

Annual Report 2020

European Liberal Forum



About ELF

A liberal future in united Europe

The European Liberal Forum (ELF) is the official political foundation of the European Liberal Party, the ALDE Party. Together with 47 member organisations, we work all over Europe to bring new ideas into the political debate, to provide a platform for discussion, and to empower citizens to make their voices heard.

ELF was founded in 2007 to strengthen the liberal and democrat movement in Europe. Our work is guided by liberal ideals and a belief in the principle of freedom. We stand for a future-oriented Europe that offers opportunities for every citizen.

ELF is engaged on all political levels, from the local to the European. We bring together a diverse network of national foundations, think tanks, and other experts. At the same time, we are also close to, but independent from, the ALDE Party and other Liberal actors in Europe. In this role, our forum serves as a space for an open and informed exchange of views between a wide range of different actors.



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Letter from the President



Hilde Vautmans, MEP

Needless to say: 2020 was a year to remember, for good or for bad. The year that threw the world into a crisis and put into question our entire lifestyles and our very basic freedoms.

Surviving such a storm is an achievement in itself. But surviving it without losing the presence of spirit, the sense of mission and direction truly merits acknowledgement and recognition. Amidst the distressing circumstances, our work continued largely as planned, even if performed not from our office in Brussels.

We stayed close while being far apart. Our General Assembly took place online yet felt as warm and inspiring as in the times when we could freely hug each other and sit down together for a 'proper' face-to-face discussion and celebration.

We adjusted quickly and without losing quality or productivity. Our Secretariat has decisively taken shape, and what a great shape! Despite all the uncertainty, it has continued to grow, welcoming new professionals who brought their fresh vision and ideas to our common project.

Most importantly, in times of confusion and transition, we have remained as devoted to our values and principles as ever. We are constantly delivering on our main mission: to provide a platform for solution-oriented exchange among liberal European policymakers, stakeholders, experts, and intellectuals.

ELF is thus growing as a public forum and reliable reference point for future-oriented solutions to the most relevant issues on the European policymaking agenda. Many ambitious and debate-stirring projects are already underway, and many more will be launched soon.

In 2020, we got used to living in a state of emergency. Now, we see that we have gained a lot during last year. ELF is now in its full force to support the European liberal family in all the work that it has to do, today and in the future.



Together with our partners and Member Organisations, ELF has demonstrated admirable resilience and perseverance. ”

Foreword by the Executive Director

2020 was a difficult year, but it was a year in which we continued our dedication to the renewal of Europe and the development of European Liberalism.

Our increased focus on running high-level events and publishing quality, academically robust work has enabled us to meet our goal of helping to strengthen European Liberalism, as well as allowing us to support our member organisations and the wider liberal movement across our European Union.

Innovation is a part of the DNA of ELF, and nowhere could this be seen more than in our publications. We have been at the forefront of the policy debate and development process in Europe.

This innovation was seen in our events, especially during our very first online Competence Centre Meeting, which allowed us to better communicate with our Member Organisations.

A new direction was also set late in the year, with the election of our new Board of Directors coinciding with the beginning of a new strategic direction for ELF, which will be developed throughout 2021 and will lead to our being in a stronger, more dynamic position.

Our strong body of work has focused on helping you to better understand the world around us and how the world is developing, and this has been essential with the end to the initial Brexit negotiations, the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic, and the numerous elections that took place.

To strategically improve our work, we increased the number of experts within the ELF, bringing in more knowledge and more skills that are essential in achieving our goals and making the Secretariat stronger.

Europe and the wider world have emerged into a different, changed landscape in 2021, and we are always here to help you to navigate it with our in-depth expertise.

Angenehme Lektüre, Bonne Lecture, and Happy Reading!



Daniel Kaddik



Europe and the wider world have emerged into a different, changed landscape in 2021; we are always here to help you to navigate it with our in-depth expertise."

ELF Board of Directors



Hilde Vautmans, MEP
President



Svenja Hahn, MEP
First Vice President



Dr. Miłosz Hodun
Second Vice President



Mats Löfström, MP
Treasurer



Dr. Šárka Prát
Board Member



Marco Mariani
Board Member



Pieter Van de Stadt
Board Member

Outgoing Board of Directors



Dr Jürgen Martens, MP
President



Martina Dlabajová, MEP
First Vice President



Olle Schmidt
Vice President



Airis Meier
Treasurer



Dr. Miłosz Hodun
Board Member



Goran Neralić
Board Member



Dr. Csaba Tóth
Board Member

ELF Secretariat

Core Team:



Daniel Kaddik
Executive Director



Julien Hoes
Assistant to the Executive
Director



Anastasiia Pravedna
Strategy & Membership
Manager



Lauren Mason
Project Coordinator



Andrei Constantin
Programme Officer



Laurenz Van Ginneken
Project Officer



Antonios Nestoras
Policy & Research
Coordinator



Francesco Cappelletti
Research Fellow



Elina Baltatzi
Communications
Manager



Viktorya Muradyan
Junior Communications
Officer



Melissa Amirkhizy
Finance Manager



Muriel Damoiseau
Accountant



Konstantinos Gatzios
Administrative Assistant

We would like to thank our collaborators & interns of 2020:



Elias Rosell
Research Fellow



Anna Zanetti
Project Intern



Aleksandre Zarubica
Project Intern



Anna Comacchio
Project Intern

With thanks also to:

Jeroen Dobber
Former Strategy & Coordination
Manager

Eleanor Doorley
Former Communications
Officer

Tari Majuru
Former Finance & Personnel
Administrator

Frédéric Iovine
Former Office Manager

ELF in numbers

Training
18%

Events
34%

268
realised
activities
in 2020

Videos and Podcasts
23%

Blogs
10%

Publications
15%

47

Member
organisations

89

Events

58

Videos and
podcasts

20

Publications

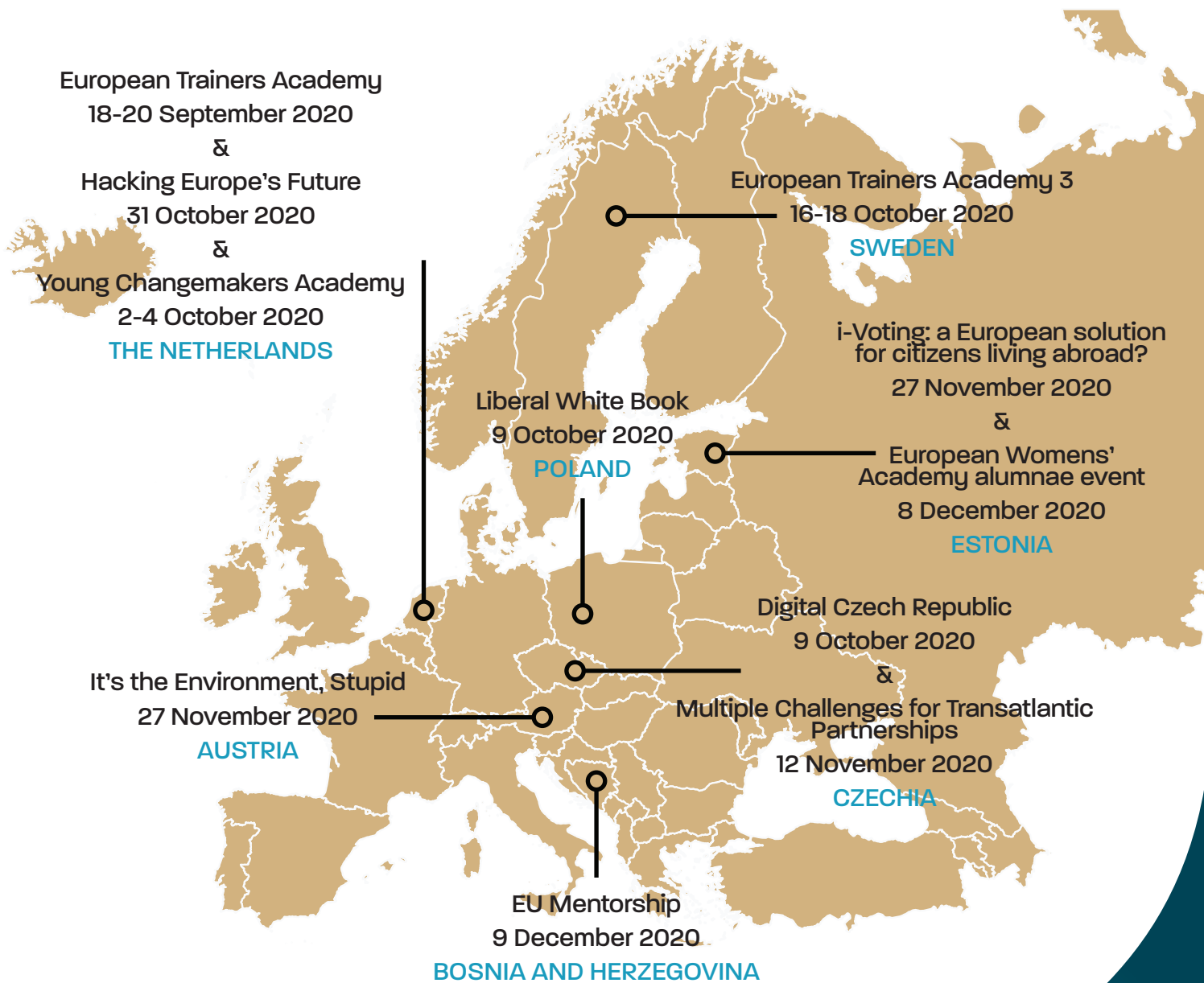
27

Blogposts

16

Papers

Map of hybrid events in 2020



2020 was a tough year. Like many organisations, ELF had to switch most of our events online, but we experimented with several high-profile hybrid events across Europe.

Events and Projects

2020 was an unprecedented year in many respects, but it was one that pushed us to be flexible and to experiment with a host of new formats for our projects and events.

“Our members showed remarkable resilience organising hybrid events, and reaching audiences with new formats.”

- Lauren Mason, ELF Project Coordinator

What started as a dynamic and optimistic year for ELF, with our biggest number of projects yet, saw a sobering up in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, ELF quickly bounced by back trialling our first webinar series, “Liberties in Lockdown”, examining the health of our democracies, and civil liberties in a time of unprecedented restrictions during a pandemic. This later grew into a regular webinar series “On the Agenda”, discussing the key topics making headlines in Brussels and beyond.

Our members showed remarkable resilience organising hybrid events, and reaching audiences with new formats including podcasts, audiobooks, interactive publications, online learning modules, and, of course, hybrid conferences.

