

LIBERTAS

The newspaper of the European Liberal Youth



Welcome to Rotterdam! Welcome to LYMEC's Spring Congress! Editorial.

Let's secure European prosperity!

From different regions of the world, quickly shifting political spheres are posing threats to safety of European citizens. The EU is in doubt over how to respond in a way that holds European principles and interests dear: how to act in what might be called the Russian-Ukrainian conflict or how to respond to threats posed by militant jihadists from countries all over the world, including from our own European backyard. Amongst other things, these questions mark the essential crossroads that the European Union is standing on today. What do we expect from the EU in safeguarding our security and where do we draw the line? This way, the theme 'Securing European Prosperity' touches upon the core of the European Union. Decisions made on this matter will have a fundamental impact on how the European identity will be shaped in the coming years. And that is why young liberals from all over Europe have come together to discuss solutions for both economy and security issues.

We will start with normal statutory activities such as reports from the Bureau to the members, financial decisions or election of LYMEC's delegation to ALDE Party Congress. But we all are very keen to start our discussion on the specific topic of European security in a changing world. We wanted all parts of the congress to support the topic and with that our debates. That's why, this time all fringe meetings are drafted to support the overall topic of the congress: "Securing European Prosperity".

Get ready for discussions by attending the Fringe meetings

Our host organisations JD and JOVD will kick off the LYMEC weekend with the first fringe on Thursday (5:30-7:00 pm). At their fringe meeting "A new geopolitical threat to Europe: Militant jihad and the Caliphate" they will talk about current events going on in Middle East, Africa and Europe and give possible conclusions for the EU. On Friday morning from 9.30 to 10:45 am two fringe meetings will take part. JOVD and JD will work with you on the topic: "European Army with respect to NATO and Austerities" and Individual Member Bernard van der Wees will bring up the importance of "Net Neutrality in the EU". Between 11:00 am and 12:15 pm our host organisations will give you an insight about how "Stability in West Africa and European Security" are connected. Individual members Benedikt Bente and Joao Duarte will bring up a different aspect of Securing European Prosperity: "Vaccination - can the EU avoid playing with fire?". Between 1:15 till 3:00 pm JOVD and JD will discuss a quite important topic: Russia. Take part in the fringe "Russia in the New World Order: Gas, Guns and Interdependence!" LYMEC's partner, the European Liberal Forum (ELF), invites you at 3pm to a "Ralf Dahrendorf Roundtable about "A Transatlantic Trade for Interdependent Prosperity" were a highly controversial TTIP will be discussed.

Congress business and "Newbie Introduction"

This is your first LYMEC congress and it all looks like a huge mystery to you? No need to worry, we got you! On Friday

you will have the chance to participate in a "Newbie Introduction" where you will be introduced to congress specific details and the programme. You will as well get the chance to check out how it feels to be a speaker before the congress starts. If you are a LYMEC oldie or after your introduction you will know how many cool things are waiting for you. The report by the bureau and the annual treasurer's financial report and the reports by the internal auditors will give you a good overview of LYMEC's work. Other important agenda point will be the elections of our delegates to ALDE congress. We can send ten delegates to our mother parties congress to push forward topics that matter to young liberals. That is why resolutions are our most important agenda point: we are looking forward to some fruitful discussions!

Congress TV

We will start LYMEC TV to bundle video campaigns and to create image videos and to have a visual summary of events like congresses. For more information have a look at page two.

Enjoy the dutch nights

The weekend will be kicked off with the Cultural Evening on Thursday night. Get ready to give new things a try. Check out drinks and food from other countries, inform people about your countries specialties! What we will be doing on Friday and Saturday night will remain a secret to increase the fun. But trust me Saturday's Farewell Party will bless you with good memories that will make you want to come back to LYMEC! (sh)

Dear liberal friends,

Let me welcome you to the second edition of the LYMEC Congress newspaper. With almost a year in the mandate of the new institutional setup, European Union is facing a new set of challenges. From geopolitical turmoil in the East, over severe security threats and political and economic instabilities inside of EU 28, to the outline of the new global trade order inside TTIP negotiations. LYMEC is ready to address all of the issues in 2015 through our events and debates, always following a clear line of more liberty and more freedom in all aspects of our political lives. We are inviting you to join us through various forms of engagement, from enlarging our liberal family with new members, to working inside our working groups and teams or debating and writing for us, spreading the liberal word around our continent. Enjoy reading our newspaper and do get involved.

Liberal friends, Vedrana



LYMEC President Vedrana Gujic.

News from LYMEC

Is it your first time at a LYMEC congress? Don't worry. We have a Newbie Introduction for you!

We have all been in your shoes at some point; getting on a plane, flying to somewhere in Europe to participate in your first LYMEC Congress. Being curious and excited, and maybe also a little bit nervous? Here are a few tips to make the best of your weekend with us:

Take the floor and participate in the political debate:

This is what we are here for! Take the floor and make sure your party's points are being heard in the political discussions on the resolution. Being a bit nervous shouldn't stop you and nobody minds if your voice is a bit shaky. And we promise, when you have taken the floor once, the next time will be a lot easier. We don't expect you to give loooong speeches (in fact, we prefer it too be short and sweet), but we definitely hope to see you on the floor.

Don't worry about your English skills:

English is the official language of LYMEC, but we don't care about your grammar or if you need a little time to find the right words. In fact, most of us speak broken English, and being a native English speaker is not always an advantage, as the British and the Irish both have funny accents and a variety of words none of the rest of us understands...

Politics goes hand in hand with party:

We come for politics, but stay for the party.

We highly encourage you to take part in the social activities; whether you want to dance all night or hang in the bar, this is a great way to get to know people better (and past experience proved that a drink or two really helps on your language skills, whether you want to brush of your high school German, have heated political discussion in English or learn a phrase or two in Estonian...).

