



European
Liberal Forum

Annual report

2022



ELF is fast growing think-tank and a political foundation in Brussels, with 51 member organisations around Europe, offering a European and national liberal policy expertise in a range of areas.

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Letter from the President



Hilde Vautmans

MEP for Renew Europe Group
and ELF President

2022 has been a painful reminder of what we liberals have to lose and what we should be ready to defend. The war at our doorstep is yet one of many threats we are facing. Authoritarian trends are brewing in the neighbourhood and within the EU itself, generously sponsored by our geopolitical competitors aiming to reverse our democratic achievements. In this increasingly illiberal world, European liberals must stay strong and united as never before.

The **extraordinary** events of 2022 have opened a new chapter in European history. It has made the EU face some of its most critical and long-overdue problems. Security dilemmas, **migration**, energy dependency, the rising cost of living – all these topics are now on the top of the policymaking agenda. And we have yet to find the long-term solutions to these issues as well as the decisiveness for their timely implementation.

Uneasy times require **our** readiness to change and adapt. For the sake of long-term development and progress, we must be ready to take uncomfortable decisions. We must be prepared to change things that do not work and strive for new perspectives.

Throughout this **challenging** year of defending freedom, the European Liberal Forum has continued to grow as a pan-European hub for much-needed liberal cooperations and solutions. We have welcomed new member organisations, a new Board of Directors, and new members of the Secretariat. Our cooperation projects have been growing and expanding, policy and research initiatives have been gaining expertise and visionary agenda, our outreach has been broadening in Brussels, across the EU, and beyond.

ELF has continued to bring together prominent liberal politicians, academics, and experts from across Europe to critically debate our common future. This year gave birth to major projects that will continue throughout 2023 and inform a liberal agenda on the issues of utmost importance.

We look forward to empowering the liberal family and being inspired by our community and friends all over the continent in our joint search for new ways to make our Europe the place we all want to live in.

About ELF

The European Liberal Forum (ELF) is the think-tank and the official political foundation of the European Liberal Party, the ALDE Party. Together with 51 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. 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 experts. In this role, our forum serves as a space for an open and informed exchange of views between a wide range of different EU stakeholders.



People behind ELF

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President



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First Vice President



Marco Mariani
Second Vice President



MP Mats Löfström
Treasurer



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Board Member



MEP Katalin Cseh
Board Member



Dr. Miłosz Hodun
Board Member



MEP Catharina Rinzema
Board Member



Dr. Šárka Shoup
Board Member

The current Board was elected by the Autumn 2022 General Assembly in Brussels for a two-year mandate.

Outgoing Board of Directors



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Amy Macgregor
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Finance & Administrative Unit



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Muriel Damoiseau
Accounting Assistant

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Mathilde Berger-Perrin
Author and journalist



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Tomasz Kamiński, PhD
Assistant Professor, University of Lodz



Ricardo Silvestre, PhD
Analyst, Think-tanker and Author



Arlinda Rustemi, PhD
Researcher and lecturer, Leiden University



Network and membership

ELF as a platform for opportunities



The European Liberal Forum serves as a platform for cooperation and capacity building for our member organisation and the wider liberal network. Through various formats such as newsletters, training, academy projects and working groups, we want to empower liberal organisation to step up to a new level and share their experience and knowledge with each other, in order to strengthen the liberal network in Europe.

• **Liberal Wire & Liberal Newspage**

Our newsletters allow us to forge committed audiences in which we can then provide directly, tailored and informative messages. The Liberal Newspage is completely accessible for all and aims to provide the readers with the latest news and important updates from Europe and beyond. Through this outlet we also present the reader with liberal positions and recommendations on the various crucial policy areas. In 2022, by tailoring our content to the preferences of our readership, we were able to expand our audience and engagement and therefore, increase the overall impact of ELF and MO outputs. The Liberal Wire is ELF's internal newsletter for member organisations. It allows our team to deliver important information to the members and creates a space to share and celebrate

their work and achievements, of which there are many! This outlet also brings our community closer together, keeping the members informed of the work of the network has created more cross collaboration, strengthening our forum from within.

- **Member organisation training**

The Training for Project Officers from our member organisations had a unique format this year. During two sessions, ELF Secretariat passed on the A-to-Z of how to run a project, including administration, finances, branding, communications and publishing.

- **Working Groups**

ELF Working Groups (WGs) contribute towards developing policy proposals through topical meetings with our member organisations and experts in the field. They aim to facilitate the exchange of experiences, tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems. In 2022, we held Working Group sessions on Staged Integration and Trade & Transatlantic Governance.

- **Liberal Communicators Network**

The Liberal Communicators Network offers high-level training for communication staff in liberal think tanks and foundations to reinforce their capacities in spreading liberal ideas in a catchy, appealing way.

- **My Academy**

My Academy e-courses in 2022 provided many different opportunities for participants all over Europe to develop their skills and knowledge. The areas of expertise covered topics such as diversity, political engagement and advocacy.



Welcome ELF's new members

During ELF's Autumn General Assembly 2022 held in Brussels, we were pleased to extend our liberal family by welcoming four new affiliate member organisations: 21 Research Institute, Ágora Liberal, Fundalib and the Progressive Institute.

