited experts and citizens to discuss its effects in Sofia. The liberal belief in parliamentary democracy as a way to ensure that all voices in society are heard was also reflected as we invited legal experts and citizens to gather in Rome to compare practices throughout the region.

With its multiple layers of representative government, we also felt it important to examine the European Parliament following the European elections. Challenged by the apparent success of populist, right-wing parties, we commissioned a study together with the German Marshall

Fund of the United States, which we later launched for discussion at a European Values roundtable in the European Parliament. Throughout, we felt it was important to take a moment to reflect on the basic tenets of European society, whether this involves a free press, the fight against corruption or the belief in representative democracy. As the European integration process strides ahead, the topic of European Values is certain to remain central for liberals around the continent.

Far-reaching European integration also means re-considering what European citizenship means and which values we all share. Taking a long-term perspective on these types of questions is the purview of political foundations and we are therefore proud to dedicate a series to this task. Having pursued this topic since 2012, we felt confident our 2014 series could add to a body of knowledge on what European values is all about. At the same time, we were also interested in giving our roundtable participants the tools needed to sustain European principles of honest government and a free media.

From right to left: Gesine Meissner MEP comments on the findings  
of the joint ELF-GMF study authored by Dr Timo Lochocki





# European Values

— Series —

As with every event we organise, our aim is to tailor it to a specific audience. In the case of our media freedom roundtable, it was key for us to target journalists in Ukraine, where recent events have put the freedom of the media under heavy pressure. We wanted to give them the opportunity to develop specific tools and skills which could later help them to perform their duties as free and independent journalists, both in Ukraine and elsewhere in Europe. In the case of our remaining three events, the goal was to reach a wider public audience, build awareness and spread the message of European values to the citizen.

The main message from our roundtable on free media was the need for more intra-European best practice exchange between journalists and editors. This was particularly central for Ukrainian journalists far removed from their other European counterparts. For this reason, we decided to give two participants the chance to attend the Summer School for Journalists and Practitioners organised each year by the Centre for Media Pluralism and Media Freedom. In a small way, we were thus able to live up to one of the major wishes voiced at the Kyiv roundtable on media freedom.

“Among a people generally corrupt, liberty cannot long exist.” Edmund Burke noted this in his letters to the Sheriffs of Bristol in 1777. Since then, corruption has long been recognised as the Achilles’ heel of democracy and the rule of law, poisoning society from within. The President of the Council of Europe went further, identifying corruption as the biggest threat to democracy in Europe today.

The EU has recognised this threat and been given wide-reaching competencies to fight corruption. Still, national governments play a key role, as do the increasingly central actors in civil society. Panellists and participants discussed the corroding effects of corruption on freedom in Europe and what can be done to combat everyday corruption in Bulgaria and elsewhere. The speakers emphasised the importance of Europe-wide tools, such as the Group of States Against Corruption (GRECO)’s evaluations and Transparency International’s Corruption Perceptions Index.

The role of small party representation in parliament was discussed in Rome, where LibMov’s **Enzo Palumbo** highlighted the history of the principle “no taxation without representation”, beginning with the Magna Carta, to the recommendations of the Council of Europe in the field of electoral law and the rulings by the German Constitutional Tribunal and the Italian Constitutional Court. **Professor Florian Grotz** from the Helmut-Schmidt-Universität Hamburg stated his doubts on the effects of the envisaged Italian reform, in light of how other European democracies try to balance majoritarian and proportional elements in their electoral systems.

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*Far-reaching European integration  
also means re-considering  
what European citizenship means  
and which values we all share.*

**Nick Tyrone**, from the UK Electoral Reform Society, focused on the challenges minority parties face in the UK’s first-past-the-post model, and the consequences of the government coalition on the future of the UK’s Liberal Democrats.

During our Brussels roundtable on the role of populist parties in the European Parliament, GMF Research Fellow

Engaging discussions with a  
Bulgarian audience on the merits  
of EU anti-corruption efforts



# European Values

— Series —

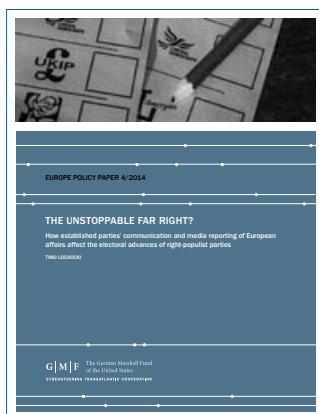
**Dr Timo Lochocki** drew the audience a picture of what characteristics populist success stories shared in Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. He argued that if traditional parties embrace and legitimise populist topics during European election campaigns, Eurosceptic parties increase their share of the vote. Building on these findings, he formulated three strategic options for pro-European parties: either they continue to pursue a clear pro-European agenda or to put aside the issue of European integration, at least temporarily. Alternatively, they can choose to devote energy and efforts to better communicate European integration as embedded in the national interest.

In his final remarks, he underlined how important it is that pro-European parties communicate in a clear-cut and

confident way in the face of populist politicians. He insisted that parties should focus on fundamental messages which people can relate to.

This diverse series of events all displayed a need for further discussion on these and other issues around European Values. ELF will continue to hone its focus, in particular on media freedom and anti-corruption work in 2015, issuing its own anti-corruption manual and using the Kyiv roundtable as inspiration in drawing journalists from throughout Southeast Europe.

Realising how important it is to continue the dialogue about European Values, we also seek to maintain a focus on upholding of fundamental rights in the EU, as well as in the Neighbourhood Countries.



## DATE AND LOCATION

March–September 2014

Kyiv (Ukraine) · Rome (Italy) · Sofia (Bulgaria) · Brussels (Belgium)

## SUPPORTED BY

[FNF](#) · [LibMov](#) · [LIPA](#)

## WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

[German Marshall Fund of the United States \(GMF\)](#)

## AUTHOR

Dr Timo Lochocki (Transatlantic Fellow, GMF)

## REPORT BY

Håvard Sandvik (Programme Officer, ELF)

# Developing a Liberal Strategy Against Online Nationalism

The rise of nationalism in Europe has led to extremist ideologies becoming more popular, both within EU countries and outside them.

The 2014 European elections confirmed successes by both the far-right and the far-left. This new atmosphere, more hostile to liberal values such as diversity and respect for the dignity of all people, has also accelerated the proliferation of aggressive discourse, both in public debate and in private speech between citizens. Hate speech is becoming an ever-more dangerous phenomenon, one observed in all areas of public life. A major arena for hate speech has been the Internet, where hatemongers are able to cloak themselves in its apparent anonymity.

Online hate speech is a new topic for political debate, with states and political parties not as yet demonstrating

a clear agenda to fight it. With this in mind, our project on nationalism was designed to develop a liberal strategy against online hate speech.

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*Hate speech is becoming an ever-more dangerous phenomenon, one observed in all areas of public life.*

The Poznan event was a follow-up to a 2013 conference in Krakow. That event enabled experts from several Polish organisations and liberal European think tanks to discuss the problems associated with growing nationalism in Europe and how it influences the growth of hate speech, especially online.

— Panellists discussing different ways of stopping online hate speech —



## Developing a Liberal Strategy Against Online Nationalism

The workshop aimed to:

- Reflect on the outcomes from the 2013 conference on hate speech in Krakow
- Discuss the development of the problem of online hate speech since then
- Outline the legal status quo in the area and identify possible reforms
- Address hate speech in formal and non-formal education
- Compare situations in different EU member states
- Empower young activists with practical tools on how to combat hate speech

The main target group was young activists from NGOs throughout Europe. They were young people who work for or volunteer with diverse organisations. While not experts in hate speech, their everyday activities expose them to it and the event programme was designed to give them the skills and knowledge to combat it using liberal tools.

Since the participants came from different cities and organisations, the event facilitated an additional networking dimension. Interactive workshops connected the participants and made common projects possible.

The first day was devoted to understanding the phenomenon of hate speech, while the second day developed practical skills. **Dr Dominica Bychawska** from the Helsinki Foundation of Human Rights began with an introduction to hate speech and the legal framework to fighting it. This was followed by a panel on the European dimension of the topic. **Stefan de Koning** from the Dutch Social Liberal Party, Democraten 66 (D66), and **Christian Scharling** from the International Federation of Liberal Youth (IFLRY) presented cases and examples of campaigns in their home countries (the Netherlands and Denmark) and outlined possible solutions at the EU level.

Workshop participants poring  
over laptops and papers as they develop  
the ELF strategy paper



The first day ended with a debate on the legal, educational and social challenges of hate speech. The panel ended with an interesting discussion on the possible interactions between those three angles. Speakers included **Dr Aleksandra Gliszczynska-Garbias** from the Legal Center of the Polish Academy of Science, **Malgorzata Waszczuk**, an educator from the Museum of the History of Polish Jews and **Joanna Grabarczyk**, coordinator of the HejtStop project.

The second and final day consisted of three interactive workshops run by professional trainers. These enabled the participants to confront their own ideas about hate speech and to outline possible future campaigns that could be implemented in their local communities.