But remember; king at night, king in the morning - we do expect you to be in the congress room in time for the roll call the next day (experience show that drinking water and a taking painkillers makes this part a lot easier...).

Help us spread the liberal message:

Twitter, Instagram or Facebook .

We are everywhere, and we hope you are as well. A congress is the perfect opportunity to spread the liberal message on social media and also a way of keeping your party posted on what you are doing. If you take pictures please tag as many people as you can to increase the visibility.

Use the hashtag #lymeccongress and tag LYMEC within every post or tweet you make and help us reach more people with our message!



Vicepresident Sissel Kvist was once new to LYMEC as well. Her first congress was in Brussels in 2008. Sissel will assist LYMEC Newbies. Just give her a tap on the shoulder.

Got any questions?

Don't hesitate to ask! The Bureau is happy to answer all your questions, and if it's your first time, we can make sure you sit next to someone experienced, who can guide you through the process. We highly recommend to take part in the Newbie session taking place on friday before the official congress opening. (sk)

Upcoming Events - Save the date.

Seminar for young local councilors

You are a local councilor for your party and would like to meet up with other young councilors from all over Europe? You would love to share your experiences and would like to know others' story? Then apply for the LYMEC seminar organised together with the ALDE Group in the Committee of the Regions. The "Seminar for young local councilor - Local politics revealed" takes place in Brussels 4th-5th June. If you know some young liberal councilor who has not been in touch with LYMEC before: share the info with them!

IMS event on LGBT rights

This year's IMS event will gather the participants in the beautiful city of Riga between the 20th and 21st June. We will discuss there the current state of LGBT rights in Europe. The group will also take part in the Euro Pride 2015 to show our support for LGBTI people and to celebrate diversity. Work hard, play hard LYMEC style. As a bureau meeting will be at the same weekend you will have the chance to get in contact with the bureau if you haven't met them before.

Young leaders meeting in Barcelona

The presidents and vice-presidents of LYMECs member organizations gather ones a year to share experiences and strengthen their contacts within LYMEC. This time they will meet in lovely Barcelona from 25th to 27th September. Despite best practice sharing we will provide a useful training that aims to support our presidents in their daily duties. The event will also provide them the opportunity to have a first hand experience of the elections in Catalonia, taking place on the 27th September.

Autumn Congress - Say hello to Helsinki

We know that you just came to Rotterdam for spring congress but we are already having the next one in mind. And Finland's beautiful capital can't wait to welcome you to LYMECs autumn congress from 29th October to 1st November. The congress will be held under the motto "Energy security and security of supply".

We are about to plan even more events, so keep an eye on the LYMEC website and Facebook page! (sh)

LYMEC TV - We will kick it off at Spring Congress in Rotterdam.



LYMEC wants to become more and more visual. That is why we will implement the new LYMEC TV. We already have a Youtube channel we basically used for campaign videos. But now we really want to push the idea of videos. LYMEC TV shall produce image and information videos, campaign material as well as summaries of our events like congresses. The first piece will be an image video about Rotterdam congress to share the buzz and to attract people to attend our events. We will film all different events to recreate the awesome atmosphere in a video, and we might ask you for an interview, so don't forget to put on your brightest smile! The TV Team during the congress will be: LYMEC assistant Edgaras, LYMEC intern Zeneda and press officer Svenja. If you are interested in working with the team please contact Svenja (svenja@lymec.eu). (sh)



The participants of LYMEC event with ELF in Warsaw came together for a picture. The participants discussed current economical and regional issues.

Meet the newly elected three Individual Member Delegates for 2015!

During March and April 2015 all Individual Members of LYMEC had chance to vote for the three new delegates for the Individual Member Section (IMS) for 2015.

Benedikt Bente, from Germany, has been active at local and European level in many Liberal organisations as LHG - the liberal students of Germany - and will now be IMS delegate for the first time. "Last year we have seen some great work in the IMS - but I want to do even more." said Benedikt as part of his motivation to apply.



Benedikt Bente: New IMS delegate.

João Duarte, from Portugal, has been an IMS delegate since the last Congress in Berlin. "Being one of the delegates from the previous Autumn Congress, I had a great deal of pleasure working with other IMS to discuss motions, agree on positions and represent them effectively in the Assembly.", reflects João.



Re-elected IMS delegate João Duarte.

Raufs Guseinovs, from Latvia, is also an IMS delegate for the first time. Raufs states: "Having experience of conducting successful political campaigns and living in different European countries, I would like to help young Liberals to push forward our agenda."



Raufs Guseinovs is looking forward to the congress.

Feel free to approach and meet the new IMS delegates during the Congress, especially if you are an individual member! If you are interested in becoming an Individual Member contact the delegates as well or ask LYMEC bureau member Jelena (jelena@lymec.eu). (js)

Economic growth unites young Liberals in Warsaw.

Between 20th and 22nd of March around 30 members of LYMEC and other ELF-affiliated organizations came to Warsaw to discuss and present their opinions about different levels of development across European regions and exchange views on how to tackle regional disparities by promoting growth based on innovation, private investment and trade.

The event started on Friday afternoon with the welcome and overview session presented by Sissel Kvist, Vice-President of LYMEC. Afterwards, participants were given an opportunity to introduce and present their policy papers on the topic of the event. Following each presentation an intensive and fruitful discussion took place which prompted all participants to actively engage and exchange their opinions and ideas on regional disparities.

The evening dinner featured a keynote speech by Andreja Potočnik, Member of the Municipal Council of the Municipality of Tržič, Member of the Slovenian Parliament and Member of the EU Committee of the Regions, on the participation of young people on various levels of political institutions.

On Saturday morning Andreja Potočnik shared her experience serving as a Member of the Municipal Council. Furthermore, she also discussed the role local and regional governments play in the economic development of Europe.

