

liberal



Bulletin

Interview with Micheál Martin

Special interview with Kadri Simson

Liberal response to the war in Ukraine



FIRST ISSUE 2022

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The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party is the party representing liberal democrat values across Europe. With our member parties throughout Europe, we are translating the principle of freedom into politics, economics and across all other areas of our societies. The ALDE Party provides an increasingly vital link between citizens and the EU institutions. The ALDE Party is made up of more than seventy member parties and many individual members from across Europe.

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Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party, EUPP

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EDITORIAL

Dear liberal friends,

Just as we began to get a glimpse of normality with the worst of the COVID-19 pandemic behind us, war came to our continent once again. Putin's brutal war of aggression against the people of Ukraine has showed all of us that we cannot take our rules-based, liberal order for granted. We cannot take our freedoms for granted. We cannot take our safety for granted.

This deplorable war waged against a sovereign, freedom-loving, democratic and pro-European country, is also a war against the liberal values that we all hold so dearly. This is why it is no coincidence liberal governments and liberal figures have led the response to the ongoing war. From coordinating crippling sanctions at the European level, to donating significant sums of money to help those on the ground. We also welcomed the Servant of the People party, founded by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, to the liberal family. Liberals are more united than ever before.

The war has also been a wake-up call for Europe in terms of energy independence. We simply cannot and will not wait to wean ourselves off of Russian oil and gas. The powering of our industries and the heating of our homes cannot be dependent on a dictator who threatens our entire way of life. The transition speed to greener, independent energy has never been more crucial.

We will be gathering at our Congress in Dublin in June for the first time in person since our last Congress in Athens in 2019. Our Congress will be hosted by the Irish Taoiseach Micheál Martin and our liberal friends from Fianna Fáil. This Congress is an historic opportunity for us to renew our commitment to liberalism.

I look forward to seeing all of you (in person!) in Dublin.

Jacob Moroza-Rasmussen
ALDE Party Secretary General

 @MorozaR



A portrait of Micheál Martin, the Taoiseach of Ireland, sitting at a desk. He is wearing a dark blue suit, a light blue shirt, and a red tie with a white pattern. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. Behind him is a wooden wall with a framed picture and a portion of the European Union flag (blue with yellow stars).

“EUROPE’S VALUES ARE THE BEST WAY TO DEFEND AGAINST RUSSIA”

The 2022 ALDE Party Congress in Dublin is the biggest since 2019, and after several virtual events, it will be the first time in three years that liberals across Europe meet in person. We ask **Micheál Martin**, Ireland’s Taoiseach, what hosting the ALDE Congress means to him and how can we tackle issues like climate change, energy sufficiency and work for a better future for youth.

After three years, European liberals are finally meeting in person for the ALDE Party Congress and your party, Fianna Fáil, is co-hosting the three-day event in Dublin. What does that mean to you?

For my party, membership of ALDE Party and the Renew Europe Group is hugely important. We were formed by a generation of leaders who secured our independence but always defined sovereignty in terms of a commitment to a strong, rules-based community of democratic nations. It was in this spirit that my party led Ireland into membership of the now European Union – and working for a successful Europe remains one of our core party objectives.

So it's a privilege for us to host the Congress and for our colleagues from across Europe – particularly because of the critical challenges of this moment facing everybody who believes in free democracy and a strong Europe. I look forward to welcoming other party leaders and can assure them that we are looking forward too.

The success of this Congress will be not just if it is organised well, as it will be because of the great cooperation of the ALDE Party team and our party headquarters – but what matters more is that we come out of it with a renewed commitment and energy. The elections to the European Parliament in 2024 will be a defining moment for that chamber, and we have to do everything possible to maximise the voice of those who want Europe to stand up for its core values and protect the interests of its citizens. Party leaders, particularly those who participate in government, should take the time to build on our current excellent cooperation as we deal with a very challenging agenda.

You were previously Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ireland. How does your experience in the field help you and your government manage the Russia-Ukraine war? and how can we have a European Union less dependent on Russia economically and for energy?

