

MINUTES

Bureau meeting

26 August 2022

Soumoy, Belgium

The Bureau gathers in-person in Soumoy, Belgium between 25-28 August 2022.

Present: Dan-Aria Sucuri (DAS), Ines Holzegger (IH), Tuuli Helind (TH), Alexandre Servais (AS), Ellinor Juth (EJ), Tanzer Yuseinov (TY), Laia Comerma (LC) and Bálint Gyévai (BG).

Meeting starts at 9:50 CEST on Friday, 26 August 2022.

Strategic planning

1) Working together and plan the mandate together

- Handover document: questions and answers

- There are no further comments on this from the Bureau.
- BG reminds the importance of reaching out to previous Bureau members in case of doubts about certain topics.

- Working practices in the Bureau and team communication

- The Bureau is on the loop of latest developments with new initiatives being taken.
- Communication is going well with IH linking with the office meanwhile EJ is taking care of the external messaging.

DAS opens a discussion on the pairing inside of the Bureau:

- AS explains that the job description is clear for him on his different tasks. The question is what is his part in the pairing? What is the division with Tanzer? How should they organise that? This should be clarified between them before moving forward with their respective tasks.

DAS calls for a short roundtable on tasks and achievements so far:

- TH explains that she is working well on finances, we have some processes streamlined with the new email address (finances@lymec.eu). She acknowledges the position on the VISA ban for Russian tourists.
- IH says that she has the best overview since she is gathering the **Bureau reports**. She wants to strengthen the practice and see what the others are doing. **Monthly**

meetings with the staff was also a very good initiative. She will look into what worked well and if needed to address something.

- TY didn't feel that engaged but probably because of the summer. He wants to see how he can help more with what he is responsible for.
- LC explains that during the summer she continued working a lot on LYMEC related matters. She was leading the policy book clean-up, a challenging process during summer. They managed to finish on time and deliver for the Digital Assembly. Congrats to Amy and then Chiara for their work on the renewal process. Would like to know more about what AS and TY are doing. Regarding the renewal process, the last chapter, chapter 9 is left, so the clean-up will be done by the end of this mandate.
- EJ thinks that her role is quite clear at this stage. During the summer, she was ensuring we react to different events. Communication team with Amy and Chiara is doing well. One meeting took place with the minority and civil rights working group. They wrote one of the latest posts we shared. She visited RU and worked on the communication strategy for this mandate.
- AS was directly very busy with ELF (CN and project proposals). He also stepped in directly for the Zagreb event. Secretariat and handover were very helpful in making these actions happen. He also participated in a few events taking place in Brussels. He worked a lot on the EYY with a proposal to be presented. He is also in charge of the IMS and structured the relationship with the new SC.
- DAS is very satisfied with the work done so far. Both offline and online presence in the past weeks was important. We show that we have something to offer and become a credible partner. We are more political and we can see that. External work can be seen a lot. He wants to be more involved with what each of the Bureau members are doing.

- Working with the Secretariat:

BG takes the floor and brings up a few points:

- He explains that dynamics are good in the Secretariat with CL being a fundamental player in her new position. She is really helping a lot in achieving the objectives of the organisation. We can see that we are able to do more and faster - also in a more professional way for example in the field of communication thanks to her.
- BG explains that he often uses the Signal chat for quick reminders, direct messaging and overall describes his communication routines to carry on the good cooperation from one Bureau to another and ensure there is no misunderstanding on that side.
- BG thanks the Bureau for the great business continuity over the summer meanwhile some staff members were on holidays.
- He acknowledges the importance of the monthly call with IH to bring Staff and Bureau closer to each other.
- He reminds that the Secretariat is here to support the work of the Bureau thus BM should feel free to reach out with their requests/questions.

DAS reminds that the Secretariat is supporting the work of the Bureau. BM are responsible for their projects. You can turn to IH if something comes up and the responsible Bureau member can't deliver to help each other and continue operating. Important to be transparent and communicate also when it's going wrong. The work needs to happen.

2) Programme of action 2022-2024

IH introduces the topic. This document should provide an overview of the next two years. It will be submitted to Congress for approval and setting goals for the actions to be taken. The priorities are broad but important to follow especially ahead of the EU elections.

- Priorities and focuses discussion (LC)

The document about the political priorities was shared by LC ahead of the meeting. DAS agrees but he would want to add '**Security**' as well in the 6 topics. It should be added before the Rule of Law part. Everyone agrees with LC's proposals with the mentioned addition.

We will have as objective to reach out to other European youth groups too - we should not only cooperate but expose our differences by debating with other political party youth.

