

35 years
of history

EUROPEAN LIBERAL YOUTH



European Liberal Youth
35th Anniversary of LYMEC and
30th Anniversary of Libertas

new libertas

anniversary issue

editorial

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Vedrana Gujic

Co-editor of the Anniversary issue

Dear LYMEC members, dear readers of New Libertas,

We've created this special issue of New Libertas to celebrate together the 35th birthday of our favourite European political youth organisation – LYMEC. The past years have contributed tremendously to the development and growth of our organisation, therefore we wanted to put together all of the people, places, campaigns, ideas and values that have defined who we are today – the most vibrant and progressive youth organisation in Europe.

We invite you to take time, flip the pages, re-live our common memories, experience the past through the words of our leaders and smile at the pictures from LYMEC's teenage years...

I bet when you come to the very last page, you will feel just like I am feeling whenever I am with all of you...proud of being LYMEC.

Yours sincerely,
Vedrana Gujic

Slaven Klobucar

Co-editor of the Anniversary issue

Dear liberal friends,

It is my great pleasure to be the co-editor of this anniversary issue, as this year we not only celebrate 35th anniversary of LYMEC but also 30th anniversary of our magazine, which through the years has changed its name from Lader to Libertas and finally to New Libertas.

When we started preparing this issue we were not even aware of the fact that our magazine had such a long history. Digging through our archives made us find out many different facts about LYMEC, its activities and changes that it has gone through over the years.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank all the people who contributed to the creation of this issue either with articles or photos. Without their contribution it would be hard for us to put all the pieces together. We hope you will enjoy this special edition of the New Libertas,

Yours sincerely,
Slaven Klobucar

ALEXANDER
PLAHR



WELCOME BY
LYMEC PRESIDENT

The acronym we use to name our great organization – LYMEC – once was precisely that, an acronym: Liberal Youth Movement of the European Community. The organization underwent many changes in the last 35 years since it was established, but the name stayed. Today known as LYMEC – European Liberal Youth, we kept the core brand identity while slowly moving from an international organization – “the Europeans in IFLRY” – to a true youth organization on the European level. And boy, does the EU urgently need that!

I do not know how the situation was 35 years ago, but nowadays liberalism in Europe faces enormous challenges on two fronts:

On the one side there are the ones who want to use the current volatility in all things European to force what they perceive as a federal system on the European Union in a top-down approach, no matter what. Even though they might be liberals themselves, they are willing to sacrifice many of our liberal ideals in the areas of subsidiarity, democracy, good economic policy and observance of the Treaties just to somehow make their dream work.

In their opinion, the shortcomings resulting from that could be fixed later. This, however, is the wrong approach. Instead of pushing forward with Europe being a project of the elites, even worse, a project that does not stick to its own

rules anymore, we need to convince the average joe and take the population with us in this great adventure.

On the other side, there are those who want to make us believe European integration cannot work and the nation state is the only viable option for democratic participation and efficient government. They are also wrong! Just because the current setup of the EU institutions does not allow for sufficient transeuropean debate and scrutiny, it does not mean that they cannot be set up in a way to do so.

In the style of an old Latin saying, one needs to be aware that “componere necesse est” – integration is necessary. We do need to continue the European integration process, we actually need to make a big step forward towards a true political Union.

For this, the LYMEC manifesto provides us with the best guidebook there is: “LYMEC believes the European Union needs to be further developed, reformed and enhanced so that it becomes a union for the people and by the people. [...] members of the European Parliament should be elected in two components: some selected in national or regional lists, and some others selected from a standardized EU top-up list. [...] The Union of tomorrow must be based on decentralization and diversity, not on petty bureaucracy and over-regulation. This means that the EU will only be

in charge of those decisions, which cannot be better achieved as well at national or regional levels.”

So our goal today as 35 years ago is to build a political Europe. But one that is based on true representative democracy and the rule of law. Our mission in the coming years is to defend the principles the Union was built on, the principles enshrined in the Treaties, while fixing what was handled wrongly in the past out of do-gooder attitude and misleading political niceness.

But enough of the serious stuff, let's not forget that LYMEC has been always involving a fun component as well: Meeting young liberals from inside and outside the European Union, having cultural evenings and cultural exchanges in many different kinds of flavors. Travelling around Europe and broadening your horizon in any way one can think of.

Do you remember the old joke that IFLRY cannot get rid of the R in their name as it would otherwise read IFLY? One day, there will be a political entity on the territory of some of today's European countries that is a state in its own right. Until then, LYMEC sounds so much better than IFLRY! ;-)

Enjoy this magazine,
Alexander Plahr
(onboard a cross-border high-speed train somewhere in Europe)

Who are we?

The European Liberal Youth, abbreviated as LYMEC, is a pan-European youth organisation seeking to promote liberal values throughout the EU and particularly through and as the youth organisation of the European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR) and its parliamentary group in the European Parliament (ALDE, Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe). Involving about 200,000 members from dozens of organisations in over 30 countries, LYMEC consists of Member Organisations (MO) and an Individual Membership Section (IMS) and is active across the breadth and diversity of the European continent. Our central aim is the creation of a liberal and federal Europe.

LYMEC was established in 1976 as the 'Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Community'. As a youth organisation, LYMEC supports the development of political awareness of young people throughout Europe. LYMEC strives to play a political role within Europe by cooperating with other liberal and radical organisations - like ELDR - and to represent liberal interests of European youth movements. In brief, our organisation aims to create a liberal and federal Europe, educate its members, increase the common understanding among young people throughout Europe of liberal ideas, promote tolerance between cultures and individuals and increase the level of political awareness and involvement of young people in politics. LYMEC Member organisations are student organisations and youth organisations of national political parties. Any organisation that applies for membership must be based in an European country. This organisation needs to share liberal ideology outlined in our Manifesto.

LYMEC also has the individual membership programme. The Citizens and Residents of a European country, aged between 15 and 35 years, who agree with our policies, can become individual members of LYMEC. The individual membership is an innovative type of membership, offered by LYMEC as the first organisation that decided to make a step further towards the development of a truly European youth organisation.



Daniel Tanahatoc

LYMEC President (2004-2008)
LYMEC Secretary-General (2002-2004)

I remember it was just after New Year's Day 1999 when we held a LYMEC Bureau meeting in Stuttgart, Germany. Although our agenda focused on preparing LYMEC's programme of activities, we had reason for a celebration.

The Euro had arrived as the common currency, which LYMEC wholeheartedly welcomed. We believed that a common currency "could intensify the political and economic integration within the European Union."

Obviously, we connected our beliefs to strict conditions for entry and a stability pact to enforce budgetary discipline with effective EU mechanisms to sanction countries that break the agreement. We know what happened in subsequent years when Eurozone member states wavered down the rules.

Despite all this LYMEC remains a firm supporter of the Euro as one of the greatest projects in modern times and I was therefore happy to read that as recently as the LYMEC Congress of Sinaia, Romania in 2010 it was concluded that a strong Euro is only possible if we strengthen the EU's ability to deal with budget crises in her member states. It shows LYMEC is consistent throughout the years.