I don't think even those who have always distrusted Putin were fully prepared for the scale of the barbaric lawlessness and cruelty of Russia's latest attack on Ukraine. No diplomacy could have handled such aggression and no concessions could have placated a regime like this.

The case for an urgent and permanent separation from reliance on Russian energy is unanswerable. This is not just about invasions and direct aggression, let's not forget that Russia is the biggest funder and promoter of extremism and anti-democratic forces in Europe. So we need economic separation and we also have to fully commit ourselves to defending our democracies.

Our colleagues in the Baltics and other states bordering Russia see this with the greatest clarity, and we all have to join together in a united front. If we want to defeat the forces of authoritarianism and extremism then we have to understand that the rule of law, free media, anti-corruption activity, the protection of human rights and other core values are not side issues – they are fundamental to our work. Europe's success and Europe's values are the best ways to defend against Russia and others who wish us harm.

The fight to tackle climate change is a joint effort for all Member States, and targets for emissions reduction have been set for 2030 at EU level. What is Ireland doing to meet these targets?

Climate change is the defining issue of our generation. The political, economic and social dimensions of it are not just profound, they are becoming more urgent all the time. Even those few in the extremes who question the science cannot today deny that Europe's fundamental freedoms require us to move to secure and sustainable energy independent of oil, gas and coal production.

The scale and pace of progress in new energy technologies is such that Europe has the possibility to achieve energy independence and meet urgent climate goals – what we need is the urgency and ambition to do this. That is why action on climate change has been a priority for our government from our first days in office.

We've introduced a legal obligation to have annual climate budgets in addition to the normal financial budgeting. As part of this, every branch of government and every policy has to be addressed in the context of its contribution to achieving carbon-emission goals. We're investing in renewable energy and seeking to use our position as an island nation to become a leader in wind power.

And we're also starting to address the issue of protecting biodiversity and introducing a wide range of education and training initiatives focused on sustainable development.

“ We have to do everything possible to maximise the voice of those who want Europe to stand up for its core values and protect the interests of its citizens. ”

COVID-19 is still part of our lives and has been the biggest health crisis of this century. What is your assessment of the management of the crisis and what is still left to do to eradicate the virus and protect our citizens?

Every country needs to look for lessons to learn from the acute phase of the pandemic because we will undoubtedly face new public health emergencies in the future. In the case of Ireland, I believe we achieved a lot in minimising the terrible impact of the virus. Case numbers and deaths in Ireland are well below average, something which I think does link to an effective response.

We worked hard to keep people informed and to base our policies on the best available evidence. As understanding of the virus improved, and as new threats emerged, the response had to evolve. I tried to communicate with the public as openly and directly as possible. We were able to maintain a broad public consensus, and a lot of this had to do with the fact that we resolutely refused to play party politics with the pandemic. We asked people to trust the science and the good faith of government, and thankfully they did.

Of course the vaccines have been transformative and Ireland has one of the highest vaccination rates in the world. The only major limitation we had during the critical phase of the vaccine roll-out was limited supply. Thankfully we refused to get involved in efforts to grab short-term wins through using less-reliable vaccines and public patience held.

What we need now is for people to maintain the basic good practices adopted during the pandemic about how to limit the spread of all viruses, and we need to push vaccination rates even higher.

“The most important thing we can do for the youth is to protect European democracy”

A further investment in research, vaccine facilities and public health expertise should be on everyone’s agenda.

Youth are at the core of the EU with a dedicated European Year of Youth running throughout 2022. What are your party and Ireland doing for youth’s future in order to facilitate opportunities and choices for all?

Education, training and employment opportunities are the fundamental foundations upon which opportunities and choices for young people have to be built. Everything else comes afterwards. There is no such thing in the modern world as a country with high living standards through society which does not also invest in the education and skills of its people.

