



Annual Report 2021

Our most ambitious year yet.



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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



In 2021, we were confronted again with another arduous year, of both continuing and new challenges for Europeans and liberals alike.

Hilde Vautmans
MEP, Renew Europe Group and ELF President

Although the Covid pandemic continued to take its toll on the world, life at the European Liberal Forum was not put on hold in any way. On the contrary, we moved forward at full speed. It was a year of commitment, growth, and planting the seeds. By the end, we have achievements to celebrate and goals to set for the year ahead.

We kept our vision straight and focused causing exponential growth in our significance at ELF, providing policymakers with timely expertise and evidence-based analysis. By producing and curating a wealth of studies, publications, and expert discussions, it helped the liberal family respond to current developments while also anticipating and shaping them.

As a result of the disruption and instability we continue to face, we are dedicated to developing a more democratic, digital and greener future for Europe. It is essential to move ahead with the green-digital transition to build sustainability, and a fairer, more resilient economy. We are realistic that our common battles will not just disappear with a new year, and the EU must adapt and

address the issues effectively.

A lot needs to be done in 2022 to ensure a safe, united, and liberal future for Europe. This year has accentuated the urgency of systemic changes and long-pending decisions on several key fronts at once. But as liberals, we are always setting our sights on the future, the future that we want to see. We must use the opportunities presented to us and take the necessary steps towards unlocking the EU's full potential in being the source of reliability and trustworthiness for Europeans, our allies and citizens of the world. To protect liberal democracy daily and in times of crisis.

At ELF we will continue to evolve as a reliable, public forum for those who believe in the pean project and want to shape its future. We look forward to bringing our audience innovative new projects, influencing the policymaking agenda toward a truly renewed Europe.

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



With COVID-19 maintaining its grip on our continent, impacting our daily lives in ways we could have never imagined, we have continued to not only adapt to our circumstances but have excelled in our mission to promote, innovate and strengthen Liberalism in Europe.

Daniel Kaddik
ELF Executive Director

In our most ambitious year yet, we can rejoice in the many successful moments ELF and our Member Organisations have collectively made happen. First and foremost, we are proud to share that we hosted 180 events and more than 60 projects that took place across Europe and have contributed to our mission of building a European demos, most of which would not have been possible without the incredible cooperation of our liberal family.

One of our largest achievements was the launch of the Liberal White Book, the embodiment of the visionary work that the European Liberal Forum prides itself in. Featuring the contributions of over 200 experts, it was the vehicle for developing concrete, high-level policy proposals across eight key policy areas. With this, we took an active role in the Conference on the Future of Europe with a four-stop Liberal White Book Roadshow. Our final stop in Paris, honing in on the need for European Strategic Autonomy and highlighting the possibilities for the EU's Global Role was graced with the distinguished presence of MEPs and MPs including, Sandro Gozi, Guy Verhofstadt, Valerie Hayer, and our very own President, Hilde Vautmans.

This was swiftly followed by one of our fondest moments of 2021, when we launched the Future Europe Journal, the accumulation of the hard work and contributions from many excellent writers both in house and external. We believe that we can fill the existing gap between policy and research, and I look forward to seeing this ambitious journal grow in 2022.

We also held our first ever Liberal Awards Ceremony, which gave us the opportunity to celebrate the work of those who are carrying the flag for modern European liberalism, and who went the extra mile over the year. We must never forget to celebrate the liberal heroes of our time!

Despite all the obstacles, our community has never been broader! We grew our reach with impactful collaborations with globally influential publications such as Foreign Policy and Euractiv. We also established meaningful corporate partnerships with Google, Qualcomm, and Apple, all with a focus on future positivity and how we can make the world a better place.

2021

OUR MOST AMBITIOUS YEAR YET

In the difficult times it is always very tempting to dwell on the negative, but our strength at ELF as an organisation and as a family is that we strive instead to look forward and find the avenue towards a better future for Europe. That's why this year we launched our 'Own the Future' campaign, providing a space to bring this perspective to a different policy area each month, with world-renowned speakers and contributors such as Steven Pinker, Yascha Mounk, and Gerd Leonhard, Karen Horn.

In 2022, we plan to continue this trajectory for success and embrace a sense of normality, regaining the invaluable human interaction we so dearly missed over the past years. It is our pledge to help you navigate the enduring challenges of our reality with our trusted expertise and future-positive mindset.

Thank you for joining us along for the ride.



WIDER
COMMUNITY
IMPACT



FUTURE-POSITIVE
PUBLICATIONS



SUCCESSFUL
CORPORATE
PARTNERSHIPS

ABOUT ELF



1

LEADING
EUROPEAN
POLITICAL
FOUNDATION

2

NETWORK
ORGANISATION
WITH MEMBERS
FROM ALL OVER
EUROPE

3

THINK & DO TANK
WITH A POLICY
& RESEARCH
EXPERTISE

47

members

30

countries

A liberal future in a 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 democratic 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.



ELF in numbers

180

events

70

projects

50

podcasts

112

publications

Our partners

renew
europe.

iW

EuropaNova
Action pour une Europe politique

alpe
ALLIANCE OF LIBERALS AND
DEMOCRATS FOR EUROPE

Freie
Demokraten
FDP

ECCJ
European Coalition
for Corporate Justice

Media collaborations

IFP

The
Brussels
Times

MACE
THE BUSINESS OF POLITICS

euobserver

EURACTIV

Flagship events

1 OWN THE FUTURE CAMPAIGN

- 400 registered attendees
- Followed by campaigns on mobility, climate, human rights, cybersecurity

2 SCIENCE, NOT FICTION

- 3 events on Innovation, Hardware, Medicine & Biotechnology
- Sponsored by Apple & Qualcomm

3 LIBERAL WHITE BOOK: EUROPE 2030

- 200 experts
- 8 MEP patrons from Renew Europe Group
- 4 Roadshow stops under CoFoE

OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS



With the generous support of our corporate partners, we are able to take our research to the next level.

Transparency is our priority

While, as liberals, we take into consideration industry stakeholders when delving into policy matters, our research outputs are fully independent and unbiased against any donation ELF is receiving.

Our work is future-positive and forward-looking. Our extensive research efforts require support to deliver policies with the capability to influence and inform the impactful decisions of policymakers at the national and European level.

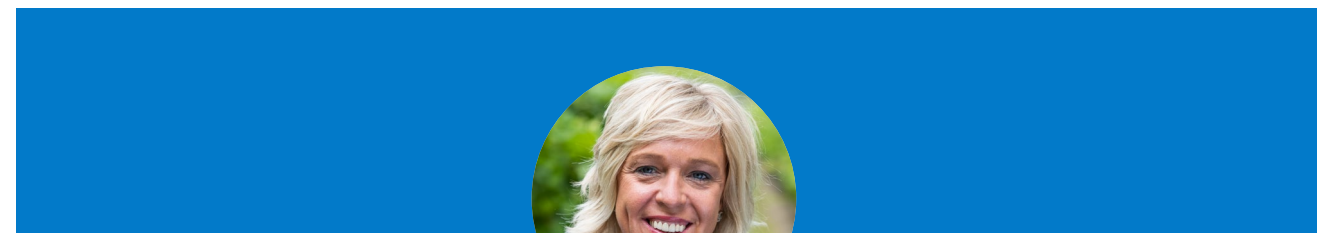
With our corporate partnership programme, business stakeholders who share in our vision of a free, prosperous, and democratic Europe, can support our research efforts through annual corporate donations.

