

Bureau Member Report

Laia Comerma Calatayud – Events and Training Officer

December 2020 – April 2021

Dear delegates, Dear liberal friends,

The second half of my first year as Events and Training Officer of LYMEC has been, again, highly marked by the pandemic. Not only it has severely curtailed our ability to move, to meet, and to travel, thus preventing us from organizing in-person events, especially at an international scale – as some of your member organisations have been able to do so at a smaller, national scale – but it has also had a high societal and personal cost, resulting in all of us being isolated, losing or seeing suffer people we love, and many young people being fired from their previous work. I think it is important to acknowledge the context in which our events and trainings take place, as we aim to be responsible and set the example for liberal young people all over the EU.

However, this has been an opportunity for innovation, for digitalization, as the only way to overcome the physical barriers. This is why LYMEC has collaborated closely with ELF to set up a **digital platform** that is now fully up and running and will be tested for the first time in our events this year. It has also been an opportunity for me to collaborate with individual member organisations that wanted to try new digital formats for their events, as the Young Liberals of Greece did, for instance, with their digital hackathon in December, and so be closer to you in terms of cooperation and exchange of know-how and digital infrastructure.

Since the workload around the organization of events and trainings around Christmas time was smaller, it gave me the opportunity to focus on the complete make-up of the **Libertas** editorial team, a task that has been successfully completed with the inestimable help of our Policy and Training Intern Lucasta Bath, who is now the Editor in Chief. We have professionalized the team by creating a smaller one of “editors”, who have a sectorial and/or regional focus in their articles, and a wider one of “writers”, who collaborate with more freedom and spontaneity. Together with that, a new marketing plan for Libertas is being set up, with a new logo and image for social media, in collaboration with our bureau member Ida-Maria and our vicepresident Dan-Aria. This will increase the number of publications and, most importantly, their quality, and ultimately lead to a wider reach and impact among our target audience.

With a view to improve our training and our skills, both me and our Secretary General Bálint Gyévai participated at the European Trainers Academy organized by ELF in March, where training for trainers is offered, this time focused on digital tools and the organization of hybrid events. Also, our own **expert database** has been finalized, with further more targeted calls being considered in the closer future.

Moreover, in terms of events, I organized the first **Young Liberal Women's Summit** of LYMEC, who had a record number both of applicants and participants in a LYMEC event.

The feedback both from the participants and speakers was remarkably good, and hopefully this initiative will continue so as to achieve its ultimate aim: bringing more young women in politics and overcome the barriers and stereotypes that we face due to gender, and that as liberals we must fight against in the name of freedom, equality and real democracy.

The last event that has taken place before the Spring congress is our traditional book seminar event, which has revolved around the topic of an “**EU diplomacy fit for the future**”. For this event, also the applying procedure has been changed, with the participants being selected on an essay proposal instead of having to write the whole essay prior to the event, and a list of topics of interest was proposed in the call, so that the final result has more coherence, interest and quality. The final essays will be edited in a book that will be presented to policy-makers and like-minded stakeholders in the Brussels bubble so as to have a real and tangible impact, and lobby LYMEC’s positions for a future-proof EU as a global norm-setter and value-protector. As it is tradition, it will be launched in Brussels in the autumn at a hopefully hybrid event.

In this sense, the bureau will continue monitoring the pandemic situation all around Europe with a view to move to online events as soon as it is safe for all the participants and their surroundings, as we are highly aware of the so-called “digital fatigue” and your wish to go back to physical encounters. Safety and social responsibility are our guiding principles, but we acknowledge your interests and will try to make them happen as soon as restrictions allow.

Last but not least, I have been in close contact with the organizations belonging to my **regional responsibilities**, helping them in whatever capacity I have been able to. One of those – from Italy – is working hard to apply for associate membership in this autumn congress, while another one – from Greece – is considering applying for associate membership in the following spring one. I have tried to help them navigate to the difficulties that the lockdown has meant for us and our organisations, to grow their membership base, and promoting their continued engagement in LYMEC. When it has been possible, I have tried to travel to their events, such as the hybrid electoral congress that JNC organized in March, as long as restrictions and health measures allowed.

To conclude, I would just like to re-state that I am open to hear any proposal for an event that you would like to see LYMEC organize, or to collaborate with you in joint events, as this is what LYMEC and its infrastructure is there for. We will be as strong as the weakest one of us.

Thank you for your interest and attention.

Liberal regards,

Laia Comerma i Calatayud

Events:

Date	Place	Event/Purpose	Organisation
26-28/11/2020	Online	Young Changemakers Academy III	LYMEC
02/12/2020	Online	Ad-hoc Bureau Meeting	LYMEC
07/12/2020	Online	Bureau Meeting	LYMEC
11/12/2020	Online	Climate Change Working Group Meeting	LYMEC
07/01/2021	Online	Meeting about Libertas Marketing Plan	LYMEC
11/01/2021	Online	Bureau Meeting	LYMEC
12/01/2021	Online	Meeting Policy Book Clean-up Working Group	LYMEC
15/01/2021	Online	Climate Change Working Group Meeting	LYMEC
30/01/2021	Online	Digital Assembly	LYMEC
02/02/2021	Online	Meeting about Outreach	LYMEC
04/02/2021	Online	ELF Project Initiation call	ELF/LYMEC
04/02/2021	Online	Meeting with ELF Board	ELF
06/02/2021	Online	Bureau Meeting	LYMEC
11/02/2021	Online	First meeting editorial team of Libertas	LYMEC
16/02/2021	Online	Teambuilding	LYMEC
28/02/2021	Online	Meeting IFLRY training team	LYMEC/IFLRY
01/03/2021	Online	Bureau Meeting	LYMEC
06/03/2021	Online	Young Liberal Women's Summit	LYMEC
09/03/2021	Online	"She will be heard" event	ALDE
11/03/2021	Online	Libertas editorial team meeting	LYMEC
12/03/2021	Online	Climate Change Working Group meeting	LYMEC
20-21/03/2021	Hybrid	JNC 21 st Electoral Congress	JNC
22-23/03/2021	Online	European Trainers Academy	ELF
23/03/2021	Online	Racism in Europe – A Liberal Response	WG Civil & Minority Rights (LYMEC)
26-27/03/2021	Online	EU Diplomacy fit for the future	LYMEC

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05/04/2021	Online	Bureau Meeting	LYMEC
16/04/2021	Online	Climate Change Working Group meeting	LYMEC

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