For Fianna Fáil, education has always been one of our defining issues. Every major expansion in education levels in Ireland, ranging from basic education up to advanced research, was initiated by our governments. It’s the same for us today. In the two years of this government we have already reduced school class sizes, expanded training opportunities and supported both basic and applied research. The level of youth unemployment due to the pandemic was historically high, but it has been falling rapidly and employment levels are back to pre-pandemic levels. I think that’s a very practical demonstration of our support for facilitating opportunities for young people.

Of course we know that there is much more to be done, and in Ireland we have a particular problem due to rapid population growth putting huge pressure on rents and house prices – both of which are particularly impacting on young people. That’s why initiating a new era in the building of social and affordable housing is central to our work in government. The single most important thing we can do for the young people of Europe is to protect European democracy and equip the European Union to be able to promote a strong and successful Europe. I think that’s something all of us in ALDE should be able to agree on.



ALDE Party meeting ahead of EU-Western Balkan Summit - Slovenia - 05-06.10.2021



Renew Europe pre-Summit meeting 24.06.2021

[@MichealMartinTD](https://twitter.com/MichealMartinTD)

**“ TO FULFIL EUROPE’S
CLIMATE NEUTRALITY
AMBITION, ALL LOW-
CARBON ENERGY SOURCES
ARE NEEDED ”**

The Ukraine war has put in the spotlight the fragility of Europe’s energy sufficiency and put on the table the need of gas and oil independence from Russia. With the European Green Deal making progress and the Fit for 55 package setting up climate ambition targets, the conflict has reinforced the need for an energy-sufficient Europe. Can we make it possible? We ask European Commissioner for Energy **Kadri Simson**, from Estonia.

We are living extraordinarily difficult times due to the Ukraine war. Is the EU's energy sufficiency at stake? How can the EU's dependence on Russian gas and oil be reduced?

Putin's war on Ukraine has made it clear that we need to move even faster to reshape the European energy system and end our dangerous dependency on Russian fossil fuels as soon as possible. It is clear that our first obligation is to help Ukraine survive and win this war, and in energy, one of our priorities has been ensuring that the electricity network of Ukraine continues to work. Since 16 March, the electricity grid of Ukraine has been synchronised with the continental European grid, which was a historical milestone in our relations.

At the same time, we are working to ensure reliable, secure and affordable supply of energy to European consumers. The RePowerEU Communication to replace Russian fossil fuels, either with other gas or oil sources or renewables and energy savings is a very powerful response by the EU to the situation in Ukraine. I know that as soon as possible is too late. Through a range of measures, we believe that we can move away from this dependence potentially cutting our imports of Russian gas by 2/3 by the end of this year.

The target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by 2030, presented under the Fit for 55 package is not only a goal, but a challenge. How does the European Commission monitor Member States and governments in order to achieve it?

The first thing to recall is that we have not actually finalised the Fit for 55 package. The Commission tabled a whole number of proposals last year – for example to increase our ambition for Renewable Energy and for Energy Efficiency from the existing EU legislation – but these proposals are still being negotiated with the co-legislators, namely

the European Council and the European Parliament. If all goes well, we can make significant progress on the different proposals still this year. We also must then give Member States the necessary time to transpose the new rules into national law.

Are EU governments doing enough to promote and invest in renewable energies? Can the Commission accelerate the build-up of renewables and energy efficiency?

EU Member States have already come a long way in terms of energy efficiency and renewables – and we lead the world in many areas. Renewables are home-grown, they create jobs, and they spur innovation. They are a strategic investment in Europe's security and independence. In the third quarter of 2021 the share of renewables already reached 37%, beating fossil fuels (35%). But of course governments can always do more when it comes to investment, and arguments are even stronger now in this unstable geopolitical situation.

Regarding energy efficiency, it is important to note that it's not just for governments to overcome this challenge. It's also something that we can all do as individual consumers. Every saving we can make in our own energy consumption will ease the additional costs of our energy bills and further reduce our dependence on Russian fossil fuels.

As an alternative to fossil fuels, nuclear energy seems like a greener solution to reduce emissions. How can nuclear energy contribute to reducing gas emissions? Is it safe to produce and maintain?

Every Member State has the right to choose their own energy mix. We have Member States that are moving away from nuclear, but there are some that are moving towards nuclear power.