21 Research Center (21 Kutatóközpont), Hungary



21 Research Center is a Budapest-based think tank specialising in social and political research (both qualitative and quantitative methods) and political consultancy. They are committed to Hungary's Euro-Atlantic orientation and to a knowledge economy primarily based on the market mechanism as the primary coordinating principle of economic activity. The Center advocates for a liberal democracy based on the separation of powers. It is also engaged in the protection of individual civil and political rights, and the EU's sustainability agenda. Momentum, Hungary's liberal party, is their most important client. However, they also regularly work with municipalities, NGOs, business actors, and international organisations. 21 Research Center's members are young and dynamic researchers who firmly believe in the value of rigorous, fact-based research. They are open to partnering with anyone who shares a similar journey.

Ágora Liberal, Spain

The aim of **Ágora Liberal** is to bring together intellectuals, scientists, and people historically linked to the Spanish liberal party, following the will expressed by the President of Ciudadanos, Inés Arrimadas, after the Catalan debacle of 'returning to the essence'.

The aim is to provide an assortment of ideas to renew Ciudadanos that will serve as a point of reference to establish themselves as a liberal force and equate themselves with other European liberal groups.

Foundation for the Advancement of Freedom (Fundalib), Spain



The Foundation for the Advancement of Liberty was born in 2015 to respond to the growing need to articulate libertarian public policies. Fundalib works on enhancing a social and political dialogue that works within the framework of liberal democracy for greater autonomy and freedom of individuals and different organisations in which civil society is organised. Their mission is to promote the advancement of individual liberties and the success of the organisations and entities that promote and defend them. Fundalib's work covers pensions and taxation but also areas such as culture, justice, civil rights, international issues and the organisation of politics.

Progressive Institute (Progresívny inštitút), Slovakia



The Progressive Institute is a civic association focused on analysing and promoting topics that have so far remained on the margins of attention in Slovakia. It aims to build upon Slovakia's potential to become one of the most advanced states in Europe and improve people's lives. The Institute works on economic, social, legal, and ecological issues and provides solutions in the fight against corruption.

Their outputs are the basis for the program of the Progressive Slovakia movement. Still, they are available to everyone who believes in the power of human knowledge and respects liberal democracy.

Partners

Together for a stronger Europe.

We believe that finding the right policy solutions requires cooperation and knowledge sharing.

This is why we The European Liberal Forum brings together a diverse network of national foundations, think tanks and experts from the corporate sector. We thank our partners for their continued trust, expertise and enthusiasm in achieving our common mission of a liberal future in a united Europe. This support is essential to expand our policy work into new domains and stay ahead of the curve.

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Political partners



Non-profit partners



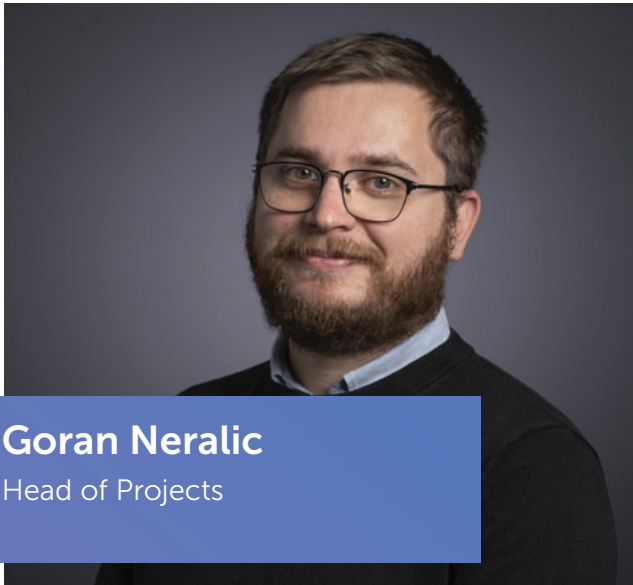
Corporate partners



This year we have been fortunate to cultivate many successful collaborations across a range of European regions and sectors. Through our Corporate Partnership Programme, businesses and stakeholders who share our vision of a free, prosperous, and democratic Europe can support our research efforts.

This support is essential to expand our policy work into new domains and stay ahead of the curve.

Events and Projects



Goran Neralic

Head of Projects

The past year proved incredibly productive and challenging simultaneously, a turning point in many ways for ELF. The easing of the Covid pandemic at the beginning of the year offered hope that ELF would finally be able to resume its core mission of gathering people and fostering discussions in the European liberal family without restrictions or fear for the health and safety of our participants, which permeated the thinking of all of us for the past few years. On the other hand, Putin's invasion of Ukraine and the reality of having a major war again on the continent mandated that ELF rethinks

its priorities and devotes resources to facilitate research and discussions on new ways to ensure European security.

Considering these developments, and with the support of its members and partners, ELF worked on 77 projects that included 191 events and 91 publications of different kinds in 2022, tackling such issues as consequences of the Russian invasion, EU enlargement, European security architecture and developing future-oriented European policies that foster sustainable growth and technological development without sacrificing the environment.

In the year ahead, we are looking forward to a new series of ELF events and publications, following the strategic vector set by the Board of Directors and aligned with the dynamic political situation in Europe before the next European elections. ELF and its members will play a vital role in the discussions that will shape the liberal vision of the future of the European Union together with the partners at the Renew Europe Group in the European Parliament, the ALDE Party and the Liberal International.