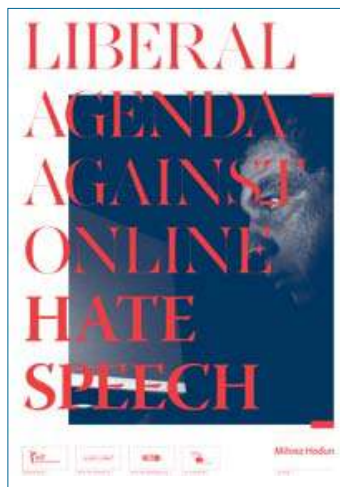
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*The outcomes of the expert discussions served as a basis of a policy paper for ALDE Members of the European Parliament and in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.*

## Developing a Liberal Strategy Against Online Nationalism

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Around 30 young activists from a number of NGOs gained knowledge and practical skills on how to fight hate speech. Participants worked in groups on anti-hate speech campaigns. The outcomes of the expert discussions served as a basis of a policy paper for ALDE Members of the European Parliament and in the Parliamentary Assembly

of the Council of Europe. There is still a lot to do in the area of anti-hate speech policy. Certain steps must be pursued at the European level, by the EU and the Council of Europe. These do not have to be exclusively legal. The inclusion of anti-hate speech elements in the European Commission's lifelong learning projects would also be beneficial.



### DATE AND LOCATION

27–28 September 2014  
Poznan (Poland)

### SUPPORTED BY

[Projekt: Polska](#) · [FNF](#)

### WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

[IFLRY](#)

### AUTHOR

Miłosz Hodun (Board Member, Projekt Polska)



# Freedom Barometer

## Western Balkans & Greece

How free are the people of the Western Balkans and Greece? Approximately 40 participants gathered in Belgrade's Media Center, among them journalists, interested public and liberals, to attend the presentation of the latest findings of the 'Freedom Barometer: Western Balkans & Greece' project.

The project's aim is to heighten public awareness to both the region's deficiencies and its progress in three fields: rule of law, economic freedom and political freedom. Media coverage also proved interest in the tool, despite the fact that it is only a partly free resource.

How a country stacks up in comparison to others is illustrated on the newly created webpage: [freedombarometer.org](http://freedombarometer.org). "These comparisons among countries enable us to pinpoint deficiencies in the field of political freedom, e.g. freedom of the press" explained **Charles du Vinage**, FNF Project Director for the Western Balkans. "Liberals should



be heard as the voice for freedom. The Freedom Barometer is an excellent tool for that", added **Dušan Gamser**, International Secretary of Serbia's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and one of the authors. Serbia is lagging in the three fields considered by the Freedom Barometer.

Why is this? The question touches upon the core theme of how reforms are implemented. When half-heartedly made, attempting to save the old political elites from oblivion, even well-intended reforms are doomed to fail. For example, since the World Bank's [Doing Business](#) report gives Serbia a low ranking in dealing with construction permits (182 out of 185), politicians do not even try to improve on this weak point. Comparison is the basis of the Freedom Barometer, or as **Giulio Ercolessi**, Member of ELF's Board of Directors said in his opening speech, "... we must give substance to the challenges facing the region by putting them in relation with the empirical reality".

### PUBLISHED

10 October 2014  
Belgrade (Serbia)

### SUPPORTED BY

[FNF](#) · [CLS](#)

### AUTHORS

Charles du Vinage · Markus Kaiser · Dušan Dinić,  
Dušan Gamser · Mihailo Gajić · Toni Richard Crisolli

### REPORT BY

Charles du Vinage  
(Project Director, Western Balkans, FNF)

# No Freedom Without Press

Can freedom exist in a society where the media is not free? What can governments do to promote a thriving fourth estate? Politicians, journalists and experts in the field of press freedom came together at the West-Indisch Huis in Amsterdam to discuss freedom of the press in Europe and beyond. In front of an interested crowd of about 50 people, the conference challenged the common belief that the core EU value of press freedom is in practice honoured by all member states.

Media freedom is another long-standing issue tackled by ELF as a part of our commitment to promoting the rule of law in Europe, including events in cities as far afield as Budapest, Kyiv and Amsterdam.

**Marietje Schaake MEP** (ALDE) opened the symposium by calling attention to the fact that press freedom within the EU seems to be increasingly coming under pressure. The cases of Hungary, Greece and Italy were just a few examples. But, things look even grimmer in

the neighbourhood area of the EU, with repression in Azerbaijan and a propaganda war in Russia and Ukraine.

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*Civic journalism can be a perfect channel to circumvent censorship or other measures that curb press freedom.*

The event continued with two plenary speakers who shed light on press freedom both within and beyond the EU. Dutch national Brussels correspondent for NOOS, **Chris Ostendorf** spoke about the ramifications for a Dutch audience of too much positive reporting on EU affairs, leading to countless negative reactions on social media and internal pressure from his own employer to steer away from excessive EU-positivism. The result: self-censorship in the heart of the EU.

——— Marietje Schaake MEP discussing the merits of media freedom with conference participants ———



# No Freedom Without Press

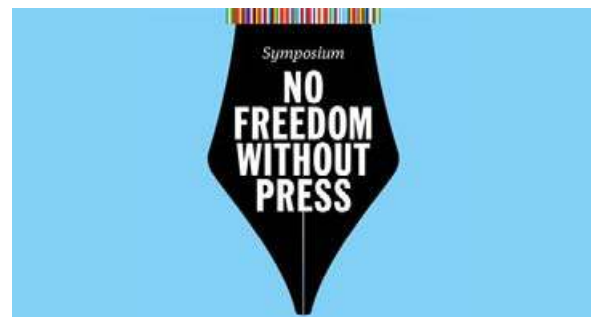
Russia and Ukraine correspondent **Olaf Koens** turned the spotlight to the outskirts of the Union: the propaganda war being fought between Russia and Ukraine to win the hearts and minds of the local population and the international community. His assertion was that both sides essentially represent two sides of the same coin. Ukrainian propaganda is as bad as Russian propaganda, resulting in a situation in which any information – from whatever source – should be mistrusted.

The afternoon was spent on three interactive panel-debates. First were Polish journalist **Anna Zamejc** and Dutch media expert **Niels ten Oever** on the potential for civic or citizen journalism to function as a catalyst for freedom of the press. An important assertion was that civic journalism can be a perfect channel to circumvent censorship or other measures that curb press freedom. Since the rise of Internet and civic journalism, repressive regimes are in an increasingly difficult situation, unable to entirely control the flow of information. On the other

hand, the advance of civic journalism requires a proactive attitude from its consumers: quality often goes unchecked compared with traditional journalism, and is therefore prone to misuse by sensation-seekers.

The second panel had a more local focus. Discussing the faults in freedom of the press in Southern or Eastern

Logo crafted especially  
for the conference



Europe, or at the borders of the EU, could take up infinite amounts of time, but it should not be forgotten that a country like the Netherlands also has its challenges. This was eloquently presented by Chris Ostendorf during the opening session. In a heated debate with each other and with the audience, Amsterdam-based journalist for the daily *Het Parool* **Elisa Hermanides** and **Jan Paternotte**, Leader of Democraten 66 (D66) in Amsterdam, discussed the strengths and weaknesses of local media in the Netherlands.

A rather gloomy picture of the local press emerged from the debate, with a sector suffering budget cuts, reduced subsidies and hence a lack of resources enabling it to play its role as watchdog of local democracy and political decision-making. As an illustration, Elisa Hermanides explained that just three journalists covering politics in Amsterdam are up against a professional army of 280 municipality spokespeople, resulting in an uneven playing field.

The final panel was a meeting of two extremes: Russia and Ukraine correspondent Olaf Koens sitting alongside

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*While the EU has enforcement mechanisms for countries that override the allowed margin of budget deficit and ways to manage financial reform, when it comes to defending core values like freedom of the press, the Union often stands helpless on the sidelines.*



# No Freedom Without Press

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**Roman Vybranosvkyy**, an information analyst working for the Ukrainian government. Each represented either end of the spectrum. Whereas Olaf Koens seeks unfiltered, raw information about events in the region, particularly in the aftermath of the Malaysia Airlines flight MH17 crash, Roman Vybranosvkyy is disseminating the post-revolutionary Ukrainian government's version of events to foreign correspondents as a counterweight to the Russian version of events.

While Roman Vybranosvkyy underlined that the Ukrainian government needs to 'professionalise' the channels of public information, he also admitted that the country does not have a well-established history of journalistic ethics. Olaf Koens was clear in his statements: there is no good

and bad in war and conflict, just bad. The international community may be looking for friends in Ukraine, but it should be aware that – like Russia – the Ukrainian authorities have their own agenda and will do anything to push it, including curbing the freedom of press.

In his closing remarks, **Leon Willems**, Director of Free Press Unlimited, expressed concern about the deteriorating state of press freedom in Europe and the ability and willingness to respond to this. While the EU has enforcement mechanisms for countries that override the allowed margin of budget deficit and ways to manage financial reform, when it comes to defending core values like freedom of the press, the Union often stands helpless on the sidelines. A sobering conclusion to an interesting discussion on the subject.

