

liberal

Bulletin

Hans van Baalen in memoriam

Interview with Prime Minister Kaja Kallas

Liberals act on the Future of Europe

FIRST ISSUE 2021

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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 sixty 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,

These past months have not been easy. With the passing of ALDE Party President Hans van Baalen, we lost a leader, a friend, a liberal champion. Moreover, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has forced us, like so many of you, to further postpone the return to office and to in-person events and meetings. At the moment, the global community can still only speculate what the long-term impacts of this crisis will be.

Despite the challenges, liberals across Europe have continued to strive, succeed and innovate. Our member parties have won elections, gained leadership roles at all levels of government, been outspoken about issues and defended values that form the core of our existence. We have called out those who threaten democracy and freedom and have not given up on our fight for the shared European future and effective recovery. Just as Hans always was fighting for.

These achievements and success stories are also reflected on the pages of this Liberal Bulletin. Giving the floor to our liberal leaders, member parties, partner organisations and rising stars, I hope you will enjoy reading about their experiences, work and ideas in more detail. We also recap our first-ever virtual congress – a success made possible thanks to our hardworking team at the ALDE Party Secretariat and all of you who attended – and shed light on our ALDE Party action plan on the Conference on the Future of Europe.

As summer is looming and the vaccinations are being rolled out, we can hopefully see the light at the end of the tunnel. And it gets better from now on. Vaccines work, and we are soon back to as normal as we can. But, no matter what happens, we as liberals will continue to deliver, fight and set the agenda at all political levels, every day of the year.

I look forward to meeting you all in person again as soon as possible.

Jacob Moroza-Rasmussen

ALDE Party Secretary General

 @MorozaR





1960 – 2021

HANS VAN BAALEN IN MEMORIAM

ALDE Party President Hans van Baalen passed away following a short illness on 29 April. A passionate and committed liberal, Hans served his country and global liberalism through a distinguished political career which spanned over decades and continents. He was a member of the Dutch House of Representatives (1999-2009), a member of the European Parliament (2009-2019), President of Liberal International (2009-2014) and President of the ALDE Party since 2015 to his passing. He was promoted to the Order of Orange-Nassau in 2020 and appointed to advise the Dutch government and parliament on peace and security in early 2021.

Hans was a strong advocate for international cooperation and solidarity, calling on countries and societies to look out for and support each other during crises and difficulties. He was also a firm believer in the European project and welcomed the Conference on the Future of Europe with enthusiasm. He wrote in an unpublished editorial, completed a few weeks before his passing:

“ I truly hope this marks the beginning of a new chapter in European politics by and for the European people ”

Liberals across the world have remembered Hans, thanking him for his dedication to the liberal cause and his tireless drive for democracy. It is this liberal family that meant so much for Hans and that he continued to serve throughout the years. It is this liberal family spirit we at the ALDE Party will continue to uphold and foster, in his memory.



TO EMERGE STRONGER, EUROPE MUST TURN CRISIS INTO RESILIENCE

For **Kaja Kallas**, Prime Minister of Estonia and leader of the Reform Party, the COVID-19 pandemic has been a professional and a personal challenge, but also an opportunity to implement new solutions and take stock of what works and what doesn't. We spoke with Prime Minister Kallas as Europe is slowly emerging from a year of restrictions and lockdowns.

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The ongoing COVID-19 crisis has put a strain on countries in Europe and across the world. How can we make our economies grow again while ensuring that social divisions and inequalities are not increasing?

I think it is something we struggle with every day, but I also think that every crisis is an opportunity to learn and do something new. What this crisis has shown us is that we need to use all available technologies. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced us to move further and quicker on topics such as the future of work. We have talked about it for a very long time, but this crisis has brought the issue close to everyone: working, studying and living our lives with a physical distance. Here in Estonia, we were prepared for e-studying and distance schooling, and it has been working quite well from the side of the schools. I know from experience that it can be difficult to make children study in this way, but they have adapted. My own children are sick and tired of staring at screens after school hours and want to spend time outside instead, which is a great thing!

When it comes to our society as a whole, we have an e-voting system in place whereas some countries in Europe and across the world are either postponing elections, which isn't good for democracy, or holding elections, resulting in greater numbers of infections. Our approach allows citizens to cast their vote and develop democracy without risk. But of course, there are challenges with access to the Internet here as well, and this is why we are using European funds to equip the whole country with high-speed connections. It's with steps and systems like these, by providing equal opportunities for all, that you can fight divisions. But it's not easy, that is for sure.

“If people are spending more and more time online, then the state should be there too,”

Speaking of digital solutions, pushed forward by the European Commission's plan to accelerate the digital transformation among others, what can other countries learn from the Estonian example?

E-voting, without a doubt! I always said that if people are spending more and more time online, then the state should be there too, otherwise you are alienating yourself from the people.