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Our flagship events from the past year

Idea Accelerator

Media freedom is at the heart of our liberal values in this technological age. The conversations and debates of the Idea Accelerator aimed to inform us about the threats we face surrounding media and disinformation in Europe while also stimulating solutions and future strategies. Through our extensive liberal network, we brought together political figures, media experts and activists to tackle a range of topics, including Russian propaganda, state-funded media, and the role of the EU.



LGBTI Freedom Zones

The past years showed that LGBTI rights must be better protected in Europe. In all parts of our continent, there have been setbacks provoked by right-wing populists. In response to those regressive actions, the European Parliament has declared the EU a "Freedom Zone". During this conference, organised in collaboration with Renew Europe Group and The Committee of Regions, we discussed the state of LGBTI rights in Europe, focusing on three urgent issues - LGBTI activism in times of change, hate speech in liberal societies, and LGBTI diplomacy in Europe.



ALDE Congress and ELF's Liberal Awards

The ALDE Party Congress 2022 was a great forum, bringing together hundreds of liberals from all corner of Europe, to tackle the most significant issues facing the EU, from the future of European security to energy independence. ELF hosted several exciting events, including Liberal Espressos with MEPs and subject experts on a variety of topics. During the Congress, we also hosted the second edition of the Liberal Awards, where we honour and provide a platform to European liberals who have gone above and beyond in their work of building a better Europe.



Alliance of Her at UN General Assembly



The Alliance of Her is a collaborative project organised with ELF, ALDE Party and Friedrich Naumann* Foundation, designed to empower European women to pursue their political ambitions. In September 2022, the Alliance of Her partnership supported the first-ever delegation to the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly in New York. The delegation aimed to forge and strengthen partnerships with UN Institutions and US-based allies, showcase the Alliance of Her initiative on the global stage, and advocate for the importance of female political leadership and representation at a critical moment in the global political agenda.

TechnoPolitics vs Europe – Conference



'Techno-Politics vs Europe' is a conference organised by the European Liberal Forum, which aimed to gather experts, practitioners, stakeholders, industry representatives, academics, and politicians to discuss how new and future technologies can influence traditional policymaking. Technology is the leitmotif on which the conference is organised. The programme was inspired by the 'Techno-Politics' series, promoted, and published by the European Liberal Forum, with its four studies on Digital Strategic Autonomy, 5G and 6G, Cybersecurity and Smart Parliaments.

New European Liberalism Workshop

To address the decline in the liberal parties' success rates across Europe, ELF has initiated a series of intellectual debates on how to revive liberalism on the continent. The first workshop took place at the Barcelona headquarters of the Spanish liberal party Ciudadanos. This workshop tackled what liberalism means today for Europeans, whether it is really in decline, the core issues to address, and how. It aimed at raising the question of why the liberal standpoint lost its attractiveness for voters and citizens and became an easy target for criticism from liberals' political rivals, including populists.



Twitter Spaces' Voices of Change' on Iran

This Twitter Spaces created a vital dialogue between the European Parliament and the heroes fighting for their freedom and democracy in Iran. During the online discussion, we brought speakers from Iranian human rights groups, activists, and MEP Abir Al-Sahlani, and Iranian journalist Morteza Esmailpour, reaching an audience of over 21 thousand listeners.

LibertyCon 2022

The European Liberal Forum hosted two panel discussions during April LibertyCon Europe Conference in Prague. The first panel, 'Where is the West after Covid?' discussed the long-term consequences of the pandemic on the idea of liberty. The panel was inspired by ELF Publication "Corona Economics: The Five Horsemen of the Apocalypse." The second panel, "Cannabis Liberalisation in Europe", focused on a free-market solution for including cannabis in the normal legal channels of the economy.



RenewPAC Conference

The annual RenewPAC Conference in Marrakech had a clear objective: to reinforce liberal cooperation between the EU and African countries. We organised a roundtable on investment policies concerning Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Africa and Europe. The vivid discussions under the moderation of MEP Martina Dlabajová resulted in an exchange of best practices. We managed to build a network of liberal politicians who were eager to work on this topic in the future.



Highlights of the year from our member organisations

Freedom Games with Fundacja Liberté!

The 9th edition of Freedom Games, the annual Łódź conference was yet again a lively and stimulating event, this year with the leading focus on Green Independence. Through the ELF Hub at Freedom Games 2022, we hosted 11 sessions in both 'Dare to Debate' discussion panels and 'Thinking Aloud' formats.



The EU Meets the Balkans Forum with ALDE Party and the Atlantic Club of Bulgaria

While the war was raging in Ukraine, EU enlargement & integration became critical in political debate. The EU Meets the Balkans Forum brought together many high-level politicians from the region and from Brussels to discuss the future of EU enlargement in the Western Balkans.

Multiple Challenges for Transatlantic Partnerships with Institute for Politics and Society (IPPS)

The War in Ukraine has demanded cooperation in imposing sanctions and supplying aid. It has increased US attention towards the needs and priorities of EU allies that have grown in importance. The Multiple Challenges for Transatlantic Partnerships 2022 Conference held in Prague was divided into three panels to cover the three critical dimensions of the transatlantic partnership: economics, politics, and security. The conference aimed to raise awareness about transatlantic alliances' status and development, develop a structured dialogue framework, and document coherent and proactive recommendations.