## DATE AND LOCATION

29 November 2014  
Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

## SUPPORTED BY

[Stichting IDI](#) · [FNF](#) · [Forum for Greece](#) · [ISL](#)  
[LIPA](#) · [Projekt: Polska](#) · [Republikon Foundation](#)

## REPORT BY

Michiel Hendrix (International Officer, Stichting IDI)

20  
14

# Liberal Solutions —— for the —— European Economy

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Europe focused much of its energy in 2014 on re-booting continent-wide economic growth. Liberals offer a unique vantage point on what it takes to bring energy and life back to the economies of Europe, and ELF devotes considerable attention to how liberal solutions can help get the continent back to growth.

The following pages provide a cross-section of ELF's activities in this field.

# Innovation Through Digitalisation

— Series —

How can digitalisation drive innovation? This question formed the basis for ELF's 2014 'Innovation Through Digitalisation' roundtable series. Intrinsically a liberal topic, digitalisation offers immense possibilities for Europeans in all walks of life. A European Digital Single Market has the potential to unlock an additional 250 billion euros in economic growth, and the opportunities created by digitalisation go far beyond the economic realm. Digitalisation can bring European politics closer to the citizen, using technology to connect with citizens who are otherwise not in a position to engage with the political future of the EU.

Politically, digitalisation has helped shape the direction of the Barroso II Commission, in which Liberal Commissioner Neelie Kroes took charge of the Digital Agenda portfolio. Following the appointment of the new Juncker Commission in November 2014, a Liberal was again put in charge of digitalisation, this time the former Liberal Prime Minister of Estonia, Andrus Ansip. In a sluggish European economy,

digital reform represents a true beacon of hope for the EU. The issue will certainly remain a top priority for the Liberal Commissioners and Members of European Parliament in this legislative term and beyond.

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*In a sluggish European economy, digital reform represents a true beacon of hope for the EU.*

Having identified the need to prioritise digitalisation as a topic, ELF conceived a series of events aiming to achieve two objectives. On the one hand, we wanted to bring together ordinary citizens with entrepreneurs, digitalisation experts and politicians, all interested in the role innovation in digitalisation can play to get European growth back on track. By formulating a set of policy recommendations for Liberal decision-makers facing

From left to right: Dr Jürgen Martens, Alicia Richart, Tom Nuttall, Kaja Kallas MEP and Vedrana Guijć arguing for  
— greater investment in digital infrastructure —



# Innovation Through Digitalisation

— Series —

difficult choices on how to best spur innovation through digitalisation, we were determined to bring together a diverse chorus of liberal voices, all with strong opinions on the future course of digitalisation and setting up a Digital Single Market. As liberals, we are inherently sceptical to the role played by government, especially at the European level. Therefore, a further objective was to delineate precisely which responsibilities in enhancing digitalisation should rest at the European level.

From left to right: Nico-Alexander Jahn, Susanne Hartig, — Alberto Zilio, Gergana Passy, Ajit Jaokar, — Roel Martens, Dorka Horváth and Daniel Kaddik



- The centrepiece of creating a European Digital Single Market is to **simplify and harmonise digital regulations and standards in Europe**. Reiterated by our entrepreneur panellists in particular was the diversity of regulations hindering an effectively European digital market from taking shape.
- The EU's second-most important role after the simplification and harmonisation of digital market rules is to ensure holistic and intensive **investment in European digital infrastructure**. The crux of such investment must be to ensure full connectivity and access for all Europeans.
- Another topic especially close to the representatives of start-ups on our panels and in our audience was **the need for more European venture capital for digital start-ups**. Without readily available venture capital, start-ups, especially in sectors as technologically intensive as the digital one, will not get off the ground. The EU already plays a role in facilitating venture capital, but more must be done to allow innovation through digitalisation to flourish.

The series was designed to target three groups. Firstly, we wanted to reach an audience of interested citizens in the cities in which we hosted our roundtables. Our geographical emphasis was on Southern and Central Europe, where we felt it was especially important to emphasise the potential benefits of the EU in an atmosphere of sometimes rabid EU-scepticism.

Secondly, we filmed most events and shared them on YouTube, enabling citizens from all over the globe to access them. Thirdly and finally, our policy recommendations were written for Liberal decision-makers dealing with digitalisation at European as well as regional, national and local levels.

Our series spanned a wide array of topics, from digital entrepreneurship to e-literacy and the Digital Single Market. In spite of this diversity, certain broad recommendations emerged during the course of the events:

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*The centrepiece of creating a European Digital Single Market is to simplify and harmonise digital regulations and standards in Europe.*

# Innovation Through Digitalisation

— Series —

- The final realisation made by our diverse group of panellists is **the need to manage expectations on the effects of digital innovation in Europe**. By connecting Europe we must be cautious to ensure that no group is left out of the digital revolution and that as some sectors diminish as the result of digitalisation, others take their

place. ALDE's **Kaja Kallas MEP** made the point that, while Schumpeterian creative destruction creates new sources of employment and innovation, it also comes with certain challenges to a changing labour market which must be taken into account when implementing a Digital Single Market in Europe.



## DATE AND LOCATION

April–November 2014

Barcelona (Spain) · Athens (Greece) · Sofia (Bulgaria) · Lisbon (Portugal)

## SUPPORTED BY

[Academy of Liberalism](#) · [CatDem Foundation](#) · [FNF](#) · [Forum for Greece](#) · [LIPA](#)

## WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

[AT&T](#)

## AUTHOR

Ajit Jaokar

## REPORT BY

Håvard Sandvik (Programme Officer, ELF)

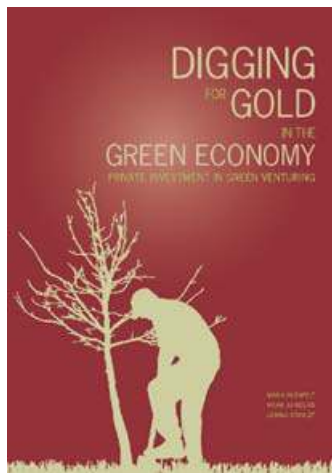
# Digging for Gold in the Green Economy

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The transition to a low-carbon society at reasonable cost is impossible without technological change. The required investments are massive, clearly of orders of magnitude beyond that which heavily indebted nations could mobilise. Private capital investments are hence essential.

The aim of the ELF project 'Digging for Gold in the Green Economy' is to document the extent to which European private capital markets provide climate funding, examine the economic rationales and discuss policy instruments, methods and strategies to redirect private investments, enabling an increase in corporate venturing at scale. In 2012, ELF issued a publication called [\*Mobilising Private Funds for the Transition to a Sustainable Economy\*](#) which concluded that policy-makers must consider classical market failures, the value of the option to delay behavioural market failures and the role of local clusters and social networks when designing optimal policy instruments. The second project output, the follow-up report *Digging for Gold in the Green Economy: Private Investments in Green Venturing*, was discussed at a seminar in Utrecht.

This publication is based on a number of interviews conducted with entrepreneurs and investors in the



cleantech sector in Sweden and the Netherlands. The interviews were semi-structured, addressing questions concerning realistic options, behavioural characteristics and the impact of social networks. The interviews were analysed by making cross-country comparisons and within- and across-group analysis.

Various findings from the interviews were discussed during the seminar. It is clear that both investors and entrepreneurs perceive cleantech to

be a sector with both a high degree of innovativeness and a high degree of risk. But, whereas investors tend to treat cleantech as any other business, some entrepreneurs view the sector as something that needs special policy treatment.

The interviews also show that both investors and entrepreneurs describe the investment process as being guided by behavioural heuristics and supported by social ties. The seminar participants raised important methodological questions and gave their input into how to continue the analysis. With the constant need for liberal innovation in the field of green growth, the relevance of this and other ELF publications on the issue are likely to remain high.

## PUBLISHED

19 November 2014  
The Hague (The Netherlands)

## SUPPORTED BY

FORES · [Mr. Hans van Mierlo Stichting](#)

## AUTHORS

Dr Maria Adenfelt · Dr Mark Sanders · Dr Ulrika Stavlöt



# The Future of the European Welfare State

If the global financial and economic crisis brought with it a paradigm shift in sovereign debt and public expenditures, a similar change of perspective concerning the welfare state is still awaiting the thinking of Europeans. Europe's welfare system is often regarded as the jewel in its crown and any change to it is fiercely opposed by various interest groups. Yet, the ever-growing pressure to trim vast public spending on social programmes and changing demographics in most European countries will inevitably lead to the need for comprehensive welfare reforms. What kind of reforms can we expect? This was the crucial question discussed during the ELF fringe meeting at the European Forum for New Ideas in Sopot.

**Dr Leszek Balcerowicz**, Professor of the Warsaw School of Economics, delivered the keynote speech entitled, 'Economics and Ethics of a Welfare State'. In it, he defined the welfare state as "transfers and regulations related to the existence of certain risks to the individuals" and further divided the welfare state into five main types, which may

be combined: family (kin)-based, civil society-based, the welfare state, company-based, individual (market)-based. Moreover, according to Professor Balcerowicz, "Each society has a certain welfare system, being a combination of the above types. The lack of a welfare state does not mean a lack of a welfare system."

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*Ever-growing pressure to trim vast public spending on social programmes and changing demographics in most European countries will inevitably lead to the need for comprehensive welfare reforms.*

In reality, strong government and the rise of a wide-ranging welfare state has crowded out other models of societal solidarity.