But Estonia has experienced some bumps on the road as well. We have discovered things that are not working so well or could work much better. Our education system, which is something we are proud of, was ready to face the challenge of moving online. Yet, we see knowledge gaps and subjects which simply don't work well online, which require face-to-face interaction too. Now we also know more about the situation from teachers' perspective: for some, the transition has been easy and rewarding, for others it has been more challenging.

You caught the virus yourself and shared on social media that it was not easy. Has that experience changed your point of view on COVID-19 in some way?

In a way I was lucky because I did not end up in the hospital but it was definitely difficult, I was very ill. Meanwhile, I have a friend, the same age as myself, who contracted the virus at the same time and was hospitalised for seven days and needed to wear an oxygen mask. She is still recovering, and it is hard for her to walk longer distances without rest. I have visited hospitals and seen the challenges caused by this virus, especially when it comes to older people. My point of view hasn't changed but I am aware I was very lucky myself.

I am also very grateful for the doctors here in Estonia. I received information on the steps to take daily, and the family doctors have been giving presentations on how to treat yourself at home, as most of the people who contract the virus do not go to the hospital but stay at home. They need to know what kind of symptoms to look out for.

What is clear is that this is a very difficult disease. We have vaccinations now, but we also need to get used to living with COVID-19. It will not go away entirely so instead of hoping for that to happen, we have to look forward and think how we can manage to live with it.

This crisis calls for more Europe in some fields while in others, Member States have been seeking unilateral solutions and closing themselves off. Will Europe come out of this crisis stronger or weaker?

I think that every crisis Europe has faced has also made it more resilient. Our economies are doing quite well thanks to the foundation we established during the debt crisis. Had we not learned the lessons of that crisis, we would not have managed to put in place the support mechanisms which are the basis for the recovery. I am confident this ongoing crisis teaches us lessons for the future.

“There is no way out of the crisis unless all of us are out of the crisis,”

Those who are angry about Europe not acting during a health crisis, while they know it's a national competence, are also saying that they don't want more Europe. It is contradictory – either you want this or you don't want this. What worries us is the unilateral approach many countries adopted, being very protective and inward-looking. As soon as a problem appears, suddenly it is every country for themselves. It should not be like this.

We are in this together, and for a small country like Estonia, the procurement of vaccines is a great example of European cooperation. We could not have secured their delivery on our own and are very happy to be a part of the process. There are challenges, but I still consider it a success.

I believe this is an opportunity for all countries to learn from each other. This crisis has clearly demonstrated that different countries have different basic rights – some have closed their borders so that no one can enter while others have said such action is unconstitutional. What we all must be able to do, however, is see the bigger picture and understand that we are a part of a bigger Union. There is no way out of the crisis unless all of us are out of the crisis.

Despite the crisis, you managed to do something historic by becoming the first female Prime Minister of Estonia. What does this mean to you on a personal level?

I get asked this question a lot and I still don't know how to answer. Yes, my gender might be different from our previous Prime Ministers but in terms of competences, there is no real difference. Because I am the first woman in Estonia to hold this role, there are people who want to see me fail. The expectations on me are much higher, higher than they would be on any man, and the responsibility to not fail everyone is huge. No other Prime Minister has started their mandate during such a difficult crisis. I cannot be popular because I must make so many unpopular decisions, from COVID-19 restrictions to the state budget, and more. There are challenges but I hope to inspire all girls and women that the role of prime minister is for everybody, no matter the gender.

 @kajakallas



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LIBERALS LISTEN WHAT CITIZENS WANT FOR THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

With Europe facing the challenges of a generation, the **Conference on the Future of Europe (COFOE)** is a unique opportunity to forge a new path forward. Europe's liberals are committed to fostering an honest debate on this topic, pushing the Future of Europe project to become a genuine listening exercise, not just a publicity stunt.

ALDE Party's liberal vision focuses on six high-level priorities (detailed below), providing concrete solutions to tackle some of the defining issues of our time. But, this is just the beginning: we need your help in building and expanding our vision, and delivering on our ALDE Party action plan which brings Europe closer to citizens.

For the rest of the year, the ALDE Party will undertake a number of initiatives:

- Together with our member parties across Europe, we will organise a series of townhall meetings named after our late President Hans van Baalen
- We have launched a dedicated digital hub where citizens can share their liberal ideas and solutions, learn more about COFOE and participate in upcoming debates and events.

Our initiatives will come together at an ALDE Conference, where we will discuss all the different input received and hear from our liberal leaders how to take the Future of Europe forward.

OUR HIGH-LEVEL PRIORITIES FOR THE CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

 <p>Build back better by fostering a green and digital recovery</p>	 <p>Fight climate change & protect our environment while creating jobs and growth</p>	 <p>Defend and promote the rule of law and human rights</p>
 <p>Renew and rebuild humane immigration and asylum systems</p>	 <p>Lead in the world and reinforce our European voice globally</p>	 <p>Strengthen European democracy with reforms that connect citizens to their representatives</p>

For more information, visit our digital hub at aldeparty.eu/cofoe and follow [@aldeparty](https://twitter.com/aldeparty) on social media to receive the latest updates!