Rainbow Platform

The Rainbow Platform project is a cross-institutional initiative aiming to increase the amount of LGBTQI+ leadership in the political arena and liberal civil society. Many members of the LGBTQI+ community recuse themselves from running for office, joining political parties, or aiming for positions of leadership in operational roles at organisations dealing with political thinking due to the fear of public scrutiny and due to the policy-focused nature of political diversity inclusion initiatives. This programme reinforces diversity within our liberal organisations by focusing on best practices and the benefits of inclusion.



EU-Mercosur Webinar series with Paddy Ashdown Forum (PAF)

The landmark agreement between the EU and Mercosur is of profound geopolitical significance since it allows both regions to enable better security in vital areas of general trade and, notably, food systems. However, negotiations on the free trade agreement between the EU and the Mercosur nations of Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay have taken more than 20 years. The EU-Mercosur Webinar Series delivered accurate and validated specialist knowledge on this Agreement, the criticism it has provoked and its impact on the climate and environment.



Policy and Research



Dr Antonios Nestoras

Head of Policy & Research

For the Policy and Research team, 2022 was a year of hard work and big leaps forward. We have stayed true to our original mission: providing the European liberal family with an evidence-based point of reference on the most topical policy issues. We delivered high-quality content on the most pressing policy issues while developing new formats and visionary ideas to maximise our long-term impact and credibility.

On the one hand, we solidified the creative achievements of the past years by fully utilising the potential of our established formats, such as our policy-and-research Future Europe Journal and academic-style papers with recommendations for European policymakers. We published the second issue of the Future Europe Journal, focusing on rising inflation and EU monetary policies in a post-covid political economy. With the journal, our 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. In ELF Papers, we have covered topics ranging from techno-sustainability to EU energy and foreign policies.

On the other hand, we have launched exciting new projects and formats to make them part of ELF's trademark as a liberal think tank. Under our TechnoPolitics umbrella, we have published thematic studies on how technologies can and should improve our future. Our international expert Working Group on Staged integration has gathered experts from the EU and candidate countries to put an innovative approach to renewing the stalled EU enlargement project on the policymaking agenda. A year-long initiative on revising European liberalism – from theoretical, political, and communications perspectives – aims at shaping a liberal roadmap ahead of the 2024 European elections.

Overall, we have significantly expanded our community of liberally-minded academics, researchers, and experts keen to share and discuss their findings and insights in our publications and workshops. We brought them into one room with liberal policymakers and politicians to stir up practice-oriented debates on controversial and innovative matters.

We have been engaging with the ALDE Party and the Renew Europe Group at the European Parliament and merging our efforts in strengthening liberals' place and

credibility on European and national levels. With the help of our Communications and Project Units, we have ensured that our research efforts reach their target audience in Brussels and capitals within the EU and in the neighbourhood.

Last but not least, we continued to work closely with our member organisations, providing them with a platform for publishing their in-house research and aligning our liberal vision and ideas across national borders.



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Policy in focus: A Shift in the EU Policy priorities since the Russian invasion of Ukraine

Considering the overall EU course toward Strategic Autonomy, we have been exploring multiple angles of this important concept: from energy to digitalisation, from transatlantic relations to the geopolitics of EU Enlargement.

TechnoPolitics: Investigating digitalisation, new technologies, and their application in our society is the only way to achieve smart regulatory procedures. In 2022, we brought forward the concept of TechnoPolitics to acknowledge that technological determinism is a reality. Therefore, our work in this domain aims to provide the knowledge basis for our innovative approach to the relationship between technology and politics.

Strategic Autonomy: As an overarching argument, the question on whether the EU is ready to be strategic has been central in European policy debates. In its search for autonomy, the EU had to face reality: protectionism is not the way to go. However, relations with like-minded partners and rivals must be discussed from a liberal perspective.

TechnoSustainability: We created TechnoSustainability as an eco-pragmatic umbrella concept uniting market-based policy solutions to counter climate change. In 2022 we studied challenges linked to environment, sustainability and climate change, as well as new technologies to boost the transition and nuclear fission/fusion.

Inflation: In 2022, we attempted to add content to the long-standing discussion about the necessary changes in the organisation of the European Monetary and Banking Union. Our experts reflected on whether the experience of the adverse shock after the war in Ukraine could force the monetary institutions to provide a resilient response to crises.

Enlargement: Once one of the EU's most successful policies, the enlargement project has turned into a deadlock over the past years. Meanwhile, harsh geopolitical realities are forcing the EU to reconsider the outdated methodology, mitigate political resistance, and find a way out of the enlargement stalemate. Hence, ELF brought together academics and practitioners to elaborate on the staged integration approach as a liberal way forward.

Policy initiatives: Working Groups

ELF Working Groups (WGs) contribute towards the development of policy proposals. They aim to facilitate the exchange of experiences, tools, and ways of addressing recurring problems – in short, to facilitate collective learning between policymakers and practitioners. In 2022, our working groups focused on two key topics: EU enlargement and Digital Strategic Autonomy.

Staged Integration approach for EU Enlargement



To propose a practical solution to the enlargement deadlock, ELF carried out a series of in-depth expert discussions on an innovative 'staged integration' approach to EU accession. The working group has gathered experts and academics from across Europe and elaborated on the geopolitical imperatives and suggested updates to the concept of staged integration a step forward in defining differentiated integration. The policy paper, built upon the discussions in the working groups, was presented at the Western Balkans roundtable organised at the European Parliament by the Renew Europe Group.