Ellen Trane Norby

LYMEC President (2002-2004)
LYMEC Vice President (1999-2002)

Once upon a time...that is how famous authors tend to begin their fairytales, but it might just as well be used to describe fabulous LYMEC times. When I recall my LYMEC days, events, results and achievements I get a big smile on my face.

From 1999-2004 I had the honor to serve as VP for 3 years and thereafter President from 2002-2004. It was truly hectic times with more nights spend at hostels and flats around Europe than in Denmark.

During these years we turned LYMEC from a EU centered organization to a truly enlarged European organization with political impact on EU policies and influence on the ELDR party. We increased our budget, the office, the number of events, the number of MOs and the professionalism of the organization.

Together with the bureau, staff and MOs we transformed LYMEC from early childhood organization, through teenage fights with the big brother IFLRY to the mature, influential and strong European youth organization it is today.

Congratulations LYMEC!



Roger Albinyana

LYMEC President (2004-2008)
LYMEC Secretary-General (2002-2004)

For a Mediterranean mind like me it was a unique opportunity to lead this organisation together with a team of valuable and committed activists from 2002 until 2008. LYMEC had always been -and still is- too oriented on the North, whilst other European political families have been traditionally more balanced in this respect.

Contrary to the current days, those years were featured by both a remarkable dynamism and a great enthusiasm in Europe's political life: the European Convention for the future of Europe, the European Constitutional Treaty, the 2004 and 2007 enlargement processes to the East and the South, the consolidation of the EMU (or at least we thought so), the 2004 European parliamentary elections (in which European liberals accounted for its best results in history)... and LYMEC did not waste its time: we modestly fostered the greatest expansion that our organisation has ever experienced before, not only organisationally but also and particularly politically with numerous campaigns that impacted the public opinion, and a very healthy and solid cooperation with our two political parents: ELDR and ALDE.

I wish LYMEC an unforgettable 35th anniversary celebration and look forward to the 40th birthday.



Aloys Rigaut

LYMEC President (2008-2010)
LYMEC Vice President (2006-2008)

LYMEC has put its imprint on 12 years of my life. When I look back, it gives me vertigo. When I started in 1997 email was only starting, when I left social media was at full speed. When I started, LYMEC had a stagiaire changing every 6 months and a table at the ALDE Group secretariat in the EP, when I left we had our own office, a permanent secretariat with 2 staff members and we could run fully-fledged pan-European campaigns. In the meantime, our annual budget had quadrupled. What a progress done... Of course, I cannot attribute everything to my work, but still, I am proud that, through my 7 years in the bureau and 2 years of presidency, I have also put my imprint on this organisation.

The LYMEC bureau is demanding when you want to do things well, and even more when you are a workaholic like me. My evenings, my weekends, my holidays... I gave a lot to this organisation, but LYMEC gave me so much in return, thanks also to the great people met during those years and to the bureau team I worked with! What after LYMEC? First and foremost, my priority was to take a break and restructure my personal life, and so I did! What a change after all these years, enjoying not being busy all the time and the simple pleasures of life. I'm happy a new generation took over. Keep up the good work and bring this organisation even higher!



Alexander Plahr

LYMEC President (2010-now)
LYMEC Vice President (2008-2010)

When I was first elected into the LYMEC Bureau, the organization was on the brink of going bankrupt. There was a talk by member organizations about LYMEC surviving the next months. Too much of its focus had blurred, too many expenses and cost overruns had accumulated, we could not even pay our staff. We solved all this. Our first decision was: Not a single cent for the Bureau before we can fulfill our obligations again! We reformed the organization with a hard but necessary austerity program and a clear work-sharing agreement with IFLRY, establishing currently well regarded understanding of our different roles and responsibilities. We also ran a campaign for the EP elections while doing this - and a nice one I have to say!

After LYMEC once again was back on track, I was elected President in a memorable Congress in Sinaia. The new Bureau steadied the work of the organization by introducing a two-year programme of action together with yearly themes. The one for 2011 is intergenerational justice and the one for 2012 will be civil liberties. In the future, Europe faces the challenge to politicize and democratize the integration process. European integration can no longer be done by the elites in a top-down process, it needs to take the broader population with it. LYMEC for sure will contribute to this!



LYMEC campaigns over the years

Over the years LYMEC has organised several different campaigns, protests and demonstrations. It all started very limited as our resources were quite limited as well, but over the years as the organisation grew so did our Campaigns. LYMEC fought for freedom of media, freedom from different regimes in Europe, freedom of expression, pension systems, advocated good sides of globalisation, fought against visa regimes and Common Agricultural Policy of the European Union. In this text we will shortly present our latest campaigns.

No Visa - Europe is our home

LYMEC always stood for the freedom of movement what was certainly not the case in Europe in 21st century. In 2004 LYMEC organised its probably most successful campaign to date, where we gathered our members and non-affiliated NGOs in 24 European cities and organised street demonstrations asking for visa free Europe.

EU Parliament elections

Every five years we plan our campaign for EU Parliament elections in coordination with the ELDR Party, candidates for the European Parliament and our member organisations. We coordinate young candidates and launch a common



Majda Zeherovic Former LYMEC Bureau member

A year ago citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Western Balkans could only dream about travelling to the rest of Europe without visas. One of the most valuable campaigns for all LYMEC MOs that were in need of visas was definitely NO VISA campaign organized in 2007. Hundreds of young people from all over the Europe went to the streets promoting freedom of movement within the European continent.

Special event was organized in the European Parliament where our liberal friends showed the same interest for this important topic. Members of MLBIH could finally see that they were not alone in their fight to have the same rights as their peers from the other countries – right to travel and study abroad. I am more than happy not to change my passport every year due to the filled pages by visas and not to experience that terrible feeling in my stomach every time when answering thousands questions from the police officers at the border crossing. I hope no young person will ever experience that. We should not stop fighting to grant the great feeling of freedom to all people within Europe.

campaign for these elections. On the last EU elections held in 2009 we dealt with the topics of privacy and budget.

Deletion and not blocking.

Crimes should be punished and not hidden - this was the motto of this campaign. LYMEC strongly lobbied for deletion of the child pornography web sites rather than hiding them through blocking. The campaign was backed by several ALDE MEPs.

Intergenerational Theft

Reducing the public deficits, getting to balanced budgets back again and paying back all state debts is essential. Young people cannot decline what they inherit: Tens of thousands of Euros debt per capita.

Globalisation is Good for you

With this controversial slogan LYMEC launched a campaign to promote the benefits of globalisation and bring fresh arguments to the table. The campaign aimed to fight the confusion and misinformation created by organised groups like the anti-globalists against a process that is in fact already bringing more prosperity and wealth across the globe.

EU is not my big brother

Since 9/11 and with the so called war on terror,

we have seen an escalation in violation of our privacy rights. People often say: "But I have nothing to hide!" – Really? Then why do you have curtains covering your windows? Protecting privacy is not about protecting criminals, it is about your personal dignity and rights. We favor effective law enforcement – but without putting citizens under general suspicion. With this campaign LYMEC aimed at raising awareness about privacy issues on the EU level.