ALDE PARTY eCONGRESS AS IT HAPPENED

From 11 to 12 June, Prime Ministers, European Commissioners, party leaders, decision-makers and other guests gathered online for the first-ever ALDE eCongress to discuss and debate some of the most defining challenges of our time.

ALDE CONGRESS HIGHLIGHTS

ALDE Congress opens with a tribute to Hans van Baalen – starting with a video tribute in his honour, acting co-Presidents Senator **Timmy Dooley** and **Ilhan Kyuchyuk** MEP delivered short remarks during the opening ceremony, in addition to video contributions by President of the Renew Europe Group **Dacian Cioloş** and European Commission Executive Vice-President **Margrethe Vestager**.

ALDE Council meeting discusses topical issues and the future of Europe – in addition to membership developments and other relevant topics, the Council meeting included a special segment on the Conference on the Future of Europe, with guest speakers **Guy Verhofstadt** MEP and LYMEC President **Antoaneta Asenova** sharing their insights on this unique process.

Congress elects new Bureau members – Congratulations to **Henrik Bach Mortensen** (Venstre, Denmark), **Dita Charanzová** (ANO 2011, Czech Republic) and **Luis Garicano** (Ciudadanos, Spain) for their renewed mandates as ALDE Party Vice Presidents! Congratulations to **David Burke** (Fianna Fáil, Ireland) for his election as the new ALDE Party Treasurer!

A range of resolutions adopted during Congress – you can find the full list of adopted resolutions on our website at aldeparty.eu/vision

Insightful panel discussions gather together high-level liberal leaders – The second day of ALDE Congress was kicked off by two panels that brought together some of Europe's leading liberals from Prime Ministers to European Commissioners to discuss topical issues such as Europe's economic recovery and smart spending, and strengthening our democracies. You can find the full recap on our website at aldeparty.eu/updates

Thank you for your participation in this year's ALDE Congress!

To view social media highlights from the eCongress, check out our @aldeparty social media channels and search for #ALDECongress. You can rewatch all streamed sessions on our Youtube channel.

For photos from the eCongress, visit our Flickr page [📷 /aldeparty](https://www.flickr.com/photos/aldeparty/)



SCAN TO
ACCESS CONGRESS
PLAYLIST



A new era for liberal women in politics is here.

With trailblazers like Margrethe Vestager and Kaja Kallas, it's easy to assume gender no longer plays a role when it comes to running for, winning and holding on to public office.

If only this were true.

In fact, when it comes to achieving gender equality in politics, not only do we have a very long way to go, but in some cases we are going the wrong direction entirely.

In no European country have women achieved equal representation in politics. Only four out of 27 EU leaders represented in the European Council today are women. More worrying is the fact that the barriers women face at every step of their political careers seem to be only getting worse. To name just a few examples, a recent report produced by NATO highlights the increased scale, coordination and intensity of online violence targeting women in politics in Finland. Research conducted by the ALDE Party last year shows that sexism is increasingly to blame for women dropping out of politics or choosing not to participate in the first place.

Elsewhere, the decision by the Turkish government to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention – one of the most important milestones in advancing women's rights globally – is another example of a determined and well-coordinated attempt by illiberal governments to roll back women's rights. The result of these efforts may be to dissuade or deny an entire generation of younger women and girls a voice or a seat at the table where decisions are being made.

“ As liberals, we believe a Europe that is free, open, prosperous and sustainable requires men and women to be equal in power, leadership and decision-making ”

None of this is right. None of this is smart. As liberals, we believe a Europe that is free, open, prosperous and sustainable requires men and women to be equal in power, leadership and decision-making. For us, the status quo is not acceptable, and we believe the time has come to take our efforts on this agenda to the next level.

This is why earlier this year, we launched The Alliance Of Her – a powerful new platform aimed at empowering liberal women across Europe to achieve their political goals and ambitions. Building on our highly successful European Women's Academy, The Alliance Of Her is so much more than simply another 'women's club'. To achieve our mission, we have developed a strategy focused around three 'A's': Academies, Alumnae (and Allies) and Advocacy.

We will continue delivering our world-class academies for talented, ambitious liberal women at all stages of their political journey*, making these experiences even better and providing even more opportunities for liberal women to join.

At the same time, we want to harness more vigorously the collective power of our growing alumnae and allies' network. We want to advocate more fearlessly to disrupt the unjust status quo that is holding back women brave enough to act on their political aspirations.

By the end of 2021, we will have over 150 alumnae, including members of the European Parliament, national parliaments and governments as well as municipal leaders. Added to this stellar network of influential and talented women is a growing number of partners and allies across different sectors. Combined, this is a powerhouse for driving a new movement aimed at ensuring that more liberal women lead and succeed in Europe. As Europe emerges from a painful period of uncertainty and loss, we believe it is time for liberal women in European politics to be heard like never before. We aim to champion their efforts every step of the way and fight more boldly than ever for a future shaped by their voices.