This support is essential to expand our policy work into new domains and stay ahead of the curve. Topics such as digitalization, strategic autonomy and the intersection between technology and sustainability are emerging fast but just now begin to be tackled by policymakers. We need visionary policy.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The current Board was elected by the Autumn 2020 General Assembly in Rome for a two year mandate.



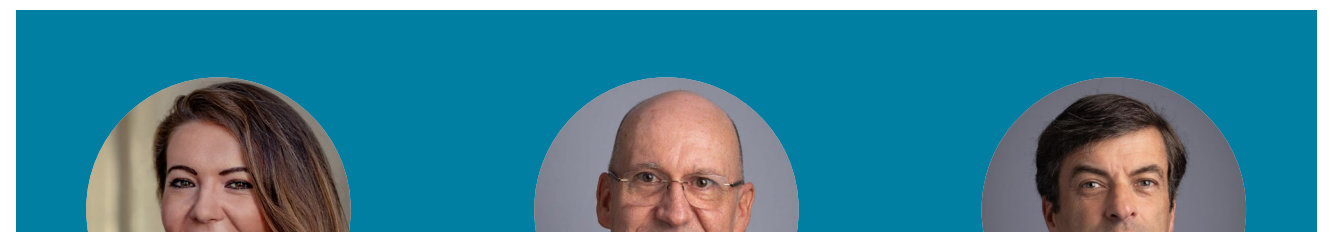
Hilde Vautmans, MEP
President



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

Our work is to reflect upon the leadership of tomorrow, define European policies, and reinforce our democratic values.

ELF SECRETARIAT



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



Even Diot
Programme Assistant



Fjona Merkaj
Project Assistant

Projects & Events Unit



Antonios Nestoras
Head of Policy & Research



Francesco Cappelletti
Research Fellow



Maria Alesina
Associate Fellow



Vincent Delhomme
Non-Resident Fellow



Matei Ștefan
Research Assistant



Elina Baltatzi
Communications
Manager



Viktoriya Muradyan
Junior Communications
Officer



Martina Devetak
Communications
Assistant



Almudena García España
Communications
Assistant

Communications Unit

Finance Unit



Melissa Amirkhizy
Finance Manager



Muriel Damoiseau
Accountant



Konstantinos Gatzios
Administrative Assistant

STRATEGY OF GROWTH

At European Liberal Forum, we value the strategy of growth and empowerment. We invest in the success of our teammates and accompany them on their professional journey. We want to make sure that all interns, who join our team, leave us with a solid package of knowledge, skills and experience of working in one of the most competitive cities in Europe. We are happy to see that all our interns are successfully moving forward in their professional journeys.



Almudena García España

Previously: Communications Assistant, European Liberal Forum

Now: Digital Communication Adviser, Association for the Prevention of Torture

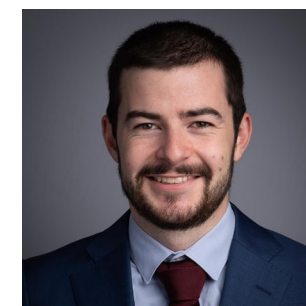
"Challenge, growth and optimism. In my six months' experience, ELF has been a great opportunity for personal and professional growth. I have learnt so much from my colleagues and have been challenged to give my best work."

Matei Ștefan

Previously: Research Assistant, European Liberal Forum

Now: Finishing his MA degree at The Hague University of Applied Sciences

"I hope this experience marks the start of my professional journey. I want to thank the whole team for creating a supportive, fun and comfortable working environment, which allowed me to personally and professionally grow."



Even Diot

Previously: Programmes Assistant, European Liberal Forum

Now: Junior Project Officer, European Liberal Forum

"Working for ELF gives me many opportunities to grow as a liberal through my function by connecting different people and views into one big European Liberal Family."

EVENTS AND PROJECTS

70

PROJECTS

27

COUNTRIES

10

LANGUAGES

13

EXTERNAL PARTNERS



Throughout the year, ELF interacted with thousands of stakeholders, researchers, and citizens across our conferences, webinars, training programmes and research outputs.

Our journey during 2021

2021 saw the European Liberal Forum strive for more ambitious, more timely and more engaging programmes and events.

Our flagship project “Science not Fiction” continued ELF’s work on future-oriented and optimistic thinking along our slogan Own the Future – Don’t fear it.

“A Europe of Values” was a reflective project, addressing challenges to the Rule of Law in Europe, both in the older and newer Member States – and within the EU institutions themselves.

Whilst Europe still recovered from the pandemic, we pursued our well-known webinar series On the Agenda bringing in MEPs, industry stakeholders and analysts to address Europe’s most pressing contemporary issues.

In 2021, we also launched our Liberal Awards, a moment to step back and celebrate the successes of the liberal family and their achievements in striving for open liberal democracies.

Our Idea Accelerator was back in hybrid-format for its third edition The Future is Digital, showcasing the work of our member organisations to a Brussels audience.

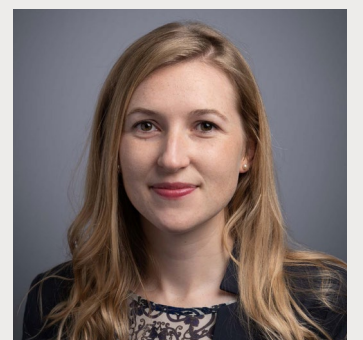
Our Member Organisations further enriched the work of European Liberal Forum, by collaborating on 70 projects, bringing in national and regional

perspectives on topics including AI, cybersecurity, EU Green Deal, Next Generation EU, transatlantic relations, migration, violence against women and human rights. This pulse on the ground allowed ELF to be up-to-date with the latest developments in the member states, to feed into sound and relevant policy positions in Brussels.

2021 also saw the European Liberal Forum reach out to new partners in the think tank and industry world. In November we collaborated with Foreign Policy Magazine on their Global Tech Summit.

Despite the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, ELF also pushed the boundaries when it came to event formats and technologies. Hybrid events became the new normal and we made the most of this chance for extra outreach to break beyond our usual audiences in 28 countries and 10 different languages.

Check out the following pages for more details about ELF’s events and programmes throughout the year and stay tuned for our activities coming up in 2022.



LAUREN MASON
ELF Project
Coordinator



NEW PARTNERS



NEW FORMATS



MORE OUTREACH

THE TOPICS WE HAVE COVERED



DIGITALISATION & FUTURE POSITIVITY

01

- Accelerated digitalisation during the pandemic
- Idea Accelerator - Future is Digital
- Science, Not Fiction
- Artificial Intelligence
- Deepfakes
- Promoting innovation in Europe
- Digitalisation in local administration
- New impulse for Transatlantic partnerships



A MODERN EU, RULE OF LAW

02

- A Europe of Values
- Recognising a multi-speed Europe
- Corruption, tackling illiberal regimes
- Economic Integration of migrants
- European integration in Western Balkans
- EU diplomacy and EEAS
- Trust in public institutions



STRONG & SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

03

- Next generation EU funds
- European Green Deal
- Restrictions to foreign investment during COVID-19
- Making environmentalism work within capitalism
- Decentralisation in times of crisis
- Entrepreneurship and methods of labour taxation



HUMAN RIGHTS

04

- LGBTI rights in Eastern Europe
- Human rights structures adapted for 21st century
- Promoting Justice in Consumption-Production Systems
- Violence Against Women in Politics
- Alliance of Her

In 2021, we had a privilege to collaborate with many renowned experts, politicians, authors and activists.