From left to right: Professor Leszek Balcerowicz, Juan Menéndez-Valdés, Tanja Porčnik, Andreas Bergström  
——— and Kalev Kallemets MP discussing welfare state reform ———



# The Future of the European Welfare State

A key observation, which also served as a basis for further discussion, was that there is no one uniform welfare state and that each country has its own variation. Quoting from the 2004 *World Bank Development Report*, Professor Balcerowicz emphasised the huge gap between theory and practice in the welfare states of developing countries, e.g. "... while governments devote about one-third of their budgets to health and education, they spend very little of it on poor people (...) Public spending on health and education is typically enjoyed by the non-poor" (*World Bank Development Report*, 2004, p.3). Finally, he posited that the crisis the welfare state is now facing represents an opportunity to implement reforms, making this a perfect time to act and not just to utter mere declarations.

ELF Board Member **Andreas Bergström**, highlighted some successful reforms that were able to modernise the vast welfare model in Sweden. These included market principles-based ideas in the form of a voucher system in education. Estonia's **Kalev Kallemets MP** drew attention to the security dimension of the welfare reforms: the increasing pressure on the public budget and ever-rising mandatory expenditures limit the ability of governments to react to new geopolitical developments in Central and Eastern Europe. Unreformed welfare states could soon become one of the major security risks, together with energy dependency, in the EU. **Tanja Porčnik**, Director of Svetilnik, a Slovenian liberal think tank, illustrated the political dimension of the reforms in Slovenia. While change in and a redesign of many welfare policies is long overdue (such as a pay-as-you-go pension system), interest groups and small political parties relying on the support of retired people are able to effectively block any changes.

As a recent study cautions, "the biggest threat to social justice in Europe is not radical institutional change, but the 'frozen' welfare state landscapes where resistance to change is institutionalised, and major interest groups are able to define how welfare systems operate" (Patrick Diamond, Guy Lodge, January 2013, *Welfare States After the Crisis: Changing Public Attitudes*).

During the workshops held directly after the panel with Professor Balcerowicz and four panellists, participants from various backgrounds (politicians, civic rights activists, think-tankers) created the basic guidelines which served as a basis for the creation of an infographic on the welfare state.

## INFOGRAPHIC



[Click to view PDF](#)

## VIDEOS



[Watch the videos here](#)

## DATE AND LOCATION

2 October 2014  
Sopot (Poland)

## SUPPORTED BY

[FNF](#) · [FORES](#) · [Fundacja Industrial](#)

## AUTHOR

Václav Bacovský (Project Manager,  
Central Europe and Baltic States, FNF)



# Inclusive Growth in Europe

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Few, if any, political issues pose a greater liberal dilemma than that of addressing inequality. Liberal values seek to protect individual rights over the collective or state, but also highlight the importance of self-fulfilment and occupational mobility. Equality of opportunity – regardless of birth – is seen as key for liberals, rather than equality of current conditions. But, how large a gap can a person be expected to overcome in a single lifetime? When is social mobility true, and when is it just an elusive utopia?

These are some of the questions put to liberal thinkers in this publication from ELF, the Bertil Ohlin Institute

and Magma. Contributors are Andreas Bergström, Anna Felländer, Olav Fumarola Unsgaard, Karl Palmås, Raul Ramos, Vicente Royuela, Evelina Stadin, Roger Wessman and Karin Zelano. Editors are Karl Wennberg and Gabriel Ehrling, both from the Bertil Ohlin Institute.



*Equality of opportunity  
– regardless of birth –  
is seen as key for liberals,  
rather than equality of current  
conditions.*



**SUPPORTED BY**

[Bertil Ohlininstitutet](#) · [Magma](#)

**EDITORS**

Dr Karl Wennberg · Gabriel Ehrling

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14

# Capacity Building



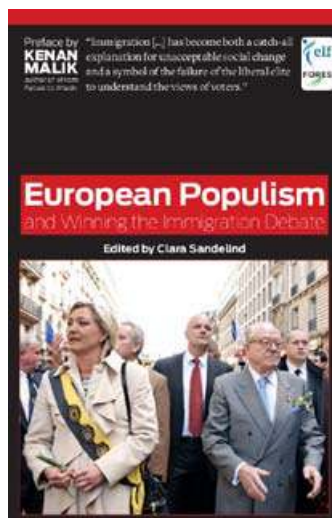
Politics is not only about policy, it is also about people. Teaching, training and inspiring citizens to take part in political life is as important as the policy work we do and for that reason, ELF's fourth focus area is dedicated to capacity building. Each year, ELF organises events and issues publications with precisely this practical angle front and centre.

# European Populism and Winning the Immigration Debate

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Why do some people oppose immigration, and have more people become negative over time? Has the economic recession boosted support for populist, anti-immigration parties? How do anti-immigration parties gain voters and how does the new media landscape, increasingly dominated by social media, change support for populism? European Populism and Winning the Immigration Debate provides analyses by some of Europe's most prominent researchers on the

subject. The report explains the nature of support for anti-immigration populists in the current European context. In addition to the comprehensive theoretical background, four case studies show how concerns about immigration have been met by politicians and civil society in Sweden, Italy, the Netherlands and Denmark. These enable a better understanding of how the debate around immigration can be used to challenge populist, anti-immigration messages.



## DATE AND LOCATION

5 November 2014  
Brussels (Belgium)

## SUPPORTED BY

[FORES](#)

## EDITOR

Clara Sandelind

# Liberals Making the Difference Locally

## — Roma Integration —

An estimated 12 million people in Europe are Roma, half of them living within the EU. But, with their living conditions far below European standards, the Roma are the least integrated and perhaps the most reviled minority in Europe. The largest number of victims of discrimination and the most serious problems are to be found in the countries of Central and Southeast Europe. Here, the Roma often live in segregated areas outside cities and towns and frequently do not even have access to basic services, such as piped water.

Liberals ask themselves: Do things really have to be like this? In response, ELF, together with FNF's Regional Office for Central, Eastern and Southeast Europe, Southern Caucasus and Central Asia launched a multi-annual project initiated in 2012 to support Roma integration in Central and Southeast Europe. Based on liberal principles, core values such as freedom, human rights and minority rights are at stake. Roma segregation and discrimination cannot be accepted by any European, and certainly not by liberals.

An important outcome of the project was the policy paper, *Integration of the Roma in Central and Southeast Europe: Liberal Policy Recommendations*, which contained within it a detailed list of liberal policy recommendations.

”

*With their living conditions far below European standards, the Roma are the least integrated and perhaps the most reviled minority in Europe.*

The paper refers directly to the EU Framework for National Strategies for Roma Integration by 2020, adopted in 2011, and identifies a total of 18 points, the implementation of which should lead to adequate, feasible and sustainable Roma inclusion policies in Europe. Based on liberal values and principles, they address fundamental problems and include recommendations such as starting integration in

— Moderator Wulf Pabst interviewing participants for the workshop video —



# Liberals Making the Difference Locally

— Roma Integration —

kindergarten and school as early as possible, combating segregation (schools must not be allowed to have separate Roma classes), encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit of the Roma, legalising non-official dwellings and improving basic housing infrastructure.

ELF and FNF would like to see this policy paper implemented on the ground. Local politicians, NGO activists and representatives of Roma and non-Roma communities from Central and Southeast Europe were invited to discuss the current problems and challenges of Roma integration and how the recommendations should be implemented at local level.

The workshop took place in Sofia, where participants from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Ukraine, Romania,

aspects that are central to liberals and must be addressed. However, integration efforts can only be successful if they are based on comprehensive policies that reflect the values of freedom and responsibility. This includes the important contribution and active efforts by the Roma minority itself in order to be successfully integrated, also stressed in the policy paper.

During the workshop many examples and experiences of proactive own initiatives were presented:

**Daniela Mihaylova** (Bulgaria) is a lawyer and works in the field of minority rights and equal opportunities. As a member of the Equal Opportunities Initiative Association she supports the Roma in the Fakulteta district of Sofia to retrospectively legalise illegally constructed buildings and helps young parents to negotiate registering their children for day care.

**David Tiser** (Czech Republic) is the first LGBT activist Roma in the Czech Republic. In 2012 he founded the Association

From left to right: Daniel Kaddik,  
—— Susanne Hartig, Roel Martens, ——  
Dr Rainer Adam and Wulf Pabst



Serbia and Bulgaria presented their own initiatives and projects to advance the integration of the Roma minority. They then discussed the 18 liberal recommendations and their implementation in the respective countries in small groups. Furthermore, the event dealt with the problem areas and the negative experience that complicate the integration work at the local level.

In fact, Roma integration relates to several key issues, including human, civil and minority rights, rule of law, racism and discrimination, property rights, equality, right to education and the fundamental right to a decent life, all

## VIDEO



*Watch the workshop video*

# Liberals Making the Difference Locally

— Roma Integration —

ARA ART, which offers online advice to gay people from the Roma community and their families. Participants left Sofia with a considerable number of ideas on how to put liberal proposals for Roma integration into practice at

a local level. However, the successful integration of the Roma in Europe is a long-term goal. The liberal policy recommendations which emerged provide an essential toolkit for its implementation.