*[*Participants that hold elected office or intend to run in an election campaign during the academy or up to 12 months are required to cover costs independently.]*

For more information please contact The Alliance Of Her team or refer to our website.]

“ It is time for liberal women in European politics to be heard like never before ”

This is her time. And she will be heard.

Visit allianceofher.eu to learn more, follow us on social media and use [#SheWillBeHeard](https://twitter.com/SheWillBeHeard) to show your support!

JOIN US! If you or a contact you have is interested in partnering with us, please get in touch with **Adam Vink** (avink@aldeparty.eu) or **Laura Owen-Onsea** (lowen@aldeparty.eu)

The Alliance Of Her benefits from the generous support of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation and the European Liberal Forum, as well as the European Parliament.

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FROM HEALTH CRISIS TO TRUST CRISIS – ALDE PARTY SURVEY GIVES INSIGHT INTO PERCEPTIONS ABOUT COVID-19

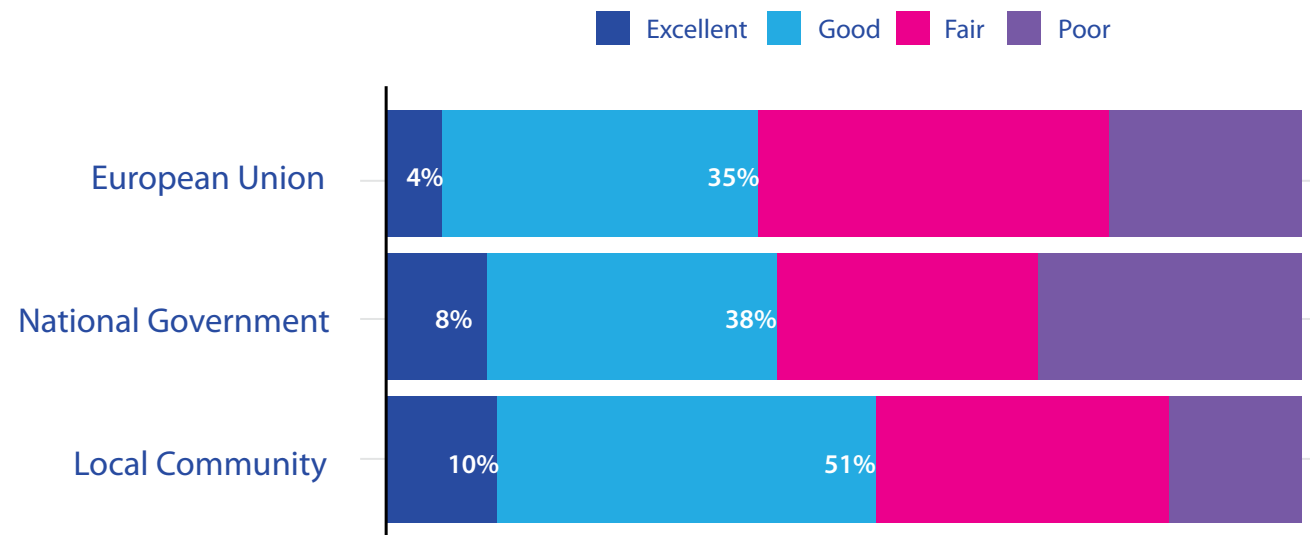
The foundation of good politics is listening to the hopes, fears and expectations of citizens. This is especially true when faced with crises like the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Yet, given the ongoing situation, direct exchanges with citizens, whether at events or at their doorstep, have become increasingly difficult or even impossible to organise in most European countries.

While public opinion surveys can't replace face-to-face interaction, they are an important tool for finding out what citizens think. For this reason, the ALDE Party has commissioned a big Europe-wide survey that covers 28 EU and non-EU countries. The goal of the project is to gain insight into people's perceptions on how the COVID-19 pandemic has been handled and how they want Europe to emerge from this crisis.

This survey marks the beginning of an ongoing research project that will provide further insights on the topics and narratives that shape the European public opinion. It will help define how European liberals can approach issues and challenges in years to come.