Free trade is fair trade

Young liberals have always been staunch defenders of international trade and the abolition of trade barriers.

The free market has always been a driving force in creating wealth and prosperity. The individual free exchange of goods and services has proven to be the most effective way to use scarce resources.



Mette Lykke Nielsen LYMEC Vice President

Campaigning has always been of great importance to LYMEC and I always found that the funniest part of the work in LYMEC. To be provocative towards the politicians – not only on a European level but also on the national level. I remember being one of the member organisations doing a LYMEC campaign back in 2007. With Radikal Ungdom we went on the street with the "No Visa-campaign".

It was really interesting as an organisation to do the actual campaign and to go on live-television running through a wall of paper. I remember the media first not being interested in this at all, but when we told them that the same campaign would run in other countries at the same time, they actually showed up.

LYMEC members

Besides all the policies, ideas, campaigns and actions, LYMEC is all about the people. For the last 35 years, LYMEC has served as a forum for education, training and capacity building for many current and future leaders and politicians, who shaped their thoughts and ideas among their friends and colleagues in LYMEC.

The biggest value of our organisation is in the exchange we have every time we meet and talk, as among liberals, there are no limits to the ideas and visions. We can proudly look upon the liberal politicians today and know that back then in those days, they sat at the same round tables, debated among the same liberal friends, wrote resolutions and policy papers, advocated same rights and progressive policies on the streets around Europe and brainstormed till late nights in hotel rooms, just as we do it on each and every of our events.

No matter how old you get and how far up you go, once you become LYMEC, you always stay LYMEC.



Sir Graham Watson

ALDE Member of European Parliament
Former Secretary General of IFLRY

I was there at the inception, though on the LYMEC Bureau as the representative of - wait for it and prepare the rotten fruit to throw! - IFLRY. LYMEC looked very different in those early days with only nine member states in the EU. I am hugely impressed to see the change today and the success which many of your campaigns have known. (I even write about one of them in my recent book Building a Liberal Europe.)

If the first 35 years have been so good, a more mature organisation should look forward to greater and more lasting achievements. Europe is ageing fast and one of your most difficult challenges may be ensuring you have successors (I know, we tried in my day too, but contraceptive techniques were already well advanced even back then!).

Religious fundamentalism has returned to haunt us, in the USA, Europe and the Islamic and Hindu worlds, and remains a threat to world peace and human harmony. And the challenge of climate change is ever present even if it has gone from the headlines.

Never doubt the capacity of our creed to provide the answers to these challenges. Liberalism has rarely been feared for the size of its political presence; but often for the strength of its ideas.



Marc Guerrero i Tarragó

ELDR Vice President
LYMEC Secretary General (1998-2000)

I would like to deeply congratulate LYMEC for its 35th anniversary. My first contact to LYMEC was in 1994. I attended a seminar in a nice Italian village and I was so nervous to meet new liberals out of my country. My first congress was in March 1995, in Hebden Bridge. Four years later, in 1998, I was elected in Brussels, SG. My time at the bureau was one of the best experiences in my political life.

I remember with excitement a bureau meeting at my family cottage at the Catalan Pyrenees. From there, a small Catalan village of no more than 100 neighbours, we were thinking about the future of the European Union...

In 2006 we came back to Brussels, with a large JNC delegation, to attend the historic 30th anniversary. That event was great. It is so important for any organisation to remember its history in order to renovate itself. Nowadays, as ELDR Party VP I often use my LYMEC network. We are a great and powerful army of young liberal politicians always ready for service. It was a great LYMEC victory when few months ago at the ELDR bureau we approved the individual associated membership figure. Thank you all for your contribution to European liberalism. Europe needs LYMEC!



Pietro Paganini

Former LYMEC Bureau member
(2004-2008)

Change comes from youth. They are the energy that fosters development, either social or economic, technological or political. Their eyes provide a different approach to problems; new solutions will follow. They make progress possible by leading humanity to a very new world that older generations do not often understand. Yet, youth is more powerful and fruitful when the surrounding environment welcomes them providing them to flourish as a vibrant and dynamic generation.

Youngsters are born free in spirit and through that liberty they can shape a free society where any individual can - and will - contribute to progress and a common prosperity. It is by killing liberty that young people are not allowed to fly and dream. Thus we commit suicide, preventing progress and well-being for millions. This is why I joined the European Liberal Youth, an outrageous committee of talented leaders that together work hard and whose aim is to build an open society by fostering individual liberties. In LYMEC I learnt to dream, to challenge, to fight and to sacrifice my self because I knew that there was somebody else ready to do the same. This is what LYMEC is. A small team of young people fighting for the freedom of billions, because this is where the prosperity come from; Small, but only god knows how talented.



Cristian Silviu Busoi

ALDE Member of the European Parliament
Former President of CSL, Romania

It gives me great pleasure to have been given the chance to congratulate LYMEC on the occasion of its 35th Anniversary.

LYMEC is without any shadow of doubt the cradle of our future Liberal leaders. I, as many other politicians, have had the chance to be part of several LYMEC events. No little was my surprise to discover that even though the active members of LYMEC are always young aspiring politicians, the organization itself is becoming more and more mature. Europe is facing many challenges today and the way we deal with these challenges will contribute to the shape of Europe's future. It seems therefore natural that the young generation has a strong saying in the making of European policies as everything we do today will become their legacy.

I have participated in at least three LYMEC Congresses and other several events and I felt proud that the National Liberal Youth had the chance to host some of these events. Liberalism in Romania has a strong and long history but being part of the European family is still new, I dare to say that being a democracy is still new, therefore I believe that being part of LYMEC is of most importance for our Liberal young politicians as they are the only ones raised in the spirit of today's Europe.



Jan Burdinski

LYMEC President (1998-2000)
LYMEC Secretary General (1996-1998)

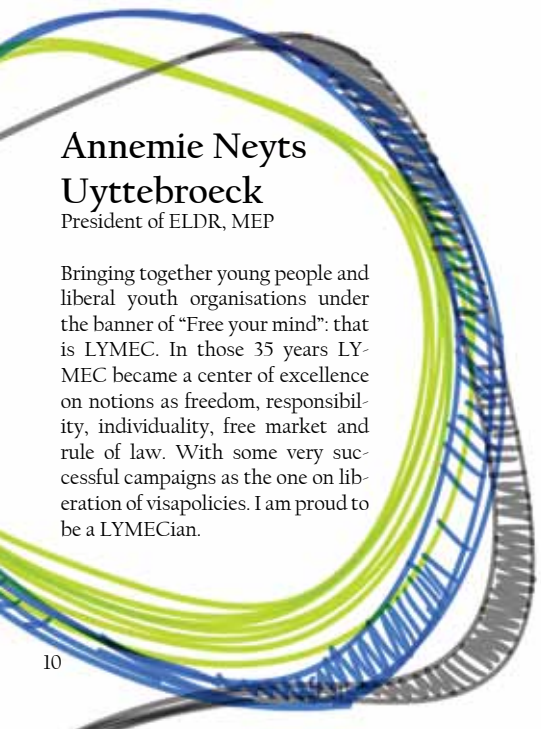
Serving as SecGen, then as President has been a great time for me. And best of all, I got to meet countless friends with great talents, who had high potentials then and became true leaders in their various countries now. There are two things I find worth mentioning, besides the start of the expansion towards Central and Eastern Europe and the introduction of the Individual Membership. It is the ideas of a strict adherence to the principle of subsidiarity and the start of the Euro. We were not shy back then to stress that Italy for the lack of fiscal discipline should never join the common currency.