Whilst the post-pandemic recovery quickly became the focus of many of our events and research, 2020 saw ELF and its members continuing to engage in key policy debates such as: Updating European migration policy, EU Emissions Trading System and Climate clubs, enlargement and stability in the Western Balkans, introducing i-voting as a solution for citizens living abroad, and protecting human rights in the 21st century.

Taking place as a flight-free edition, our flagship Brussels event, the ELF Idea Accelerator, again showcased new liberal ideas from across the ground in Europe.

Last but not least, our most ambitious and visionary project for 2020 saw ELF organise a series of eight high-level expert forums on migration, security, rule of law, institutional frameworks, digitalisation, sustainability, trade, and social policy, which fed into the creation of our Liberal White Book, a blueprint for a fairer and freer Europe by 2030. Watch this space in 2021 for the official launch.



Events & Projects



Youth Academy

Supported by Academy of Liberalism

The main idea behind the Youth Academy was the creation of a leadership training programme for liberal youth. A series of 2 on-site sessions and online work, with mentoring in between, served as training for youth people willing to become the next influencers in the political field or great leaders with a liberal worldview.

US-China relations: Lessons for the EU

Supported by Centre Party International Foundation (CPIF)

The power struggle between the U.S. and China, in terms of grand strategy as well as military strategy, served this project in helping European stakeholders and decision-makers understand the rationale behind the U.S. response to emerging and existing Chinese defense & security policies. The project inspired and educated interested parties in the ways the U.S. perceives Chinese strategy and policy in the aforementioned areas and what Europe can learn from that. The project set the stage for a profound and well-structured case for liberalism as a vital tool in countering totalitarian inclinations.



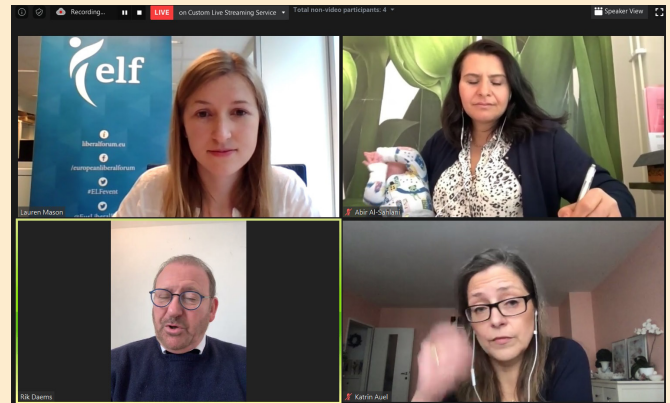
Civic Platform for Young Liberal Activists

Supported by Centre Party International Foundation (CPIF)

The project aimed to trigger the interest of young people in political activism within the broad spectrum of civil society, including political parties, NGOs, and social movements. Young people from all around Southeast Europe gathered with young representatives of liberal political parties to learn techniques for raising awareness about local social, political, and cultural issues and how these skills could later be applied to youth activism.

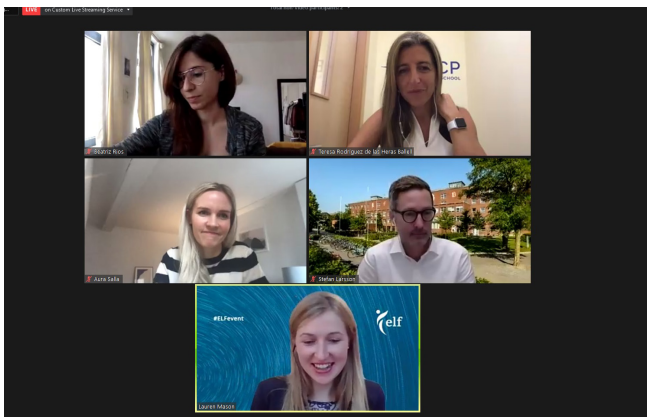
Liberties in Lockdown Series

To better understand the consequences and the impact of Covid-19 on our freedoms, ELF launched its weekly online webinar series, Liberties in Lockdown, which allowed experts and liberal leaders to discuss and explore the multi-faceted degradation of these rights. The eleven debates also showed how Covid-19 indeed gave a window for more reflection about what future we want for Europe and its citizens, with an opportunity to reshape our priorities in terms of policies and investments.



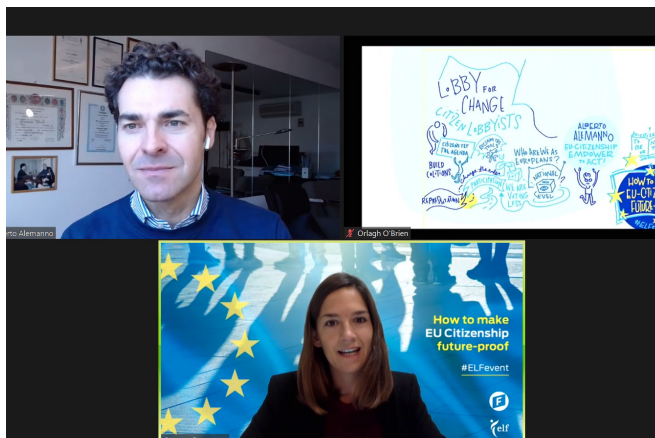
Thought Bites

Thought Bites consisted of short videos submitted by MEPs in which they had the occasion to answer specific questions relating to recent events and current affairs in a snappy and down-to-earth format. The project aimed to strengthen engagement with ELF's network and beyond and generate thinking about topical EU questions.



On the Agenda

Following on from the success of the Liberties in Lockdown webinar series, ELF launched a new online event series in which to discuss current topics and events. While the world was trying to recover in the aftermath of this health crisis, it was the moment to shape what the EU and its member states were putting on their agendas in the short, medium and long-term. ELF believes that what gets put on the agenda is as important as what gets left out, and, with this new series of webinars, tackling head-on the most pressing issues in Europe.



Dare to Debate & Thinking Aloud

This year, we dared to debate about the digital revolution and whether certain scenarios are closer to reality or sci-fi, with the Institute for Politics and Society. Our Thinking Aloud events, three TED-style talks, featured Alberto Alemanno on How to make EU citizenship future-proof, Kadri Simson on How to cope with climate change, and Timothy Garton Ash on Prospects for freedom in Central Europe at the Freedom Games in Lodz. These talks were published in cooperation with Friedrich Naumann Foundation, Academy of Liberalism, and Fundacja Liberté!

Liberal White Book – A Liberal Europe 2030

To renew the European Union, we need to define the goal that we are striving for. To determine this, we organised a series of nine high-level expert forums, bringing together top academics, policymakers, and practitioners on the key topics for Europe. Collected together, with each chapter endorsed by an MEP, The Liberal White Book - Europe 2030 is our vision of a liberal Europe and how best to reach it.



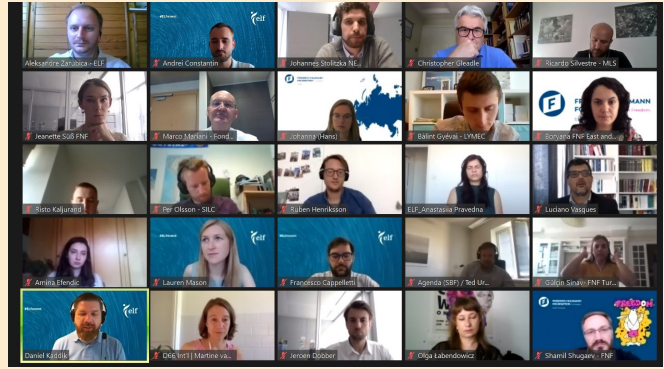
All Things Liberal

Reaching and convincing liberal audiences is not always best achieved through dense and detailed publications. Therefore, the Secretariat created a series of 4 educational videos for European citizens to present some key topics at the European level alongside the liberal take on them: trade, consumer choice, innovation, and the rule of law.



Competence Centre meetings

The Competence Centre meetings brought together member organisations who were hoping to apply for ELF projects in 2021. This represented a great opportunity to pitch ideas, receive feedback from peers, and broker joint projects with others working on similar topics.



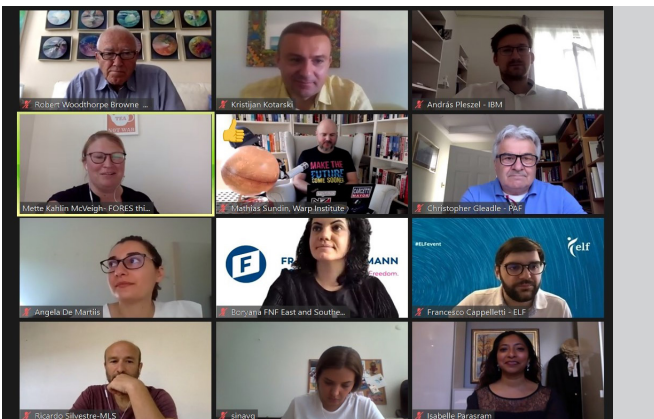
ELF Administrative Training

ELF Member Organisations gathered in Brussels to kick-off the year with a project management and administration training. Through interactive sessions and group work, we covered the A-to-Z of doing projects with ELF, especially how to create meaningful and engaging events.



Idea Accelerator: The Future is Digital

The 2nd edition of ELF's flagship event – the Idea Accelerator – took place online in a "flight-free" format. Joined by our member organisations, we presented ways in which liberals can make the world a better place. Including notable contributions from Kristin Schreiber and MEPs Martin Hojsik and Svenja Hahn, we took a creative look at how to support the recovery of European industry, how to approach sustainability questions, how countries can regulate more smartly, and why we should not fear the future, but own it.



Values First? Promoting EU Norms Through Trade

Supported by European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)

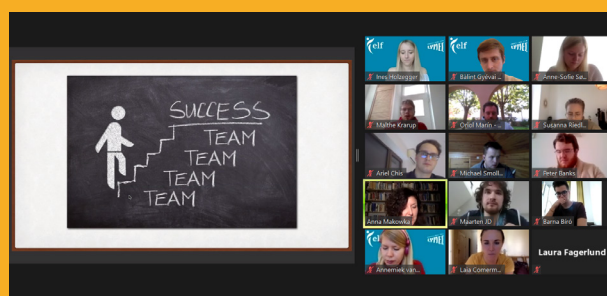
The project aimed to gather the thoughts of young liberals to explore international trade developments and how the core values of the EU are reflected in (free) trade agreements and investments with third countries. Starting from an exploratory seminar in Luxembourg, looked at different aspects of EU trade strategies, including human rights, climate change, and normative approaches to promoting values through trade. A compilation of essays written by young liberals was later presented to MEPs and interested stakeholders in Brussels.