The next session was about TTIP, the planned trade and investment agreement between the United States and the European Union. The first speaker was a representative of US embassy in Poland, Angela Palazzolo, Second Secretary-Consul. She emphasized the importance TTIP will have for the future world's economy. Following, other ar-

reas of interest for a successful conclusion of the trade and investment deal such as transparency and agriculture, were covered. The other speaker on the panel, Marie Blanchard, Public Affairs Manager at Novartis focused on economic growth of Europe through expanding sectors of research, innovation, technology and trade. Afterwards the speakers shared their professional views of the related topics.

The afternoon session was on Innovation and Entrepreneurship where a screening interview with Kumardev Chatterjee, founder and President of the European Young Innovators Forum, took place. The interview focused on several topics, among which the lack of entrepreneurship in Europe and how to overcome it, or the imbalances in our labor market, where high youth unemployment levels go hand in hand with millions of unfulfilled job positions, due to the lack of skilled workers. The Participants discussed the needed changes in our educational system to overcome these imbalances.

In the last part Zeneda Feratllari, LYMEC intern, presented some concrete information concerning EU Regional Development policy implementation and upgrades since its inception, considering the challenges of 21st century. The event was closed with a key-note speech of Adrian Martinez and Stephen Roy Cruz from the Philippine Liberal Party. They offered a general overview of world economy, focusing in both the economic rise of Asia, and the geopolitical issues affecting the region.

The ten best essays will be published. That way LYMEC will be able to push it's professional work towards a broader audience. (ic)

News from Member Organisations - Newly elected presidents

In the last months several of our member organizations have elected or re-elected their boards and presidents. We invite you in this section to get to know three of them.

Belgium - Jeunes MR

Mathieu Bihet is a 23-years-old young student in Administrative and Public Law at the University of Liege who has always been interested into politics. In 2010 Mathieu Bihet became a member of the Jeunes MR, the French-speaking liberal youth movement in Belgium.

Mathieu began his political commitment as President of the local section of the Jeunes MR in his hometown, Neupré. Quickly, his beliefs in liberalism and his innate talent for politics encouraged him to run for the local elections in 2012. And success was just around the corner! Mathieu was elected as member of Neupré's City Council.

In 2014, he applied for the national Vice-President to the outgoing President, Lora Nivresse. It was again a brilliant success for Mathieu who was elected by a large majority. When Lora announced her resignation Mathieu was expected to become the new President. Since then, he has taken his role very seriously and he has carried out his function with spirit.

Mathieu Bihet is a convinced liberal. As he said in a recent press interview, "The Mouvement Réformateur in Belgium represents my values of freedom, of work, of tax temperance".

Austria - Junos

Douglas Hoyos was born on 8 of September 1990 in Klagenfurt, Austria. After completing his schooling in 2009 at the Bundesrealgymnasium in Horn, he performed his military service in the Austrian Guard. Right after that he gained experience in the private sector by managing the site of a recreational adventure park. From 2010 onwards he studied business administration at the Vienna University of Economics.

During the student union's election in 2011 he in the list of JuLis (now Junos), joining the organization a short time later. In October 2011 he became Secretary General of the Federal National Executive Board of Julis Austria. From October 2013 Douglas also worked at the Federal Office of NEOS, where he was responsible for the organization and activist mobilization.

Douglas always fought for a close co-operation between Julis and NEOS and was also largely responsible for the resulting partnership, through which Julis became the backbone of the youth organization of the new party. At the XI Congress Douglas was elected as

the new Chairman.

Estonia - ERPY

The Estonian Reform Party Youth elected new members of the board last year in November and on that day the Chairman of the Board, Joonas Vanto, was re-elected for the second time for a one year term.

Joonas Vanto has been also Secretary General of Estonian Reform Party Youth (ERPY) for three years and for now he is the Advisor to the Minister of Interior of the Republic of Estonia.

He was born in the capital of Estonia - Tallinn - and has also been a candidate for local elections and parliamentary elections in his home-district in Tallinn. Joonas Vanto was elected to the Board of Administration of his home-borough in Tallinn and he is also the Chairman of the Board of the Committee of Revision.

Joonas is a student in Estonian Business School mayor in business and entrepreneurship. He has also been an active entrepreneur and for now is the owner of three companies.

Ireland - Ógra Fianna Fáil

Eoin Neylon has been a member of the National Executive of Fianna Fáil since the 2012 Ard Fheis (National Conference). He comes from Ennis, Co. Clare on Ireland's west coast. He was elected the Uachtarán (President) of Ógra Fianna Fáil at the November 2014, National Youth Conference of the party. Eoin was educated at the National University of Ireland, Galway, where he earned an honours degree in Civil Engineering before earning a Masters in Structural Engineering and Mechanics concurrently from the University of Edinburgh and the University of Glasgow. He is currently self-employed in the construction sector.

The main reason Eoin got involved in politics was his devotion to Republican principles, particularly equality of access to education and equality of opportunity in life in general. Over the course of his Presidency, Eoin hopes to use his role to lead the campaign in support of the Marriage Equality referendum due to take place in Ireland on May 22nd of this year.

He also wishes to enhance the role of women and encourage more female participation in the political discourse. He is seeking to alter some facets of how Ógra does its business as well as provide specific training and recruitment initiatives to bring more women into the party and to encourage them to put themselves forward for more roles at all levels on the party including public office. (ic)



The 23-years-old Mathieu Bihet is the president of Jeunes MR.



Junos president: Douglas Hoyos was elected at Junos XI. congress.



ERPY president Joonas Vanto campaigning in the 2015 general elections.



Eoin Neylon is the new president of Ógra Fianna Fáil.

News from Member Organisations - Meet our host organisations

JOVD: Guarding the principles of liberalism since 1949.