To fulfil Europe's climate neutrality ambition, all low-carbon energy

“Our end-goal is clear: to keep electricity affordable without disrupting supply and boost further investments in the green transition”

sources are needed and nuclear energy has a clear role to play into this transition. The Commission's long-standing position is to be technology neutral, as long as technologies chosen by the Member States guarantee the highest level of safety for the EU citizens.

The rise of energy prices last winter had a strong impact on consumers and the economy. How can the EU allow the single market to keep being competitive but at the same time offer affordable energy prices for its citizens?

Already in October 2021, the Commission presented a Communication on energy prices, including a toolbox, outlining what Member States can do under existing EU rules to help vulnerable consumers and businesses to face high prices, without distorting competition on the internal EU energy market. These covered three types of measures in particular: energy subsidies and vouchers, tax reductions and measures to avoid energy disconnection. But as the situation has evolved, it's no longer sufficient. The Commission also introduced a minimum 80% gas storage level obligation for next winter to ensure security of energy supply, rising to 90% for the following years.

There is no single easy answer to tackle high electricity prices, given the diversity of situations among Member States in terms of their energy mix, market design, and interconnection levels. But our end-goal is clear: to keep electricity affordable without disrupting supply and boost further investments in the green transition.

FROM OUR CAPITALS: MIA NYEGAARD



Deputy Mayor of Copenhagen
Radikale Venstre

Who or what inspires you in your work as mayor?

I am inspired by democracy and think we sometimes forget how precious it is. Working for the people, with democracy and within one of its institutions, is a privilege. As a mayor, one of my foremost tasks is to ensure all citizens are involved in the democratic process and have a say in how our society develops. In a universal welfare state like Denmark, I believe we should be measured by our ability to lift and include people who are vulnerable or from less privileged backgrounds.

How is your city responding to the Ukraine conflict?

First of all, it is appalling that there is a war in Europe. The only good thing is that it has brought Europe closer together, thanks to all Ukrainians who are fighting for our liberal values and democracy. Back to the question, in Copenhagen

our policy is to integrate Ukrainians in society, cultural life and labour markets as quickly as possible. This is important for refugees, who need to get a sense of normalcy back into their lives by having a job, enjoying culture, meeting the Danes in the local sports club and more. Most of the refugees from Ukraine are women, often with children. Therefore, we have taken measures to ensure that children can go to school within weeks of arrival and that they are invited and helped financially to join local sports clubs and attend cultural activities.

What are your priorities for Copenhagen at the moment?

As a liberal, I see my role as Mayor of Culture and Leisure to not to pick and choose on behalf of people, but to ensure that all citizens in Copenhagen have access to a broad spectrum of culture and leisure activities. Culture binds us together, and everybody should have a chance to get inspired and be part of their communities' culture, sports and leisure life offers. Furthermore, my long-term vision is that Copenhagen can use culture as a guiding principle, and integrate it into city planning and development.

How do you see the role of mayors in fighting climate change?

War or not, climate change is our greatest challenge in the long run.

That is why we need to accelerate the green transition. But as politicians, we must also ensure that the green transition does not set people against each other in a blame game for who is the greenest. The green transition is structural and about large societal changes. Therefore, as politicians we must ensure that the green transition moves forward. As Mayor of Culture and Leisure, I can promote culture that creates awareness about the climate agenda and new, sustainable solutions. Copenhagen is also already a biking city, but we can do more, for example to develop new green infrastructure and housing, better waste collection and recycling.

What's your top tip for getting to know Copenhagen?

My top tip would be to take a day trip by bike around the city. We have nice, broad bike lanes, and new bridges across the harbour canal, which allows for smooth bike riding in clean air across the city. We have also clean water in the harbour, where you can stop for a swim along the way. And what I always tell my own guests, is to take a boat trip in the canals and see our city from the water.