Energising Europe: Raising Climate Ambition, Boosting Energy Solutions

Supported by European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)

When it comes to addressing one of today's hottest topics such as climate change, ideas within liberalism such as the free market, freedom of movement, and globalisation are often pointed out as the issue. Therefore, the project aimed to show how liberalism can tackle climate change and not be the actual cause of it.

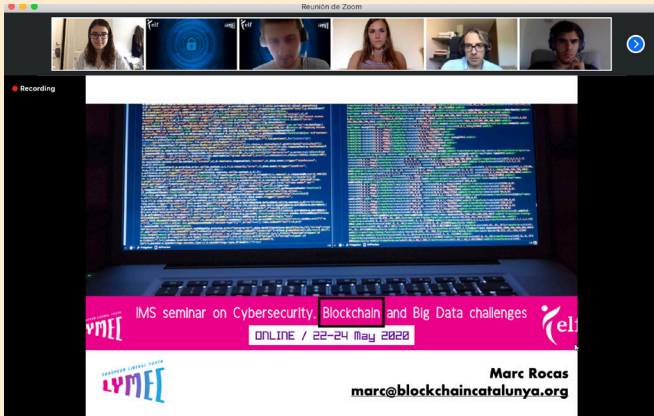


Young Changemakers Academy (YCA)

Supported by European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)

The Young Changemakers Academy (YCA) programme prepared promising young political and advocacy leaders to understand and act in democratic processes through seminars, mentoring, and networking support with other young people and senior political figures from all over Europe. Through a series of three seminars, these young participants also developed and pitched their own advocacy plans for issues close to their hearts.

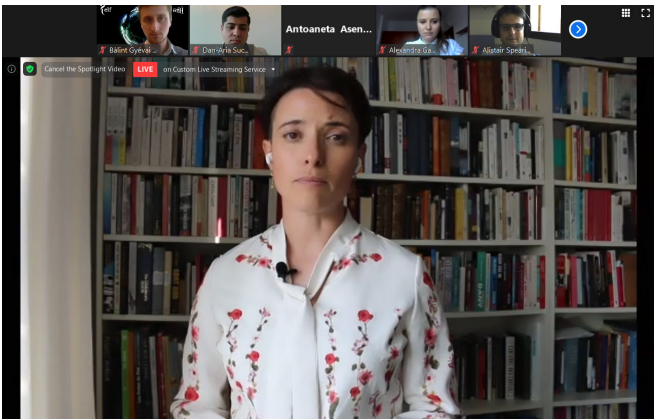




Capacity Building Seminar on Cyber Security, Blockchain and Big Data

Supported by European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)

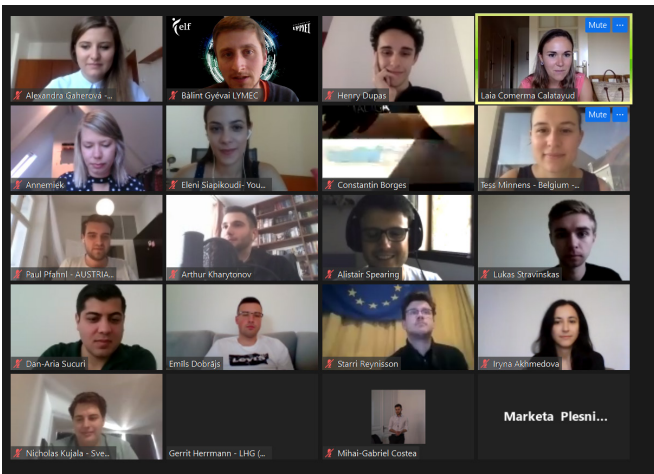
Given the devastating consequences of cyber-threats and attacks, issues related to cyber-security have never been more important for the EU's path to digitalisation. Therefore, this project focused on capacity building and knowledge for young liberals, equipping them with concrete tips and a handbook to be shared among the community.



Young Leaders Meeting

Supported by European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)

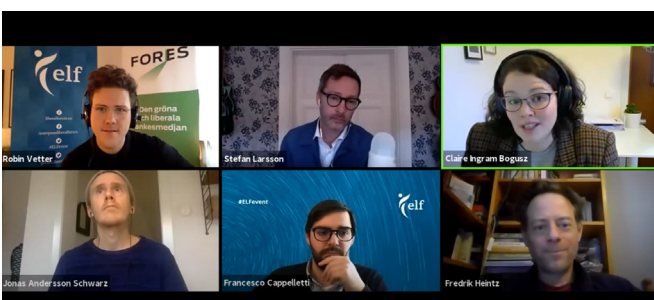
This project helped foster liberal leadership by bringing together presidents of youth organisations to exchange and discuss best practices, mutual benchmarks, common challenges, and opportunities, as well as peer support. This year's focus was digital policies: what are the core tenets of a liberal digital policy and how can young people help to shape it?



AI in the EU: Towards a Trustworthy Development of Artificial Intelligence

Supported by Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

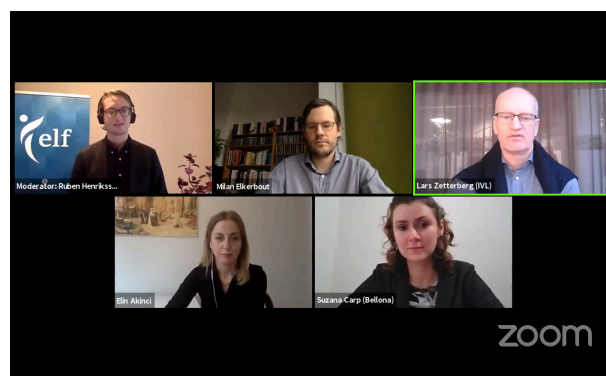
This project assessed and compared five national AI strategies, in light of the EU's strategy and connected Coordinated Plan on Artificial Intelligence, to strengthen an ethical, trustworthy, and cutting-edge AI made in Europe. The results are being used to understand how national and European level strategies interact in terms of ensuring that AI applications remain ethical and transparent. It hopes to focus and enhance the policy-relevant AI-debate in the coming years.



The EU's Emissions Trading Scheme in Light of the Paris Agreement

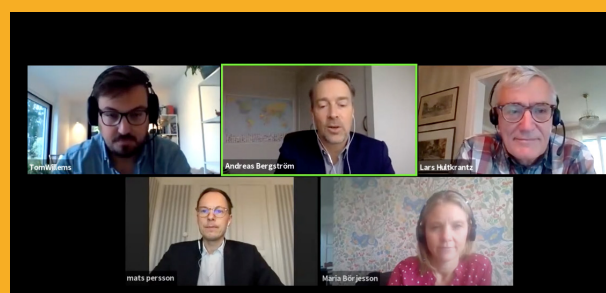
Supported by Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

This project served as an analysis of selected Member State policies that were more ambitious than the ETS and which interacted with it. In addition, the project aimed to outline possible solutions to how this liberal market mechanism could be reformed and become more ambitious, while also ensuring liberal market-based policy effectiveness.



Does Europe Need More Private Funding and Organisation of Investment?

Supported by Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES) Transport infrastructure investment is costly. Private capital can be helpful, both for funding and incentives, but can have several drawbacks. This project aimed to find the best solutions based on research and examples from several countries and spread them via a book, several launches, and direct contact with policymakers.



See you in court - the Effectiveness of Litigation as a Climate Tool

Supported by Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

As rule of law is a foundation of liberalism, this project studied litigation as a tool to tackle climate change. This is a relatively new phenomenon that has emerged through court cases in recent years, notably in the Netherlands and the UK. Thus, this study provided an overview and assessment of how EU governments and companies were increasingly being held to their policy climate change commitments through legislative channels.





Trading to Make the EU Prosperous and Green

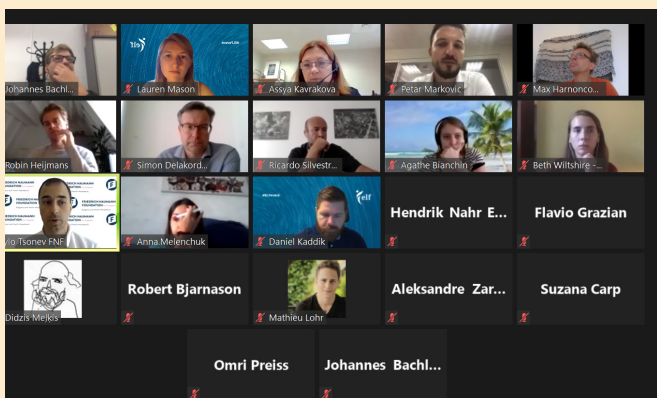
Supported by Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

This project brought out how climate policy can be furthered through trade by looking at possibilities like including “green” factors in EU free trade agreements to a greater extent, and how green technology can serve to use trade as an empowering tool.

eDemocracy - Driving Citizen Advocacy Through Digital means

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)

Some governments have been cautious about enabling state-led eDemocracy initiatives for citizen involvement in policymaking. Yet digital means present an opportunity for individual citizens to become more involved in democratic decision-making processes and hold governments to account. This project researched, collected, assessed, and presented the ever-growing number of innovative good practices in citizen-led, informal participation and methods for government scrutiny through digital means.



I-Voting: A European Solution for Citizens Living Abroad?

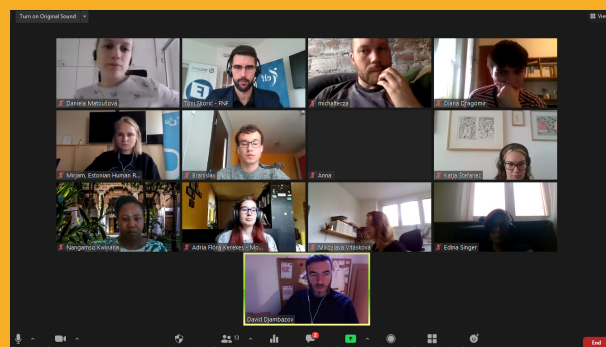
Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)

Millions of Eastern Europeans live and work abroad. Because of geographical reasons and few polling stations in their countries of residence, their right to influence the democratic development of their home country through voting is denied. This project therefore examined if internet voting could be a solution, taking Romania and Moldova as case studies for the potential development of i-voting solutions across Europe.

Improving Communication on Human Rights

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)

This project aimed at tackling the safety and wellbeing challenges that human rights defenders face in their work while educating them and the broader public about the EU's action and policy in the field of human rights and democracy, as well as how this can be improved through liberal solutions.