A Greek membership was not even discussed. Well, times change and so do the principles of independent central banks and the Maastricht criteria for debt and deficit. And yet, another principle of the Maastricht treaty gave us great joy. Subsidiarity. We believed then and still do, that deeper integration could only be acceptable if decisions are taken as close to the citizens as possible. The EU chose a different path and nowadays we see the skeptics on the rise. Just a bit more humbleness by the European integrationists and a more thorough adherence to the principles set out in the Treaty of Maastricht 20 years ago would reanimate the European spirit and grant more support for the political union.

Annemie Neyts Uyttebroeck

President of ELDR, MEP

Bringing together young people and liberal youth organisations under the banner of "Free your mind": that is LYMEC. In those 35 years LYMEC became a center of excellence on notions as freedom, responsibility, individuality, free market and rule of law. With some very successful campaigns as the one on liberation of visapolicies. I am proud to be a LYMECian.



The history of LYMEC

LYMEC was founded in 1976 as an autonomous EEC organisation out of the European pillar of the World Federation for Liberal and Radical Youth (WFLRY), called the European Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth (EFLRY).

WFLRY continued as the International Federation for Liberal and Radical Youth (IFLRY), now International Federation for Liberal Youth.

On 3-4 November 1976, the first Assembly of the Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Community (LYMEC) was held in The Hague (the Netherlands). Niels Christensen (Denmark) was elected as President. In 1978, Gijs de Vries (The Netherlands) was elected as Secretary General at LYMEC's General Assembly in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.



In October 1982, LYMEC held its Congress in a trade union centre in Florence (Italy). The Congress decided that LYMEC no longer had an Executive Committee and that the Congress had to meet every year instead of every two years. The Bureau consisted of three instead of five people from now on.

The Congress also decided that its main task will be the LYMEC contribution at the ELD Congress. Also, a new Bureau was elected: Jo Behmer (German Young Democrats, DJD) was elected as President, Bent Christoffersen as Treasurer and Dobbie Aldridge as Vice President. At the time, Dobbie Aldridge was also a Bureau member of IFLRY. The election of a DJD member as President caused considerable difficulties between LYMEC and the ELDR. DJD was at that time no longer the youth organisation of FDP.

In November 1990, the Congress of LYMEC met in Berlin (Germany). The structure of the Bureau was changed again: from now on it consisted of a President, Secretary General, Treasurer and two Vice-presidents. The structure with Executive Committees was re-established as well:

the Executive Committees met twice a year, next to the annual Congresses. In September 1991, LYMEC established relations with the Centre d'Etudes Libérale Européenne (CELE). The CELE is an institution arranging different seminars and conferences in close cooperation with the ELDR. LYMEC organised a seminar in cooperation

with CELE with the subject "Education in Europe, what will it look like in 2000?", held in Holte (Denmark). It was one of the most successful seminars of that time, which was concluded with an extensive report.

At the LYMEC Congress on 18-19 January 1992 in Paris (France) Elisabeth Geday (Denmark) was elected as President.

The LYMEC seminar in April 1992 dealt with the peripheral regions of the European Community, and was organised in the Açores (Portugal). The participants had the opportunity to hear some of the problems felt by EC islanders and discussed the positive influence of the European Community on their development.

The seminar approved the "Açores Declaration" on the ultra-peripheral regions, which was sent to the LDR members of the European Parliament and the ELDR Federation.

In cooperation with the Committee on Equal Opportunities of the EC, LYMEC organised a Women's seminar in Brugges (Belgium) in October 1992. Only the female members of the LYMEC member organisations were invited. This seminar gave an excellent opportunity to several young women to discuss the development of equal opportunities in politics within the EC. A resolution with the conclusions was sent to the LDR group and the ELDR Federation.

The first LYMEC/ELDR seminar was organised in Dublin (Ireland) in November 1992 and dealt with the European Community Borders after 1992. The completion of the single market, the Schengen agreement and the third pillar of the Maastricht Treaty on the European Union were among some of the issues discussed during this seminar. A seminar about foreign affairs and security policy after the Maastricht Treaty was organised in Konstanz (Germany) in December 1992.

This seminar had an extra lecture on environmental policy and three more lectures regarding the third pillar of the Maastricht Treaty.

In October 1993, a seminar about social cohesion and external and internal changes to the European Community was organised in Batalha (Portugal). The connected LYMEC Extraordinary Congress adopted new Statutes and declared LYMEC's independence from IFLRY: LYMEC no longer considered itself as a regional organisation of IFLRY, but decided to transform into a platform for European liberal and radical youth. In this respect, the wish to establish individual membership was expressed by the Congress, but not implemented yet. It was also adopted that the period of elections of the Bureau members changed from one to two years.

“LYMEC was founded at the EFLRY Congress on 1-4 July 1976.”

Jean-Bernard Ruggieri (JR, France) was elected as President, Peter Facey (LDYS, United Kingdom) as Secretary General and Hartmut Stiller (JuLis, Germany) and Daniel Clivillé (JNC, Catalonia) as Vice Presidents.

The Executive Committee in Gummersbach (Germany) in July 1994 decided that the official name of LYMEC changed into the Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Union, because of the changing of the European Community into a European Union, because of the Maastricht Treaty. The abbreviation remained the same.

In December 1994, an Extraordinary Executive Committee took place in Trieste (Italy). Special attention was paid to the financial problems in the movement.

In March 1995, LYMEC organised its Congress in Hebden Bridge (United Kingdom). The financial problems ended up in a motion of no confidence for the LYMEC Treasurer. The Congress also adopted a cooperation agreement between LYMEC and IFLRY, which was later that year approved by the IFLRY General Assembly.



Peter Facey was elected as President in the by-elections and Dennis Straat as the new Treasurer. Giulia Paolo Ruaro (FdGLI, Italy) became the Secretary General. Daniel Clivillé left the Bureau in September 1995.

In June 1995, LYMEC seminar in Maastricht and Brussels about the Intergovernmental Conference (IGC) of 1996 adopted an extensive report on this important subject, which outlined LYMEC's ideas about how Europe should develop in the next years. The report was presented to the ELDR Group. The report was preliminarily adopted by the Executive Committee in Mainz (Germany) in September 1995 and finally approved by the Congress in Il Ciocco (Italy) in March 1996. Also at that Congress section V of the Manifesto "Visions of Europe" was reviewed in regards to the IGC paper.