LIBERAL RESPONSE TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE

24

February
ALDE Party petition
to stop the war

1

March
ALDE Party
Secretariat
donations
campaign

28

February
Sluga Narodu
becomes part of
ALDE Party

2

March
ALDE Party Bureau
meeting with Olga
Stefanishyna

On 24 February, President Putin started an unprovoked and unjustified military aggression on Ukraine. The ALDE Party and its member parties stood united in condemnation and rejection of these actions.

On the same day, ALDE Party launched a petition calling for Putin to stop the war and to stand with Ukraine and its people. We also called for massive and bold sanctions against the Russian government for these actions. The petition gathered more than 1,000 signatures.

On 28 February, ALDE Party leaders met in an extraordinary meeting to discuss the situation and proposed to grant temporary affiliate status to **Servant of the People**, the party founded by Ukrainian President **Volodymyr Zelenskyy**.

On 1 March, the ALDE Party Secretariat launched a donations campaign. The proceeds of the campaign were doubled by the Party and sent to the Red Cross.

On 2 March, the ALDE Party Bureau organised a liberal leaders meeting with Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Olha Stefanishyna to learn about the situation on the ground and how could we and our parties assist Ukraine.

On International Women's Day, ALDE Party was present at the demonstration Women Stand with Ukraine in Brussels, Belgium. Representatives of LYMEC and Alliance Of Her waved their messages of support of Ukrainian women and girls.



8

March

Demonstration
Women Stand with
Ukraine

25 - 25

March April

Run for Ukraine
campaign

24

March

ALDE Party Leaders
Meeting

11

April

ALDE Party
Co-Presidents
mission to Kyiv

On 24 March, liberal leaders representing more than 30 parties from 25 countries across Europe came together to call for tougher sanctions on Russia addressing energy, continuous humanitarian and military aid to the Ukrainian government, a permanent structure to host Ukrainians fleeing the war and a Marshall Plan for Ukraine, so they can rebuild their own European state once the war is over.

From 25 March to 25 April, the ALDE Party Secretariat launched its very own runners team for the solidarity race destined to raise funds for UNICEF to help Ukrainian children. The team brought together 82 liberals from all over Europe and put down 3,951 kms for the cause.

On 11 April, ALDE Party acting co-Presidents Senator Timmy Dooley and Ilhan Kyuchyuk MEP travelled to the Ukrainian capital, Kyiv, as a sign of support and solidarity with the people of Ukraine against Putin's brutal war of aggression.

Our member parties and liberal leaders have shown solidarity and action at all levels since the beginning, organising campaigns to collect donations and/or first necessity products, and pushing national parliaments to facilitate the entry of Ukrainian refugees to their countries and send weapons to the Ukrainian army.

We are united and we Stand with Ukraine!



RUSSIA IS NOT AS GREAT AND INFLUENTIAL AS IT APPEARS

For **Artis Pabriks**, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Defence of the Republic of Latvia and leader of the Latvian liberal alliance Attīstībai/Par!, an energy-independent Europe is key to face these challenging times.

The image of Russia we have in our minds is that of an enormous country taking up half of Eurasia on the world map. Our belief in the country's economic might stems from Russia's incessant declarations of Europe's dependence on its oil and gas. Although there is some truth to both claims, in reality they are largely exaggerated. The myth of Russia's economic strength has been dispelled – following the invasion of Ukraine, Europe was able to reevaluate its needs for Russian oil and gas and come up with an alternative strategy within a matter of weeks. We are already working towards the European Green Deal and today, Europe refuses to fund the Kremlin's regime, which is largely sustained from trade in Russia's environmental resources. The events of the past months have demonstrated that geopolitical issues are directly linked to economic development and energy independence,

the latter being one of the most important factors in the security of the Baltic countries. The longer we remain dependent on an aggressive and unpredictable neighbour for our energy, the more likely it becomes that this leverage will be used against us.

In the immediate future, Latvia, like the rest of Europe, will consider the needs of its population by adjusting taxes, coming up with financial support mechanisms, simplifying the bureaucratic process surrounding the production of solar and wind power and switching to the use of liquified gas instead of the gas we used to buy from Russia.