European Women's Academy in Eastern Europe

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation

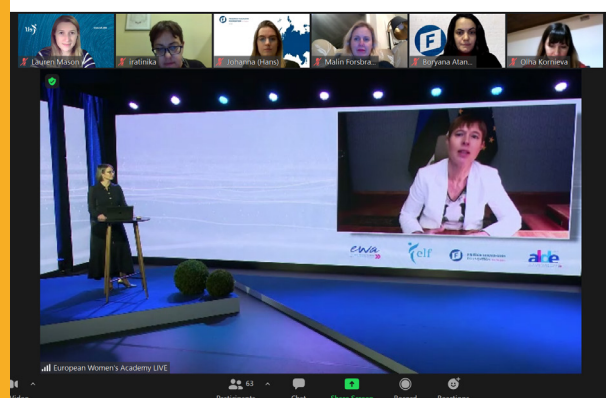
The European Women's Academy in Eastern Europe was a state-of-the-art training and capacity-building programme for women in politics. The programme included training sessions on personal branding, communication, media relations, public relations, fundraising and data analysis.



European Women's Academy in Western Europe

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation

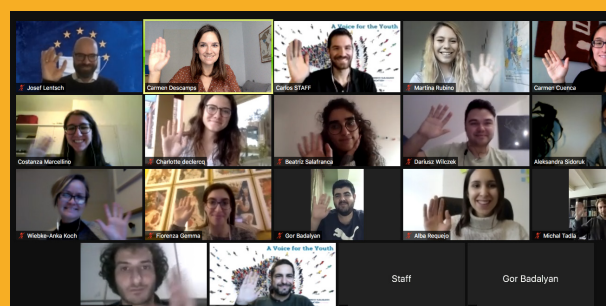
The European Women's Academy this year focused on a celebratory almunae session bringing together participants and trainers from the EWA Family over the last few years for a high-level online summit. As a result of the reflection, EWA has rebranded into The Alliance of Her.



A Voice for the Youth

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation

A Voice for the Youth was a two-stage policy development and lobbying initiative for young leaders across Europe. The first stage took place in an online workshop, where they met with relevant stakeholders to develop two coherent policy proposals; later they lobbied for these proposals to the Renew Europe Group and EU institutions from Brussels.





The Euro-MENA Freedom Project

Supported by Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)

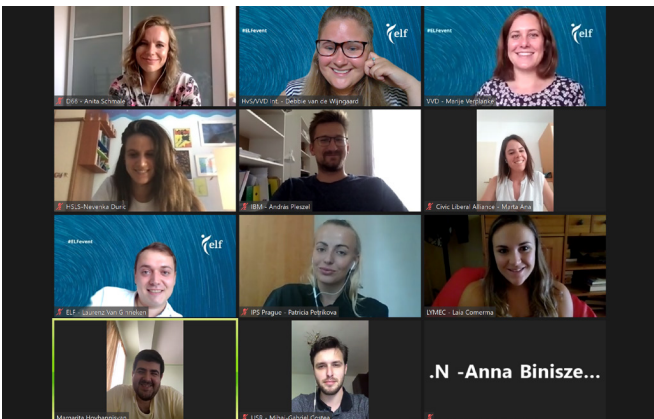
The “Euro-MENA Freedom Project” constituted the blueprint to achieve constructive cooperation between the liberal networks of Europe and the MENA region. The project aimed to represent a liberal call to counter extremism, create innovative solutions for socio-economic threats, and consolidate efforts through a common 2025 agenda.



ELF HUB at The Freedom Games 2020

Supported by Fundacja Liberté!

The ELF HUB at the 2020 Freedom Games was an exclusive part of the Games – an interdisciplinary forum of ideas – bringing together academics, politicians, thinkers, writers, and NGO leaders to explore ideas of Freedom in society, politics, and cultural domains. ELF’s hub at the hybrid conference based in Łódź sought to further reinforce European dialogue on vital issues from the liberal perspective.



ELF Studio Europe

Supported by Haya van Someren Stichting / VVD Internationaal

ELF Studio Europe brought together young and up-and-coming professionals from all around Europe, who were engaged in education and training programmes while focusing on finding answers to the challenges that liberalism faces in the 21st century.



Tell Me Your Story

Supported by Haya van Someren Stichting / VVD Internationaal
Tell Me Your Story built on a series of advanced workshops for communication officers from all over Europe on storytelling and use of emotions in messaging. This year, a publication entitled "Scary Stories" looked into the discourse of fear used in countries such as Poland and Hungary both by populist leaders and by opposition groups, along with the impact this had on the rationalisation and justification of political positions.

Digital Czech Republic 2020

Supported by Institute for Politics and Society (IPPS)

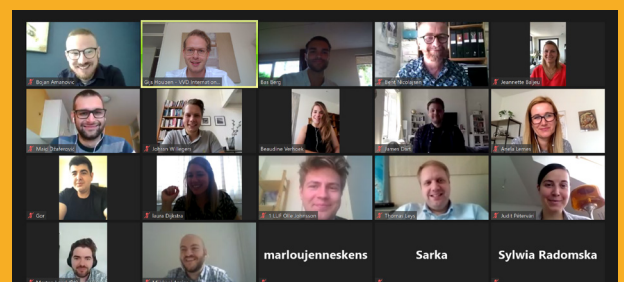
The conference Digital Czech Republic 2020 was the fifth edition of this high-level conference attracting tech companies, start-ups, government officials, politicians, and think tankers. Taking the example of the Czech Republic, the conference explores how Europe can open up to technology whilst taking in its stride the new challenges presented in the field.



Liberal Leadership Academy 2020

Supported by Haya van Someren Stichting / VVD Internationaal

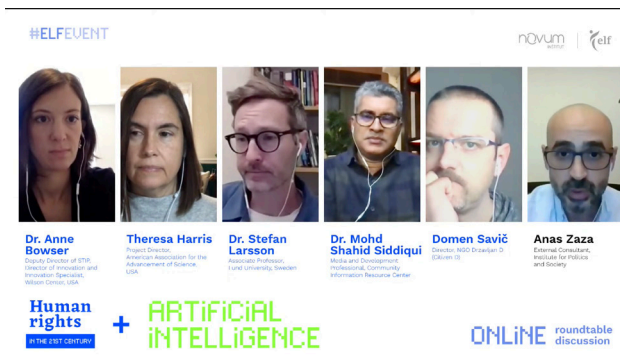
This Liberal Leadership Academy consisted of multiple workshops where a selected group of participants was trained on different personal and professional skills necessary for being active citizens in the public arena.



Multiple Challenges for Transatlantic Partnerships

Supported by Institute for Politics and Society (IPPS)

This conference was the fifth instalment of the Multiple Challenges series. The project focused on how the relationship between the U.S. and the EU – two key global partners – has developed during a complicated period. Touching on the economic, political, and defence fields, the status quo of the relationship was analysed by top experts from both sides of the Atlantic.



Human Rights in the 21st Century

Supported by NOVUM – Institute for strategic and applicable research

In 2018 the world celebrated the anniversaries of the UDHR and ECHR. Both documents are being challenged by the rise of illiberal political systems and complex issues, including rights to privacy and freedom of expression, AI, and the threat climate change poses to life, food, and water. The project aimed to discuss the opportunities and challenges for Human Rights in the 21st century.



European Trainers Academy

Supported by International Educational Centre, Haya van Someren Stichting / VVD Internationaal, Stichting IDI/ D66 International

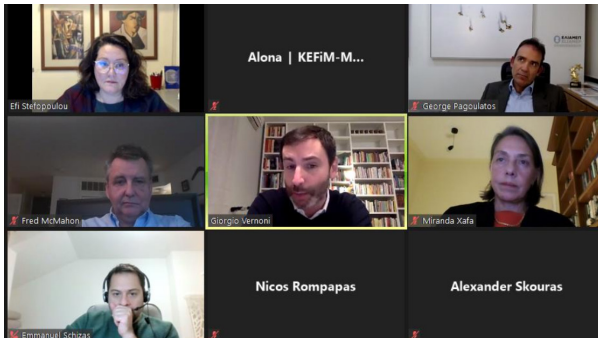
This project aimed at establishing an ELF framework for the training of trainers to further promote capacity building and improve the quality of training across the liberal network.



Regional Policy Network

Supported by International Educational Centre, Haya van Someren Stichting / VVD Internationaal, Stichting IDI / D66 International

Regional Policy Network represented a comprehensive capacity-building programme that trained and empowered policy advisors and experts in Central and Southeast Europe, focusing on how to better understand, communicate, and shape policy.



EU Accession and Economic Freedom

Supported by Centre for Liberal Studies – Markos Dragoumis (KEFiM)

Previous studies have failed to demonstrate a strong correlation between EU membership and increases in economic freedom. This project devised a methodology for which to test this and went on to explore the correlation between the EU accession period and Economic Freedom, finding that some of the core elements were trade, protection of property rights, quality of regulation, and moderation of currency.

EU Enlargement in the next 5 years. Moving the Western Balkans Forward

Supported by Liberal Integration Foundation

Gathering top politicians from the Western Balkans and from the EU, including Commissioner Varhelyi, this hybrid conference addressed the question of EU enlargement in the next 5 years. Hoping to serve as a plea for moving the Western Balkans forward in the EU agenda, this conference also discussed the main stumbling blocks and challenges to the region's EU integration and how to address them.

ELF Executive Class

Supported by Centre for Liberal Studies – Markos Dragoumis (KEFiM)

In accordance with ELF's mandate to strengthen the liberal and democrat movement in Europe, the creation of this training programme aimed to improve the capacity and effectiveness of ELF MOs by providing a state-of-the-art course on think tank capacity. This course has been tailor-made for think tank leaders from the ELF network of 46 MOs who are interested in learning from industry experts and sharing knowledge with their peers.



Liberal Europe Podcast and Videocast

Supported by Movimento Liberal Social

Following on from two successful seasons, the Liberal European Podcast continued for a third year, welcoming top guests from around the continent to discuss issues of European interest with host Ricardo Silvestre. Additionally, this year's podcast has been supplemented by a videocast, bringing in video content, like short documentaries and explanatory videos, proven to be a good way to convey liberal values or policies.



Basic Social Security in the 21st Century

Supported by NEOS Lab

What does social security in the 21st century mean, and how can it be designed? In an era of new forms of mobility, a revolution of the working environment, and a fast-changing demographic, social security systems need to adapt. This project aimed to develop a common European understanding, discussing basic income theories and experiments, as well as innovative ways to reform social security systems from a liberal perspective.



It's the Environment, Stupid! Liberal Climate Change Solutions

Supported by NEOS Lab

How we manage the transition to an ecologically sustainable economic and industrial system is a key question for the 21st century, which is often answered with illiberal solutions like bans and regulations. Through a study and workshop, the project aimed to create a liberal vision for climate change policies and showcase successful existing best-practice solutions.