'The Race for Digitising Europe' at the Siena Conference on the Future of Europe



Italian think tank Vision organised the 2022 edition of their annual Pontignano Conference at the University of Siena, Italy, in cooperation with the political foundations of the European Parliament. During the Conference, this ELF Working Group, "The Race for Digitising Europe", explored Europe's role in the battle for global digital leadership, a new era for industrial policies. Working Group participants discussed issues related to digitisation, rules harmonisation for internal market investments, and the focus on SMEs.

'European Digital Strategic Autonomy: a panacea in international digital battlefield' at the M100 Colloquium



The international media conference M100 Sanssouci Colloquium in Potsdam brings together every year around 100 representatives of traditional and independent media from all over Europe to discuss the most pressing issues on the political agenda. During the 2022 edition of the Colloquium, ELF organised a Working Group chaired by our Head of Policy & Research, Dr Antonios Nestoras. The WG focused on how the EU can shape a long-term strategy for Digital Strategic Autonomy (DSA) to strengthen its position in tomorrow's international digital domain, complement the security aspect of 'Strategic autonomy', and redefine its relationship with allies and rivals.

Flagship publications

TechnoPolitics Studies



New technologies have added value to civilisation, improving and even lengthening our lives and shaping the way we communicate. Europe is at a critical juncture: on the one hand, the digital transition offers unprecedented opportunities. On the other hand, this technological transition must be supported by intelligent policy choices. The TechnoPolitics Study series by the European Liberal Forum creates a bridge between the tech industry, academia, and policymakers. It represents an important step towards this new future-oriented way of thinking, in which policymaking is a tool to create a link between technology and the individual to support our digital future.

TechnoPolitics Vol. 1, 'Decoding EU Digital Strategic Autonomy – Sectors, Issues and Partners', addresses various key concerns and opportunities associated with developing the EU's Strategic Digital Autonomy (SDA), from research and education to strategic deployment of resources.

TechnoPolitics Vol. 2 'Europe's Future Connected – Policies and Challenges for 5G and 6G Networks' focuses on 5G and 6G platforms and the most appropriate policies for regulation in Europe while at the same time offering a perspective on the world's significant pioneers in the deployment of this technology.

TechnoPolitics Vol. 3 ‘European Cybersecurity in Context – A Policy-Oriented Comparative Analysis’ approaches the topic of European cybersecurity, considering critical infrastructures, skills, strategic autonomy, AI, cybercrime, privacy, and the use of space.

Finally, TechnoPolitics Vol. 4 “Smart Parliaments – Data-Driven Democracy” offers politicians the tools and outlines the path towards designing more efficient, inclusive and resilient institutions that will stand the test of time.

Future Europe Journal Issue 2: Inflation Rising



With crises around us and a persistent expansive monetary policy, we witness daily price increases while our purchasing power rapidly fades, hurting particularly low and middle-income earners and families. The explosive potential of inflation rates at the beginning of 2022 and the slow realisation of the potential societal fallout are pushing institutions to rethink the principles of monetary union and speed up its completion. The current endemic crisis in growth rates and inflation in the Eurozone have created new dynamics affecting the financial and banking system across Europe.

This second issue of the Future Europe Journal attempts to add content to the long-standing discussion about the necessary changes in the organisation of the European Monetary and Banking Union. The inflation problem is far from over, and we are moving head-on into the next crisis, exacerbated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. But, ironically, the experience of the war-induced adverse shock might force the monetary institutions to provide the system with resilient and responsive features, at least in the short term.

ELF Papers

In 2022, we published fourteen Policy Papers (PP) on topics that included security, enlargement, digitalisation and new technologies, foreign relations, and EU internal affairs.

Russian aggression against Ukraine

In a special mini-series of policy papers, we have addressed the various consequences and implications of the Russian aggression in Ukraine. PP 17 'Military Aggression against Ukraine: Russia's Rhetoric and the International Legal Framework' focused on how the Russian narrative uses the language of *jus ad bellum* and the UN Charter to justify its invasion of Ukraine. In PP 15, 'Russian Nuclear Threats: A Security Conundrum and the EU's Response', the author analysed the character of the Russian nuclear threats and how the EU should respond to them. Finally, PP 19 'EU Sanctions and Russian Gas Deliveries' analyses Russian sanctions and their effect on the current gas crisis and Europe's long-term energy supply transition.

Geopolitical EU: Security and enlargement

PP 12 'Why Europe Should Stand Up for Taiwan' focused on the growing tensions between China and Taiwan, which coincided with the relationship between the US and the PRC reaching a new low. One year after the establishment of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, PP 18 'One Year After the Fall: Assessing the Consequences of the Taliban Takeover in Afghanistan' discussed the consequences of the withdrawal of Western troops from the country in August 2021.

Resulting from the 2022 ELF expert Working Group on enlargement, PP 20 'Staged Integration for Future EU Enlargement' addressed the geopolitical imperatives for renewing the project that many consider 'stalled' and elaborated on a new 'staged integration' approach as the best way out of the impasse. Continuing the topic of the EU enlargement, PP 21 'Georgia's European perspective: A Litmus Test for EU Conditionality?' discussed the potential implications of the EU's response to Georgia's candidate status application.