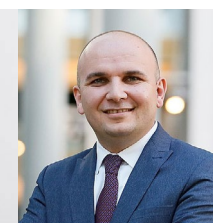
KEY STAKEHOLDERS OF OUR PROJECTS



Johan Norberg



Kaja Kallas



MEP Ilhan Kyuchyuk



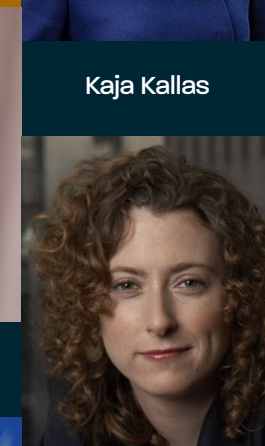
Gerd Leonhard



Geneviève Pons



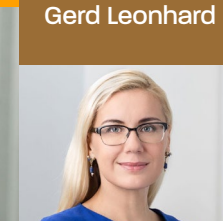
Steven Pinker



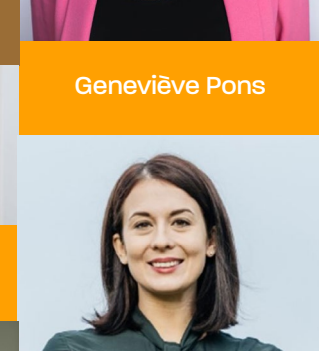
Jessica Bruder



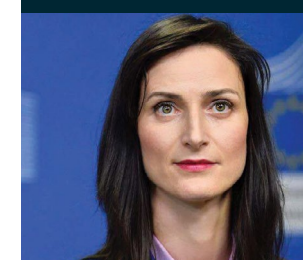
Niall Ferguson



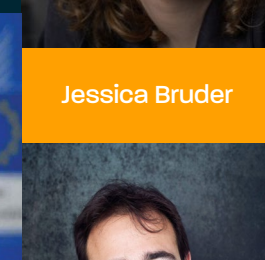
Kadri Simson



MEP Katalin Cseh



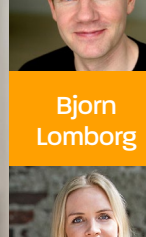
Mariya Gabriel



MEP Dita Charanzová



Bjorn Lomborg



Aura Salla



MEP Nicu Stefanuta



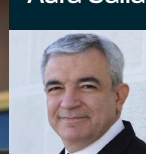
MEP Moritz Körner



Yascha Mounk



Olivér Várhelyi



MEP Luis Garicano



MEP Dragos Pislaru

FLAGSHIP EVENT SCIENCE, NOT FICTION

Own the Future

Who doesn't like a good fiction novel about the future? It takes us to a distant land, centuries ahead of our time and shows us what the human race can achieve if it has the right conditions to flourish. Once we close the book and we think of the present day, we cannot help but wonder what needs to be done now in order for the human race to turn fiction into reality.

Through the Science, Not Fiction event series ELF led the discussion on how liberals can foster innovation in Europe and reach new frontiers. We need not fear the future, but embrace its challenges and see how we can encourage and contribute to the creation of a liberal environment and mindset at the cutting edge of certain fields: digital, health, and hardware.



01 Digital Innovation

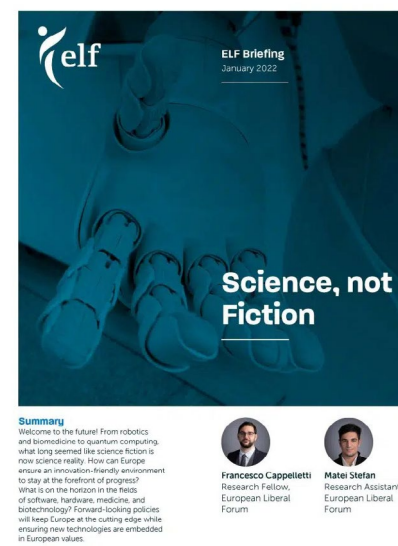
Sci-Fi is becoming a reality. Half a century ago, 5G, AI, dark matter, observing black holes were theories, or in some cases, fantasies. The European Union and its Member States can compete globally with high technological value and cutting-edge solutions. Reflecting on our future is more necessary than ever and this event provided that platform. Shaping the future means taking part in digital innovation and not letting it slide by.

02 Hardware and Industry

A future-oriented event on hardware, a practical and vital aspect of our lives that is sometimes overlooked. It is important to understand what pieces of hardware will predominate in our daily lives over the next decades, how to utilise hardware innovation in and for Europe's digitalisation, and to tackle the challenges posed by climate change, while also achieving a balance between regulation and innovation.

03 Medicine & Biotechnology

This event showcased the recent advancements in biotechnology, that have brought us biosensors, bioprinting of drugs, tailor-made organs, nanobots and innovative treatments using human genome sequencing. These are incredible achievements; we should not stop there but should discover other new technologies that would make our lives and health treatments better. It is vital to keep up the momentum and capitalise on the rapid development of COVID-19 vaccines and their innovative spillover.



FLAGSHIP EVENT LIBERAL AWARDS

The European Liberal Forum is delighted to bring you the first ever Liberal Awards and celebrate the liberal heroes of the year. The 2021 awards ceremony took place during the ALDE Party Council on December 10 in Rome, Italy.



Alena Trauschel
Winner: Rising Star

"I am honoured and grateful to be chosen as the 'Rising Star' by the European Liberal Forum Jury. I am aware of my unique position and will continue to fight for the topics of my generation and the liberal community. The time is always right to fight for liberalism."



Johan Norberg
Winner: Political Disruptor

"Wow. This is a great honour for me. Right now, liberalism plays defense against a more statist left and an increasingly nationalist right, so Europe urgently needs innovative liberal ideas, for an open and dynamic continent. To be recognised for my part in this by the European Liberal Forum is incredibly inspiring."



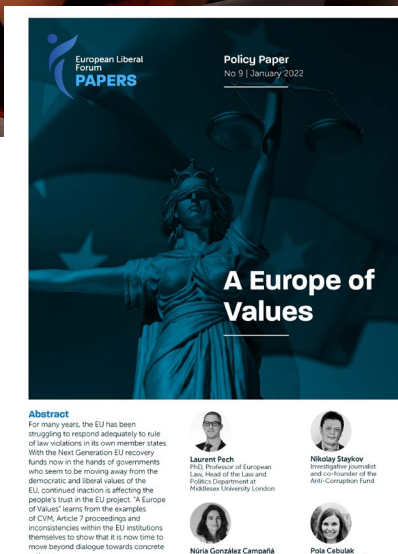
MEP Katlin Cseh
Winner: Best Speech

"It is such an honour to receive this award. I dedicate it to all party members and activists in Momentum, who are fighting every day to rebuild our democracy. Representing them and giving voice to them in the European Parliament has been the honour of a lifetime. Thank you for all the support from our European liberal family."