In the long run, Latvia and the Baltics, but also Europe as such, must use their unique potential to become a centre for green and zero emission energy. To achieve this, we must focus on three aspects: Immediate resumption of the Baltic nuclear power plant project, interconnection of Baltic power systems with Continental Europe and production of green hydrogen - key to transition from fossil fuels.

Refusing Russia's oil and gas is not going to happen overnight, but

I am convinced that the resources and technologies available to us today are able to produce enough safe and clean energy for Latvia and Europe. Our economic performance, development and competitiveness are at stake, but more importantly it is a matter of security and independence of the whole democratic world. We are ready and must act united now!

“The events of the past months have demonstrated that geopolitical issues are directly linked to economic development and energy independence”



attistibaipar.lv

 @Pabriks



WAR CLARIFIES LIBERAL CHOICES

For **João Cotrim Figueiredo**, leader of *Iniciativa Liberal* in Portugal, concentration of power comes at the expense of core liberal values.

The barbaric invasion of Ukraine perpetrated by the autocrat Putin has reminded us that fundamental liberal values such as the rule of law, democracy and human rights should not be taken for granted and must be defended at all times.

The Ukrainians are fighting in the name of those values. They are fighting for a liberal idea that Putin says “has become obsolete”. They are fighting for us. This war brings the tragedy of death and destruction but it also brings clarity to the geopolitical landscape. The relevant geopolitical divide is not between left and right, but rather between tyranny and liberalism. This war has clarified liberal choices.

The crisis also reminds us of the fact that Europe’s dependence on authoritarian states for energy and essential raw materials is a strategic vulnerability. As liberals, we instinctively mistrust any concentration of power, especially if comes at the expense of core liberal values.

This is why the spontaneous and overwhelming response of the freedom-loving citizens of Europe must be accompanied by an equally determined response to the economic and social effects of the war. In particular, the substantial rise in energy costs affecting the daily lives of 450 million European citizens must be offset quickly and effectively. In the short term, this must inevitably mean the lowering of taxes on fuel and energy, even if it runs contrary to the ongoing effort to reduce emissions. People must come first.

This should be seen as an opportunity to move to a new approach to environmental conservation. Instead of basing public policy on an ever-growing set of compulsory measures or wholesale prohibitions designed to force consumers and companies to adopt different behaviours, we should structure our sustainability goals around a set of market-based incentives that induce such behaviours.

At *Iniciativa Liberal*, we favour a contractual approach to sustainability, an approach that provides incentives to economic agents to attain certain pre-defined goals.

There is also an important political point to be made about the issue of sustainability. Radical socialists and leftists are replacing the logic of the class struggle with the logic of the climate emergency to advance an agenda of ever-increasing state intervention, both in the economy and our daily lives. As liberals, we must denounce and oppose this strategy.

We must be absolutely clear: we cannot succeed in our fight for a sustainable future unless we create the market-based conditions for people to voluntarily adopt new behaviours and for technological innovation to take its course to provide us new options in the future. This must be the liberal approach.

iniciativa

iniciativoliberal.pt

 [@jcf_liberal](https://twitter.com/jcf_liberal)

‘Our member parties have the floor’ is a regular series in which we give the opportunity to ALDE members across Europe to share their perspectives. If you have suggestions on which member parties you would like to see featured next, please contact us at communication@aldeparty.eu

Our member parties have the floor

LIBERALS STEP UP DURING THE EUROPEAN YEAR OF YOUTH

In her 2021 State of the Union address, the President of European Commission Ursula von der Leyen declared that 2022 would be European Year of Youth. This means that throughout the year the Commission will coordinate a range of activities in close contact with the European Parliament, the Member States, regional and local authorities, youth organisations and young people themselves.

At ALDE Party we have taken up the torch and reinforced our support for young liberal leaders.

Because young liberals are strong and ambitious! 10 out of 71 ALDE Party's MEPs are 35 years old or younger. On top of that, we have five liberal Ministers and four party leaders under 36.