New technologies and global challenges

With the release of the new DSA-DMA legislative package, the EU wants to echo its 'Brussels effect' into the realm of digitalisation. Our Policy Brief 4, 'The 'Brussels Effect': Digitalisation and the Future of Transatlantic Relations', addressed the interplay between EU regulatory power in this field and the future of transatlantic relations. PP 10, 'Enhancing the Commission's AI Act Proposal,' suggests that although many welcome aspects of the Commission's AI Act Proposal, it needed to go further to protect Europeans' fundamental rights.

PP 13 'The Promise of Magnetic Fusion for a Sustainable Future' builds on the ELF's Techno-Sustainability Series and its assumption that technology is our ally in tackling climate and environmental challenges. The Paper suggests that magnetic fusion is one of such new and existing technologies that are pivotal to constructing the whole discussion about sustainability in Europe. PP 14 'Batteries Charging the Future: The New Cycle for Energy Storage, and the Global Arms Race for it' continues this discussion on the role of technologies and focuses on batteries and energy storage.

EU of the future

PP 11 'Flexible Transnational Electoral Constituencies' focuses on how the tragic events shaking the world require Europeans to think of the Union's politics as a whole and decide the common destiny of the Member States together.

PP 9 'A Europe of Values' discusses the EU's longstanding struggle to find adequate responses to its member states' rule of law violations. 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.

And finally, PP 16, 'The Potential of Harm Reduction: A Novel EU Strategy on Tobacco Regulation', addresses the long-term issue of Europeans' health and suggests that the Commission should consider harm reduction policies to reduce the negative effects of tobacco.

Renew Europe Position Papers

We continued the collaboration with the Renew Europe Group. In a series of papers, the Group presents its joint position on a specific policy issue or domain. Each Position Paper (PP) is approved during the Group meeting at the European Parliament and thus serves as a point of reference for the official standpoint of the Renew. In 2022, ELF published eight more Renew Europe Position Papers. Thematically, they covered a range of topical issues currently on top of the EU policymaking agenda.

EU Foreign Affairs

PP 10 'Blueprint for an EU-China Strategy' proposes a new EU-China strategy based on four pillars. In PP 5, 'A New Strategy on Relations with Russia', Renew Europe suggests that tackling the Russian challenge is critical for strengthening the EU's role as a global player and the EU institutions' ability to take the following steps.

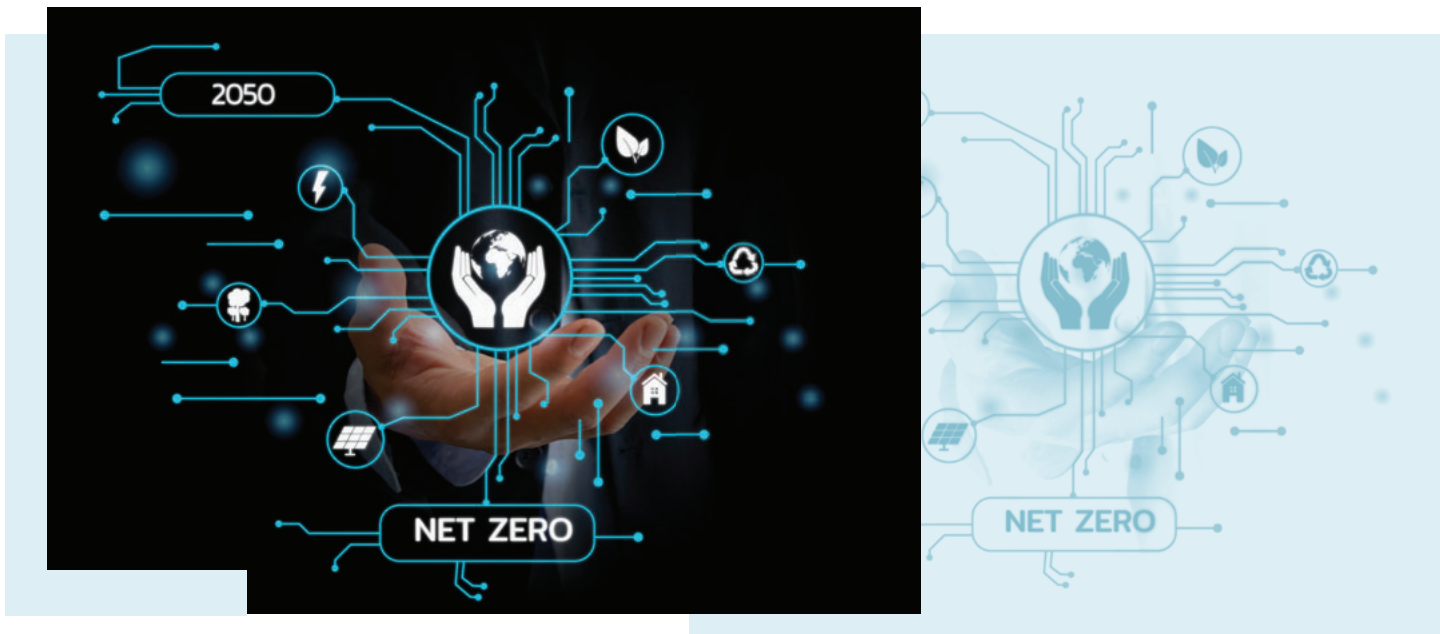
Sustainable and resilient future for Europe

PP 11 'Europe's Industrial Future' puts forward a vision for an innovation-driven industry fit for the green and digital age. PP 6 'Small and medium-sized enterprises, our commitment to Europe's SMEs' suggests that if improving SMEs' access to finance was essential before the crisis, it has now become crucial for their very survival. In PP12, 'Renew Action Plan on Food Security and Response to the Ukrainian Crisis', the Group proposes policy approaches focused on the resilience and sustainability of the food supply chain, the international dimension of food security, and other linked topics.