FLAGSHIP EVENT A EUROPE OF VALUES



For many years, the EU has been struggling to respond adequately to rule of law violations in its own member states. With the Next Generation EU recovery funds now in the hands of governments who seem to be moving away from the democratic and liberal values of the EU, continued inaction is affecting the people's trust in the EU project. "A Europe of Values" learns from the examples of CVM, Article 7 proceedings and inconsistencies within the EU institutions themselves to show that it is now time to move beyond dialogue towards concrete actions.

- 01** Lessons Learned the Hard Way: A reflection and policy recommendations on CVM in Bulgaria and Romania
- 02** Navigating the Rule of Law
- 03** Checks and balances in the European Institutions

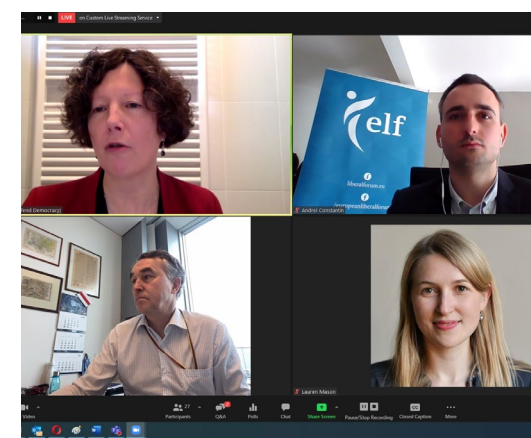
FLAGSHIP EVENT ON THE AGENDA

On the Agenda is a webinar series organised by ELF in which renowned speakers debate the most preset topics on the political agenda, always with a liberal take. We use this avenue to keep our audience well informed on the relevant issues from trusted experts in each field.

Over 2021, through the On The Agenda series, we delved into many important subjects, including, the EU's digital services and markets acts, EU-China relations, tackling the Coronavirus pandemic, LGBTI equality, the EU energy market and disinformation and deep fakes.

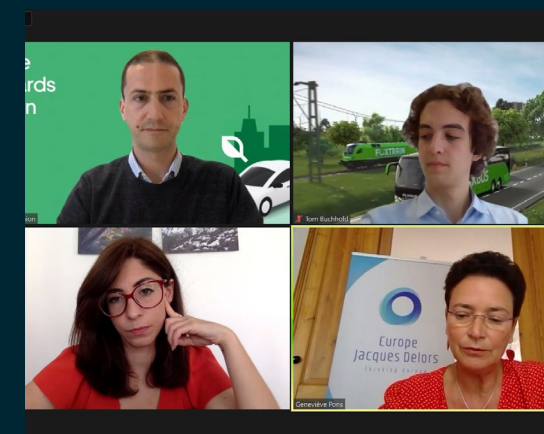
To discuss these pressing issues, we brought together relevant figures and field experts from across our network such as MEPs, CEOs, government officials and researchers.

The webinar event series is streamed on Zoom, but is also available after each event on ELF YouTube channel.



15
WEBINARS

2000
VIEWERS



POLICY AND RESEARCH

33

PAPERS

9

LIBERAL READS
EPISODES

30

BLOGPOSTS

3

FLAGSHIP
PUBLICATIONS

Reaching new horizons

2021 has been a milestone year for the Policy and Research Unit (PRU).

On the research side, we published more ELF papers than ever before (18 papers, plus an end of year review entitled EU Policy Review.

PRU edited and published an ELF journal called Future Europe (FEU) involving independent experts and member organisations. The first issue focused on the EU's need to reform after the Conference. We also launched our Liberal Reads podcast series, an innovative series of classical liberal book reviews that is also available as a podcast.

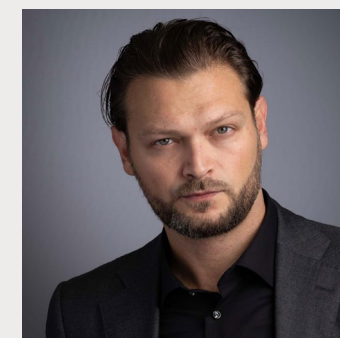
On the policy side, we have strengthened our cooperation with Renew Europe Group in the European parliament, publishing a series of position papers with them, and creating Working Groups to leverage the power of the ELF network and provide concrete policy inputs.

In addition, we published a flagship Liberal White Book, which we hope will affect the policy debates in our political family until the next European Elections.

As this annual review is being prepared, more publications and more policy initiatives are on the way.

The PRU team grew bigger last year and will continue to grow in order to bring to our network more ELF papers, journal issues, and podcasts. We will also continue with the consolidation of the working groups and building up more opportunities for our network to become stronger, publish more, and impact on the policymaking in Brussels and other EU capitals.

As always, and since the PRU journey began almost two years ago, our mission is to empower our members, and amplify their messages to the EU policymaking community.



DR. ANTONIOS NESTORAS

Head of Policy and Research



European Liberal Forum provides research that matters to those who set policies.



EVIDENCE-BASED
RESEARCH



POLICY AGENDA
SETTING



NEW FLAGSHIP
PUBLICATIONS

POLICY IN FOCUS

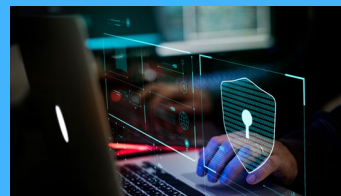
7+1 Research Areas

For 2021, the Policy and Research Unit aims to continue delivering timely, evidence-based and policy-relevant research that enriches our understanding of the social and economic conditions in Europe and contributes to the development of comprehensive liberal solutions to real-life problems.



Economic Governance, Social Affairs, and the European Single Market

Globalisation and economic integration have produced more prosperity in Europe, but they have also triggered social and political reactions that challenge core liberal values. Among other topics, research in this field may focus on internal market regulation, external trade policies, social security policies, intellectual property rights, competition law, taxation and fiscal policy, the circular economy, and democratic economic governance. Policy recommendations will aim to contribute towards designing more efficient regulatory frameworks, increasing transparency in EU economic governance, and building more robust social security systems and competitive European economies.



Digitalisation, Cybersecurity, and New Technologies

Though digitalisation holds great potential for democratic governance and economic growth, it may also pose significant risks and challenges. In line with the liberal tradition that always supports new technologies, research in this field will examine how the digital transformation of Europe can empower citizens. But it will also consider cybersecurity and other policies which can ensure that digitalisation is a citizen-centred and socially responsible process. Topics will deal with aspects of the European digital market, AI, the Internet of Things, 5G and connectivity issues, public administration and e-democracy, digital identity, e-commerce, and the digital marketplace.