“The first LYMEC/ELDR seminar was organised in Dublin in 1992”

Therefore, Gijs de Vries, then President of the Group of the ELDR Party, opened the Congress. The Congress elected a new Bureau. Dennis Straat became the new President. Jan Burdinski (LHG, Germany) the Secretary General, Oscar Wåglund-Söderström (LUF, Sweden) the Treasurer and Julie Greaves (YA, Northern Ireland)

and Anja Bjergskov Sørensen (VU, Denmark) Vice Presidents.

After LYMEC was invited to participate in the ELDR Leaders meetings, LYMEC organised its first Young Leaders Meeting (YLM) with the Presidents and Secretary Generals of the member organisations in Strasbourg (France) in November 1996. The goal was to establish contacts with and among these decision makers on national level and to improve the knowledge about LYMEC and the importance of the European integration process.

The Congress in 1997, held in Helsingborg (Sweden), mainly dealt with the LYMEC Statutes. The Statutes were improved, the membership possibilities and the rights of the member organisations were outlined more clearly and finally, individual membership was introduced. From now on, individuals between 14 and 35 years could become member of LYMEC. They did not get voting rights directly, but it was agreed to discuss the voting issue once the Individual Member Section would develop in a clearer way.

The second LYMEC Young Leaders Meeting was organised less than 10 days before the Amsterdam summit. The Presidents of the LYMEC member organisations proved to be able to conclude the Treaty of Amsterdam, which turned out to be much more constructive in respect to the institutional reforms than the real Treaty.

The LYMEC Treaty of Amsterdam was offered to Frits Bolkestein, party leader of the Dutch liberal party VVD and President of Liberal International. The ELDR Congress in Brussels in September 1997 turned out to be a success for LYMEC. The LYMEC president got a statutory position in the ELDR Party Bureau.

The Extraordinary Congress in October 1997 dealt with the review of the Manifesto. All sections were prepared in working groups and reviewed according to the developments of the European integration process. Julie Greaves left the Bureau.

“The LYMEC Congress in January 1994 in Lloret de Mar (Catalonia) adopted the first LYMEC manifesto, LYMEC’s ideological programme.”

In March 1998 the LYMEC Congress assembled at the VLD headquarters in Brussels. Bureau elections were held. Jan Burdinski (Julis, Germany) became President, Marc Guerrero i Tarragó (JNC, Catalonia) Secretary General, Oscar Wåglund-Söderström (LUF, Sweden) re-elected as Treasurer. Both Marina Lundén (Svensk Ungdom, Finland) and Daniel Tanahatøe (JOVD, Netherlands) got elected as Vice-Presidents. In the spring of 1998 a seminar on IMS was held. As result of the seminar guidelines for the IMS development were established. It was decided that IMS ambassadors would be appointed. A LYMEC seminar on the status of Gibraltar was held in September in the British dependent territory of Gibraltar.

The seminar participants called for self-determination to be paramount. In the autumn LYMEC leaders came together in Milan, Italy. In February 1999 the LYMEC Congress was held in Novo Mesto, Slovenia. It was the first time a LYMEC Congress was held outside the European Union. Marina Lundén resigned from the Bureau. The ELDR pre-European elections Congress was held in May in Berlin, Germany.



Many of LYMEC wishes were adopted in the electoral manifesto. A fringe meeting where young liberal Euro-candidates participated was organised in Berlin.

At the Bureau meeting in Berlin, LYMEC Bureau appointed Ellen Trane Nørby (VU, Denmark) under their responsibility to the Bureau. LYMEC organised a well attended summer camp in Ireland and Northern Ireland. The LYMEC Young Leaders Meeting was held in Barcelona,

Catalonia in September. In April 2000 the LYMEC Congress was held in Skanderborg, Denmark. The only remaining official LYMEC working language is English. Also a new Bureau was elected. Daniel Tanahatøe (JOVD, Netherlands) became President. Oscar Wåglund-Söderström (LUF, Sweden) changed position to Secretary General. Daniel Obst (Julis, Germany) was elected as Treasurer. Rebecca Faller (GLY, Gibraltar) and Ellen Trane Nørby (VU, Denmark) were elected as Vice Presidents.



LYMEC participated actively with the 2nd largest delegation in the ELDR Congress held in Puerto de la Cruz on Tenerife. With our 10 votes the youth held the balance between the two candidates in the election of the new ELDR party President.

LYMEC held its Young Leaders Meeting on the subject of EU reunification and institutional reform. ELDR group leader Mr. Pat Cox, MEP and former WEU Secretary General Mr. Wim van Eekelen addressed the presidents. They opted for a clear Constitution containing a list of Fundamental Rights, which would help to bring the EU closer to the citizens. At the end of 2000 an Extraordinary Congress was organised in Barcelona. It adopted a new Manifesto. Issues on the institutional EU reform from the new manifesto were presented already in the following week to many Prime-ministers, ministers and party leaders assembled at the successful pre-EU summit ELDR leaders and ministers meeting held in Nice, France.

In April 2001 the LYMEC Congress took place in Plovdiv, Bulgaria. 50 participants attended the Congress. The Congress agreed on remaining parts of the revised Manifesto, related to education and environment. Resolutions were also adopted on EU asylum and immigration policy, the situation in the Presevo valley and the conflict in the Middle East. ENR, Estonia was welcomed as a full member of LYMEC. Applicant membership was granted to YMRF, Bulgaria, YAACP, Estonia and LJJC, Lithuania, whereas the Young Dolphins of Turkey was voted observer member. A meeting of ISEEL was held in connection to the LYMEC Congress, providing for significant participation by organisations in South East Europe.

“In 1997 LYMEC accepted its first individual member”

A colloquium was held with MEPs and former LYMEC bureau members addressing the past, present and future of LYMEC. Some 40 participants from LYMEC and ELDR parties attended

the colloquium. LYMEC also hosted a successful ‘beer reception’, which was visited by more than 100 delegates and addressed by the ELDR President, Dr. Werner Hoyer, and Mr. Bertel Haarder, 1st Vice-President of the ELDR Group. On Friday evening, the LYMEC delegates gathered for a big anniversary party. The anniversary celebrations were co-organised by MLD.

In March 2002 LYMEC held its annual Congress and Executive Committee in the wonderful mountain resort of Sinaia. This event gathered around 110 representatives from LYMEC Member Organisations and Individual Members, thus it became the largest event ever launched, not only because of the amount of delegates that attended the event, but especially for the decisions taken at this meeting.

For the first time in the LYMEC history, any liberal organisation based in the European continent will be able to apply for full membership, while so far only those based in a EU or candidate country could apply for such status within LYMEC. Therefore, a complete and strengthened proposal for new Statutes was adopted at this Congress. The new Statutes also allocated certain political power to the Individual Members that will be able to elect their Congress delegates, put forward amendments, resolutions and bureau candidates for their election.