- Campaigns and actions (EJ)

EJ presents LYMEC's communications strategy - she took the previous one as a basis with some updates. Some parts were deleted on paid add boosting for example. She updated the goals to reach by the end of the mandate. She also added some further target groups. A survey could be done on that (identify key target groups). She added the Working Group on communications that has to be created following the last motion adopted at the Congress. She also added a part on security due to recent hacking and threats.

AS emphasises the importance of involving individuals in our campaign ahead of the EU Elections. DAS highlights the limitations on that because we are not running as LYMEC. We need a reach out campaign but no big focus is needed on that. We serve as a collection of liberal youth organisations and we need to highlight them, not us. He proposes targeted groups to be used for the campaign. Stepping outside of the LYMEC bubble is a possibility through individuals. EJ summarises that young Europeans with an interest would be that group according to her proposal. It is difficult to reach average citizens not interested in EU politics, that's more for our MOs. But we can support that effort as well.

IH has a point on making sure what comes out of the Communications WG needs to be validated/approved by the Bureau. This is especially important ahead of the EU elections when it comes to the strategy proposed.

- EU elections and strategy

IH asks about what our overall priorities should be. Do we want a manifesto. We should discuss openly when we want to start and what we want to focus on.

LC explains that the manifesto is useful for two reasons. Internally - to review policy and see what our stances are. Second from an external communication point of view - we have a document to reply on and use during the campaign. We should clearly follow up with the elected people and highlight the youth candidates running.

DAS suggests doing it like last time. **Myth-busting campaign about the EU and reaching out to our candidates** should be the two key actions. We really need to ensure diversity

from all over the EU: 3 or 4 first candidates from each country would be showcased not more to ensure most countries get visibility.

AS proposes to bring **training to the youth candidates** in a way. We need to identify financial resources available for that or do it **online**. We want to be useful for our members in this election process. LYMEC could also act as a matchmaker/connecting force between our youth candidates and members.

DAS states that reinforcing the liberal parties in Europe should also be the focus. LYMEC will be part of **ALDE's strategy**.

The Bureau decided we will have a manifesto. Autumn Congress 2023 will validate it.

- Final delivery and next steps

1. Programme of Action

IH will put everything together. The Bureau now discussed the changes. Bureau members need to submit by 12 September 2022.

- EJ will work on comms and campaigns.
- LC on political priorities.
- AS and TY to work on the organisational development side and IMS.
- TH on Alumni.

2. Communications Working Group

The call will be launched before the next Congress. Opening of the call is planned on **Monday 26 September 2022 for 2-3 weeks.**

3. EU Elections strategy - Autumn 2023 validation by the members

Internal timeline and tasks will be presented by IH at the next BM in Copenhagen, end of September.

- Funding and long-term sustainability

DAS proposes that already in November we spend time on an application that hits the mark to get the funding from the EC. We have people that worked on this for many years and we should mobilise. YFJ is also a useful resource.

AS explains there are other means to get funding for projects in Belgium as well. Several calls for actions we can respond to. We could get money to make events happen. These funds help when we organise something in Belgium but maybe also when Belgian link is being proved (Belgian asbl holding a Bureau meeting). Training component is important for eligible funding.

Another option would be to use Erasmus+ programmes to cover some cost. But it's not worth the effort, especially since it's only project based and political links of LYMEC might be an issue.

Agenda

3) Finances (TH)

- Overall state of the finances 2022

TH explains that we had cash flow issues but there is no big issue for this year overall. We had two positive years before. We got some money from the savings account.

- 2023 MO fee decision – for decision

TH explains the proposal to do an increase of the base fee for 2023. We didn't raise our fees for years and now with inflation it has to happen. Associate members would be hit most but all raises are below 8%. Same amount for both membership categories to not create further gaps and keep the same difference.

The change for MO fees is validated by the Bureau.

TH adds that we will also look into raising the price to attend our Congresses. It's a difficult topic. We will do it case by case. For Bucharest, the price won't be unusual, we will see for later. Discussion on hardship for some members to pay the cost from their own pockets. We need to consider this as well. It is also discussed if we have to do a progressive rate. Age can't be the category setter. Decision is not taken on that. It will be discussed again at a later stage.

- **Financial protocol update** (including decision on MO fees when change of status happens after Congress) – **for decision**

TH proposes to continue with the written practice in our rules. It will be included in the reformed financial protocol that is being presented. The document is proposed for update to highlight and clarify some processes so they are written.

There will be a clean version and also an overview with the changes for the Congress.

The Bureau approves the updated financial protocol.

- **Internal Audit 2022 - #2 updates**

Travels and accommodation are booked now for the auditors. The dates are set for 16-17 September at the office in Brussels.

- **Staff salary raise – for decision**

The Bureau approves the salary increase for the Secretary General following the staff reward scheme in place.