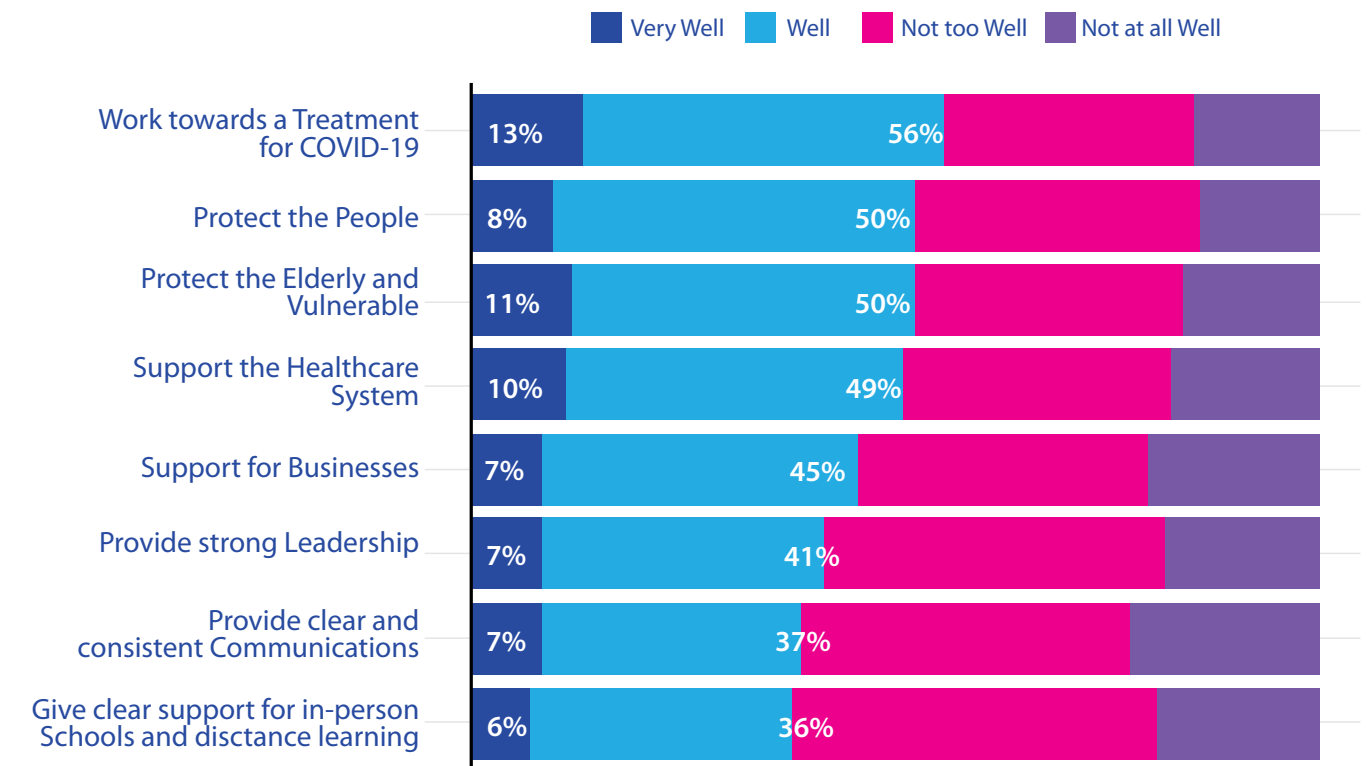
Q: How would you rate the job done by each of these institutions in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic?



An example from the ALDE Party survey, conducted in early 2021.

One of the main findings of this survey shows how the ongoing health crisis could develop into a crisis of trust in politics. Across the continent, a majority of the citizens feel unsatisfied with how their national governments have handled the COVID-19 pandemic. What is even more worrying is that citizens are particularly unhappy with how the European Union has handled the crisis, and this dissatisfaction could do long-term damage in citizens' trust in the EU.

Q: For each of the following, please rate how well the national government has done during the COVID-19 pandemic?



An example from the ALDE Party survey, conducted in early 2021.

Looking at the specific areas of government response, the picture is much more nuanced: citizens' opinions are divided across topics such as supporting schools and businesses and providing strong leadership and clear communications, and many feel their governments have been lacking in action. These insights can help address key areas of concern and also provide an important tool for liberals to either communicate more effectively on solutions, when in charge, or point out areas requiring more support, when in opposition.

For more information on the ALDE Party survey project, get in touch with **Max Sundermann** (msundermann@aldeparty.eu)

This Survey was conducted with IPSOS. Sample size 28542. Countries: AT, BA, BE, BG, CH, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, HR, HU, IE, IT, LT, LV, NL, NO, PL, PT, RO, SE, SI, SK. Fieldwork 15 January – 5 February 2021

SETTING NEW PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IN UKRAINIAN POLITICS

For **Kira Rudyk**, leader of ALDE Party member **Golos in Ukraine**, her country is on the brink of a better future. In this op-ed, she outlines the work her party has undertaken to establish a concrete plan for Ukraine's development and to foster new, day-to-day political standards, among others.

Modern Ukraine is a society with high demand for liberal, just and democratic governance. This civic request was materialised in September 2019, when Golos was elected to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Our team of professionals with impeccable reputation came from the business and public sector and joined the Parliament and local councils to change Ukraine for the better.

Today, we're encouraging the Parliament and the government to plan in advance – if there is no plan, there will be no work done. We are setting the new professional standards for Ukrainian politics: working for efficiency and results, and not from one election to the next, which has been the standard in the past.