Hate Speech at the Service of Politics

Supported by Projekt: Polska

This project explored how hate speech has been instrumentalised for political gains. It culminated in a comparative study on hate speech as a prevalent component of the identity of the populist movement in all 27 EU member states, bringing examples from each country, and the relevant responses (or lack thereof) from public bodies, political parties, and civil society.

Internal Migration in the European Union: Liberal Answers

Supported by Republikon Foundation for Science, Education and Research (Republikon Foundation)

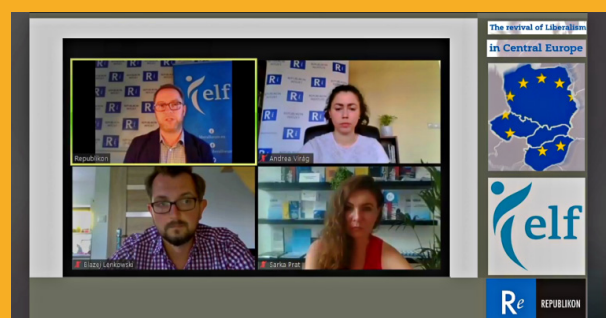
This project aimed to assess and discuss the consequences of internal migration in the EU. The project pointed out that the free movement of the workforce should promote a European single market, global competitiveness, and stability, not social and political disturbance. It also looked into the impact of Brexit with regards to internal migration, and the closing of borders during the COVID-19 pandemic.



The Future of the Liberal Visegrad Project

Supported by Republikon Foundation for Science, Education and Research (Republikon Foundation)

This project assessed the political relevance of the Visegrad cooperation. Despite getting a lot of bad press when it comes to liberal standards, there is potential for the Visegrad group to draw on its historical roots and pursue a course of liberal politics. The publication analysed the liberal roots of the cooperation, the role of the V4 in the EU, the neighbourhood policies of the group, the illiberal tendencies, and the future of liberal democracy in the Visegrad countries.



COVID-19 & Human Rights

Supported by Republikon Foundation for Science, Education and Research (Republikon Foundation)

This project assessed the illiberal tendencies, freedom restrictions related to emergency measures, and centralisation during the COVID-19 pandemic and the subjective perception of such tendencies in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia. Furthermore, the project analysed whether the emergency situations and special measures undertaken by central governments could have an irreversible effect on human rights and individual freedom. Thus, it focused on citizens' reactions and attitudes.



Hacking Europe's Future

Supported by Stichting Internationaal Democratisch Initiatief (Stichting IDI)

Hacking Europe's Future was a one-day conference and two-day brainstorming event, which focused on rebranding and reimagining Europe. The project aimed to build on reform ideas for Europe, elaborated in an ELF white paper, to redefine the interaction between leaders and citizens regarding the EU, and promote citizens' demands for greater vision and substance.



EU Mentorship 2020: WB and EaP Integration to the EU

Supported by Stichting Internationaal Democratisch Initiatief (Stichting IDI)

The project provided political mentorship to liberal political activists in non-EU Western Balkan countries and Eastern Partnership member states. It aimed to prepare them for EU accession processes, as well as push the topic of future EU enlargement beyond the simple 'pro et contra' arguments onto more solution-oriented discussions.



Mission: New Engagement

Supported by Stichting Internationaal Democratisch Initiatief (Stichting IDI)

Mission: New Engagement focused on modern membership and innovative forms of civic engagement. Through interactive workshops, it looked for new ways of activating people in political organisations and fresh ideas for using social activism in politics. Building on the 2019 edition, the topic for 2020 was "Is Online Better Than Offline?".

My Academy | E-Learning Platform

Supported by Stichting Internationaal Democratisch Initiatief (Stichting IDI)

As liberals, we believe in personal development and life-long learning. To stimulate this within the European liberal community, "My Academy" a common e-learning space, was created. My Academy aimed to open up e-learning platform on current topics and political skills, tapping into the expertise of liberals across Europe.



Growing Old in Europe - how the North and South Treat Older Adults

Supported by Svenska bildningsförbundet (SBF)

Europeans are living longer lives, while nativity is down. This study focused on how we can be more inclusive of older adults, how their skill sets could contribute to society even after retirement, and the differences of societal inclusion in northern and southern Europe.

Tax measures and other governmental responses to COVID-19 pandemic

Supported by Zavod 14

Following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, governments and public institutions have had recourse to different solutions. Through a series of research papers, this project looked at challenges and opportunities for public organisations and higher education institutions.



Policy & Research

If 2020 had a profile online, it would have the worst reviews ever. It was a year full of uncertainty, restrictions, and cancelled plans. A lonely year. A year that forced everyone out of their comfort zones. But it was also a year that called for resilience, a strong resolve to overcome these difficulties and continue pursuing our goals.

“Some see 2020 as the end of an era; for us in the Policy and Research Unit it was – quite literally – a new beginning.”

The Policy and Research Unit was created amidst a pandemic with the mission to monitor, analyse, and contribute to the debates on European public policy, support member organisations, and promote ELF’s purpose and objectives.

Despite everything, we managed to adapt to the new working conditions and lay the foundations for an exciting future ahead of us.

With the publication of our first Discussion Papers, we initiated a new series of research formats that will become a launching pad for evidence-based policy proposals and the liberal ideas of our network. With the launch of our first blogpost series – London Calling and Spotlight European Integration – we established our intention to stir discussion on the pressing issues of European policy, adapt to a fast-paced news cycle, and use flexible publication formats to get our message across.

In 2020 we also launched our internal newsletter. Every two weeks, the Liberal Wire keeps you up to date with latest developments in Brussels and the EU institutions, but also features events, publications, calls, and other activities that take place within our network. We plan to keep this momentum: in supporting our member organisations and leveraging the power of our network; in strengthening our partnership with the ALDE Party and the Renew Europe Group in the European Parliament; and in conducting timely, evidence-based research that matters to those who set policies.

Dr Antonios Nestoras, ELF Policy and Research Coordinator

4

Discussion papers

2

Blogpost series

1

Bi-weekly newsletter

Our 2020 papers:

1/2020 - Banking Union: imminent crisis and possible solutions

**Authors: Graham Bishop, independent consultant on EU financial affairs
Giuseppe Russo, Managing Director of the Centro Einaudi**

The Banking Union is an essential pillar of the Economic and Monetary Union. However, it is still not completed and not as resilient and weather-proof as one would wish. In this ELF Discussion Paper, two distinguished authors analyse the imminent crisis and possible solutions: Giuseppe Russo proposes to prevent banking crises at the micro-level through the use of predictive systems that employ artificial intelligence, while Graham Bishop analyses the proposals to counter the current crisis, arguing for a temporary Eurobill Fund and the capitalisation of banks.

ISSN: 2684-6667 - DOI: 10.53121/ELFDP

2/2020 – Post-Pandemic Legislatures: Is real democracy possible with virtual parliaments?

Authors: Olivier Rozenberg, Associate Professor, Sciences Po Paris

Legislatures are crucial for functioning democracies. The Corona virus has changed them. This ELF Discussion Paper by Olivier Rozenberg asks if real democracy is possible with virtual parliaments. The author challenges the thesis of a parliamentary backlash and assesses the hypothesis of virtual parliaments.

ISSN: 2684-6667 - DOI: 10.53121/ELFDP1

3/2020 – Nothing is lasting without institutions: Setting the scene for the Liberal White Book Europe 2030

**Authors: Renaud Dehousse, President, European University Institute
Simon Hix, Harold Laski Professor of Political Science, London School of Economics**

European integration relies on well-functioning institutions. This ELF Discussion Paper is based on the contributions by Simon Hix and Renaud Dehousse to ELF's Expert Forum on the Future Institutional Framework, which took place on 3 July 2020 as the launch event of the process towards the Liberal White Book Europe 2030. The two distinguished authors offer their perspectives on "Rethinking the institutional framework" and on "Institutional change in the post-Lisbon period".

ISSN: 2684-6667 - DOI: 10.53121/ELFDP2

4/2020 – Achieving robust European cybersecurity through public-private partnerships: Approaches and developments

Authors: Francesco Cappelletti and Prof. Luigi Martino

In this publication, the authors point to the cooperation between public and private sectors as a fundamental step to developing a harmonised European threat response system. Luigi Martino provides a detailed description of the regulatory aspect of these collaborations between European public and private actors. Francesco Cappelletti examines how these partnerships could stimulate the development of a single European cybersecurity market.

ISSN: 2684-6667 - DOI: 10.53121/ELFDP3

Blogpost series

London Calling

London Calling is the European Liberal Forum's column aimed at bridging the Channel. After Brexit, something changed, but as liberals, we kept the dialogue open and discussion going while stimulating interest in the future of European-UK relations. With the help and coordination of Irina von Wiese, former MEP, in 2020 we invited authors, academics, and politicians from the UK to reflect upon the future of EU-UK relations, political developments in the UK, and the future of the EU with 27 Member States and the Covid-19 crisis.

Spotlight European Integration

The Spotlight European Integration series tracks the progress of EU enlargement from a liberal perspective, looking at Europe's future. Eminent authors from Eastern Europe contributed to this series to stimulate discussion on issues of EU membership and neighbourhood policies, keep track of geopolitical changes in the area, and offer an interesting perspective on essential issues for the future of European integration. The coordinator for this series of blogposts was Emil Kirjas, Nominal Vice President of Liberal International.

Publications

ELF's research output grew from strength-to-strength in 2020.

A key turning point was the establishment of our own in-house research team, headed by Dr Antonios Nestoras. This allowed us to drive research and policy papers on topics including the future of a European banking union, the efficacy of virtual parliaments, and an outlook on UK-EU relations.

Similarly, the collaborations with our member think tanks and foundations saw us explore topics including:

- border carbon adjustment mechanisms;
- litigation as a climate tool;
- human-centred AI in the EU;
- EU-China relations and cyberspace;
- EU accession and economic freedom;
- challenges to free movement within the EU;
- ageing in Europe and new social security structures.

Our handbooks on a range of topics directly empowered citizens, offering them: tools for citizen-driven e-democracy, e-governance options, communications tips for human rights defenders, and how to recognise hate speech used for political gain.

All our publications are available for free download on our website.

ELF's research output grew from strength-to-strength in 2020.

Our 2020 publications:

Audiobook "Fear of the Future"

Given that the population is growing, and we are becoming better educated, it is reasonable to expect that we will be able to come up with new and better solutions to the problems we face. The world is not getting worse; it is getting more complex. This audiobook, composed of five sections, aimed to remind people about how much better the world has become over the past few decades. This publication used a discussion of current problems as its starting point and offers solutions that could contribute to a better future—as well as giving us fewer reasons to be worried about it.