Free and fair societies

In PP 7, 'Recommendations for a Safer Internet for Children in the EU', Renew Europe calls upon EU policymakers to take the interests of children into account from the start of EU law-making to ensure children can safely enjoy the digital world. PP 9 'Countering Disinformation' addresses how the EU can expose, attribute and counter disinformation to avoid fragmented or conflicted national regimes. Finally, PP 8, 'A New Vision for the Protection of Animals during Transport', addresses the pressing problem of animal welfare during transport.

Blogposts

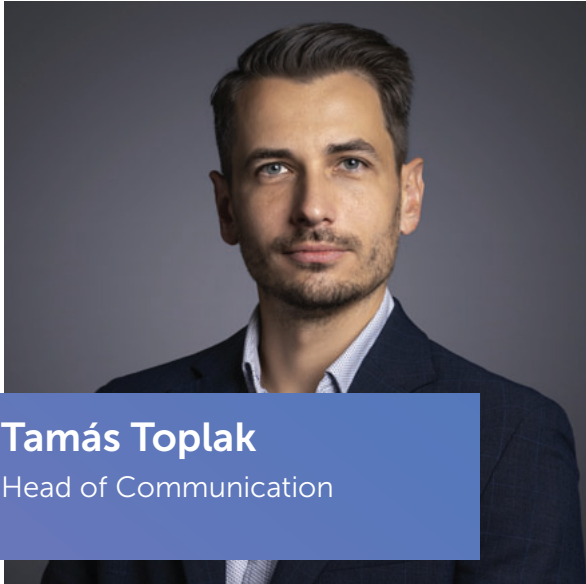


ELF's blog posts bring new ideas and solutions to enable change founded on evidence-based research. In 2022, ELF published a series of blog posts covering topics such as fusion energy, mining, sustainable bioenergy, decarbonisation for aviation and automotive industries and many more.

The "Road to Net-Zero" series allowed us to engage with policymakers, industry experts and academics to contribute to a better understanding of how to shape the EU's sustainable transition. The essential aim of the series is to foster debate on the topic with an eco-pragmatic, pro-science, and pro-technology perspective.

The "Science, Not Fiction" series explored innovation in many sectors that have been advancing at a pace that we have not seen before for a very long time. We, as liberals, attempt to keep our eyes on the horizon and facilitate the creation of a liberal environment in which these innovative sectors will have everything they need to succeed and push the boundaries of science even further.

Communicating Liberalism



Tamás Toplak

Head of Communication

2022 was a year of constant challenges. The changing geopolitical landscape, the war in the immediate neighbourhood and the rising cost of living showed us that every organisation must be resilient and constantly reinvent itself. The European Liberal Forum is no exception from that. Security, strategic autonomy, digitalisation and monetary policy became the main focus of our communication.

This year, ELF introduced TechnoPolitics as a new sub-brand of ELF. With its studies, papers and conferences, the project aims to gather experts, industry representatives, academics and politicians to discuss how new and future technologies can influence traditional 'policymaking'.

In over 50 episodes, our Liberal Europe Podcast – created in collaboration with our member organisations Movimento Liberal Social and Fundacja Liberté! – gave a platform to academics, member organisations and politicians from national and European levels, and covered several topics from the changing geopolitical landscape to the significance of strategic autonomy, from the global implications of the war in Ukraine to the future of liberalism.

Our Liberal Communicators' Network project - organised in cooperation with LYMEC and Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom - continued to empower liberal communicators to adopt cutting-edge communication strategies for their organisations. We believe that by innovating non-profit communications, liberals will be better equipped to influence shifts in values and behaviours and achieve societal change for a forward-looking Europe.

In the year ahead, we will continue working on streamlining our communication and creating stronger cooperation between the ELF Secretariat and our member organisations, as well as other stakeholders in the liberal network. In this way, the European Liberal Forum, as the leading liberal think tank and foundation of the family, can play a crucial role in shaping the discussion about a liberal future in a united Europe.

“

By innovating non-profit communications, liberals will be better equipped to influence shifts in values and behaviours and achieve societal change for a forward-looking Europe.



Reaching out to our community

Liberal Communicators' Network

Doing great projects is only half the job unless we communicate effectively about their result and impact. The competition in the world of ideas is fierce, and liberals need to communicate strongly about our work.

The Liberal Communicators' Network offers high-level training for communication staff in liberal think tanks and foundations to reinforce their capacities to spread liberal ideas in a catchy, appealing way.

In 2022 we had the 3rd edition of Liberal Communicators' Network umbrella events that complemented the programmes organised by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and LYMEC. Throughout the series of online and in-person trainings, participants learned from experts about how to plan and shape good messages for key audiences, what kind of tools to use and how to incorporate digital technologies into their storytelling.

Liberal Europe Podcast

The fourth year of our Liberal Europe Podcast continued to be a forum for open-ended discussions on European social and economic challenges. In each episode, politicians, activists, or academics join the hosts to discuss the most pressing European problems and potential liberal solutions.