Taking into consideration the important constitutional reform carried by this Congress, 15 membership application were submitted on time before the deadline. Thereby, the Congress decided to accept 10 new full members and 5 new applicant members. Also a new Bureau was elected. Ellen Trane Nørby (VU, Denmark) became President. Roger Albinyana i Saigi (JNC, Catalonia) was elected Secretary General. Wouter Brunia (JD, The Netherlands) was elected Treasurer. Srd Kisevic (LSA, Croatia), Pascal Dubois (Jong-VLD, Flandes, Belgium) and Moritz Delbrueck (JL, Germany) were elected Vice-Presidents. In November 2002 LYMEC held an Extraordinary Congress in Escaldes, Principality of Andorra. After twenty-six years of existence, the organisation changed its name to “European Liberal Youth”. Nonetheless, the abbreviation LYMEC was maintained. A new logo was presented by the LYMEC Bureau and at the same

Sabine Dechamps, ELDR

My relationship with LYMEC started back in 1992. I started working for the ELDR Party in September 1991 and so did my former colleague and later boss, Lex Corijn. Our Secretary General was Christian Ehlers who was contacted by the then President of LYMEC Elisabeth Geday from Radikale Venstre and the then Treasurer of LYMEC Jean-Bernard Ruggieri, still a very close friend 20 years later! LYMEC was sharing a small office with IFLRY in the heart of Brussels and for various reasons found it more and more difficult to be able to stay there. Christian Ehlers then offered LYMEC to share his trainees with them. The trainee would be sitting in one of the offices of the ELDR Party in the European Parliament. LYMEC Bureau agreed, and I took my car to go with Elisabeth to take the boxes containing all the LYMEC files and bring them to the European Parliament. Every six months, a new trainee started and had to rediscover how LYMEC was organized and worked. That was the only administrative support of LYMEC in those days.

When the European Parliament moved to the Paul Henri Spaak building in 1997, I ended up sitting in an office I shared with the LYMEC trainee. I have very fond memories of those days and saw young people from all over Europe occupy the desk opposite to mine. I had to bear with a nervous young man constantly rocking his creaking chair, with posters from (I think) a Danish youth organisation showing sado-maso relationships, with their homesickness, and with the lively visits of the whole LYMEC Bureau to my small office. But I also made new friends and witnessed how much energy and enthusiasm some of these trainees invested in their work. LYMEC is also the frame in which many talented liberal politicians have started. It is the forum in which policies are being defined that do not accept compromises, they are truly liberal and often radical and in that way constitute a genuine contribution to the political debate in the liberal family.

When I first had contacts with LYMEC it still was a toddler and is now a young, clever and good-looking teenager! LYMEC over the years grew, was able to secure funding and recruit a managing director and benefitted from the dedication of several remarkable young people. I wish LYMEC a very happy birthday and lots of liberal successes in the years to come!

time a new complete marketing strategy was launched. The new logo was based on the bird of the ELDR, establishing a common brand for European liberals.

Once again LYMEC wrote history in European politics by having Necmettin Kaymez present as first ever elected delegate of the individual members of LYMEC. In Andorra the Bureau also presented the IMS membership card that was handed out to several individual members that were present.

The Congress decided that Pascal Dubois, Vice-president of LYMEC elected in Sinaia, should no longer take part of the LYMEC bureau. Therefore, the chairs proceeded to by-elect the empty place for Vice-president. Milda Kuliesiute (LJCJ, Lithuania) was then elected as LYMEC Vice-president.

The Congress also endorsed the establishment of a legal status for the organisation in Belgium as International non-profit making organisation.

In April 2003 it was time for another Executive Committee and Congress that was held in Vilnius, Lithuania. Congress gathered around 70 participants and discussed among other things the finances.

In May LYMEC faced a resignation of two bureau members (Treasurer Wouter Brunia and Vice President Moritz Delbrueck). In June, bureau appointed two new bureau members, Aloys Rigaut (JR, France) and Gesine Röder (JuLis, Germany). LYMEC held an Executive Committee in Stockholm, Sweden at the end of November 2003. It ratified the decision of the bureau to appoint Mr Rigaut as Treasurer and Ms Röder as Vice-President. The Executive Committee also discussed the content and the procedure to approve the electoral manifesto for the EP elections in 2004.

In March 2004 LYMEC held its annual Congress and Executive Committee in the capital of Croatia, Zagreb. The Congress also approved the political manifesto for the European Parliament elections. LYMEC welcomed 9 new member organisations and New Democracy Youth (Serbia)

A former ELDR Secretary-general, 1999-2007

“35 years, still youthful in its founding spirit. Daring to be radical in action, firm in its beliefs, blessed with the eternal label of youth, defending clear policies, sharp to remind our history, always focussed on our European future, ready to celebrate its achievements, standing tall to defend our fundamental rights and obligations, not shying away from catering a strong vision and preparing to take responsibility. A true pleasure having cooperated with: to be called our next generation, our expectations fulfil us with confidence. Barcelona will mark this anniversary, which will not go by unnoticed!

was disaffiliated from LYMEC on ideological grounds. A new bureau was also elected. Roger Albinyana i Saigí (JNC, Catalonia) was unanimously elected as new LYMEC President. Minna Miettinen (NKL, Finland) became new Secretary General and Aloys Rigaut (JR, France) was re-elected as Treasurer. Congress also elected four Vice Presidents: Srd Kisevic (CPPY, Croatia), Thomas Kibasi (LDYS, UK), Pietro Paganini (FdGGLI, Italy) and Charlotte Linvald (VU, Denmark).

In December 2004, LYMEC held an Executive Committee and seminar on transatlantic relations in Rome, Italy. This was a historic moment as both events were attended by a high-profile representatives from Young Democrats of America (YDA), Jay Augustine and Rachel Morse. After these events relations with YDA strengthened and LYMEC delegation also visited the YDA's National Convention.

On a more organisational side, EC approved two internal motions “Capping the debts of inactive Member Organisations” and “Reduced Participation Fees to LYMEC statutory events for Member Organisations having financial difficulties”, which were meant for encouraging MOs in trouble to get more active again in LYMEC.

In April 2005, LYMEC gathered with 150 delegates in Amsterdam, The Netherlands for annual Congress and Executive Committee. Congress welcomed many new member organisations (4 full members, 3 applicant members). During the year LYMEC also sent first larger delegations to election observer missions (e.g. to Azerbaijan). Seminar themes ranged from Turkey's accession

to the EU to Energy politics. Also first IMS Club was created (Radical club). In September, Srd Kisevic resigned from his post as LYMEC VP and started working as LYMEC Executive Director.

In December 2005, LYMEC Extraordinary Congress and Executive Committee was held in Helsinki, Finland. An extensive reform, consisting of several statutory changes, was accepted. Among others, the Congress was made more political and Executive Committees (still twice a year) more organisational.

Congress also welcomed new member organisations (3 full and 2 applicant members). The keynote speaker of the event was Commissioner Olli Rehn. Speakers among others were Gijs de Vries, then first Secretary General of LYMEC, now the European Council's Counter-Terrorism Coordinator as well as Graham Watson, the former IFLRY President, now ALDE Group leader.