## DATE AND LOCATION

26–28 September 2014  
Sofia (Bulgaria)

## SUPPORTED BY

[FNF](#) · [CLS](#)

## WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

[ALDE Group in the Committee of the Regions](#)

## REPORT BY

Neli Kaloyanova

(Coordinator Regional Dialogue Programmes & Project Management,  
Regional Office Central, East and Southeast Europe,  
South Caucasus and Central Asia, FNF)



# List of All Projects

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*A Liberal Perspective on European Integration*  
*Academy of Liberal Future Seminar*  
*Balance Between European and National Scope for Policymaking*  
*Civic Nationalism and the Future of the European Identity*  
*Dahrendorf Taskforce 2014-2015: The Future of the European Union*  
*Democratic Control: The Power of the Media*  
*Faces of Euroscepticism*  
*Free Media: An Indispensable Part of Liberal Democracy*  
*A Declaration on Media Freedom in Turkey After the Gezi Park Events*  
*Freedom Barometer: Western Balkans and Greece*  
*Intensive and Inclusive Economic Growth in Europe*  
*Liberal Answers to Modern Migration and Integration Issues in Western Europe*  
*Liberal Solutions for Europe: New Concepts for Migration and Integration*  
*Liberal Strategy Against Nationalism Online*  
*Liberals Making the Difference Locally: A Workshop on Roma Integration in Central and Southeast Europe*  
*Making Europe Work for Young People*  
*Migration: Economic and Social Impact*  
*Pooling and Sharing: The Frontline of Harnessing Common Potential*  
*Private Investments in Green Venturing*  
*Promoting Liberalism in the Mediterranean: Challenging the Status Quo*  
*Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtables*  
*Regional Leadership Academy for Liberal Women of SEE*  
*Second Arab-European Liberal Dialogue Forum: The Role of Political Parties in Promoting Liberalism*  
*Stand Up for Liberalism! The Situation of Civil and Political Rights in the European Union*  
*Teaching Materials on Liberalism*  
*The Anomalous Liberalism of Friedrich August von Hayek*  
*The Future of the European Union*  
*The Interaction of Economic Development and the Rule of Law*  
*Unity in Freedom*  
*What Future for the European Welfare State: Freedom and Solidarity After the Crisis?*

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# About us

—— European Liberal Forum ——

*ELF is the foundation of the European Liberal Democrats (ALDE Party). We are made up of three pillars:*



Member  
——  
Organisations



The Board  
—— of ——  
Directors



The  
——  
Secretariat

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# Member --- Organisations

*I*

Membership is open to think tanks, political foundations and institutes  
that promote Liberal ideals and values.

# NEOS Lab – Das liberale Forum

—— NEOS Lab – The Liberal Forum ——



[lab.neos.eu](http://lab.neos.eu)



[facebook.com/NeosDasNeueOesterreich](https://facebook.com/NeosDasNeueOesterreich)



[twitter.com/neoslab\\_eu](https://twitter.com/neoslab_eu)

NEOS Lab is the political academy of the liberal grass-roots movement, NEOS and an Open Laboratory for New Politics. NEOS Lab's main objective is to contribute to enhancing political education in Austria by providing a platform for knowledge exchange and liberal political thinking on the key challenges to, and pathways for, democracies and welfare states in the 21st century. Particular emphasis is placed on the core topics of education, a more entrepreneurial Austria, sustainable welfare systems and democratic innovation.

NEOS Lab views itself as a participatory interface between politics and society, insofar as it mediates between experts with scientific and practical knowledge on diverse policy issues and interested citizens.

Currently, more than 130 thematic groups, with more than 1,000 participants, facilitate access to the political party – to politics and policies – for interested citizens in order to integrate them into policy-making and the development of long-term strategies in different thematic areas and policy fields. A network of experts accompanies and supports the knowledge work of the diverse thematic groups and takes part in the think tank work of NEOS Lab.

Additionally, NEOS Lab provides several services, such as political education and training, workshops and conferences and a rich portfolio of inter- and trans-disciplinary research at the interface between science, politics, economy and society.

NEOS Lab is the successor of the Liberal Future Forum, which was also a member of ELF.

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**neos** LAB

# Centre Jean Gol

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Founded 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, seminar, 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 interest; plus a section entitled *La Pensée Libérale*, which gives access to analyses of major liberal works, bibliographical references, etc.

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# Liberaal Kennis Centrum

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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 the varying challenges of the near future. In this way, we seek 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.

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**LIBERAAL  
KENNIS  
CENTRUM**



# Liberal Institute for Political Analyses (LIPA)



lipa.bg

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 is to:

- Demonstrate how the change in our mentality results in a change of our lives
- Support the development of conditions for a civilised dialogue in society
- Contribute to tolerance and continuity in politics
- Show the primacy of classical liberalism over leftism, populism and extremism
- Encourage political parties in Bulgaria to embrace the values of classical liberalism

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

We organise 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

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# Međunarodni edukacijski centar

— International Educational Centre (IEC) —



[akademija.hns.hr](http://akademija.hns.hr)



[goo.gl/aDaJvJ](https://goo.gl/aDaJvJ)



[twitter.com/PoliticalAcadem](https://twitter.com/PoliticalAcadem)

International Educational Centre (IEC) is a civil society organization which works to advance the political education of Croatian citizens and develop a tolerant and democratic political culture in Croatian society. The IEC adheres to universal values such as personal liberty, equality, economic freedom and individualism, which we consider to be the cornerstones of western civilization. Due to our liberal background, much of the IEC's activity is more specifically aimed at strengthening liberalism in Croatian society and politics.

The IEC was founded by members of the Croatian People's Party – Liberal Democrats (HNS) to bring its Political Academy closer to the public and add a new international dimension to its educational work. Since then, the IEC has continued to open new avenues for international cooperation for the Academy by joining networks of likeminded organizations and foundations, while recently branching out to actively participate in projects by providing invaluable technical support.

As their respective names would suggest; the primary concern of the IEC and the Political Academy is education, which is the most valuable capital a person can possess. We are of the firm belief that for liberal democracies to function, their citizens must be politically engaged as well as adequately educated. Both formal and informal education should equip citizens with the ability to critically think of political and social ideas, thus producing autonomous individuals capable of deciding for themselves what their definition of 'a good life' is and how to successfully and responsibly achieve it within an open society. Such individuals are ever more likely to safeguard liberty, rather than succumb to the call of populism which, once again, seems to be taking roots in Europe.

The IEC and the Academy, through their activities, continue to strengthen liberalism in Croatia by providing training opportunities to members of HNS, while sharing knowledge and expertise with other Liberal parties in the region. In addition, by holding roundtables and conferences which discuss major issues on the political agenda, the IEC promotes liberal views in the public and provides Croatian citizens with a chance to further educate and inform themselves on important issues in the society. In the near future, the IEC hopes to establish itself as a liberal think-tank in the region, bringing together theorists and practitioners to discuss and propose solutions to critically important public policy issues.

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INTERNATIONAL  
EDUCATIONAL  
CENTER

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# Centrum Liberálních Studií

— Centre for Liberal Studies (CLS) —



[libcentrum.cz](http://libcentrum.cz)

The Centre for Liberal Studies (CLS) was established in 1994 as a foundation and then re-established in 1999 as a civil society organisation. It is a non-governmental, non-partisan, non-profit think tank. The main objectives 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 the Czech political landscape, the CLS, along with the Liberal Institute long remained the only promoters of liberal ideas in Czech society. The CLS is open to cooperation with all interested institutions, organisations and individuals.

The CLS mainly works in the three following areas:

- **Policy advocacy** in areas such as tax system reform, social insurance, rent deregulation, healthcare system reforms etc.
- **Education:** Panel discussions, roundtables, conferences, awarding grants to undergraduates and graduates, sponsoring degree papers and translations
- **Cooperation with established experts** (university teachers, scholars, government officers etc.) and with other think tanks such as Liberal Institute and FNF

In 2011, the CLS was actively involved in designing the website [www.4liberty.eu](http://www.4liberty.eu), which serves as a platform for liberal-oriented think tanks in Central and Eastern Europe to communicate with media and decision-makers.

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# Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy (SILBA)

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[silba.dk](http://silba.dk)[facebook.com/silba.danmark](https://facebook.com/silba.danmark)[twitter.com/silba\\_denmark](https://twitter.com/silba_denmark)

Support Initiative for Liberty and Democracy (SILBA) is a Danish NGO established in 1994. SILBA currently works on projects together with partners in Russia, Kaliningrad Oblast, 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 in the countries mentioned above. Our members are young people from different Danish political youth organisations and students.

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# Liberalismi Akadeemia

— Academy of Liberalism —



[liberalism.ee](http://liberalism.ee)



[facebook.com/LiberalismiAkadeemia](https://facebook.com/LiberalismiAkadeemia)

The Academy of Liberalism is an independent Liberal think tank founded by members of 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 socialist and anti-liberal ideas in society. The Academy of liberalism is focused on civic education and research projects to promote Liberalism in Estonia and the EU neighbourhood countries.