During the early spring of 1949 the JOVD, Youth Organisation for Freedom and Democracy, was found by a group of liberal enthusiasts in the famous Pulchri Studio, located along the Lange Voorhout, the political heart of the Hague. The intention was to unite and strengthen the liberal voice amongst young people. Ever since the JOVD has served as a true political school with notable alumni; many members of parliament, senators, and ministers - amongst them the current Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte - have obtained many of their political skills in their years at the JOVD. Concluding from that alone we can say that the founding in 1949 was a success.

Nowadays the JOVD forms the political consciousness of the mother party VVD. Especially with the latter in government with the Labour party, it is of vital importance to scrutinize decisions and policies that are implemented. Being an independent organization the JOVD is able to do so, aiming to defend our core principles: freedom, responsibility and tolerance. This we also do on an international level. Being somewhat notorious for our stance on topics like for example defense and European integration, we intent to be outspokenly critical when the discussion departs from our own political line. Especially in fierce debates all voices ought to be heard; that is what we bear in mind.

This year, 2015, is a very special year for us. Firstly we have the great honor to invite the European liberal family for the LYMEC congress. The JOVD has, together with our colleagues from the JD, put much time and effort into making sure there is no way this congress will ever be forgotten. With a superb location and great programme ahead, it promises to be a great event.

There is however another reason: in

2015, we happen to move back to our roots. Within weeks the JOVD will move its headquarters to the Lange Voorhout, facing the Pulchri Studio where the JOVD was founded in 1949. Knowing this I can already say that 2015 has been a success so far, and that it can only become better. Thus I invite you to debate, celebrate and stand up with us for liberalism.

By Robin van der Wal, International Officer of JOVD. (rw, mp)



JOVD International Officer Robin van der Wal.



JD International Officer Milan Assies.

JD - From a downfall to a social-liberal success in ten years.

Nine years ago our mother organization, social-liberal party D66, found itself in an existential crisis. In the polls they scored the lowest rating of all times, with zero expected seats in parliament. Luckily it never came that far, as in the elections they managed to secure a few seats. This downfall also had a great effect on us, JD. Some people asked themselves, as happened within D66, if the organizations still had a right to exist. After many intense debates, it was decided that within the political spectrum, the social-liberal sounds that D66 and JD voiced, needed to be heard. D66 decided to reform, deciding to put some very important issues to rest for an undefined period of time. The program was altered, the image was changed. All members of D66 and JD hoped this would be the path that would lead to a brighter, more social-liberal future.

After almost a decade, I'm glad to say that the path taken has proven to be the right one. D66 has grown every election since 2006, increasing their power in local, regional and national level. Also JD has developed itself to unexpected heights. At this moment, we're the largest non-confessional political youth organization - it's hard to compete with an organization that has a culture of recruiting one-year olds (no joke) - and as it now seems, we'll be the largest very soon. With ten active departments who organize events everyday, GA's that are visited by ever growing numbers of people, various international projects and an increasing amount of cooperation with different political youth organizations all over the world, I'm proud to say we're doing great. From a political organization that was on the brink of extinction, we became an example of how to promote liberal values in a political reality that

becomes more complex by the day.

With this increasing influence JD has gained and is still gaining, we have an increasing obligation to *achieve* and to realize what we stand for. On a national level, we have done this in several ways. To name a few, we've organized a campaign to promote the legalization of MDMA (or XTC) that got international attention. During the European elections, we promoted a new European Union, being critical of its current structure, but stressing the vast possibilities that it's providing our country and region with. We've had a national campaign on the emancipation of transgenders, which made it into several regional and national newspapers and radio shows. And, to finish these examples, we've actively campaigned for a reformed health care system in order to create sustainable and affordable health care in the years to come.

Besides campaigning, we've also used the steadily increasing influence of D66 in order to put our ideals forward. On several GA's of our mother party, we've passed resolutions on implementing the QALY in Dutch health care, on a more humane life-long imprisonment, on raising the minimum age of being allowed to consume alcohol to eighteen years, and on many other topics. The upcoming D66 GA, we will be, amongst other things, putting forward a resolution on reforming the European asylum system and have good hopes to get this passed. It is the same resolution that was already adopted at the last IFLRY GA and hopefully will be adopted at the upcoming LYMEC GA.

To state it again, we're doing well. And, we want to keep doing well. However, we should watch out not to be overconfident. It's necessary to always look for new ideas, new ways to promote our ideals and, most importantly, to seek cooperation with other political youth organizations, both within and outside of The Netherlands. It is only through cooperation and exchange that we can hope to remain an important liberal voice in our small country. Therefore, I'm more than proud that JOVD and JD are able to welcome our European partners in the great city of Rotterdam.

By Milan Assies, International Officer of JD. (ma, mp)



Everything a liberal needs to know about ... TTIP

Mythbusting - TTIP Myths and facts about the treaty.

Hardly ever has the public been as engaged and interested in the EU trade policy as currently - all, or at least mostly, thanks to four letters: TTIP. The Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership has been called the mother of all free trade agreements, the root of all evil, the salvation for the depressed European economy and an easy way to sell out all our beliefs. Among many other things.

Throughout Europe concerned voices are being raised warning us about the dangers of the trade deal. There is, as always, need for close scrutiny of the negotiations in order to secure the best agreement possible in the end. But there are also many misunderstandings and even straight out lies circulating about the negotiations. Sadly many people are opposing the negotiations without even having a clear picture of what is at stake or what the deal could result in, they simply see two of what in their opinion are the great evils of the modern world (capitalism and the United States) combined and decide to oppose anything that has to do with TTIP.

This is an attempt to tackle some of the most persistent myths out there, and answer them with information that is public and within reach for anyone, who actually would make the effort of looking for it.

Myth #1: "TTIP will inevitably lead to the lowering of standards regarding the protection of health, environment and animal welfare"

One of the aims of the partnership is to cut costs for enterprises by unifying the standards on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean, or to recognise each other's standards in order to avoid double testing of products. This means that in areas where the standards are high both in the US and the EU, but the methods of testing a product differ, the regulators could simply agree to recognise the other parts way of testing so that a product wouldn't have to be tested twice just to be able to access the other market.