In May 2006 LYMEC held its electoral Congress in Winterthur, Switzerland where new member organisations were welcomed and the new Bureau was elected. Several member organisations were accepted to LYMEC. Roger Albinyana i Saigí (JNC, Catalonia) was re-elected as the President of the organisation.

Former Treasurer Aloys Rigaut (Jeunes MR, Belgium) was elected as the Vice President of the organisation and former Vice President Pietro Paganini (GLI, Italy) was re-elected as the Bureau member. Newly elected persons were Jeroen Benning (JOVD, The Netherlands) as the Treasurer, Julia Leferman (TNL, Romania), Dalia Venslovaite (LLJ, Lithuania) and Slaven

Klobucar (mHNS, Croatia) as the Bureau members.

The Bureau launched first truly international campaign that gathered 20 member organisations, various NGOs and Individual members on the protests held in 24 European cities against the visa regimes in Europe, especially those imposed on the citizens of Western Balkans. The campaign was heavily covered by European media.

In 2007 LYMEC held its annual Congress in Berlin where number of different resolutions were adopted and a street action was held aiming to promote the adoption of the EU Constitution. The years 2008 to 2010 was a period of severe austerity for LYMEC. Aloys Rigaut was elected as the President of LYMEC and Alexander Plahr from Julis Germany was elected as his vice president.

Sibel Redheb from YMRF, Bulgaria was elected as the Treasurer and Majda Zeherovic (MLBIH, Bosnia and Herzegovina), Dries Holvoet (Jong VLD, Belgium), Riku Eskelinen (FCY, Finland) and Mette Lykke Nielsen (RU, Denmark) were elected as the Bureau members.



Emil Kirjas, Secretary General of Liberal International

LYMEC has a special place in my heart, as I will always connect it with enthusiasm – for the energy that all the brilliant young European bring in the organization, enlargement – for the courage, commitment and support that LYMEC gave to the unification of Europe and excitement – in both political and social terms from all the unforgettable memories I have from the events I had the privilege to attend.

Plagued by severe financial mismanagement of the former Treasurer, the lack of a professional accounting system as well as territorial and mission-wise overstretch, LYMEC was close to the brink.

So consolidating the organization was priority number one! The newly elected Bureau did precisely that: Getting the finances back in order, establishing financial checks as well as a transparent double-entry accounting system, finally repaying all our debts. Oh, and we did run a European Parliament election campaign while doing so. In May 2010 LYMEC held its Spring Congress in the mountains of Romania, the city of Sinaia. On Sinaia Congress LYMEC elected a new bureau.

Alexander Plahr was elected as new LYMEC President, Mette Lykke Nielsen as a Vice-president and Vedrana Gujic, Claudia Benschescu, Jeroen Diepemaat and Mireia Huerta y Sala as Bureau members.

Matilda Fleming was elected a new Treasurer of LYMEC. The Congress adopted several important resolutions dealing with the economy: No to EU Tobin Tax, Liberalism not to blame for the crisis, To go Greek or not to go Greek. Also following resolutions on civil liberties were adopted: Deletion is not blocking and No naked scanners.

The newly elected Bureau decided on the Annual Theme of LYMEC for 2011 – The justice between generations. In December 2010, Autumn Congress of LYMEC took place in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

In Ljubljana LYMEC elected Slaven Klobucar as new Secretary General. LYMEC welcomed 2 new member organisations, Liberal Party Youth Organization, Moldova and Zares Aktivni, Slovenia as well as 5 applicant members.

The Congress discussions followed the recent economic developments in the European Union, which resulted with a resolution No double standards – the EU needs a frugal budget that invests into the future!

In May 2011, LYMEC held its Spring Congress in Utrecht, The Netherlands, where it continued to discuss resolutions focused on intergenerational fairness and pension system. The Congress also formed its position on nuclear power in Europe. Barcelona once more welcomed LYMEC for the Congress and Seminar in November of 2011 where over 15 resolutions were discussed.







30 years of history over 120 editions

LYMEC's Magazine: 30 years of History LYMEC Newsletter, Larder, Libertas and New Libertas

Almost at the very beginning of LYMEC, in 1980, a first issue of LYMEC's magazine was created at that time being called simply as "The Newsletter". The magazine kept this title until 1995 when Internet became a widely spread communication tool and the magazine changed its name to the Larder.

The Larder was a first magazine issued in a form of a real magazine and in that format it remained until 2002 when LYMEC Bureau decided to rename the magazine to The Libertas. At that time the magazine changed its concept, featured most interesting LYMEC resolutions and policies and had indepth reports of the events LYMEC organised.

In 2006 the magazine changed its name to The New Libertas, which remained under this title until today. After 2006 LYMEC's publication grew to a fully fledged magazine and all the issues were published on the web site specifically made for the magazine.

Today on the 30th anniversary of our magazine we are proud to announce that we will further develop the magazine. As of 2012 the magazine will no longer be run by the Bureau of LYMEC but by the elected Editor in Chief, his deputy and elected Board.

The magazine will be led by young liberals for young liberals. Our magazine, regardless of the name changes, has been an important communication tool and a nice legacy for our future generations.

When we were preparing this anniversary issue we were not even aware that our magazine is 30 years old. It came as a nice surprise while digging deep into our archives.

This special issue of New Libertas comes as an icing on the cake rounding up our long history in one issue. One issue, however, does not offer a sufficient space to cover all our history and achievements in depth. LYMEC Bureau has great plans for New Libertas and we are sure that it will continue to enrich and document our work for coming 30 years and more.



The Bureau and the Office LYMEC Leadership and its Secretariat in Brussels

LYMEC started its work 35 years ago with very limited resources, no office and no staff, slowly progressing and hiring its first interns in a very small office that was shared with IFLRY in Brussels.

Soon LYMEC was invited to join ELDR Party Secretariat in European Parliament, where it stayed for several years. In 2004 all the political parties were asked to leave the premises and LYMEC with ELDR moved into an office building close to the European Parliament.

At that time LYMEC employed its first full time employee, Anna Gerrard from United Kingdom. After Anna's departure, former LYMEC Vice President, Srd Kisevic from Croatia, took over the office and moved with ELDR Party once more to a new and bigger office in close proximity to the European Parliament. Here the office remains until today.

Srd Kisevic has been the head of the office for five years. During this time he supervised over 10 internships in LYMEC's office. Upon his departure Slaven Klobucar, also from Croatia, took over the office and LYMEC employed its first ever second employee, Lorenzo Marchese. Today the second employee changes every six months in order to give our members a chance to experience the Brussels political life. Over the years LYMEC became a fully professional organisation and its events, publications and campaigns are highly appreciated.

LYMEC Office is supervised and led by the elected Bureau. The Bureau runs LYMEC on a day-to-day basis. They follow the decisions and resolutions adopted by the Congress and issue press releases. The President, Vice President, Treasurer and four Bureau members are elected every two years by the Congress. Each of the Bureau members is in charge of a certain policy and certain number of member organisations or individual members section. LYMEC Secretary General is

not a member of the Bureau but participates in every meeting. President and Vice President are in charge of the general leadership of the organisation.