The Academy of Liberalism is active in many fields of think-tank work. Among the activities we pursue are:

- **Publishing:** translations of acknowledged works into Estonian (Editors: Claudia Aebersold Szalay, Gerd Habermann & Gerhard Schwarz, *Vabaduse raamat. 111 teost liberaalsest vaimuloost*) and publishing books in Estonian (Andrus Ansip, *Pühendumus*) and publications on topical issues
- **Events**
- **A sophisticated training programme:** The Youth Academy
- **Academy of Liberal Future:** Seminars for young Liberal political leaders aged 20 to 30
- **The Day of Liberalism**
- **Liberal of the Year Award**
- **Think tank in Estonia for Russians**
- **Round tables, conferences, training series on liberalism:** Topics range from liberal economics, government spending and economic growth, state intervention in the economic crisis, etc.
- **Cooperation:** various joint projects with other think tanks (ELF, Institute for Market Economics – IME, FNF, 4liberty.eu etc.)

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# Edistysmielisen tutkimuksen yhdistys r.y. e2

— Think Tank e2 —



[e2.fi](http://e2.fi)



[goo.gl/X1QrUc](https://goo.gl/X1QrUc)

The Society for Progressive Research (Editysmielisen 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 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 focuses on two primary subjects:

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

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# Svenska Bildningsförbundet r.f. (SBF)



[bildningsforbundet.fi](http://bildningsforbundet.fi)



[facebook.com/bildningsforbundet](https://facebook.com/bildningsforbundet)



[twitter.com/bildningsf](https://twitter.com/bildningsf)

The Swedish People's Party, together with its women's and youth league, formed Svenska Bildningsförbundet (SBF) in 1973. The initial goal of SBF was to organise local workshops and provide training for candidates and campaign staff in fields relating to the mission of the party. Today, the role of SBF has grown and matured to an organisation that provides broad political and ideological support in a wider sense. SBF wants to drive the conversation in society by creating spaces where political and societal matters are being discussed from a liberal point of view.

As a strong advocate of liberal solutions to today's societal challenges, SBF hosts seminars, both short weekday seminars and full-day, more comprehensive seminars on a wide range of topics. SBF also publishes books and pamphlets on important political issues and commissions surveys to gain a better understanding of how society views different topics.

SBF runs an internship programme, Liberal Praktik, which gives young people the opportunity to grow at high-level organizations in Cape Town, London, Brussels, Berlin and Washington D.C.

SBF also runs a leadership development programme, Ledarskapsakademin (the Leadership Academy), aimed at developing the skills of young adults as they mature into leadership roles in society. The programme focuses on international relations, competitiveness, global trade, sustainable development and a wide range of other topics.

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# Tankesmedjan Magma

—— Think Tank Magma ——



[magma.fi](http://magma.fi)



[goo.gl/vhtYxR](https://goo.gl/vhtYxR)



[twitter.com/TankesmedMagma](https://twitter.com/TankesmedMagma)

Magma is a Finnish think tank 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 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.

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# Alternative Libérale

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[goo.gl/CxAcZn](http://goo.gl/CxAcZn)



[twitter.com/altliberale](https://twitter.com/altliberale)

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 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 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 a 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 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 the country 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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# Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung für die Freiheit

—— Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF) ——



[freiheit.org](http://freiheit.org)  
[fnf-europe.org](http://fnf-europe.org)



[facebook.com/FriedrichNaumannStiftungFreiheit](https://facebook.com/FriedrichNaumannStiftungFreiheit)  
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[twitter.com/fnfreiheit](https://twitter.com/fnfreiheit)  
[twitter.com/fnf-europe](https://twitter.com/fnf-europe)

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, the foundation has nine regional offices in Germany and is active in over 60 countries worldwide. Its aim is to promote core values such as the protection of human rights, civil society, market economy, free trade and the rule of law.

Over the last 57 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 assignments.

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 with local FNF offices and joint events in various EU member states as well.

The main objectives of our work are to:

- Disseminate liberal ideas and concepts in all political areas
- Strengthen civil society, particularly liberal organisations and parties
- Bring liberal approaches and solutions from abroad into the German political discussion

## European and Transatlantic Dialogue

On both sides of the Atlantic, coordinated from our offices in Brussels, Athens, Prague and Washington DC, we actively encourage political debate and develop innovative liberal approaches and solutions. A lively dialogue is based on tolerance and mutual understanding. Our activities aim at promoting these basic values through intercultural exchange.

Our projects act as liberal platforms for the Foundation's worldwide partners to debate issues of the European as well as the transatlantic agenda.

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Friedrich Naumann  
STIFTUNG **FÜR DIE FREIHEIT**

# Forum for Greece

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[twitter.com/forumgreece](https://twitter.com/forumgreece)

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.

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.

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# Republikon Foundation for Science, Education and Research (Republikon Foundation)



[republikon.hu](http://republikon.hu)



[goo.gl/JiWwdl](https://goo.gl/JiWwdl)



[twitter.com/Republikon](https://twitter.com/Republikon)

Republikon Foundation for Science, Education and Research (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 Foundation believes that Hungarian politics can take a turn for the better only if liberal ideas and opinions are formulated in policy and public discourse.

Republikon Foundation has played an important role as a think tank in Hungary: independent from any political party, but committed to liberal values, it has been endeavouring to shape policy thinking and public debate with its innovative approach to politics and policy. It is Republikon Foundation's mission to articulate new ideas and to find ways of making the values of liberal democracy, human rights and tolerance more popular.

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# Szabadságért Alapítvány

— For Freedom, for Liberal Thinking Foundation —

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 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 challenges faced by the Roma community 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 to 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:

- Educational programmes, training and lectures
- Exhibitions and cultural events
- Publications
- Scholarships for organisations and individuals
- Awarding individual support or grants

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S Z A B A D S Á G É R T



A L A P Í T V Á N Y

# Associazione LibMov, Movimento Liberali (LibMov)



[libmov.it](http://libmov.it)



[goo.gl/CruJHv](https://goo.gl/CruJHv)

LibMov is a new think tank, formed by Italian ALDE associate members, with the aim of promoting liberalism in Italy and of gathering together all 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 the preliminary step should be the elaboration of a set of political principles and reform proposals capable of joining together the diverse traditions and cultural sensitivities existing within the Italian Liberal family, which 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 that making direct reference to our European common family could be an effective approach to gain supporters.

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 promoting

European integration (a role miserably neglected in the past two decades); turning the page on the two muddy decades marked by political populism, continuous breaches of the rule of law and indecent public ethical standards; a resolute modernisation and liberalisation of the Italian economy, also as a means to curb corruption, patronage and vested interests; and, separation of state and religion and related individual freedom.

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# Fondazione Critica Liberale

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[criticalliberale.it](http://criticalliberale.it)



[facebook.com/criticalliberale1](https://facebook.com/criticalliberale1)



[twitter.com/CriticaLiberale](https://twitter.com/CriticaLiberale)

Fondazione Critica Liberale is a non-profit foundation established in 1994 with the aim of promoting liberalism in Italy and acting in the fields of democracy, civil liberties and human rights, social and economic policies.

Fondazione Critica Liberale organises and sponsors conferences, workshops and seminars, as well as research studies and a wide range of publications. The foundation runs the three-monthly review *Critica Liberale* (published since 1969, before the foundation came into existence) and its online supplements *criticalliberalepuntoit* (weekly), *Gli Stati Uniti d'Europa* (The United States of Europe, advocating European federalism) and *Novae9* (a cultural interdisciplinary review).

The foundation supports, and is a partner of, institutions and activities with parallel aims, such as Consulta Laica of Rome and Coordinamento Nazionale delle Consulte Laiche of Italy. In 2007 the foundation and CGIL trade union office, Ufficio Nuovi Diritti, launched the Observatory on Secularisation. The Observatory publishes an annual Report on secularisation in Italy and organises a series of meetings called *Conversazioni laiche*; it also edits a yearly report on religious information in the Italian media, funded by the Italian Waldensian (Protestant) Church.

Fondazione Critica Liberale is a member of the Coordination of Italian Cultural Reviews (CRIC).

The foundation is one of the founding members of the Pannunzio Society for Freedom of Information.

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fondazione critica liberale

# Atvira visuomenė ir jos draugai

## — Open Society and Its Friends —



[atviravisuomene.lt](http://atviravisuomene.lt)

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; create concepts for liberal reforms; organise conferences, discussions and public lectures; carry out opinion polls and finance the publication of academic literature.

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# Laisvės studijų centras (LSC)

— Centre for Liberty Studies —



[laisvesstudijos.lt](http://laisvesstudijos.lt)

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 goal of fostering the emergence of young leaders, popularising liberal values, promoting civil liberties and providing a platform for every citizen to engage in the democratic process.

LSC has as its primary interest the strengthening of civil society by means of organising educational activities. Examples of such activities include visits and open lectures for high-school students, leadership and political communication training for young citizens, and more generally, for the liberal community in Lithuania.

Our most notable current project is our ongoing dialogue on the meaning of freedom, liberalism and the future of the European Union in the context of Lithuania.

LSC aims to establish itself as a profound institution of public policy analysis. Having a wide network of reformers across Lithuania, we seek to contribute in various spheres of public policy, including education, health and public administration in particular.

One of the key objectives for LSC is to build a long-lasting training platform for public sector leaders, not only from Lithuania, but from across Europe.

In all our activities we closely cooperate with the Liberal Movement of Lithuania, as well as other liberal organisations, both in our own country as well as abroad.