Rumour has it that this would open up the European market for gene-manipulated (GM) foods, hormone-treated beef and meat from cloned animals, among others. That is simply not true. The negotiators on both sides have made it clear that TTIP would NOT lead to lowering of standards, it would NOT infringe on the possibilities to legislate in order to protect our health and it will NOT force the EU to import GM food that hasn't already been approved ac-

cording to our own rules - not to mention hormone-treated or cloned meat.

This could however result in the EU and the US setting standards regarding the protection of health, environment and animal welfare that will be the model for global implementation, which certainly is something worth striving for. It is a lot better that we are setting the standards that others will have to live up to, than finding ourselves in a situation where we have to lower our standards to meet the level set by someone else.

Myth # 2: "TTIP will make it possible for big companies to sue member states for issuing legislation aimed at protecting people and therefore impact the legislation"

This is one of the most persistent myths. However, the negotiating parties have made it very clear that even if there is an investor-state dispute settlement mechanism included in the TTIP, companies will not be able sue states just on grounds of not being able to make the expected revenue due to new legislation. Investment agreements are a way to attract foreign investment, and not a new thing - the EU member states currently have more than 1400 agreements with each other and third countries. The agreements are there to ensure that foreign investors are treated equally to domestic ones, and the dispute settlement is a way for the investor to get an objective ruling from a panel of international arbitrators on whether the state treated them unfair or not. If the panel decides that the investor has been treated unjustly, the state might have to pay compensation for this. The state can however NOT be made to change or withdraw a law.

Myth # 3: "TTIP would force EU member states to privatise public services such as health care"

Commissioner Malmström and the US head-negotiator Froman issued a joint statement on March 20 saying that the TTIP will "not impede governments' ability to adopt or maintain regulations to ensure the high quality of services and to protect important public interest objectives, such as the protection of health, safety, or the environment".

Myth # 4: "TTIP will lead to the lowering of standards and rules protecting worker's rights"

On the contrary the TTIP would expand

the EU standards on worker's right, which are the highest in the world, to the US as well. There are plans to include a chapter on sustainable development in the agreement. The TTIP would let the EU keep setting its own standards for protecting people at work, but it would also commit both the EU and the US to enforce these rules. The EU is aiming at including commitments that guarantee that both the US and the EU respect core labour standards set out in essential conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO). This would be a leap forward compared to the current situation, as the US has not ratified all ILO conventions protecting worker's rights.

Myth # 5: "Citizens have no say in the negotiations and not even the MEPs or national governments can impact the negotiations, but big companies are able to lobby their opinions"

The TTIP has been criticised for being negotiated behind closed doors, away from the public's eye and out of reach even for MEPs and national governments. These are however by far the most open trade talks ever conducted. The European Ombudsman even commended the commission for the progress on transparency regarding the negotiations as recently as in late March. The commission has made the negotiation mandate, given by the member states, public, and started publishing all position papers on their website as soon as they are handed over to the US negotiators. There are still steps to take in order to further increase the transparency, but one should also remember that if everything is public there could be no negotiations - the same way one doesn't play cards by showing the hand right at the beginning.

The commission has also launched several public hearings, the latest on the topic of ISDS, in order to engage the public and hear as many opinions as possible. During each negotiating round there are public meetings with stakeholders, both companies and citizens, NGOs and other organisations. It might be true that enterprises are heard quite often, but it is companies, not private person's, who are facing trade barriers.

It is also worth remembering that in the end it is the European Parliament, and the national parliament in each of the member states, that gets to decide on whether the EU should enter the free trade agreement or not. (dv)

TTIP Action Day.

In the present discourse on the TTIP, all public can hear is "TTIP will weaken strong EU standards on food safety", or that "TTIP will allow firms to sue EU governments", or that actually "TTIP is tailored for big companies, and will ruin small businesses". In fact, all these presumptions are well-constructed myths around TTIP aimed at discouraging support for this important partnership. We, Liberals, strongly support the TTIP, but often fail to explain why others should do the same. And while our opponents invest a lot of resources into creating these false myths, it is time for us to go on a MYTH-BUSTING mission! Thus, it is with great determination and excitement that we announce a call to participate in LYMEC's action day - pan-European on-street rally to promote and support the TTIP. This rally aims to first, promote and explain the benefits of TTIP to our voters, explaining why and how it will change their lives, and not just Brussels circles, and to "bust the general myths" wrongly attributed to TTIP; second, to show that liberal youth is a big and united force; and third, to bring more visibility to each of you and LYMEC in general.

The Myth-busting mission will take place on May 16, 2015, at 12:00 CET (so the rest of us in different time zones will have to do the math, so that we go on streets simultaneously throughout Europe). LYMEC will provide you with the concept of the rally, list of liberal argumentation and arguments on TTIP, spreadsheets and promotional materials (in English, so we will need your help to translate it into your languages). What we need from you: active support and participation, translation, photo reports from rallies, and last, but not the least, you will need to obtain a permission for public gathering from your local authorities.

You will get more technical information once you apply to participate, meanwhile you can ask questions to Jelena at jelena@lymec.eu The rally will be a great opportunity to support the policy that is important for us, to showcase our political views and values, and to better connect to our potential voters. We really hope we can do it en-masse, so look forward to your support and participation. If your organization would like to participate and take this important issue to the streets, please apply by sending the following information to jelena@lymec.eu: name of organization and an approximate member of participants. Let's stand up for Liberalism, promote our values, and support our liberal Commissioner! (jj)

Liberal World

Young leaders to follow - Ilhan Kyuchyuk the youngest liberal Member of the EP.