Environment, Sustainability, and Climate Change

The EU's environmental policies have had a tremendous effect on international climate change politics. The EU is renewing its commitment to climate protection, decarbonisation, and sustainable development. However, in order to be successful, these goals need support from across the political spectrum. Liberals can and should be at the forefront of this debate. This field may include research on climate change and energy politics, multilateral environmental agreements and policy diffusion, the role of private and business actors in climate politics, sustainable solutions in energy-intensive industries, maritime and marine issues, biodiversity, trade and the environment, renewable energy, etc.



Institutional Affairs and the Future of European Integration

European integration and democratic governance rely on well-functioning institutions and transparent decision-making processes. The successive crises of the past decade have revealed the weaknesses and limitations of EU governance. Also, in view of the Conference on the Future of Europe, liberals need to be ready and able to communicate their vision on EU institutional reforms. Policy-relevant research may focus on decision-making procedures, the concept and implementation of a multi-speed Europe, the role of national parliaments in European democratic governance, the importance of the subsidiarity principle, and others.



Justice, Rule of Law, and Civil Liberties

There is no legitimate government without justice, and there is no justice without the rule of law. This is why the rule of law and the civil liberties that it safeguards are fundamental for the European project and for liberal democracy on the continent. 2020 saw many watershed moments when both the rule of law and the civil liberties of European citizens were abridged. This is an issue of definite concern for liberals, and research in this field may reflect on recent developments and future prospects from a liberal perspective.



Foreign Affairs, Security, and Defence Policy

The world has entered a prolonged period of instability and conflict that places a question mark on the liberal world order. While seeking to recalibrate traditional alliances and partnerships, there is a growing consensus that the EU should develop its strategic autonomy and its capacity to act in international affairs. Policy-relevant research in this field should inform debates about EU global strategy, the return of geopolitics in Europe, Transatlantic partnerships and EU-NATO cooperation, EU relations with China, Russia, and Turkey, EU defence cooperation, the development of strategic autonomy capabilities, etc.



EU Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy

At the same time, the European neighbourhoods to the East and South are in turmoil, and EU enlargement has been put on hold until further notice. In the past, both of these instruments have been the most successful expressions of European foreign policy and the most efficient tools for facilitating social, political, and economic transitions on the continent. This research field will feed into debates that speak of a renewed importance for EU Enlargement and the Neighbourhood Policy as the main vehicles of Europe's strategic vision for a new liberal world order.



+1: New Social and Political Cleavages in a Post-Covid Europe

The ongoing Covid-19 crisis is only the latest in a series of crises that have upended European politics over the past decade. The politicisation of the pandemic response indicates that European integration has cut new social and political cleavages in our societies. Liberals need to examine how these new cleavages interact with our electoral politics and reflect on how to reach out to newly emerging constituencies. This research area cuts across the aforementioned themes and examines them with a post-Covid angle and a perspective on electoral politics.

POLICY INITIATIVES

RENEW EUROPE GROUP IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

In 2021, we attempted to broaden and strengthen ELF's working relationship with the Renew Europe Group in the European Parliament.

The intention is to institutionalise the exchange of information, the coordination of activities, and ELF participation in REG meetings. In this context, ELF will also be looking to organise events ('hearings') and publish policy papers in line with the calendar of REG Working Groups. In parallel with the REG bodies and meetings, ELF – as the official think-tank of the ALDE family – is in a good position to foster internal group dialogue on controversial issues and contribute to voting line consistency.

ELF x Renew Europe Position Papers

European Liberal Forum published a series of papers on key policy areas written in collaboration with Renew Europe Group.



03

Beyond Covid-19: Strategic Priorities for a European Health Policy

The COVID-19 crisis has revealed the fragility of the European Union in terms of public health. Limited EU competencies and perilous dependencies on third countries exposed our weaknesses and the need for coordinated responses to health

crises. This position paper outlines a set of strategic priorities to guide our work in strengthening EU health policy. Even if it is still early to evaluate the management of this crisis at EU level, Renew Europe can already draw some lessons learned.

04

The Future of EU-US Relations: Towards a Renewed Transatlantic Partnership

The Transatlantic partnership is strong, deep and central to the rules-based world order but, in an international climate marked by growing great power competition, the alliance is facing serious challenges and both partners must adapt to a new era. The policy paper is the result of a months-long

Renew Europe internal process that was informed by and benefitted from conversations with various external stakeholders, such as the Group's webinar "After the elections. The future of EU-US relations", organised on 30 November 2020.

05

A new strategy for relations with Russia

We need to strengthen the EU's role as a global player as well as the EU institutions' ability to take the next steps: the Russian challenge is important. This position paper distinguishes the Russian people and

Putin's regime and the critical actions that are necessary in improving relations, while stressing the urgent need to reach out to the Russian people and show that the EU is welcoming to them.

06

Small and medium-sized enterprises, our commitment to Europe's SMEs

Europe's Small and Medium Sized Enterprises are everywhere around us. The importance of our SMEs has always been recognised – yet Covid-19 has made us realise just how vital they are, especially as the crisis has placed huge numbers

of SMEs in a precarious financial position. If improving SMEs access to finance was essential prior to the crisis, it has now become crucial for their very survival.

07

Recommendations for a safer Internet for children in the EU

One in three internet users in Europe is a child, spending on average 6,5 hours online daily. But while the internet offers children endless opportunities to study, shop and meet online, it was never designed with children in mind, leaving children vulnerable to a range of issues, including sexual abuse, privacy infringements and commercial targeting.

Renew Europe calls upon EU policy makers to take the interests of children into account from the start of EU law-making, to ensure children can enjoy the digital world in a safe way. Renew Europe calls on the Commission to include the following recommendations in its work programme and future legislation.

08

A New Vision for the Protection of Animals during Transport

The EU has a large population of farm animals. Most of these animals are transported during their lifetime. In most cases, it is primarily domestic transport. In some cases, live animals are transported from farm to market to farm for trading reasons. This happens in both intra-EU trade and with EU imports and exports to or from third countries, with the

EU being the main exporter and the distances travelled can vary a lot.

A pressing problem for animal welfare during transport is the current practice of successive individual transports, which counteracts efforts from single actors to comply with European legislation.

01

6 Pillars for a European Pact on Migration and Asylum

Migration is not a new phenomenon, it is a part of human nature. Since ancient times, people have migrated across Europe, or even across the globe, in search of a better life or to flee from war or crises. Due to globalisation, the world feels a smaller place. Technological development has enabled instant global communication. People, communities and even countries interconnect

digitally, despite being physically far apart. Our environment and society will continue to change and develop, both online and offline. Demographic changes, conflicts, climate change, shifts in the political and economic world order and increasing social welfare needs are but a part of the challenges facing the international community today.

02

A Liberal Blueprint for Artificial Intelligence in Europe and Beyond

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is already part of our lives, transforming our world and our societies. AI can make a huge contribution to reaching our common goal of improving the lives of our citizens and fostering prosperity within the EU. As a strategic engine of productivity and economic growth, it will increase global GDP in the years ahead. In areas such as health, agriculture, energy,

transport, climate and various industrial processes AI can contribute to the development of better strategies and innovations. Its development is also a condition to reach the sustainability goals of the Green Deal in many different sectors. Digital technologies can boost the impact of policies in delivering environmental protection.