This year, the Liberal Europe Podcast was produced by ELF in collaboration with two member organisations, Movimiento Liberal Social (MLS) from Portugal and Liberté! Foundation from Poland. In 2022 our hosts touched upon a wide variety of topics, from the future of liberalism to EU enlargement and security challenges after the war in Ukraine.

In the year ahead, Liberal Europe Podcast shall keep working as a platform that member organisations can use to showcase their projects to our liberal family and beyond.

You can find all our podcast episodes on SoundCloud, Apple Music and Spotify.

Liberal Reads

The Liberal Reads uncover the classical and modern liberal works in a digestible and easily accessible format, packing a complex argument in short, thought-provoking essays and podcasts. In the second season of the Reads, we shed light on seven more liberal works and critically reflected on how their authors' ideas correlate with current political and societal developments.

Among the classical works, we have included Friedrich Hayek's famous Road to Serfdom and Adam Smith's less well-known yet profound piece, The Theory of Moral Sentiments. Similarly to the first season, the classical works were complemented by those written in our times. Thus, in the season, you can also find reviews of Johan Norberg's Open: The Story of Human Progress, Michael Huemer's The Problem of Political Authority, Stephen Holmes and Ivan Krastev's The Light that Failed and other works.



ELF in Press

BalkanInsight

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euronews.



**TAGESSPIEGEL
BACKGROUND**

moderndiplomacy****

euobserver****

Financial Report



Melissa Amirkhizy

Head of Finance

In 2022, we implemented a new financial structure and changes to the work plan to create excellent flexibility and accountability. The renewed structure came hand in hand with establishing a streamlined way of working with our Member Organisations and networks, as well as innovating the nature of our independent and collaborative activities.

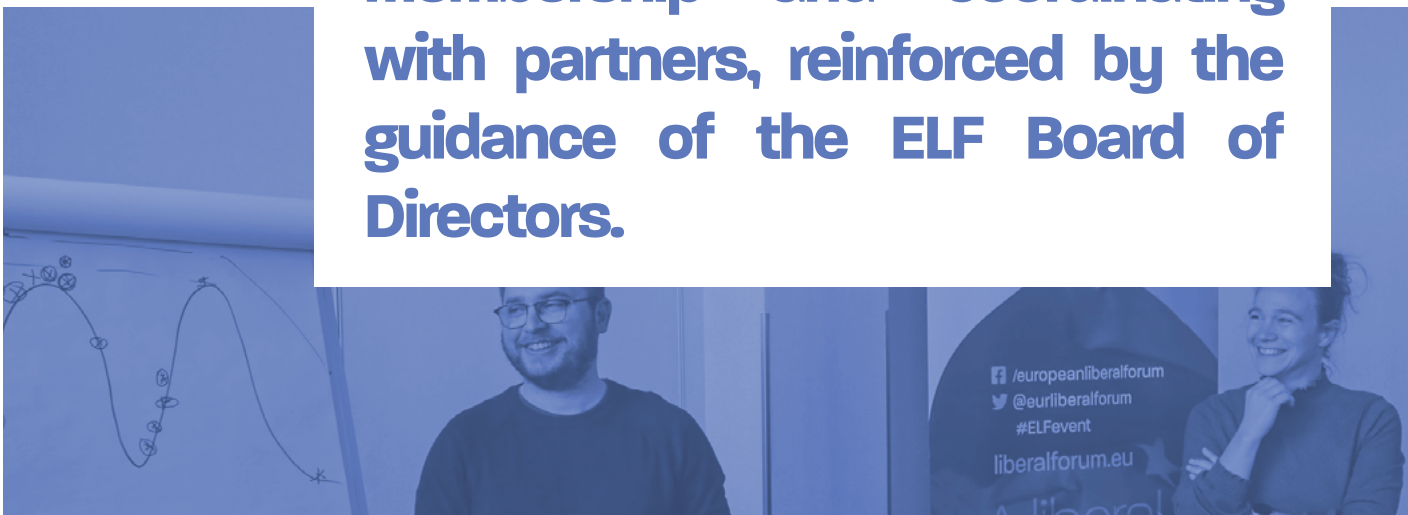
This year our primary focus was on creating solid financial procedures that can work in a multitude of locations and specific contexts of EU countries. To strengthen our liberal network, we dedicated time to training our membership and coordinating with partners, reinforced by the guidance of the ELF Board of Directors.

We defined the needs of ELF today. 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 disinformation and maintain the highest standards of compliance regulations.

At the same time, the growing and changing team within the ELF Secretariat created the need for new, clear HR policies and structures allowing for sustainable personal and organisational development across all units.



To strengthen our liberal network, we dedicated time to training our membership and coordinating with partners, reinforced by the guidance of the ELF Board of Directors.



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51 member organisations from 31 countries



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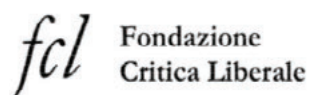
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Does the state have the right to coerce?

Liberal Read No 12:

What Made Humanity's success?

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Camus' Ethic of Political Moderation

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John Milton against the Paternalism of the Seventeenth Century

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Empathy as a Pillar of Liberalism

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Movimento Liberali (LibMov)

Discussion Paper Direct Foreign Investments in Europe:

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The Voice of The Youth Vol. 3

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European Cities Network on Migration: Getting Skills Synchronised

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Lonely Europeans

Projekt:Polska

A liberal future in a united Europe

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