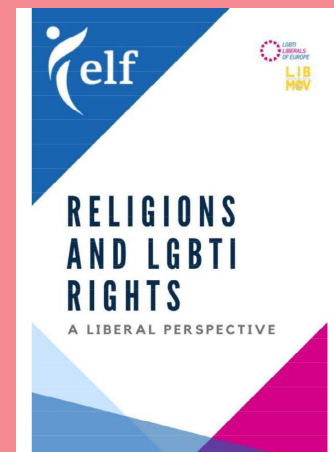


Religions and LGBTI rights

Authors: Tommaso Virgili and Matteo Gemolo

Associazione LibMov, Movimento Liberale (LibMov)

In both past and present times, LGBTI advocates have hardly found allies among institutionalised religions. The complex relationship between LGBTI rights and religions should therefore be discussed openly and frankly, in both its positive and negative outcomes. In this effort, this paper reviews religious and sexual identities and analyses a religion's place in liberal society.



The Voice of Youth

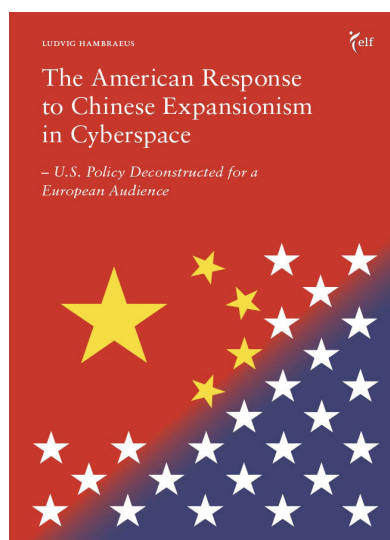
Authors: Vanchov Dimitar; Dimitrovksa Teodora et al.

Editors: Amina Efendić & Faris Šehović

Boris Divkovic Foundation (BDF)

The objectives of this project are to provoke and raise awareness among the youth on the importance of not only their political participation but also their very much-needed political activism. The youth represents a group that is often marginalized in policymaking to encourage their empowerment, they need to stay united and articulate the problems they are facing sharply. Therefore, the project that resulted in "The Voice of Youth" is given to the participants of CPLA as a tool to write about the issues that they have recognised as problems in their societies.

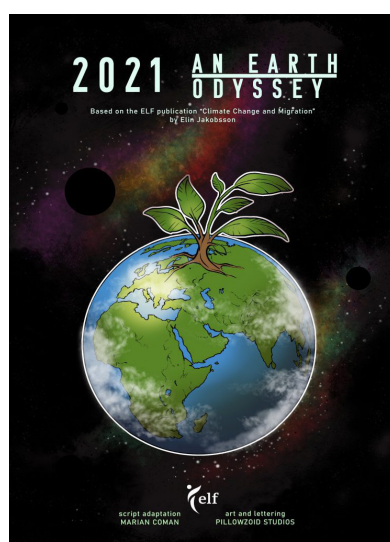




The American Response to Chinese Expansionism: US Defense Policy Deconstructed for a European context

Authors: Ludvig Hambræus and Katarina Tracz
Centre Party International Foundation (CPIF)

U.S. private equity extraordinaire Stephen Schwartzman outlined it well: “In the 21st Century, China is no longer an elective, it is core curriculum”. The aim of this publication is to aid European decision makers and stakeholders towards a greater understanding of one of the foundational issues of the 21st century.



2021: An Earth Odyssey

Novel Author: Marian Coman
Based on writing by: Elin Jakobsson
European Liberal Forum (ELF)

This graphic novel is an interactive odyssey to the past and into the future of climate migration. The reader will understand how the international community and the EU have dealt with this issue in the past and why we have not yet found adequate measures to prepare for the challenge and nor to respond to it. This publication further looks at the policies needed to address the diverse and wide scope of the phenomenon.



Liberal White Book - Digital publication

Editor: Antonios Nestoras
European Liberal Forum (ELF)

The world is changing faster than ever. The choices we make today will define what the EU looks like ten years down the road. The Liberal White Book: Europe 2030 highlights the challenges that the EU faces and presents a range of policy options in the form of future scenarios: will the EU muddle through the next decade or will it change fundamentally to own its future? This publication is a point of reference for liberal policymakers who want to shape Europe's next decade.

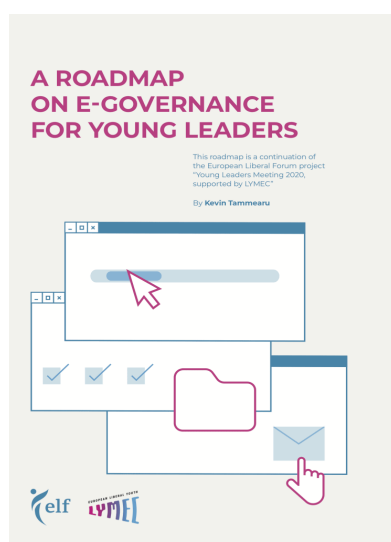


Values First? Promoting EU norms through trade

Authors: A. Alvarez, R. Bolkun, C. Constantinescu, B.Ó Cruaíoch, H. Huizer, D. Ilkevic, C. Jefferies, A. Komziuk, G. Kovács, A. Mehmedov, V. Neustroev, K. Onishchuk, T. Schouteten

European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)

This publication is a compilation of essays written by the participants in the ELF seminar “Values First? Promoting EU norms through trade!”, which took place in Luxembourg in the beginning of March 2020. The authors of the essays are members of LYMEC member organisations and individual members, all young liberals from across Europe.



Roadmap for young leaders on e-governance

Author: Kevin Tammearu

European Liberal Youth (LYMEC)

Good governance and public administration are inherently challenging tasks, given their multi-stakeholder nature and the ever-changing demands and needs of citizens. And perhaps it is this challenging nature that calls upon liberal-minded and entrepreneurial leaders to emerge, take up political, administrative, and organisational leadership positions, and drive meaningful, positive change. However, some conceptual frameworks need to be considered for this change to be feasible and for it to be sustainable.



Transparency at Stake: National Responses in Facing Challenges due to Covid-19 Pandemic

Editor: Gian Marco Bovenzi

Fondazione Luigi Einaudi

In this comparative study, the authors analyse the policy responses to the COVID-19 pandemic adopted by the governments of several Member States: Italy, Poland, Bulgaria, Slovenia, the Netherlands, and Hungary. The goal was to answer the question of whether governments have ensured citizen's rights to access information or if transparency was rather put “at stake”.

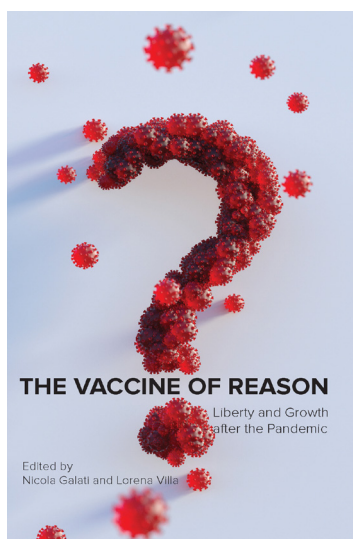


Next Generation EU: A Southern-Northern Dialogue

Editor: Gian Marco Bovenzi

Fondazione Luigi Einaudi

This comparative study aims at ensuring a dialogue between the two “Southern-Northern” European macro-regions - here represented by Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, and Spain - for an inclusive, resilient, and dynamic reprise of the EU. The publication offers a liberal perspective on the national policies pursued within the Next Generation EU framework. In each chapter, the authors highlight the policy priorities of their own countries.

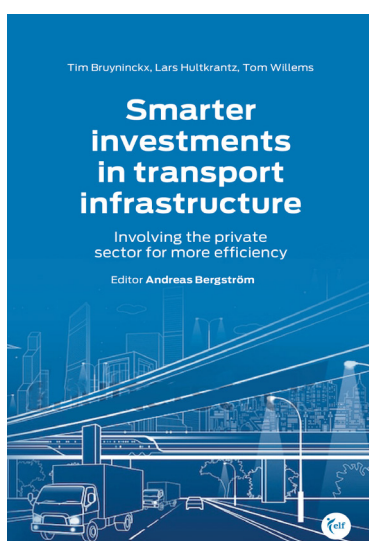


The Vaccine of Reason: Liberty and Growth after the Pandemic

Editors: Nicola Galati, Lorena Villa

Fondazione Luigi Einaudi

No one can say whether implementing restrictive measures at the beginning of the pandemic was the right choice, as the counterevidence cannot be provided. No one can say whether the economic damage could have been avoided. This book presents a deep analysis of the current economic situation caused by the pandemic in Italy. It touches upon diverse issues from economics to politics, international relations, and government accountability.



Smarter investments in transport infrastructure: Involving the private sector for more efficiency

Authors: Tim Bruyninckx, Lars Hultrantz, Tom Willem

Editor: Andreas Bergström

Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

Experience shows that investments in transport infrastructure often do not end up as planned. Costs are often underestimated and projects delayed. One way to reduce these problems lies in greater involvement of the private sector. This summary of research in the field provides examples from Belgium and Scandinavian countries and concludes with recommendations for decision-makers.



See you in court – the Effectiveness of Litigation as a Climate Tool

Author: Kristina Forsbacka

Editor: Ruben Henriksson

Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

Climate litigation is being increasingly admitted in courts, and this development is likely to continue. The purpose of the study is to better understand how, and if, climate litigation can be used to tackle global warming alongside common challenges and potential gains. It also identifies a range of ways to proceed on this path.



Human-centred AI in the EU

Editors: Stefan Larsson et al.

Authors: Pedro Rubim Borges Fortes et al.

Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

The European approach to AI points to ethical considerations, human control, and trustworthiness. From this anthology, the reader can learn to what extent the notions of ethical and trustworthy AI, presented by the High-Level Expert Group on AI and the European Commission, have influenced AI strategies in Portugal, the Netherlands, Italy, the Czech Republic, Poland, Norway, and the Nordics overall.



Border Carbon Adjustments and Climate Clubs in the EU context

Author: Rikard Forslid

Editor: Ruben Henriksson

Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

Global warming poses a major policy challenge for politicians around the globe. The increasing temperature is caused by anthropogenic green-house gas (GHG) emissions. This publication discusses the rationales for border carbon adjustments (BCAs) and carbon clubs in the context of the EU's trade policy.



EU ETS: Reform needs in the light of national policies

Authors: Milan Elkerbout and Lars Zetterberg

Editor: Ruben Henriksson

Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

The EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) is often described as the cornerstone of the EU's climate policy. Changes to the ETS will be proposed in 2021, and this publication aims to deepen the understanding of the EU ETS and give an analysis of the reform options being discussed.