POLICY INITIATIVES

INTERNATIONAL EXPERT WORKING GROUPS

Policymakers face challenges of increasing complexity and scale. Therefore, they need to be constantly brought up to date regarding technological developments, fast-paced environments, and changing social landscapes.

Policy solutions require coordination and knowledge sharing. The PRU will seek to form communities of practice and informal working groups of technical experts from EU agencies and NGOs, academics, and scientists, as well as industry stakeholders and civil society actors, to contribute towards the development of policy proposals.

These groupings will aim to facilitate the exchange of experiences, tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems – in short, to facilitate collective learning between policymakers and practitioners. Communities of practice and working groups will enable connections across formal structures through joint activities and regular discussions.

Our achievements during 2021

EU Strategy on China with MEP Hilde Vautmans



In collaboration with ELF President and MEP Vautmans, ELF developed the EU Strategy on China with a focus on liberal perspectives on trade relations and the EU-China Comprehensive Agreement on Investment, 5G networks, AI, environmental policies, human rights and effects on transatlantic relations.

EU Social Policy/Porto Summit with MEP Dragos Pislaru



In view of the Social Summit in Porto, we submitted a complete liberal agenda with proposals for coronavirus recovery, social impact investments, social security innovations, actions for youth employment in digital transition, among others.



ELF working groups address upcoming policy issues and aim to set the visionary agenda for the most challenging dilemmas of the current policy cycle. The outcomes of these international expert discussions are publicised in ELF papers.

Standing Working Groups

01 Sustainable Economy
and Social Policy

02 Digitalisation,
Cybersecurity and New
Technologies

05 Social and Political
Cleavages Post-Covid

03 Foreign Affairs,
Neighbourhood and
Enlargement

04 EU Institutions,
Democracy, and Justice
Affairs



FLAGSHIP PUBLICATION

LIBERAL WHITE BOOK: EUROPE 2030

The European Liberal Forum presents you the Liberal White Book 2030, a visionary publication that lays down the road to a free, fair and strong Europe. Over 200 experts in European politics, academics, and civil society representatives worked together to create a point of reference for policymakers.

In 2020, the European Liberal Forum hosted a series of expert forums dedicated to the most pressing future issues on the road to a Europe that is freer, fairer, and more liberal. The topics, ranging from democracy and trade to digitalisation and security, were developed by top experts such as Simon Hix, Professor at the London School of Economics, and Renaud Dehousse, President of the European University Institute. Individual authors were then asked to draw together insights from these forums and write a chapter on a particular issue. ELF compiled these chapters into a Liberal White Book, a flagship publication that aims to influence decision-makers and shape liberal discussions about the future.

LWB Roadshow

After the successful launch of the Liberal White Book: Europe 2030 with Renew Europe MEPs Hilde Vautmans, Guy Verhofstadt and ELF Executive Director Daniel Kaddik, ELF kicked off its Liberal White Book Roadshow.

As liberals, we want to have democratic answers to all the complex problems of today and make our voices heard in the Conference on the Future of Europe. We used this opportunity to debate, engage with our community, create discussions, and take ideas.

- 1 Democracy and Rule of Law and the Future of Europe | Rome
in collaboration with Fondazione Luigi Einaudi
- 2 Shaping the Conference on the Future of Europe | Ostend
in collaboration with Open VLD and Renew Europe Group
- 3 European Strategic Autonomy and the EU's Global Role | Paris
in collaboration with Association for a European Renaissance and La République En Marche
- 3 5G technologies in Europe: How to Seize the opportunities and avoid the risks of an incoming revolution | Turin
in collaboration with Centro Einaudi



8

MEP PATRONS

200

EXPERTS

8

CHAPTERS ON KEY
POLICY AREAS



A Roadmap for a liberal Europe

Liberal White Book: Europe 2030 is a point of reference for policymakers



This review encompasses a wide range of contributions in which experts from academia, policymaking, and industry critically discuss topics of crucial relevance for current EU policies and politics. The scope of topics is as diverse as was the EU policy agenda in 2021. Apart from the variety of topics, this publication is marked by a variety of formats, namely: *discussion papers*, *policy briefs*, *policy papers*, *research papers*, and *books reviews*. These formats serve different purposes: from sparking discussion to providing background information to suggesting concrete ways of dealing with a problem.

A dual mission

This was a year in which the political debates were preoccupied with the ongoing pandemic, external threats, internal crises, engaging Europeans into co-creating the face of Europe, and preparing the legislative ground for the EU's long-term transition towards a digital, sustainable, and more just future. In this context, the role of the ELF as a think tank is to provide liberal-minded policymakers, experts, and people at large with a reliable point of reference and innovative expertise. Our mission here is dual: to supply much-needed expertise for addressing urgent concerns, while also spotting and raising the issues and trends that are yet to come.

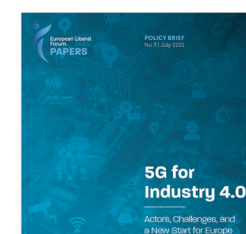
A win-win for scholars & policymakers

This review is an insight into both current and upcoming debates. What unites all the contributions is their topicality, evidence-based judgement, and liberal standpoint. Engaging scholars and practitioners from across Europe aims to make complex subjects accessible and theoretical ideas fit for practical implementation. High-level research and visionary insights are refracted and presented in ways that match policy needs and that can be readily adopted by policymakers. We provide scholars with a platform for sharing their findings, policymakers with a solid background for informed decision-making, and all others with food for thought and clarification of complex and controversial matters.

ELF Papers provide timely, evidence-based, and policy-relevant research outputs that enrich our understanding of the social and economic conditions in Europe and contribute to the development of comprehensive liberal solutions to real-life problems.

ELF PAPERS

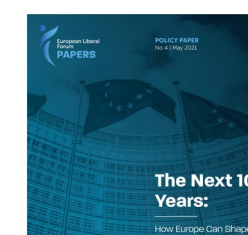
Policy Briefs



Research Papers



Policy Papers



Discussion Papers

We aim to help the liberal family to proactively put new topics on the agenda and shape their development according to our values and research based knowledge. In this way, we fulfil our liberal ambition to proactively shape the future instead of merely coping with it as it unfolds.

FLAGSHIP PUBLICATION

FUTURE EUROPE JOURNAL (FEU)

FEU, a newborn in the liberal family, a fresh start for the EU

Future Europe (FEU) is an open-access, peer-reviewed journal which aims to contribute to bridging the gap between academic research and policymaking.

FEU Journal seeks to create a space for academics, policymakers and citizens to promote new ideas, reflect on important issues and raise their voice towards shaping Europe's future. Academic participation in European Studies has risen significantly in the past few decades. In turn, the debate surrounding development of the European project has grown.

Many interesting insights have been proposed, identifying strengths of the project and tackling the fundamental weaknesses and challenges. However, these fail to find a wider audience and are often overlooked by policymakers. While maintaining the highest standards of quality research, Future Europe Journal's primary goal is to ensure that the practical knowledge of those making daily contributions to Europe is heard by those who can effect real change.