Ukrainian politics is still more about giving promises than fulfilling them, but we are trying to break this tradition and set the example by fulfilling our election programme. In 1,5 years, Golos has already fulfilled more than a third of our election promises.

We have also prepared a clear plan for Ukraine's development – this has not happened in our politics before. It is a step-by-step action plan for 2021 that can be assessed by the results at the end of the year. The National Plan for 2021 includes a range of strategic and tactical tasks, from equality to security.

1. Economic development

Letting the economy function with no extra pressure from the state is the ground rule. That is why we want to stop extensive pressure on business from the Security Service of Ukraine when it deals with economic crimes. This power should instead be shifted to the newly created institution, the Bureau of Economic Security. It has enough professional capacity to deal with economic issues properly and according to international standards. We also work on reducing the labour taxes and developing a long-term budget planning, and advocate capital amnesty for businesses so that entrepreneurs – except for public officials and criminals – could legalise funds by paying the appropriate tax.

2. Green course

Ukrainian cities are suffocating from emissions and pollution. We stand for creating air quality monitoring and energy efficiency systems, which will help reduce emissions from companies. Our priority is to introduce the 'green course' simultaneously with Europe, so that from 2030 Ukrainian goods would comply with environmental standards and would not be subject to additional duties.

3. Equal rules for everyone

Another priority for us is the judicial reform. Restarting the judiciary has become a matter of survival, as corrupted courts constantly block foreign investment and economic development, and citizens have zero confidence in courts.

“ The National Plan for 2021 includes a range of strategic and tactical tasks, from equality to security ”

We will work to complete this reform and prevent the anti-corruption reform roll-back. We believe that law enforcement, instead of being a threat to people or businesses, should finally become their defender. To this end, we will promote a full-fledged reform of the Security Service of Ukraine, the prosecutor's office and the police.

4. Safety above everything

Most importantly, we should not wait with these actions until the war ends. Golos is the only party with a clear vision on how to get Russia out of Eastern Ukraine and Crimea. We have developed a realistic 'cold' de-occupation strategy, peace on Ukrainian terms: termination of the Minsk agreements and starting a new negotiations format. We are also working to implement the NATO standards in our army.

5. Overcoming COVID-19 and other goals

Our plan also includes such strategic areas as education, pension, health care reform, decentralisation, digitalising administrative services, and the fight against COVID-19. With each of these areas involving tactical levels, we are ready for surprises and challenges. If only the government would take up our plan for the better future of Ukraine and the whole of Europe.



golozmin.org

ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL DURING PANDEMIC – A PERSPECTIVE FROM THE NETHERLANDS

Campaigning is hard and campaigning during a global pandemic is even harder! ALDE Party member D66 from the Netherlands ran in the country's parliamentary elections this March and, despite the extraordinary circumstances, secured a historic result. In this op-ed, the party's campaign team sheds light on their strategy in the months running up to the election day.

This spring's parliamentary elections in the Netherlands were historic. The eyes of the citizens have probably never before been so fixed on The Hague, the capital of Dutch politics, given the COVID-19 measures and the issues faced by the sitting government. For D66, the election result was a historic achievement as well, as we captured 24 out of the 150 seats in the Second Chamber. Equalling our previous record from 1994, the limitless enthusiasm of our members, steered forward by our leader **Sigrid Kaag**, proved to be a successful recipe in surmounting the challenges of campaigning during a global pandemic.

Where we would normally travel across cities and towns to spread flyers and information about our programme and goals, this time our volunteer pairs went – following the COVID-19 measures – past house doors and instead filled as many mailboxes as possible. In The Hague, parliamentary candidates like Steven van Weyenberg and party legends like Laurens Jan Brinkhorst coupled with volunteers, making our campaign, regardless of the circumstances, once again a platform for cooperation between volunteers and (former) candidates. Moreover,

the campaign's social media team proved to be instrumental in contributing to our electoral success, with volunteers answering a great number of direct messages and comments across platforms. This was combined with the narrative of nobody being left behind, with effective social media adverts and with a perspective-offering television commercial – all instrumental components of our campaign success.

“ Despite the challenges and extraordinary circumstances, this year's elections have been an unforgettable experience for D66 ”

Under the title 'nieuw leiderschap' (new leadership), we set out to counter the status quo and populism by emphasising the need for a new, value-based leadership to emerge from the ongoing crisis. By focusing on community rather than division, Sigrid Kaag embodied our narrative and was a strong alternative, particularly during the election debates. Moreover, as the largest progressive party in the Netherlands, with this narrative we offered a new solution to problems highlighted by the pandemic, with inequality of opportunity, the climate and education issues being top priorities for us.

European cooperation was 'the elephant in the room' in these elections. With key themes focused on the pandemic, the national housing crisis and climate change, the narrative around the European Union was focused on the EU being either the cause or the solution to problems. We did not steer

away from this discussion and managed to maintain our reputation as a reliable, pro-European party – and now we also have company, as the newcomer party Volt that is also outspokenly pro-European gained three parliamentary seats. We also congratulate the VVD on their victory, which shows that liberalism is a strong force in the Dutch politics for years to come.