Pieces of the Puzzle: Managing Migration in the EU

Author: Bernd Parusel

Editor: Therese Lindström

Forum for Reforms, Entrepreneurship and Sustainability (FORES)

This study explores the problems of the existing European asylum system, identifies core issues to be resolved, and proposes potential future scenarios. Through looking at the past and the present, this study aims to offer possible liberal solutions to a difficult issue.



Improving Communication on Human Rights ("A Guide to using audio-visual means of communication and building your {social} media presence")

Editor: Tony Skoric

Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)

In order to reach out to people defending human rights, we need to discover and adopt more effective ways of communication. The reader will acquire guidelines on how to use audio-visual storytelling and audience targeting to get a message across as well as practical takeaways for managing social media and media relations.



Internet Voting: The Reality of Our Times?

Authors: Victor Guzun, Kevin Tammearu, Ana-Maria Stancu, Alexandru Balmoș

Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)

I-Voting could be a future solution for millions of citizens living abroad, especially for the diaspora in Eastern Europe, having much more restricted access to this basic democratic exercise.

This policy paper addresses general considerations on i-Voting, its introduction of it in Romania and in the Republic of Moldova, and future perspectives on the topic.



Next-level participation: Citizen-driven e-democracy tools

Editor: Ivaylo Tsonev

Author: Fredrick Nahr

Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)

Today, a great part of people's day-to-day activities rely on digital applications and services. Imagining a world without the internet becomes increasingly difficult. By arguing that digital technologies could have growing potential in relation to democratic processes, the author helps to understand how the use of digital tools can be applied to enhance citizen participation in democracy.



MENA-EU Cooperation: Providing Answers to Challenges That Impede Fruitful Cooperation Between the MENA and EU

Author: Lara Saade, Friso Rip

Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)

Due to shared challenges such as migration, energy transition, radical Islam, and climate change, Europe and the MENA region are struggling to cooperate successfully. The authors of this paper analyse and suggest possible responses to the challenges that impede fruitful cooperation between the MENA and EU.



Regional Policy Network – A Question of Policy About journeys of liberal ideas

Author: Jasmina Mršo

International Educational Centre (IEC)

This handbook gathers some of the best liberal practices adopted across Europe with regards to defining policy cycles from a liberal perspective and methodology for policymaking. It can be used as a guide on how to influence internal policy and a way to identify best approaches for developing liberal policies.



Terrorism in Europe: Who is behind it and how to prevent it

Author: Jan Havlíček

Institute for Politics and Society (IPPS)

In Autumn 2020, Europe faced a series of terrorist attacks that have shown the unreliability of deradicalisation programmes and a systemic failure of the counterterrorism policy. This publication aims to identify and critically analyse the causes of these recent attacks in Europe. It also offers a set of recommendations to proactively combat terrorism.

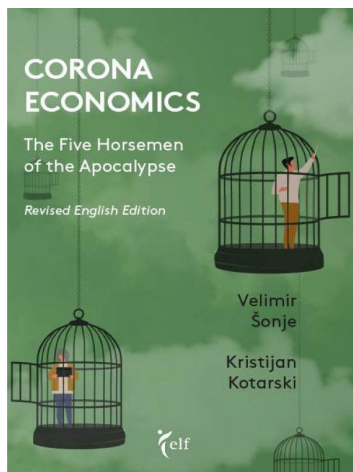


Safer Internet for Kids and Youth

Authors: Martin Kožišek, Martina Viewegová, Jan Kolouch, Kamil Kopecký, Yana Humen

Institute for Politics and Society (IPPS) - Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF)

This is a thorough analysis of the dangers children may encounter on the internet, including cyberstalking, sexting, cyberbullying, and sexual exploitation. The reader will understand how these risks affect their behaviour and mental wellbeing. Finally, the authors address possible solutions within the household, the legal framework, and the education system.



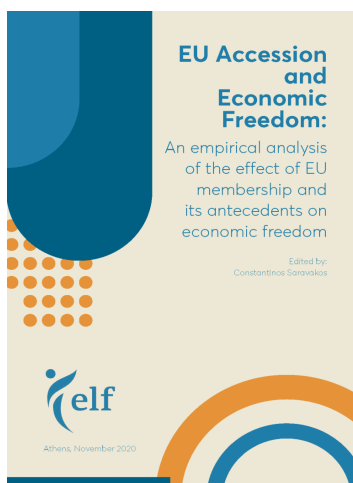
Corona Economics: The Five Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Authors: Velimir Šonje and Kristijan Kotarski

Editor: Antonios Nestoras

International Educational Centre (IEC)

The authors examine the external and internal factors which have influenced not only the decision-making process during the pandemic but also the very fundamental values of liberal democracy in Europe. They delve into the Chinese totalitarian model of coronavirus management and identify five risks associated with the adoption of public policies modelled on the Chinese approach in Europe.



EU Accession and Economic Freedom: empirical analysis of the effect of EU membership

Editor: Constantinos Saravakos

Centre for Liberal Studies – Markos Dragoumis (KEFiM)

The process of EU accession is generally associated with increased economic freedom. The key mechanism behind this phenomenon is arguably the freedom to trade, mainly due to the elimination of many types of barriers to trade in goods within the European Union and favourable terms offered to accession candidates, typically as part of an Association Agreement.



EU accession and political freedom

Editor: Constantinos Saravakos

Authors: Emmanuel Schizas et al.

Centre for Liberal Studies – Markos Dragoumis (KEFiM)

Along with the refugee crisis and the rise of populism, the recent deterioration in civil liberties in EU member states calls into question the EU's willingness and ability to protect its values. Based on empirical evidence of how the European integration impacts political freedom in a country, the authors examine whether processes towards EU membership might result in citizens enjoying higher political freedoms.

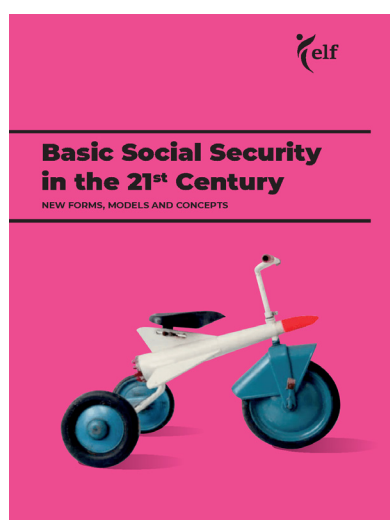


The Enlargement of the EU: A New Approach and Perspective for the Western Balkans

Author: Valentin Tonchev

Liberal Integration Foundation

The EU enlargement policy aims to unite the EU Member States in a common political and economic project. It also contributes to strengthening the EU's presence on the global scene. This is a geostrategic investment in our pursuit of a stable, strong, and united Europe based on common values as well as democratic governance and respect for fundamental rights.



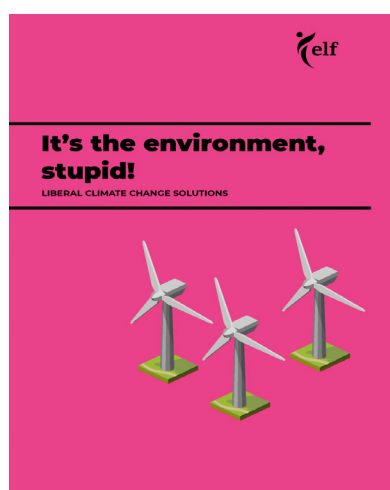
Basic social security in the 21st century

Author: Christiane Varga

Editor: Dieter Feierabend

NEOS Lab

How may modern basic social security systems cope with a transforming society and new work-life realities and thus reflect the complexity and diversity of a constantly changing European society? Addressing this question, the author presents European and national policymakers with a range of recommendations to create new opportunities and legal frameworks for basic social security systems.



It's the environment, stupid!

Author: Andrzej Ancygier

Editor: Dieter Feierabend

NEOS Lab

Despite the ongoing pandemic, European politicians should not lose the focus on future challenges such as the effects of rising greenhouse gas emissions. This study aims to provide the basis for liberal discussions on climate change and suggests the direction the European Union and its member states may consider when determining future climate policies.



Social Economy and Green Transformation (2nd Ed.)

Authors: Anastasia Costantini, David P. Ellerman, Tej Gonza, Urša Zgojznik, Felicita Medved and Sebastjan Pikl

NOVUM – Institute for strategic and applicable research

The focus of this study lies in bringing together two fields—the social and circular economy—and examining how, together, they can play an important role in shifting towards a more sustainable, fair, and democratic European Union. By introducing social enterprises to the circular economy, we can arguably strengthen the benefits of both domains and create new multiplier effects.

They are brazen, feral, anthropoids that demand pay without work and collect sickness benefits without being sick. US/THEM They receive child benefits for children Hate Speech at the Service of Politics that play with pigs on the street, and for women that have the instincts of stray dogs*/ edited by Miłosz Hodun



US/THEM: Hate Speech at the Service of Politics

Editor: Miłosz Hodun

Fundacja Projekt: Polska

This collection of position papers assesses the problem of hate speech across the EU from different perspectives. The reader is presented with a thorough analysis of the current status of hate speech in each of the 27 Member States: how it affects politics, how and via which channels it is promoted, and whom it targets. The authors also provide national and transnational solutions that governments could implement to fight against hate speech.



Scary Stories or the sum of all fears in political discourse in Poland and in Hungary

Authors: Dr Krzysztof Mączka, Dr Maciej Milewicz and Dr Miłosz Hodun

Editors: Andrea Virág and Dr Dániel Mikecz

Fundacja Projekt: Polska

Fear-based discourses among government and liberal opposition supporters in Poland and Hungary constitute the focus of this publication. It draws on interviews and workshops to identify and describe different narratives and understand the target audience of fear-inducing arguments and how the latter are justified, explained, and rationalised.



The state of human rights during the COVID-19 pandemic in East-Central Europe

Editor: Dániel Mikecz

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

With its assessment of lockdown measures implemented in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia, this study analyses the impact of such restrictions on human rights. It provides a thorough overview of the publics' reaction to these measures and searches for the best liberal approach to developing internal policies on this issue.



The Future of the Liberal Visegrad project

Editor: Dániel Mikecz

Authors: Milosz Hodun, Sarka Prat, Istvan Szent-Ivanyi, Viera Zuburova

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

By following a journey from the origins to the present and into the future of the Visegrad Group, the reader will understand how it became a platform for cooperation among populists. The authors analyse current developments and provide an optimistic vision of the future for the Visegrad Group.