Treasurer is in charge of finances and other Bureau members are in charge of: campaigns, policy development, projects and press. The work of LYMEC is supported by many volunteers who help us spread the liberal ideas and promote our events and campaigns.

Srd Kisevic
LYMEC Secretary General
(2005 - 2010)

This is the situation close to a year after leaving. Things that I miss include: complete freedom to argue your point of view (no matter how controversial) in a debate at the congress or in the bureau, running a bit provocative campaigns and trying to 'sell' them, seeing the positive gradual change in new members, after-hours with friends in various cities of Europe... Things I do not miss include: collecting people from coffee breaks like a German shepherd to get them back into a seminar room and doing Congress minutes. I think the good side wins.

Bureau and Office Current composition: 2011

President
Alexander Plahr, Julis, Germany

Vice President
Mette Lykke Nielse, RU, Denmark

Treasurer
Matilda Flemming, SU, Finland

Bureau Member in charge of policy and politics
Vedrana Gujic, mHNS, Croatia

Bureau Member in charge of campaigns
Claudia Bencescu, TNL, Romania

Bureau Member in charge of press
Jeroen Diepemaat, JOVD, The Netherlands

Bureau Member in charge of projects
Mireia Huerta i Sala, JNC, Catalonia

Secretary General
Slaven Klobucar, Croatia

Assistant in the Office
Jelena Jesajana, Latvia

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Jongeren Organisatie Vrijheid & Democratie (The Netherlands)

As one of the founding organizations we congratulate LYMEC on the results that LYMEC has achieved as 'the' liberal youth movement of Europe. Starting on November 3rd in the Hague, JOVD has always taken its responsibility in support of the liberal thought that Europe so desperately needs. From the first bureau with Gijs de Vries to the current bureau with Jeroen Diepemaat we are taking responsibility to bring LYMEC forward to where we are today.

Both JOVD and LYMEC share the common goal of giving young aspiring liberals the chance to develop themselves as individuals. The first 35 years of LYMEC have been very successful in bringing together liberal youth from all over Europe to share their experiences and beliefs and bring Europe forward. 35 great years, but the best is yet to come!

LYMEC's Individual Members' Section (IMS)

Igor Caldeira, IMS Delegate

Nowadays, those who are more into European politics already know of initiatives (Duff Report, ELDR's Associate Membership) that try to bring a more transnational vision. But in 1997 that was not the case. LYMEC was a true pioneer when it established the possibility of individuals becoming directly members, with no need to be part of member organizations. Recent changes even enlarged their rights and responsibilities (internal regulations, possibility of being candidates for the Bureau). Over the years, hundreds of young Europeans have been part of LYMEC through IMS, having an opportunity to participate in seminars and having a say in the destiny of the organization through the election of their own delegates.

Mladi Liberali Bosne i Hercegovine, BiH

The Young Liberals of Bosnia and Herzegovina were established in 1994. Since then we have always been in an unenviable position in the B&H society - a society that has never gone through the process of liberalization. Therefore, the membership in international organizations has always been extremely important for us. Through our engagement in LYMEC and cooperation with other liberal organizations, we gained the opportunity to develop and upgrade our structure, which became the fundamental basis of the liberal tradition in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We still remember one of our first joint events - a Liberal rafting seminar on ecological issues in 2003 in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We enjoyed four great days listening to eminent experts on ecology and going rafting down the clean emerald-green waters of the river Una. In April 2006, a LYMEC president came for the first time to Bosnia and Herzegovina. It was Roger Albinyana who visited our organization on the occasion of an interesting twining project organised by the Young liberals of B&H together with liberals from Norway, Denmark, The Netherlands and Serbia.

One of our most important joint campaigns with LYMEC, the „No Visa“ campaign, was implemented in February 2007. A large number of young people gathered in Sarajevo, to advocate publicly for the abolishment of visas for students and tourists, as a way to accelerate the rhythm of reforms and development in our region. Certainly, we will never forget the LYMEC Executive Committee in Barcelona in 2008. One of our members, Majda Zeherovic, was elected as a Bureau member. A true Bosnian girl, elected with the most votes and the only Bureau member from outside the EU.

Svensk Ungdom (SU), Finland

Grattis LYMEC!

All the best to LYMEC turning 35 this year. For Svensk Ungdom in Finland, LYMEC is the door to Europe. Many of our leaders now and in the past have participated in LYMEC events and brought back new ideas and inspiration to our organization.

SU looks for a support internationally, to be stronger nationally, and many of our members have continued to work on the international arena. Being in Europe is possible through LYMEC and that makes us proud and grateful. A good sign within SU is that we always want to participate in LYMEC events.

As 68 year old organization we want to congratulate LYMEC for doing a good job in Europe and we will together continue to work for shared liberal values, at least for another 35 years.

Junge Liberale (Julis), Germany

LYMEC and JuLis always had a long and fruitful relationship. We are very proud to be part of such a strong European youth organization that is taking care of all relevant issues going on in Brussels. Currently, Alexander Plahr from JuLis is heading LYMEC and before that, Jan Burdinski, Daniel Obst, Moritz Delbrück and Gesine Röder were in the bureau. Of course we love to remember the LYMEC Congress 2007 in Berlin, when the European Young Liberals came to Berlin, had a hilarious evening in the federal parliament Bundestag and a very successful congress.

Now, that we just turned 30 years old, we also want to congratulate LYMEC for its 35th Anniversary! JuLis strongly believes in Europe and its future possibilities. Therefore, we are looking forward for the next years of cooperation with LYMEC.

Joventut Nacionalista de Catalunya(JNC), Catalonia

Joventut Nacionalista de Catalunya(JNC), has been proudly affiliated with LYMEC for 20 years. Together with 58 organizations in 33 countries throughout Europe JNC has enjoyed and benefited from this environment of coexistence and open exchange. After all of these years, we may ask the question: "How has JNC benefited from this partnership?"

Being a part of LYMEC has given us a lot, both on a personal level and collectively as a group. LYMEC has provided JNC with a lot of exposure to the rest of Europe. Through this participation we have been able to share the experience of other democratic countries, as they have with our experiences, learning new ideas and different ways of life.

It is still very important to keep alive our own social, linguistic, religious, cultural and gastronomic traditions. This is what keeps us unique. Yet, there are common bonds that unite us with a shared political ideology. One example is the use of English as the common language. This has helped to unite us, and has facilitated this exchange.

Europe faces many challenges, now and in the future. Collectively, through LYMEC, we can help to build a progressive and cohesive Europe that is tolerant to everything - people and politics - and able to meet these new challenges. A liberal Europe is the clear choice that provides this freedom.

Thank you!

LYMEC wishes to thank everyone who has contributed to this issue, our member organisations and individual members, our partners ELDR, European Liberal Forum, ALDE, Council of Europe and European Commission for supporting our work throughout our history.

A liberal is a man who is right most of the time, but he's right too soon.

Gregory Nunn

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