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# Haya van Someren Stichting/ VVD Internationaal



[international.vvd.nl](http://international.vvd.nl)



[facebook.com/vvdinternationaal](https://facebook.com/vvdinternationaal)



[twitter.com/VVDint](https://twitter.com/VVDint)

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 non-profit activities that strengthen liberal-minded political parties and groupings in Central and Eastern Europe. This is facilitated by the Political Parties funding of the Matra Programme set up by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Matra Programme aims to support the transition to a multi-form, constitutional society in countries in Central and Eastern Europe and North Africa. Haya van Someren Stichting/VVD Internationaal has nearly twenty years' 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 Liberal International, and/or the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party. Certain other conditions also apply. The political party or group 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 Stichting works on a demand-driven basis and organises and facilitates several training programmes:

- Training on various party-related subjects
- Regional seminars, providing keynote speakers
- Visitors' 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 Party is a member of such networks of liberals as Liberal International and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party.

Descriptions of the countries, organisations, activities and background information on Haya van Someren/VVD Internationaal's cooperation with its international partners can be found on our website.

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# Mr. Hans van Mierlo Stichting

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[mrhansvanmierlostichting.nl](http://mrhansvanmierlostichting.nl)



[twitter.com/VMStichting](https://twitter.com/VMStichting)

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 referred to as 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 development 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.

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**Mr. Hans  
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Stichting**



# Prof.mr. B.M. TeldersStichting



[teldersstichting.nl](http://teldersstichting.nl)



[twitter.com/TeldersTweet](https://twitter.com/TeldersTweet)

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 legal scholar 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 were 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, although as an organisation and in its policy formulation, the think tank remained independent. The current Chair of the Board is Frans Engering, who previously was director of Economic Affairs and Dutch ambassador to South Africa. The current Director of the foundation is Patrick van Schie, a historian who wrote his dissertation on the history of Dutch liberalism from 1901 to 1940.

The Prof.mr. B.M. TeldersStichting publishes policy papers and books on all kinds of political and societal topics, from the market economy to environmental issues, from fighting crime 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 the leading thinkers in liberal (political and economic) theory. Each year, several conferences and seminars on various topics are organised. Also, an annual Telders Lecture is held. Talented students from Dutch (and Belgian) universities are selected to take part in the Prof.mr. B.M. TeldersStichting Liberal Summer School. The quarterly journal of the foundation is *Liberaal Reveil*, which is edited by Charlotte Maas. The TeldersCommunity, an online platform for

discussion as well as a digital library for all our publications was launched in 2014. 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 particular variant of liberalism, though 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), continues. 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.

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**TeldersStichting**  
omdat kennis ertoe doet

# Stichting Internationaal Democratisch Initiatief (Stichting IDI)



[d66.nl/internationaal](http://d66.nl/internationaal)



[facebook.com/D66Internationaal](https://facebook.com/D66Internationaal)



[twitter.com/D66Int](https://twitter.com/D66Int)

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 the 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, 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 support most IDI projects.

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# European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)



[lymec.eu](http://lymec.eu)



[facebook.com/EuropeanLiberalYouthLYMEC](https://facebook.com/EuropeanLiberalYouthLYMEC)



[twitter.com/lymec](https://twitter.com/lymec)

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 200,000 members from 50 organisations in 30 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 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.

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# Fundacja Industrial

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[findustrial.pl](http://findustrial.pl)



[facebook.com/liberteworld](https://facebook.com/liberteworld)



[twitter.com/MagazynLiberte](https://twitter.com/MagazynLiberte)

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, FNF, National Centre of Culture and the Polish Confederation of Private Employers Lewiatan. At the same time, we partner the largest 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 also host the online web portal [www.liberte.pl](http://www.liberte.pl) and a quarterly printed magazine. *Liberté!*'s patron council includes, among others, Professor Marek Safjan (Judge at the European Court of Justice), Jerzy Pomianowski (Head of the European Endowment for Democracy (EED)), Janusz Lewandowski (Former EU Commissioner), 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 as well as the philosophical and political science debate series. Furthermore, we coordinate the [4liberty.eu](http://4liberty.eu) platform together with FNF. This is a joint project of 11 think tanks from Central Europe and the Baltic States, with a number of them (including Poland's Fundacja Industrial, FOR, Fundacja 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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# Fundacja Projekt: Polska



[projektpolska.pl](http://projektpolska.pl)



[facebook.com/projektpolska](https://facebook.com/projektpolska)



[twitter.com/projekt\\_polska](https://twitter.com/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 young professionals and business people who entered the labour market since 1989 the chance to get involved in politics and civil society, in turn passing 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 with the support of our partners.

Fundacja Projekt: Polska has created the *państwomiasto*, a multidimensional hub in central Warsaw. It is a vibrant coworking space for NGOs and create 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 public efficiency.

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projekt:polska®

# Movimento Liberal Social (MLS)



[liberal-social.org](http://liberal-social.org)



[facebook.com/movimentoliberalsocial](https://facebook.com/movimentoliberalsocial)



[twitter.com/mliberalsocial](https://twitter.com/mliberalsocial)

MLS, which was officially founded in 2005, aims to promote 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 principle of subsidiarity) the defence of the individuals 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 inevitable disequilibria

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# Institute for Liberal Studies (ISL)

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[isl.ro](http://isl.ro)



[facebook.com/institutuldestudiiliberale](https://facebook.com/institutuldestudiiliberale)

The Institute for Liberal Studies association was created by a group of high-ranking Liberals, including several cabinet ministers and the Prime Minister of Romania in order to promote liberal values in Romanian society. These distinguished figures close to Romanian and European liberal values established the Institute as a specialised apparatus for the administrative and ideological education of Romanian citizens, as well as to provide research to the benefit 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 also focuses on social-political research on current events.

In the long term, the Institute aims to continue its research on public administration, political science and history, while also issuing its own studies and monographs.

The Institute for Liberal Studies is a founding member of ELF and works closely with FNF as well as with the 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.

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# NOVUM – Inštitut za strateške in aplikativne študije

— NOVUM – Institute for Strategic and Applicable Research —  
(Institute Novum)



[inovum.si](http://inovum.si)

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, roundtables, workshops, forums and conferences.

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

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**novum**  
INSTITUTE

# Asociación Galega para a Liberdade e a Democracia (GALIDEM)

—— Galician Society for Freedom and Democracy (GALIDEM) ——



[facebook.com/galidem](https://facebook.com/galidem)



[twitter.com/galidem](https://twitter.com/galidem)

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 to be used by students.

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

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 student teaching materials. In the past, GALIDEM has partnered

with ELF to organise a Southern European School of Liberalism, together with partners such as Movimento Liberal Social, Forum for Greece and FNF. The event targeted college students interested in liberal policies and ideology.

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# Fundació Catalanista i Demòcrata (CatDem)

—— CatDem Foundation ——



[catdem.cat](http://catdem.cat)



[facebook.com/fundacio.catdem](https://facebook.com/fundacio.catdem)



[twitter.com/catdem](https://twitter.com/catdem)



[goo.gl/p0kKgL](https://goo.gl/p0kKgL)

The CatDem Foundation (Catalanist and Democrat Foundation) is a private non-for-profit platform that generates ideas and encourages and fosters democratic values so that the Catalan people can move towards a society of freedom, democracy, economic progress and social justice.

To reach these objectives, we consider essential the construction of our own State of Catalonia.

We seek an independent Catalonia in order to achieve:

- Our own State
- A new and radical democracy
- A reformed welfare State that fosters social justice and economic progress
- An active role in international politics as an EU member State

To achieve this, we organise public conferences, debates, seminars and publish a wide-ranging array of documents, such as reports, journals and electronic newsletters.

Since it was born in 1994, the CatDem Foundation has worked to foster political Catalanism, becoming a reference point in the creation of political thought in Catalonia, based on our values of democracy, economic progress and social justice.

CatDem Foundation is a member of ELF and the European Network of Political Foundations (ENOP).

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# Bertil Ohlininstitutet

—— Bertil Ohlin Institute ——



[ohlininstitutet.org](http://ohlininstitutet.org)



[goo.gl/FG8u5e](https://goo.gl/FG8u5e)



[twitter.com/ohlininstitutet](https://twitter.com/ohlininstitutet)

The Bertil Ohlin Institute is a foundation founded in 1993 and named after Bertil Ohlin. Ohlin led 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 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 or ordered on 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 prominent university departments, with four out of nine seats on our board reserved for scholars from relevant fields, mainly the social sciences.

Although the institute's founders are 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.

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# OHLINinstitutet

# Centre Party International Foundation (CPIF)

— Centerpartiets Internationella Stiftelse (Sweden) —



[www3.centerpartiet.se/Lokal/cis/](http://www3.centerpartiet.se/Lokal/cis/)



[facebook.com/CenterpartietsInternationellaStiftelse](https://facebook.com/CenterpartietsInternationellaStiftelse)

The Centre Party International Foundation, CPIF, is a Swedish Party-Affiliated Organisation established in 1995 by the Swedish Centre Party. It shares the same core values as the Centre Party, a social-liberal, green party with a strong emphasis on sustainability and decentralisation.