Aušrinė Armonaitė
Minister of the Economy and Innovation and party leader, Laisvės Partija, Lithuania



Evelina Dobrovolska
Minister of Justice, Laisvės Partija, Lithuania



Rob Jetten
Minister of Climate and Energy, D66, The Netherlands



Artūrs Toms Plešs
Minister for Environmental Protection and Regional Development and party leader, Latvijas Attīstībai, Latvia



Dennis Wiersma
Minister for Primary and Secondary Education, VVD, The Netherlands



Anna Julia Dónath
MEP and Party Leader, Momentum Mozgalom, Hungary



Vlad-Marius Botoș
MEP, USR PLUS, Romania



Katalin Cseh
MEP, Momentum Mozgalom, Hungary



Claudia Gamon
MEP, NEOS, Austria



Svenja Hahn
MEP, FDP, Germany



Irena Joveva
MEP, LMS, Slovenia



Moritz Körner
MEP, FDP, Germany



Samira Rafaela
MEP, D66, The Netherlands



Linea Sjøgaard-Lidell
MEP, Venstre, Denmark



Emma Wiesner
MEP, Centerpartiet, Sweden



Anett Bósz
Party Leader, Liberalisok – Magyar Liberális Párt, Hungary

We aim to have more young liberals taking important roles throughout Europe and making their voice heard. Therefore, in 2022 the Alliance of Her Academy launched its first youth class together with the European Liberal Youth (LYMEC), ALDE Party's Youth wing. These young women are ambitious, talented, and now well equipped to achieve their goals. For example:



Aoife wants to campaign to ban unpaid internships. "Work is work regardless of your age. Young people deserve to be acknowledged for the valuable insight and expertise they bring to the table," she declared.

Aoife McCooey, Ireland



Csenge wants to set up a refugee system in Hungary. "Because I believe that they deserve the same livelihood as we in Europe," she explained.

Csenge Schönviszky, Hungary



Bente wants to work to close the gap in this digital era. "To create more digital literacy across all countries, across all generations to take full advantage of all the opportunities that come with it," she added.

Bente Schrijver, The Netherlands

LYMEC has been fighting to get youth voices heard and providing young Europeans with opportunities for trainings and to exchange ideas since 1976. It has 150,000 members from 40 European countries. One of their flagship programmes together with the European Liberal Forum is the Young Changemakers Academy. This programme empowers participants to take on policy issues and lobby for causes they believe in. This year's class is getting ready to tackle serious issues for the European Year of Youth. For example:



Emilie wants to work for inclusion of non-binary and transgender people in society, especially when it comes to sports.

Emilie Ovnerud, Norway



Barnabás wants to protect Europe's promise of peace and prosperity for all its citizens by raising awareness on the problem of high rent prices of housing for young people.

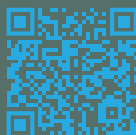
Barnabás Gádor, Hungary



Ursula wants to enable young people to use their voice by making it easier to vote in elections through a mobile voting system.

Ursula Ilves, Estonia

Find out more about the **Alliance Of Her Academy** and the **Young Changemakers Academy** through the QR codes below.



A RETROSPECTIVE ON THE LIBERAL AWARDS 2021

Last year, during the ALDE Party Council in Rome and for the first time ever, the European Liberal Forum awarded the most outstanding liberal figures of the year.

Best speech: Katalin Cseh MEP

Katalin is Vice-President of the Renew Europe Group in the European Parliament and Chair of its Working Group on Values and Democracy. Last year, she delivered a fierce, clear, and inspiring speech in the European Parliament regarding the abuses of the Hungarian government by Viktor Orbán.

“Representing party members of Momentum and giving voice to them in the European Parliament has been the honour of a lifetime.”

Political Disruptor: Johan Norberg

Johan is a historian of ideas, an author and a documentary filmmaker from Sweden. He has been brave enough to shake up the liberal world by promoting the principles and values of freedom and economic globalisation.

“Europe urgently needs innovative liberal ideas, for an open and dynamic continent.”