The first issue of the Journal called "Europe's Window of Opportunity: Why the EU needs to reform after the Conference".

www.feu-journal.eu

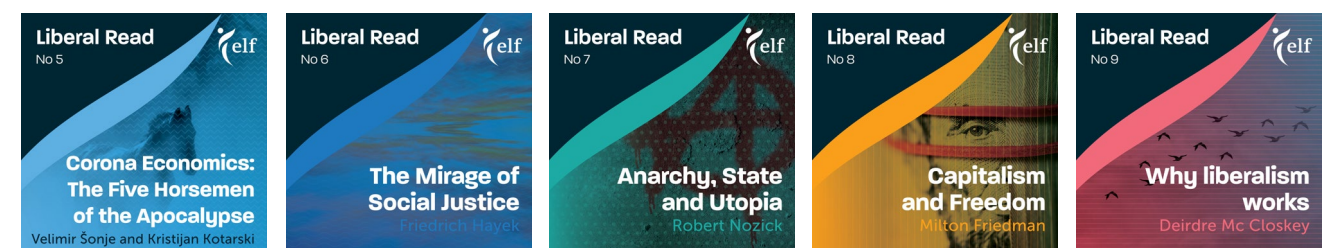


FLAGSHIP PUBLICATION

LIBERAL READS BOOK REVIEWS

The world is not getting worse; it is getting more complex. Information is faster and people must make sense of it. Liberal Reads enable you to listen to brief summaries of key ideas from the liberal and democratic bibliography.

Liberal Reads aim to package together our biggest ideas and introduce new ones in audio and brief paper formats that provide key insights in 30 minutes. Apart from decoding classical and fresh liberal concepts, the reviews critically engage with important political, philosophical, and economic books through a liberal lens.



COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH



20K 7K 8K 1M

FOLLOWERS ON
SOCIAL MEDIA

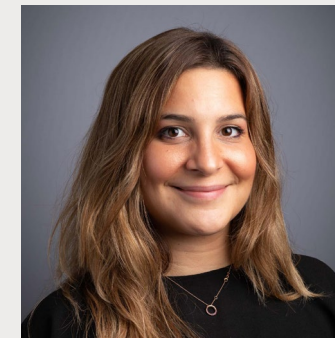
SUBSCRIBERS TO OUR
NEWSLETTERS

PLAYS OF OUR
PODCASTS

IMPRESSIONS ON
SOCIAL MEDIA

Storytelling is at the core of our work

2021 has been a significant year for the ELF community.



ELINA BALTATZI

Head of
Communications

We underwent a complete revamp of our branding with the goal to streamline our product offering for external audiences. Our publications, events, digital visuals, mailings, invitations, and all communications outputs now have a clean, compliant, and coherent style. In addition, we launched a brand-new website with state-of-the-art capabilities to showcase the diversity of content from our Member Organisations and Secretariat policy experts. Our goal was to position ELF and all networks as the leading liberal think tank and foundation on the EU scene – and lay the foundations for further growth.

But we did not stop there. We established stable and frequent channels of communication with our target audiences, with the aim to “clear the clutter” of excessive information on different policy fields. With two distinctive and highly curated newsletters – the Liberal Wire exclusive for Member Organisations and the Liberal Newpage for external audiences – we aim to provide a comprehensive yet digestible overview of key events, developments, and activities. Our Social Media channels (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn) complement our active outreach toolkit together with podcasts, audio books (Fear of

the Future), and audio book summaries (Liberal Reads). Our Liberal Europe Podcast – created in collaboration with our member MLS – and host Ricardo Silvestre covered several topics in over 50 episodes alone. We rolled out over 20 “Thoughtbites”, a video commentary series with Renew Europe MEPs. We clustered complex content into month-long campaigns, always looking at how to make sense of the current reality with extensive research. We worked closely with our members but also political and research partners to turn thinking into action. We made media partnerships with prestigious European and international publications such as Euractiv and Foreign Policy, to take our message to thousands of stakeholders in Europe and beyond.

And we see the results, just like in any other field, facts and figures tell a story; and this is a story of growth and success. We feel the responsibility to be even more innovative, more accurate, more comprehensive. At the European Liberal Forum, we see the world with a future-positive lens. Together with our community, we continue to work for a liberal, free and prosperous Europe.



FULL REVAMP OF
ELF BRANDING



TWO BI-WEEKLY
NEWSLETTERS



NEW ELF WEBSITE
LAUNCH

ELF'S NEWSLETTERS

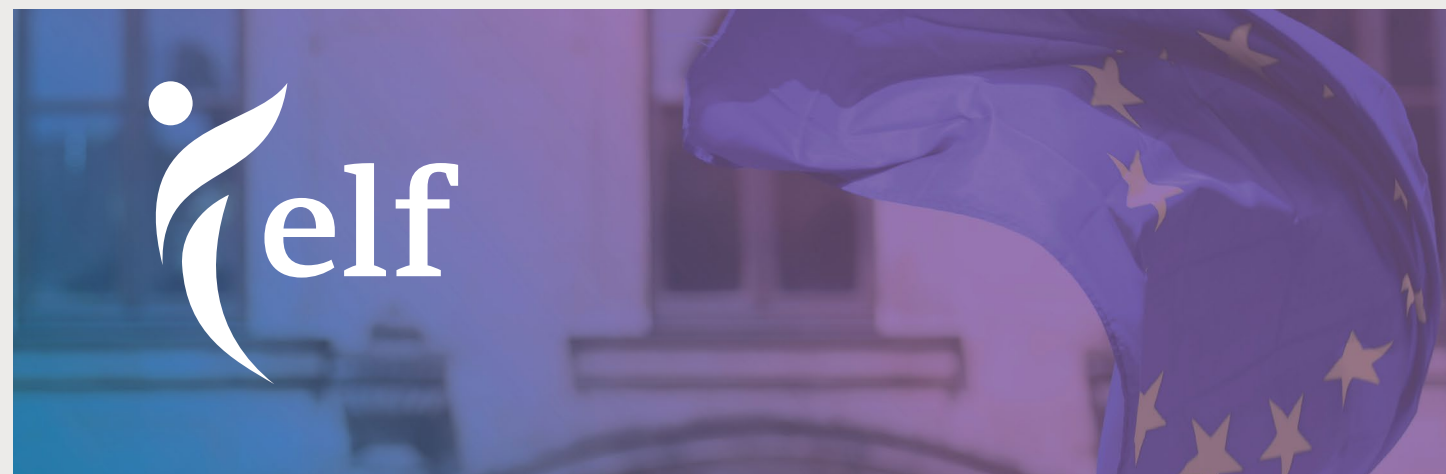


OUR PODCASTS

Liberal Wire

ELF wants to make sure you are always up to date with the most important developments on the European scene. Twice a month, we deliver a selection of high-profile topics relevant to our members' work, right to their inbox. This is an exclusive service for the members of the European Liberal Forum.

Exclusive
for our
members



Liberal Newspaper

For our
partners &
followers

With Liberal Newspaper, we connect Europeans with liberal ideas. The European Liberal Forum seeks to bring meaningful ideas through our continued quality research. We aim to keep the public and policy makers well informed on the most important issues across Europe and beyond during this crucial period.

In this bi-weekly newsletter, you can find our events, highlights, opportunities, our policy and research work, and so much more.