Ilhan is our youngest elected liberal MEP and a president of a LYMEC member organisation Youth MRF Bulgaria. With a year behind him in the European parliament, Libertas discussed with him his political career, goals and motivation and one of the key priorities in his mandate - the youth unemployment.

Libertas: Could you give us a short introduction into your background, what brought you into politics?

For more than 25 years the Movement for Rights and Freedoms (MRF) was guided by the basic liberal values - defending human rights and freedoms, minority protection in the context of the European principles and functioning of the civil society. Owing to our unconditional orientation to the liberal value system Bulgaria is unique model of tolerance for the Balkans and Europe.

As a person with strong liberal values, in MRF, the biggest liberal party in Bulgaria, and its youth structures, I found friends with whom I share common ideas already back when we wanted to change Bulgaria. First I became a member in one of the youth student's union of Youth MRF. We were dozen students in Veliko Tarnovo, where we were very active in promoting liberal values and principles. We were quite successful and popular in that. After that I was elected as a member of the Central Executive Council of the youth structure of MRF. In 2012 I was elected president of Youth MRF. I am now member of the European Parliament and more than ever I still believe that we can change Bulgaria and Europe for a better and that is why our work on the promotion

of the liberal values is constant.

Libertas: From Sofia to Brussels, what does it take to win a seat in the European parliament?

My party has always put the youth in the core of its policy. MRF considers youth as a very important subject in the process of policy making. The most important lesson in life and in politics is patience mingled with good preparation and principles. This may sound as cliché, but I believe it is not. A person needs to realize that the responsibility is not there because of him only, but because of the others as well. Only in that case he will be respected equally in Sofia and Brussels.

Libertas: Serving as an example to many, as the only one young liberal leader who did win the seat on European elections, what can you say to all of the young Europeans working in politics?

As one of the young members of that Parliament, I cannot skip to mention the attitude towards the youth in Europe. I think that all European politicians are conscience that the Continent's prosperity depends on the perspectives and opportunities we give to the youth. That is why I am deeply convinced that the more youth is involved in politics, the better we will cope with the challenges in front of us.

Libertas: what inspires you?

I am glad when I am able to seek and offer possible solutions to real problems. I have always been a person dedicated to action. This is what keeps me going on.

Libertas: Youth unemployment has been an elephant in the room for a successive number of years now in Europe, often discussed, but rarely given a solution to it. What do you see as a policy for reversing the growing unemployment?

Juncker's Commission has on its side different instruments to help solve the problem with the youth unemployment and I sincerely hope that we will see real results. I myself organized a forum in Bulgaria named "Education and business: Dialogue for effective partnership". Definitely education is crucial which to grate extend predetermines the development of the youth. The greatest result from the effort to reform the education in a state measures with the rise of the living standard of its citizens and the opportunities for them to fulfill themselves adequately. Investments in knowledge means to invest in better competitiveness, growth in employability, fight with poverty, product of high quality, attract investments and keep the educated people in the country.

Libertas: LYMEC and other European youth organisations have been quite critical towards Youth Guarantee scheme, what is your take on that?

Definitely the Youth Guarantee had its positive effect in the fight with youth unemployment.

When we talk of the future what is crucial is to breed and educate the entrepreneurship as spirit and mind early from the school and to develop it gradually life long. I mean to develop that skill in the youth to transform the idea into real action. This develops their creativity and has better influence on

each sphere in our life. Entrepreneurship in 21 century is not just business, but a way of thinking!

Libertas: Being an MEP it's hard to find free time for yourself, but when you do, what do you do in your leisure time?

It is getting harder to find free time for myself. (laughs) The meetings I have in my country during the holidays are a good chance to enjoy the beauty of Bulgaria and to meet my friends. The constant contact with young people enriches and motivates me. (vg)



Ilhan Kyuchyuk was born in 1985 and is one of the youngest Members of the European Parliament. He is a member of the liberal party in Bulgaria, the Movement for Rights and Freedoms. As the president of LYMEC Member Organisation Youth MRF Bulgaria one of his key priorities is to end youth unemployment.

Become an e-resident of E-Estonia. A guest article by Joonas Vanto from ERPY.



I want to make you wonder and think outside the box for a couple of minutes. Think if it is possible to get things done in a faster way and without any annoying bureaucracy. Want to do business or use Estonias services and our flat tax system from your hometown without even traveling to Estonia? We thought that it would be an interesting and a pleasant gesture if we could offer the world an opportunity to get things done more easily. Today's digital world demands a flexible and easy-to-use system that makes our lives easier.

E-residency

The word itself raises questions, doesn't it? We all have heard about becoming a resident of a foreign country, but becoming an e-resident is a totally different thing. Similarly to the idea that things could be done more easily, the process of becoming an e-resident is also relatively easy. E-residency is a state-issued secure digital identity for non-residents that allows digital authentication and the digital signing of documents. Basically an e-resident is a non-resident person with an Estonian digital identity card. The card works in a same way as Estonian ID-card. For e-residents there isn't a photo on it. You can't use the card for physical identification nor a travel document. It can only be used for digital services. The purpose of e-residency is to make life easier by using secure e-services that have been accessible to Estonians already for years. By providing e-residency, we are moving towards the idea of a country without borders.

Using services

Digital authentication allows you to

access different e-services (provided both by the public and private sector) and to log in to any online portals that recognize this type of authentication (such as internet banks, government portals etc). Digital authenticating requires you to enter a 4-digit PIN code, similar to your bank card. PIN codes will be also given to new e-resident together with their ID-card. The number of services have grown substantially from the beginning. For example it is possible for Estonians to use paperless digital prescription. E-prescription allows you to exit your doctors office and already have your prescription on the ID-card which you will hand out to the pharmacist for your medication. Another good example is declaring your taxes. In Estonia you can do it online and last year has showed that over 95% of taxes are being declared online. Estonia is an e-country and estonians are used with the e-life. Now there is a chance for everyone to live life more easily.