Rising Star: Alena Trauschel

Alena serves as the spokesperson for her parliamentary group for career training, women’s rights, LGBTQI+ and EU policy in the state parliament of Baden-Württemberg, Germany. She made history by getting elected as its youngest ever member at only 22 years old.

“The time is always right to fight for liberalism.”



DECODING EU DIGITAL STRATEGIC AUTONOMY: SECTORS, ISSUES, AND PARTNERS

Achieving European Strategic Autonomy requires a set of initiatives and policies that strengthen the EU’s sovereignty in strategic sectors. When dealing with digitalisation in particular, the goal is to promote the European digital internal market, ensure that the arrival of innovative technologies will fit the economic, regulatory, and political framework, and foster competitiveness and openness at a global level.

This study from ELF reflects on several aspects of the European Strategic Autonomy through the lenses of ongoing digitalisation. The study considers different factors of the industrial, infrastructural, and social transformative effects digitalisation has on the European Union. It explores the interactions of digital technologies with economic and policy issues, assessing main challenges and risks, describing best practices and viable policy options. To achieve “autonomy”, the EU must promote internal programmes or champions in strategic fields such as connectivity, supply components, hardware and software while ensuring that the overall deployment of critical infrastructure and innovative technologies are embedded into a fair and strategic digital transition.

By Prof. Gérard Pogorel Professor of Economics Emeritus, Institut Polytechnique de Paris.

MOVERS & SHAKERS



Adrien Dolimont

After becoming the youngest alderman in Belgium's history at the age of 18 in 2006, **Adrien Dolimont** has reached another milestone at age 33, becoming Wallonia's regional Minister of Finance, Budget, Airports and Sports Infrastructure. This young engineer takes on his new post with the aim to improve the region's budget administration not by increasing spending, but with smarter use of public funds.

 @ADolimont



Anna Donáth


Elected in 2021 to lead Momentum Mozgalom, **Anna Donáth** is one of the youngest members of the European Parliament and a key voice on safeguarding rights and freedoms. In Hungary, she led her party through the April 2022 elections as part of the opposition alliance against Orbán's corrupt regime. Despite challenging circumstances, Momentum gained 10 seats in Parliament.

 @donath_anna



Kira Rudik

Following the unjustified and horrific invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, **Kira Rudik** has emerged as a leading figure of the Ukrainian resistance. As a Member of Parliament and leader of ALDE Party member Golos, she has taken bold and brave action to defend her country and raised awareness about Russian aggression against Ukraine around the world. Her courage is an inspiration for all liberals!

 @kiraincongress



Dr. Sima Samar

Dr. Sima Samar was awarded the Liberal International Prize for Freedom in late 2021 for her trailblazing career as a human rights defender, having served as Afghanistan's first-ever female Vice President and Minister of Women's Affairs. With extensive experience in UN roles related to women's rights, democracy and peacebuilding, Simar is a leading voice on some of the key global issues of our time.

 @DrSimasamar



Yannick Shetty


First elected to national office in 2019, **Yannick Shetty** is the youngest Member of Parliament in Austria. With political roots in youth politics and having served as a local district councillor, his experience with ALDE Party member NEOS is broad-reaching. As current NEOS spokesperson for LGBTIQ+ rights, immigration, youth and sport, he is leading the fight for a brighter future for youth in Austria.

 @yannickshetty



Henrik Wickström

As Vice-Chair of ALDE Party member Svenska Folkpartiet and Council Chair in Ingå, Finland, **Henrik Wickström** is making his mark as a young politician. Following the first-ever regional elections in Finland this January, he was elected in the district of West Uusimaa and was elected chair of the SFP group in the new regional council, where he is committed to ensuring bilingual public services.

 @wickstromhenrik

These profiles are an editor's pick of some of our liberal movers and shakers. Have a great profile in mind? Feel free to submit your proposal at communication@aldeparty.eu ahead of the next issue to be published by the end of 2022.

To view all our liberal profiles, visit www.aldeparty.eu/leadership

LIBERALS STAND WITH UKRAINE!

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24 MARCH 2022





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