CPIF's mission is to strengthen democracy and human rights, with a focus on gender and environmental issues, in collaboration with political parties and organisations working to strengthen liberal values and local democracy, also outside large population centres.

To achieve the overall objective of our strategy, we focus on two interdependent areas: Support for sister parties and affiliated political movements and organisations, with the goal of ensuring well-functioning democratic political parties; Support for multi-party systems, with the goal of ensuring well-functioning, democratically based multi-party systems

In terms of the first area, Support for sister parties, CPIF currently supports Liberal sister parties in Burkina Faso, Malawi and Bosnia and Herzegovina, and two civil rights organisations, one in Belarus and one in Burkina Faso. The aim of this support is capacity-building. To achieve it, we implement a three-step programme for political party capacity-building. Its objectives are to increase institutional, organisational, political and ideological capacity.

Activities include training workshops on various topics, seminars for strategy development, revision of political manifestos, partner conferences for networking and training and mentoring, etc.

In terms of the second area, Support for multi-party systems, CPIF is one of the implementers of the Programme for Young Politicians in Africa (PYPA). PYPA is a ground-

breaking capacity-building programme aimed at young politicians in eleven African countries. It is a true multi-party initiative, since both implementers and beneficiaries of the programme come from political parties with different ideologies. It is the fruit of collaboration between four of the seven Swedish Party-Affiliated Organisations, two from the government and two from the opposition. Specifically, CPIF implements the programme in Burkina Faso, Benin, Mali and Niger.

Beyond the actual activities, one of the added values for our partner organisations is the insight and access they get into the Centre Party and its affiliated organisations, such as Centre Women, Centre Students and Centre Youth. Over time, we have built a platform of mutual collaboration which supports the exchange of knowledge and experiences. It gives both sides the opportunity to network and create mutual understanding for each other's political context. We strongly believe that increasing knowledge and understanding is crucial when working with politics across national borders.

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CENTRE PARTY  
INTERNATIONAL  
FOUNDATION

# Forum för reformer och entreprenörskap (FORES)

— Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship  
and Sustainability (FORES) —



[fores.se](http://fores.se)



[goo.gl/6kLQjN](https://goo.gl/6kLQjN)



[twitter.com/fores\\_sverige](https://twitter.com/fores_sverige)



[youtube.com/tankesmedjanfores](https://youtube.com/tankesmedjanfores)

Fores – Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability – is a green and liberal think tank. We want to renew the debate in Sweden with a belief in entrepreneurship and opportunities for people to shape their own lives.

Some of the issues we are working on include: market-based solutions to climate change and other environmental challenges, the long-term benefits of migration and a welcoming society, the gains of increased levels of entrepreneurship, the need for modernisation of the welfare sector and the challenges of the rapidly-changing digital society.

We hold seminars and roundtable discussions in town halls, parliaments and board rooms, publish reports, books and policy papers, put together and chair reference groups around policy issues, participate in media debates, and support policy-makers with relevant facts. We act as a link between curious citizens, opinion-makers, entrepreneurs, policy-makers and researchers, always striving for an open-minded, inclusive and thought-provoking dialogue.

The Fores board consists of experienced people from varied professional and political backgrounds. The composition of the board guarantees a strong independence from special interests and partisan politics.

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# Swedish International Liberal Centre (SILC)

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[silc.se](http://silc.se)



[goo.gl/KngpAf](https://goo.gl/KngpAf)



[twitter.com/silcfdemocracy](https://twitter.com/silcfdemocracy)

Swedish International Liberal Centre (SILC) supports activism for democracy and human rights. Current programmes are focused on Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Serbia, Egypt, Tunisia, Cuba and Venezuela.

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.

Headquartered in Stockholm, SILC currently has a staff of fourteen, of which four are working from the programme office in Vilnius, Lithuania. SILC's annual turnover is approximately EUR 2.4 million (2014).

SILC is organisationally associated with the Swedish Liberal party (Folkpartiet Liberalerna)

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# CentreForum

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[centreforum.org](http://centreforum.org)



[goo.gl/WRgJIM](https://goo.gl/WRgJIM)



[twitter.com/centreforum](https://twitter.com/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's 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 was instrumental in recent reforms to school league tables in England. The Department for Education estimates that the 'Progress 8' accountability measure, modelled by CentreForum, will improve the education of 1.75 million children. The think tank has also helped to widen access to postgraduate education. CentreForum's postgraduate loans model was adopted by the government in 2014.

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 debt, 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 government is piloting its proposal for community land auctions to promote local involvement in development. CentreForum ideas regularly feature in government Budgets and Autumn Statements.

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.

Running in parallel to CentreForum's research programme are its public events. Through meetings, conferences, seminars and lectures, the think tank aims to engage policy-makers, academics, the media and voters in lively and provocative debate.

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# CENTREFORUM

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The Board  
— of —  
Directors

*II*

# The Board of Directors

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*Member, Board of Directors, ELF | 2010 – 2012*

*Vice-President, Zares – New Politics | 2007 – 2010*

*President of the Board, NOVUM | 2010 – present*



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*Member, EU Committee of the Regions | 2009 – 2014*

*State Minister of Justice and European Affairs, Free State of Saxony | 2009 – 2014*

*Member of State Parliament, Free State of Saxony | 2004 – 2014*



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*Senior Policy Advisor, Ministry of Foreign Affairs | 2013*

*Member of Advisory Committee on European Affairs, VVD | 2002 – Present*



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*Deputy Director, FORES | 2012 – present*

*Political Advisor, Minister of Integration | 2010 – 2012*

*Political Advisor to the Party Leader, Folkpartiet Liberalerna | 2006 – 2010*



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*Co-editor, Gli Stati Uniti d'Europa | 2003 – present*

*Editorialist, Critica Liberale, monthly journal | 1999 – present*

*Secretary General, Radical Party (Partito Radicale) | 1973 – 1974*

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# The --- Secretariat



# The Secretariat

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# The ALDE Party

—— in 2014 ——

Meet our mother party, the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE).

ELF is the European political foundation of the ALDE Party.

# The ALDE Party

— in 2014 —



— Liberal leaders gathering for a pre- European Summit meeting —

The European Liberal Democrat political family was founded in 1976 ahead of the first European elections and was established as the first true transnational political party in 1993. Today, the European Liberal Democrat family consists of more than 50 member parties across the continent and more than 50 members of the European Parliament who sit in the ALDE Group. Together we are translating the principle of freedom into politics, economics and all other areas of society. The ALDE Party President is Sir Graham Watson.

Since the European elections of May 2014, the ALDE Group is the fourth-biggest group in the European Parliament and remains an influential 'kingmaker' on all parts of European legislation and is headed by former Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt MEP.

Five out of 28 members of the College of European Commissioners 2014-2019 represent liberal democrat parties and hold key portfolios: Andrus Ansip, Vice-President and Commissioner for Digital Single Market;

Violeta Bulc, Commissioner for Transport; Věra Jourová, Commissioner for Justice, Consumers and Gender Equality; Cecilia Malmström, Commissioner for Trade and Margrethe Vestager, Commissioner for Competition.



*We are translating the principle of freedom into politics, economics and all other areas of society.*

In 2014, five European Prime Ministers – Xavier Bettel, Luxembourg; Charles Michel, Belgium; Taavi Rõivas, Estonia, Mark Rutte, the Netherlands and Miro Cerar, Slovenia - and five Deputy Prime Ministers – Nick Clegg, United Kingdom; Alexander De Croo, Belgium; Morten Østergaard, Denmark; Dr. Vesna Pusić, Croatia and Didier Reynders, Belgium - belong to ALDE member parties. At regional level, Artur Mas i Gavarró is the Head of Government of Catalonia.



# The ALDE Party

— in 2014 —



Voting underway at the 2014  
— ALDE Party Congress in Lisbon —



ALDE Party President Sir Graham Watson  
— addressing journalists —

Prior to European Council Summits, held at various times throughout the year, Liberal Prime Ministers and European Commissioners meet in Brussels at the invitation of the Party President in order to discuss topical issues together and harmonise and strengthen their liberal perspective.

The ALDE Group in the Committee of the Regions brings together nearly 100 politicians from local and regional authorities from around the European Union. The President of the group is Bas Verkerk, Mayor of the city of Delft, the

Netherlands. In January, Anne Brasseur was elected as the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE). The leader of the liberal group at PACE is Jordi Xuclà.

The European Investment Bank is headed by former ALDE Party President Dr. Werner Hoyer. The former Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen was Secretary General of NATO until his mandate concluded on 1 October 2014.

## VIDEO



2014 ALDE Party Congress

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 [youtube.com/aldeparty](https://youtube.com/aldeparty)



## The ALDE Party

— in 2014 —

# European Commission 2014 – 2019

— Liberal Portfolios —



Andrus Ansip

— Estonia —

*Vice President,  
Digital Single Market*



Cecilia Malmström

— Sweden —

*Trade*



Věra Jourová

— Czech Republic —

*Justice, Consumers &  
Gender Equality*



Margrethe Vestager

— Denmark —

*Competition*



Violeta Bulc

— Slovenia —

*Transport*

IMPRINT

# Annual Report 2014

—— European Liberal Forum ——

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The European political foundation  
of the