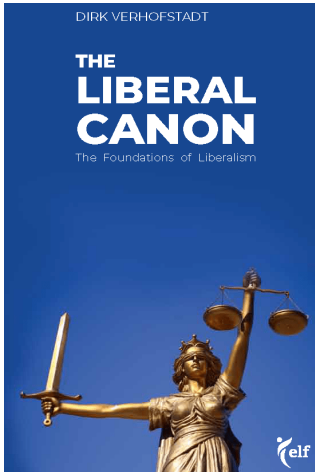
Challenges facing free movement in the European Union after Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic

Editor: Dániel Mikecz

Authors: Carmen Descamps, Nils Erik Forsgard, Giulio Saputo, Andrea Virag, Bianka Demeter, Dora Pakai, Kamilla Kiraly, Marton Gera,

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

The current state of internal migration in the European Union is assessed through the effect of Brexit, the rise of the populist right, and ageing in Europe as well as the workforce shortage and brain drain in new member states.



The Liberal Canon: The Foundations of Liberalism

Author: Dirk Verhofstadt

Studiecentrum Albert Maertens (SAM)

The Liberal Canon serves as a useful guide for anyone seeking to learn more about liberalism. With the aid of the authors and their publications, this book aims to show how and to what extent thinkers from the past and today have left a lasting impact on one of the most successful ideologies of our time. ELF brings this Dutch classic to an English-speaking audience.

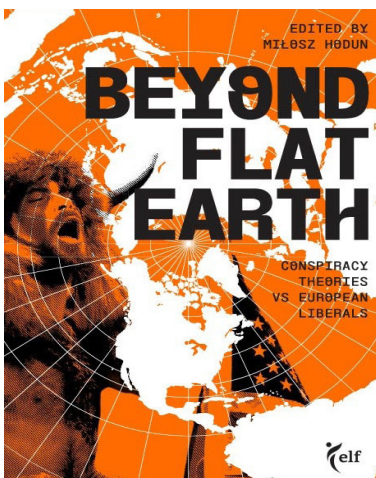


Ageing in Europe: from North to South

Authors: Maria Varlamova, Tamara Premrov, Michael Fuchs, Anna K. Forsman, Gian Marco Bovenzi & Felice Strollo

Svenska bildningsförbundet (SBF)

This white paper report covers: 1) synthesising EU wide statistics of key indicators related to the ageing population, 2) describing and comparing country-specific cases, and, finally, 3) the formulation of consensus-based recommendations – based on the synthesis of statistical data from selected key indicators and best practice policy examples identified from the partner countries.

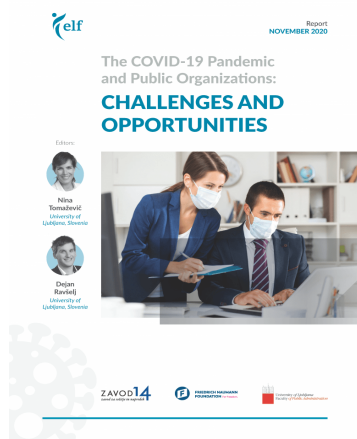


Beyond Flat Earth. Conspiracy Stories vs. European Liberals

Editor: Miłosz Hodun

**VVD Internationaal – Haya van Somerentichting/
Fundacja Projekt: Polska**

The authors attempt to explain what conspiracy theories are and how we can protect liberal democracy and the European Union against them. A discussion of the phenomenon from various perspectives — philosophical, psychological, policy, sociological — is followed by ideas on how to tackle the issue.

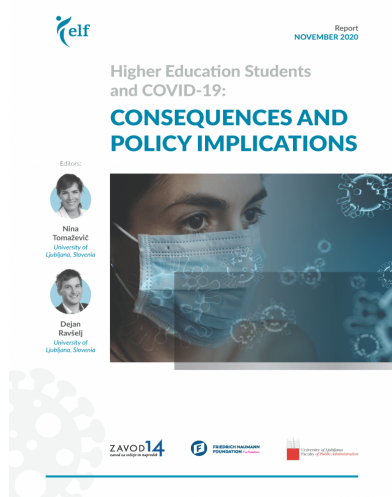


The COVID-19 Pandemic and Public organisations

Editors: Nina Tomažević, Dejan Ravšelj

Zavod 14

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly reshaped almost all aspects of societal relations, including administrative ones. Namely, in an unexpected circumstance like the Covid-19 crisis, the delivery of public services cannot be suspended and must be delivered in a different way, chiefly relying on the available digital technological capabilities and digital competencies. The study findings may assist in formulating commendations for the agile functioning of the public sector in line with the principles of good public governance.

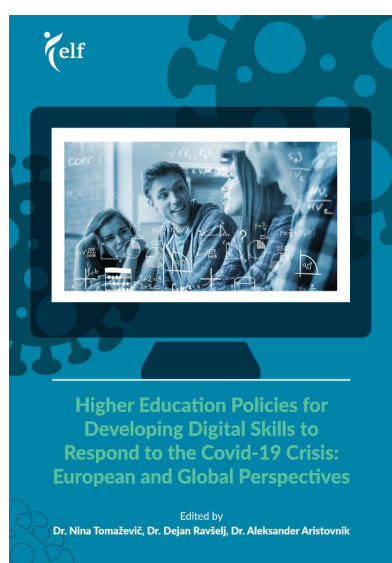


Higher Education Students and COVID-19

Editors: Nina Tomažević, Dejan Ravšelj

Zavod 14

To capture the immediate economic and social effects of the Covid-19 crisis, ELF and the University of Ljubljana launched a large-scale on-line survey across the world between 5 May and 15 June 2020. The on-line questionnaire targeted higher education students, asking what student life looked like during the pandemic, including teaching and learning, social contacts, and how students were coping with the situation emotionally in different parts of the world.



Higher Education Policies for Developing Digital Skills to Respond to the Covid-19 Crisis: European and Global Perspectives

Editors: Nina Tomažević, Dejan Ravšelj, Aleksander Aristovnik

Zavod 14

This is a thorough review of digital skills in education in Hungary, Romania, Italy, France, Portugal, Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Turkey, South Africa, Chile, and India. The authors analyse the effects of the pandemic in Higher Education Institutions in these countries. This helps to identify the policies needed to further develop digital skills in higher education.

My Academy

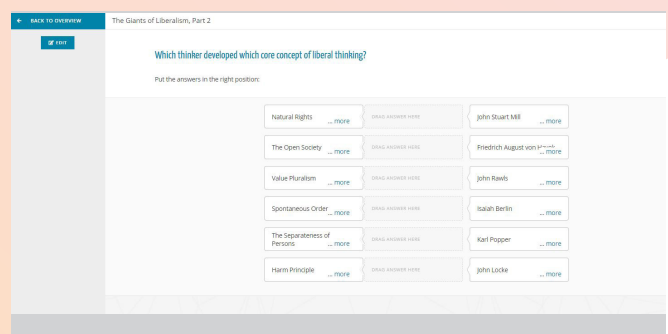
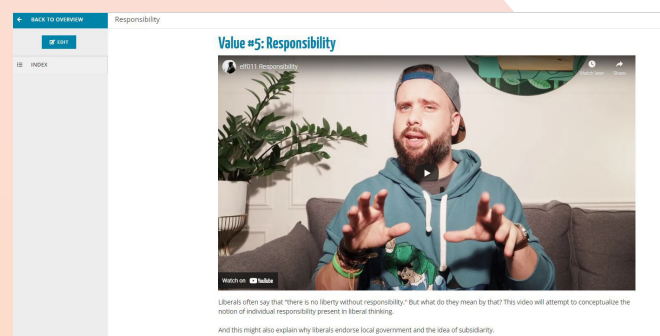
“I believe that ELF continuously encourages, inspires, and empowers its members by providing important training through the My Academy programme, which plays a key part in the enlargement and growing importance of our organisation.”

- Pieter van de Stadt, ELF Board Member

At a time when the pandemic risked driving us apart, the European Liberal Forum launched its own tailor-made online learning platform, My Academy, to help citizens stay connected to liberal ideas.

From the Fundamentals of Liberalism, an Introduction to Policy Development, to a crash course in youth activism, My Academy is a space where everyone can build on their skills and knowledge, wherever they may be!

Look out for more courses coming to our MyAcademy catalogue in 2021 and beyond.



Liberal Europe Podcast

“With Liberal Europe Podcast, we want to bring you the most interesting conversations and debates from different corners of our European continent.”

- Elina Baltatzi, ELF Communications Manager

Following a successful pilot phase in 2019, the Liberal Europe Podcast really came into its own in 2020, with 40 new episodes and almost 6000 listens.

Host Ricardo Silvestre from the Movimento Liberal Social in Portugal transported listeners each week across Europe and indeed across the globe to discuss some of the most pressing topics on the liberal agenda.

2020 saw podcasts covering populism, corruption, online governance, digital services, AI, climate clubs, human rights, education, and citizens' initiatives.

The Liberal Europe Podcast continued to attract knowledgeable and inspiring guests, including MEPs, researchers, think tankers, futurists, activists, NGO representatives, and members from the ELF network.

These bite-sized 30-minute snapshots offered listeners the chance to delve into the European angle of current challenges and policy questions. But we also got to know the people behind these ideas, what makes them tick, and how they were drawn to spend their days fighting for their ideals.

Testimonials



ELF has been invaluable in promoting much-needed liberal values, ideas, and solutions.”



Dita Charanzová

Vice President of the
European Parliament and
ALDE Party

2020 has been a very difficult year. The world was absorbed by the global Covid pandemic which touched essentially every aspect of our lives as we knew it and brought countless challenges. Protectionist voices have grown louder in response, but, as liberals, we know that the answer to emerging stronger from this crisis is together, through openness, cooperation, and free trade.

ELF has been invaluable in promoting much-needed liberal values, ideas, and solutions. As ALDE Party Vice President, I look forward to continuing our work together to make our liberal voice stronger.

Leading policy research, analysis, and debate to the heart of European policy while strengthening liberalism in the EU is what the European Liberal Forum excels in, and the pandemic that marked our work in 2020 did not change that.

Despite the difficult and swiftly changing circumstances, ELF continued to bring together political foundations, academics, and young people in order to shape the visions of active citizenship, defending liberal democracy across Europe and its neighbourhood.

In the aftermath of 2020, we need strong liberal debates, visions, and voices while we rebuild and recover; and I am happy that ALDE and ELF can lead this way together!



Ilhan Kyuchyuk MEP
Acting ALDE President

“
Strengthening
liberalism in the EU is
what ELF excels in.”



Antoaneta Asenova
LYMEC President

Throughout 2020, the European Liberal Forum continued providing training opportunities and platforms for discussion to young people from all across Europe.

It has been a key partnership for LYMEC to work together with ELF on getting young liberals prepared and equipped with the necessary toolbox to face the challenges and come up with solutions for the future we want to forge together.

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