Despite the challenges and extraordinary circumstances, this year's elections have been an unforgettable experience for D66. While the polls in early January predicted a much lower number of parliamentary seats for us, we continued consistently campaign for what we stand for, never giving up. The end result is something we are extremely proud of.

“ We did not steer away from this discussion and managed to maintain our reputation as a reliable, pro-European party ”

D66

d66.nl
international.d66.nl

“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

AIM WORKING GROUPS – GET INVOLVED TODAY!

Do you want to discuss the political issues that matter most? Join an AIM Working Group! At the initiative of the AIM for Europe Steering Committee, 11 thematic working groups are now open to all individual members and liberal associates.

These working groups will meet online at least once every two months, giving members an opportunity to discuss current political developments at the EU level and exchange ideas and solutions on European policy issues.

CHOOSE FROM THE FOLLOWING WORKING GROUPS:

-  WG A: Foreign Affairs/Defence & Security/NATO
-  WG B: Civil liberties, Justice & Home Affairs/Human Rights
-  WG C: Development/Humanitarian Affairs
-  WG D: Women's rights and gender equality
-  WG E: Environment, Public Health & Food Safety
-  WG F: Constitutional affairs/Legal affairs/electoral law
-  WG G: Internal Market, Consumer Protection/Industry, Research and Energy/International Trade
-  WG H: Agriculture and Rural Development/Fisheries/Animal Welfare
-  WG I: Transport & Tourism/Regional Development
-  WG J: Employment & Social Affairs/Culture & Education
-  WG K: Budgets/Economic & Monetary Affairs

Currently, all working groups are in the start-up phase. However, going forward, the groups will become a valuable asset to the AIM and liberal associates programmes.

The Working Groups benefit from the organisational support of **Mircea Șerdin** (ALDE Party Secretariat) and **Francesco Condò** (AIM Coordinator, Northern Italy). More information can be found on MyALDE or by contacting mserdin@aldeparty.eu



AIM Working Groups will:

- Form a permanent framework to discuss current European politics and policy
- Increase opportunities to meet with ALDE Party politicians, experts and civil society organisations
- Improve competences and knowledge of EU policy within the AIM and liberal associates programmes
- Positively impact the programmes' contribution to ALDE Party positions
- Attract new individual members and liberal associates
- Create cross-border links and connections between participants to foster our pan-European community
- Make the voice of individual members and liberal associates heard!

Not yet an individual member or a liberal associate? Find out more information on how to join at aldeparty.eu



Thematical Working Group coordinators meeting April 2021



THE VOICE OF EUROPE'S YOUTH NEEDS TO BE HEARD FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

The COVID-19 crisis has affected us all, but for many young Europeans – labelled as 'Generation Corona' by some – dealing with the economic, social and health consequences will be a reality for decades to come, writes LYMEC President [Antoaneta Asenova-Bihlmayer](#) in this op-ed.

Every generation faces challenges. For today's young people, key concerns include the future and financial stability, coupled with continuously high youth unemployment and workforce entry opportunities which come with stark competition and high expectations.

We are also concerned with the future of our environment and see the climate crisis as requiring immediate action, not as something politically polarised. Despite being the fabric of our everyday lives, social media is also a matter of growing concern, from privacy issues to its impact on democracy. Moreover, with advances in technology, we are drowning in information, which adds a completely different perspective, speed and magnitude to the issues facing the youth of today. Last but not least, of course, come COVID-19 related uncertainties.

“The pandemic has hit us all, but many young people have been uniquely affected”

The pandemic has hit us all, but many young people have been uniquely affected, with their educational and employment opportunities curtailed and opportunities

to socialise and travel halted. This has brought about the term “Gen C” or “Generation Corona”. Studies suggest that more than 70% of adolescents feel psychologically burdened, more anxious, easily irritated, worried and report a deterioration in their relationships with others. We do not yet know what the long-term repercussions of the pandemic will be for young people, but there is no doubt that this generation will be paying for many of its economic, social and health consequences for decades to come. Therefore, it is more crucial than ever that young people are engaged and consulted in the recovery process, that we shift from being subjects of youth policies to active architects in their development and implementation, and that youth voices are heard and respected.

We would like to see the EU and its Member States move quickly to ensure that meaningful education, training and employment opportunities are made available to young people who are struggling to get their lives back on track after over a year of COVID-19 restrictions. It is vital that students and young people are properly trained and equipped for the jobs of the future, which require more advanced digital skills. At LYMEC, we have been providing many digital and online opportunities throughout the COVID-19 pandemic: in addition to shifting our Congresses and assemblies online, we have put new initiatives in place to connect young liberals from all over Europe and to provide opportunities to cooperate.

The Conference on the Future of Europe should be an important first step in bridging the dialogue between policymakers and Europe's youth.