E-signing documents

In the fast life of 21st century, people need modern solutions that would satisfy our demands to solve problems quickly. E-signature has made doing business or just solving everyday tasks so much easier for Estonians for more than ten years already. Now it is time to give that opportunity to the rest of the world.

Digital signing allows you to securely sign any type of documents from anywhere you are in the world, provided there is Internet access, with your 5-12 digit PIN code. Within EU, digital signatures are legally binding in all member states. Outside EU, digital signatures are legally binding in the case of mutu-

al agreement between the parties. In Estonia signing contracts is simple and you can do it from home or even from a cafe where you're having lunch. It doesn't matter if you're signing your new job contract or making deals with your bank. You only need your ID-card.

Doing business

Starting a company in Estonia is simple and it only takes about fifteen minutes. Ofcourse it is done on the internet and with your ID-card. You just need to enter the portal of Estonian Entrepreneur and start entering information about your new company. With a short period of time you are the owner of your new company and can start doing business in Estonia of abroad. Easy as pie. For the moment, I have registered five companies and every time the registering becomes more easier. Before the online company registration was available, it took about two weeks to become the owner of a firm. Statistics show that almost all of the freshly started companies are registered through internet. Estonians are used to it and entrepreneurship is on a rise. It is pleasant to see that there are more young entrepreneurs trying to take over the world with their brand new business ideas.

Productivity and Environment

Signing documents with digital signature raises productivity and helps to save valuable time. Studies have shown that using a digital signature will save a whole working week of time on a year for every citizen who uses it. Imagine what you could do with one spare week. Probably travel or rest with your family or friends. Lymec congresses could be on that week. Think

about it. Environment could rest for a while when digital signatures take over hand written ones. In Estonia it has been calculated that we save so much paper with digital signing of digital documents every month that that stack could rise as tall as Eiffel Tower. Think how it will save environment when whole Europe would start using it.

Become an e-Estonian

As an e-resident you can use and enjoy the same great digital services that allow Estonians to do anything and everything digitally - sign all documents, launch and manage companies, do the banking, encrypt files, etc. It is especially useful for entrepreneurs and others who already have some relationship to Estonia: who do business, work, study or visit here but have not become a resident. However, e-residency is also launched as a platform to offer digital services to a global audience with no prior Estonian affiliation - for anybody who wants to run their business and life in the most convenient and digital way. With e-residency, you can become part of the digital society revolution taking place in our dynamic Northern European country. You can become an e-Estonian! (jv)



Joonas Vanto: Chairman of the board of the Estonian Reform Party Youth.

Inspiring campaigns.

Don't we all somehow love being out on the streets campaigning? Campaigning can be such fun but it is hard work as well. We totally understand that there can be these days when a grumpy mood can kick in if you have been out all day, no one wants to take your leaflets and the rain starts to fall. In those moments you simply need something to brighten up your day. We got you covered with some inspiring pictures of campaigns by our friends who already spend a lot of time with campaigning this year. Our Member Organisation Liberal Youth (LY) from the UK is doing their best to push their mother party. From the campaign in Finland we received pictures of two of our member organisations: Finnish Centre Youth (FCY) and Svensk Ungdom (SU). Both are very active in supporting young liberal candidates and their mother parties. Estonia already held elections and the Estonian Reform Party performed very well and is back in government. We are sure a lot of this success goes back to the effort the Estonian Reform Party Youth (ERP) made during their campaign. Have a look at this picture page and soak up the spirit!

If you want your campaigns to be featured in the next Newspaper just contact our press officer Svenja (svenja@lymec.eu). (sh)



Pictures from Svensk Ungdom campaigning.



How awesome is the campaign bus of Finnish Centre Youth?



The Estonian Reform Party Youth had a good time campaigning with their mascot.

LYMEC exchange: Campaign support by JuLis Germany and our president Vedrana Gujic for LY in UK.



Welcome to the new kids in town!

LYMEC is actively contacting several organisations who are promoting liberal values and policies in their home countries, with the aim to establish stronger ties, open the doors for future cooperation and active involvement in our liberal family. Meet our new friends from:

PORTUGAL

JpT - Juventude Pela Terra

Juventude Pela Terra was founded on the 22 November 2014 in Lisbon as a youth organization of Partido da Terra - MPT, ALDE Party member with one ALDE MEP. With active membership at home, but also abroad, many of them being active LYMEC individual members, JpT promotes a progressive combination of liberal and green policies, focusing on sustainability, democratic reforms, humanism and a pro-European advocacy in Portugal. With the national elections on its way in 2015, JpT is currently preparing for an election campaign through training and capacity building of its members.

ROMANIA

TLR -Tineretul Liberal Reformator

Tineretul Liberal Reformator is the youth organisation of Calin Popescu Tariceanu's party PLR (Partidul Liberal Reformator), established in 2014. Calin Popescu Tariceanu is a former Prime Minister of Romania (2004-2008) who left PNL right after this party left ALDE to enter EPP. PLR is now a strong member of the Romanian Government, has 2 MEPs, and Calin Popescu Tariceanu is the President of The Romanian Senat. After PNL's defection to EPP, PLR remained the only advocate of liberal policies and values in Romania. This strong attachment to liberal values is now loudly heard in Romania due to the new Fiscal Law, which was adopted by the Romanian Government, and which has a strong liberal component (tax decrease) promoted by PLR.

LATVIA

LAJN - Latvijas Attistibai Jaunatnes



Latvijas Attistibai Jaunatnes Nodala is especially promoting LGBTI rights in Latvia.