01 Liberal Europe Podcast

The Liberal Europe Podcast, is a forum for open-ended discussions on European societal and economic questions that aims to provide the listener tools to empower them to take action for a freer, more positive and democratic society. This podcast is produced by ELF in collaboration with Movimiento Liberal Social (MLS).

Our latest angles on
European affairs straight
into your headphones

02 EU Mentorship Podcast

EU Mentorship Podcast is a show about the EU integration process in the Western Balkans and Eastern Europe. This podcast is produced by ELF in collaboration with Fondacija Boris Divković (BDF) and D66 Internationaal/IDI Stichting,

The European Liberal Forum is producing multiple series of podcasts and audiobooks on a regular basis, in collaboration with our member organisations.

03 Human Rights in the 21st Century

This podcast, produced by ELF, in collaboration with NOVUM institute, searches for reasonable argumentation how contemporary political cleavages are affecting and/or contra positioning some important values by which we live.

You can find all our podcast and videocast episodes on our Youtube page and on all audio streaming platforms.

▶ 10000 plays during 2021

04 LiberTea Videocast

LiberTea Videocast is a forum for open-ended discussions on European societal questions. In each episode, produced in collaboration with MLS, an expert is invited to be on camera and explain the importance of specific freedom, its effect on a personal and community level.

05 Audiobook "In Ukraine, Adrift"

Over the course of 2019, journalist and author Paul Frigyes went adrift across Ukraine. First published in Swedish and in Ukrainian in 2020, the book is now presented to an English-speaking audience, including in a form of an audiobook.

FINANCE

13

FULL-TIME STAFF

8

INTERN ASSISTANTS

3

RESEARCHERS

6

ASSOCIATE FELLOWS

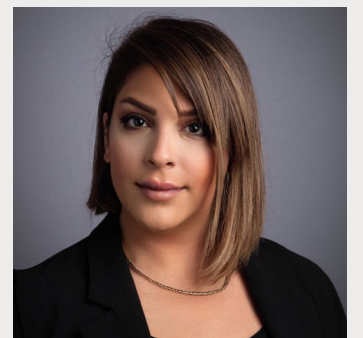
Robust and flexible financial strategy

In 2021, the European Liberal Forum excelled in combining flexibility with accountability.

Just like most organisations, the pandemic brought many changes to the workplan and nature of our activities as well as those of our Member Organisations. It has been a key priority of the Financial Unit to ensure that funds can be adapted to the reality set by ever-changing restrictions, set in place to mitigate the spread of COVID 19, while still adhering to the highest standards of compliance regulations.

Combining flexibility with accountability came hand in hand in establishing a streamlined way of working with our members and networks. We focused on creating solid financial procedures that can work in the multitude of locations and specific contexts of EU countries. We dedicated time to train our membership and coordinate with our partners, always with the guidance of the ELF Board of Directors.

At the same time, the growing team within the ELF Secretariat created the need for new, clear HR policies, allowing for sustainable organisational development across all units. We defined the needs of ELF today but also tomorrow, developing tools and processes, ensuring the evolution of ELF's footprint.



MELISSA AMIRKHIZY
Head of Finance



FLEXIBLE FINANCE

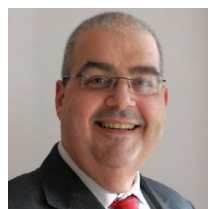


NEW PROCEDURES



ROBUST GROWTH

ELF AS A PLATFORM OF OPPORTUNITIES



Beppe Russo

Director, Centro Luigi Einaudi

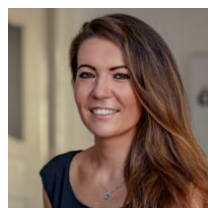
"The global emergency has raised theoretical and practical challenges in many areas and a wide-spread uncertainty affects people's lives. In our opinion, the role that EU should play in the next future is – on the one hand – establishing correct remedies under the perspective of public health and envisioning a way out from the economic downturn; on the other hand, coping with democratic procedures under pressure over health emergency."



George Melashvili

Chairman, Europe-Georgia Institute

"Our dream for the EU is to be a beacon of hope for every person fighting for Liberty in every corner of Europe, demonstrating solidarity and unity while defending our common values and boldly facing those who seek to undermine what is dear to us. Covid-19 was another signal demonstrating that powers striving to undermine our common values are willingly ready to abuse even cataclysmic tragedies to achieve their mean goals and wage disinformation campaigns against the idea of strong, united Europe, undermining the aspirations of those, who are willing to return to the European family."



Dr. Šárka Shoup

Executive Director, Institut pro Politiku a Společnost, Board Member, European Liberal Forum

"I call for a strong, united, and well-versed Europe that can take the helm in confronting one of the greatest threats of our age – the global pandemic. The pandemic represents a litmus test for the EU. More than ever, the EU needs to champion in multilateralism and a rules-based international order, and at the same time strongly reject populism, misinformation, and simplistic solutions."



FACES OF LIBERALS

Between January and March 2021, we held a "digital meet-and-greet consultation" with our Member Organisations around Europe. Our purpose was to understand their needs and priorities on the future of Europe. The Members involved, shared their valuable thoughts on how to move liberal ideas forward in a United Europe.

During this enriching experience, we learnt that Liberals across Europe want a strong and united Europe with liberal values as a bedrock. To achieve such a goal, liberals call for increased involvement of citizens in European decision-making processes, including greater participation of the youth. Liberals further agree in including EU neighbourhood countries in decision-making processes and defend Eastern Europe and the Western Balkan's place.

Liberals hope to see more robust relationships with external actors and highlight the need to stay ahead of geostrategic changes. As a requirement, Europe should present a common front to face these challenges while defending liberal values.

A strong and united Europe is also needed to reject populism, misinformation, and simplistic solutions. We believe in a constructive holistic dialogue and strong partnerships within the region as solutions to the growing misinformation and populist ideas.



Ricardo Silvestre

International Officer, Movimento Liberal Social

"The future of the European Union depends on working with countries to the east, south and west of the Union. A priority should be the development of good working relationships with countries like China, Russia, the United States, and blocks of countries in Africa, South America and the Middle-East. However, the European Union needs to have liberal values and policies as the bedrock of those international relations, which then will be transversal to all the areas of interaction."



Martine van Schoor

Head of the International Office, Stichting IDI/D66 International

"Every single European citizen contributes to what Europe is. We all share the common values of democracy, rule of law and protection of human rights. Commitment to our values requires the commitment of every voter in the European Union. This calls for a stronger European Parliament, transnational list for the EP elections, direct elections for the President of the European Commission and EU support for our non-EU neighbours. For the support for journalists and civil society organisations to actively defend our values. Because Europe is all of us. We are Europe"



Anela Lemeš

Executive Director, Boris Divkovic Foundation

"Not being part of the EU does not mean being outside of the European decision-making processes. Equality, coexistence and solidarity are the most important pillars for our future within the EU. We must strive to raise awareness about the importance of social and political responsibility within Western Balkans and spread the European liberal values furthermore, because we are Europe too!"

47 MEMBER ORGANISATIONS FROM 30 COUNTRIES.

MEMBER ORGANISATIONS



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glplab.ch


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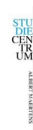
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