It is essential that we are given a platform for discussion on an equal footing, rather than infantilising us with concepts like role-playing or “youth-targeted” festivals, and that youth involvement continues long after the Conference ends. LYMEC has prepared several proposals ahead of the Conference, including on the young liberal response to COVID-19, reform of the EU institutions and the political focus of the EU. The process of developing and scrutinising these proposals has been a true exercise of cooperation and compromise between our members. We truly hope that Youth Agoras will take place, and that the Conference will not become a mere talking exercise but will be followed by bravery and determination in overcoming differences and adopting an agenda for common development and an ambitious Citizens' Europe for tomorrow.

The current LYMEC Bureau could hardly have imagined a more challenging start to our mandate last year – however, we adapted quickly and have been working harder than ever to continue our mission of involving young people in politics and furthering the creation of a Liberal Europe.

The future is here and we are ready...

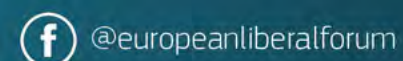
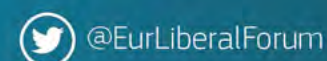


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The world is changing faster than ever. The choices we make today will define what the EU looks like ten years down the road.

The *Liberal White Book: Europe 2030* highlights the challenges that the EU faces and presents a range of policy options in the form of future scenarios: will the EU muddle through the next decade or will it change fundamentally to own its future? This publication is a point of reference for liberal policymakers who want to shape Europe's future.

www.liberalforum.eu



MOVERS & SHAKERS



Daniel Berg @bergdanielmomentum

ALDE Party Vice-President and Deputy Mayor of Budapest District II, **Daniel Berg** (Momentum) is an active voice in the fight against Viktor Orbán and illiberalism Hungary. He also recently announced his parliamentary candidacy as part of the joint opposition's primary election process, set to start in August 2021 ahead of next year's national elections.



@DegrottJana **Jana Degrott**

Jana Degrott (Demokratesch Partei) is a local councillor, activist and Renew Europe CoR Young Elected Politician. On youth leadership, she says, "As a young leader, jurist, woman, and person of colour, I want to prove that progress is possible in our lifetime and allow everyone to feel that their opportunities are as limitless as their potential."



Victor Filloy @victorfilloy

Two years ago, **Victor Filloy** (Partit Liberal D'Andorra) took office as Minister of Social Affairs, Housing and Youth of Andorra. In that role, he has taken key measures to guarantee housing and social support for citizens throughout the pandemic. In 2020 alone, he destined almost 60 million euros to unemployment benefits, occasional financial aid and housing aid.



@digitalniahmed **Ahmed Kosovac**

Elected to his first term on the Sarajevo Municipal Council in 2020, **Ahmed Kosovac** (Naša stranka) is focused on fighting corruption and listening to citizens to find common solutions for local problems. He is also working to foster remembrance culture through art, and recently initiated the creation of mural in honor of Balkan singer-songwriter Đorđe Balašević.



Monika Rosa @MonikaRosa

As a Member of Parliament in Poland since 2015, **Monika Rosa** (Nowoczesna) has distinguished herself as a defender of women's and LGBTQ+ rights, as they have increasingly come under attack in Poland. She was at the core of the protests that halted legislation restricting access to reproductive care, sexual education and abortion in 2020.



@alenatruschel **Alena Trauschel**

At only 22, Junge Liberale Board Member **Alena Trauschel** (FDP) was elected to Baden-Württemberg State Parliament in March 2021 elections, thus not only obtaining a historic win for liberals — who had never won an election in the Ettligen constituency — but also becoming the youngest member of any German parliament ever.

INTRODUCING A GLOBAL, EMERGING NETWORK

LIBERAL ASSOCIATES

Ten years after creating the biggest pan-European network of liberal citizens, the ALDE Party was proud to announce 'The Liberal Associate' subscription earlier this year.

This new programme is aimed at all non-EU citizens who want to connect with the ALDE Party. Once enrolled, all subscribers:

- » receive invitations to exclusive events on topics and issues related to Europe
- » contribute to political resolutions that will shape the future of the ALDE Party and Europe
- » are a part of a pan-European community of more than a thousand Individual Members
- » enjoy exclusive access to selected campaigns before they reach the general public
- » connect with liberal individuals from their countries
- » debate liberal solutions for European problems
- » interact with liberal politicians and speakers from across the world
- » help liberals grow and succeed
- » fight against tomorrow's illiberal threats

Together with Individual Members and national parties, each new Liberal Associate is a part of our common future: free, democratic, liberal.

We want you to have your say. We are always doing our best to ensure that our members and liberal associates stay connected to our work as without you, the ALDE Party wouldn't be the party that it is today.

If you have suggestions as to how we can improve, please contact us at individual.members@aldeparty.eu



SCAN ME FOR MORE INFO ON HOW TO JOIN



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 communciation@aldeparty.eu ahead of the next issue to be published by the end of 2021.


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


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