Nodala

Latvijas Attistibai Jaunatnes Nodala (For Latvia's Development Youth) was established in 2014 as the youth wing of the Latvian party, Latvijas Attistibai, which is also an ALDE Party member. It is a nationwide body and focuses on civil liberties and market economy. At the moment LAJN is seeking to promote LGBT rights through recognition of a cohabitation agreement by launching a citizens' initiative and gathering signatures to deliver to the parliament.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Mladé ANO

With a raising number of active members, Mladé ANO was actively registered as a youth organisation in the first week of April 2015. It's the youth movement of Czech governing party ANO, ALDE Party member with 4 MEPs and a liberal Commissioner Věra Jourová.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Forum mladih - Naša stranka

Youth Forum of Naša stranka is a youth movement inside the Bosnian liberal party - Naša stranka, a progressive party attracting mostly young, urban and liberal members. In its' activities, the movement focuses on citizens and human rights, political and institutional reforms, education and problems of younger generations in the diverse and conflicted society in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

SLOVENIA

Youth movement in SMC

Governing ALDE member party from Slovenia, with a liberal Commissioner Violeta Bulc, Stranka Modernega Centra (SMC) is gathering a prospective youth movement. The ongoing activities and policies aiming at strengthening the liberal agenda in Slovenia, from the recent gay marriage law to progressive economic liberal policies, are a good foundation for soon to be established youth organisation. (vg)



A group picture of the founding of JpT in December 2014 in Lisbon.



LYMEC has met in March the Liberal Youth of Romania, TLR at the offices of FNFB Brussels.



A group of member of Forum mladih - Naša stranka.



Have you met...



These are some of the graphics made by the campaign team for the campaign #trustmeiamaliberal.

... the campaign team?

Are you a good organizer? Experienced campaigner? Or just excited to promote Liberal Ideas? Are you good at design? Are you a reliable team player? Maybe you have some cool and fresh ideas for LYMEC's campaigns?

If so, we want you in our Campaign Team! Contact us and become part of something great!

In the past year LYMEC's Campaign Team has launched online #trustmeiamaliberal campaign, and is at the moment working on our TTIP Myth-Busting street campaign on May 16! The team works on campaigns' concepts, design, promotional materials. It will work together with local organizers of Member Organizations to help facilitate the Action Day and any other upcoming campaigns.

If you are interested in joining us, please email jelena@lymec.eu your name, country and organization, and why you'd like to join!

We are looking forward to hearing from you! (jj)

... the 50 shades of liberalism team?

50 shades of liberalism is a comparative liberal policies project aimed at creating an up-datable database with policies of LYMEC MOs. While at our congresses we try to find a common compromise among our opinions, this project celebrates plurality of liberal policies across Europe on numerous and various topics ranging from Security to Individual Rights. The database will be a useful and available tool for each and one of us, helping us to better understand each other, enhance our own political programs, or better prepare for campaigning. At the moment the working group is running its pilot. You have probably received quite some emails from us, and we hope that in the future we will get more support and feedback, since the database could be created only with your help. At the moment we are only five members and we are happy to welcome more young liberals to our friendly group, so if you are interested in participating in this long-term project, please get in touch with us! (vl, jj)

... the red tape team?

The red tape team will create content to show that Liberal creativity can offer solutions to many problems that we experience with European politics.

Some call for a smaller European government, others want the EU to be more efficient, or more centralized. We all want to have Europe change and LYMEC dares you to give your view. The central question is: Where can Europe cut red tape? Or what can Europe do more efficient? Instead of defining what Europe should not look like we will call for essays and other content to describe what Europe should look like.

As a political youth organisation we don't have to make the compromises that our mother organisations do and we can showcase our diversity within the liberal family. The best content will be bundled and presented to the European Commission. If you want to join the Red Tape team contact Timo or send your essay of maximum 800 words to timo@lymec.eu. (tr)

... the press team?

We are very proud that we can now present the second issue of LIBERTAS. The Newspaper of the European Liberal Youth.

The first call for the press team was in September 2014. Back then we brought the idea of a LYMEC congress newspaper to life and gave the old Libertas magazine a new look in quite a short time. After the successful launch we worked with the feedback Berlin congress participants gave us to improve our work. We even had so much content to share with you that we added four extra pages this time.

As a newspaper takes quite a lot of effort we are looking for new team members.

So this goes out to all of you who would love to be a writer or editor for our new newspaper: You have a huge passion for texting or you are great with grammar? Then it is you we are looking for! If you want to be part of the press team, please send an email to our press officer Svenja (svenja@lymec.eu) and include information just as: name, country, member organisations and a description of your skills. (sh)

... the web cafe team?

LYMEC is congratulating you for participating at the congress in Rotterdam and having wonderful discussions at this great venue. Discussing European Politics only twice per year is however too little by far! Therefore the bureau has taken up the challenge to host Web Cafe Discussions on changing subjects every month. The only things you need is your phone and an internet connection and you can join our discussions from anywhere in Europe. In april we pilot this new platform for discussions by having a preparatory discussion on TTIP. If you have suggestions for topics to discuss or want to join in our Web Cafe team, please let me know. LYMEC is also looking for liaisons that can gather local experts on different topics to facilitate expert speakers from different Member Organizations and Individual Members Section. I am looking forward to seeing you online. If you want to join the Web Cafe Team contact Timo or send your contact details and areas of interest to timo@lymec.eu. (tr)

Liberal Lifestyle

Liberal Bullshit Bingo

We all know that when a debate gets heated some phrases will be overused. Take advantage of that and fill in our Liberal Bullshit Bingo. How Bingo works? Do you really need an instruction?

Just grab a pen, listen carefully, cross a phrase if you hear it in the debate and ones you have a line shout out "Bingo" and get a prize!

Trust me I am a liberal	EU	We need a European federal state.	Juncker
We need a European army.	Economy	Putin	You are a conservative!
Let me be clear...	We as liberals...	We don't need a European federal state.	Single market
You are a socialist!	Tax	Securing Prosperity	Lichtenstein
NATO	Don't you agree with me that...	TTIP	We don't need a European army.

Create your own Bullshit Bingo

Can't get enough of the fun? Then create your own buzzword!

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