- **New External Auditors - for discussion and decision**

TH got in touch with a lot of firms. We are too small and not bringing any profit so it's hard to find someone else. We will sit down with our current auditors and see how they can improve their work. We will sit down with the manager. If issues continue we could look into change again.

The Bureau agrees to continue with the same auditor for now.

- Update on EC grant 2023 + EP DG Comm funding opportunity

The situation looks better because the EC doubles the funding for next year. We lobbied for it on many sides. We went to our MEPs and the European Youth Forum also helped at the EC level.

Funding opportunity by the EP is available but it's only for non-political organisations so we wouldn't be eligible.

4) 2022 Autumn Congress in Bucharest

- Programme

- The hotel booking is secured with a conference room and the package. We wait for them to sort out the documentation and the practicalities.
- The dinner on Friday will be a Year of the Youth event with MEPs.
- Saturday evening will be a dinner with FNF.
- Travels: The Secretariat, DAS and EJ would fly in on Thursday, rest of the team on Friday.
- We would start with the Congress at around 15 h on Friday.
- Sunday the Bureau meeting takes place at 9 h in the morning.
- Social gathering needs to be more social ensuring interactions between our members and plan better the evening programmes than last time.

- Logistical details and bookings (need for hybrid component?)

- Registration form was prepared and shared with the Bureau. The website has the call ready and visuals have been prepared.
- Additional disclaimer on the 4th spot for big MOs was added.
- In the form, information on how to do the invoicing was added as requested.

- Deadlines and timeline

- It is available on the website and there are date proposals for all the steps.
- Opensides training and newbies session with IH will be on **Tuesday 11 October 2022 at 19 h CET** for the delegates.
- IH will be the digital contact point for the Congress. TY will be the back-up.
- Online Working Groups on **Saturday 12 November 2022 at 10 h CET**. LC and AS will chair and TY will be the back-up.

- Registrations

- They are opening on Monday until mid-September.

- COVID situation assessment

The LYMEC Bureau decides to monitor the situation closely and might change the rules accordingly. For the moment, people should act in a very responsible way and requirements of the hosting country need to be followed. Some COVID related documentation might be requested depending on the circumstances, the LYMEC Bureau will assess the situation closer to the event.

- ALDE delegation elections

- Timeline from last time to be used.
- The call to apply will be open 6 weeks before and close 4 weeks before the Congress.
- Debate with all candidates somewhere 2 weeks before the Congress.

- Chair

- Local organisation to send someone
- Further names were mentioned

- Agenda

- We move the membership point ahead of the finances so it is tackled on Saturday.
- External Auditor point taken out cause we keep the same.

5) Secretary General

- Secretary General proposal to 2022 Autumn Congress – for decision

The Bureau decides to nominate BG again for a new mandate of 2 years in accordance with the statutes of the organisation.

6) Year of the Youth 2022

- Action plan for Autumn 2022 – for decision

AS presents a plan for the remaining part of the youth year. It builds on previous initiatives such as the brainstorming we had in February but also the Renew Europe event in July. We want to have an impact as an organisation this year and follow up with the MEPs to propose them activities. The 4 topics Renew Europe was working on are the basis for this action. We have overlapping subjects between our Hub and Renew4Youth. We should continue work on those: Diversity/inclusion, Entrepreneurship, Climate and environment and mental health.

The proposal is:

- Work with MEPs on these topics in the format of a 1,5 or 2 days event. The MEPs would give the keynote and then listen and react to the proposals elaborated in working groups.

- Content part - the topics mentioned with additional training and plenary session at the end.
- Dates options: 15-16 October in Brussels or before the Congress on 17 November in Bucharest.

- Renew4Youth latest updates

Next meeting, somewhere in September, slowed down because of the holidays a bit. The event in July had many LYMEC participants.

The Bureau agrees that:

- **We will proceed with the proposed project and try to find the MEPs still having funds;**
- **We will proceed with one event of 2 days;**
- **We will do it on the Thursday and Friday before the Congress. Thursday travelling in the morning and 'lunch to lunch' event then our Congress before a plenary with finger-food dinner.**

7) Other events

- Digital Assembly

- *Policy book renewal process outcomes*

3 amendments only were submitted and the proposals were shared with the delegates. We finished all the chapters proposed for this round (5-8 chapters).

- *Agenda and programme*

DAS will start with presenting the work of the Bureau and then each Bureau member will present shortly what they did and what their functions are in the Bureau. Then the policy book part comes with LC.

- *Last logistical details*

Two computers will be used. CL and BG will take the notes. DAS and LC chairing in turns. Voting will follow the indicated rules. IH will be backing in checking the outcomes of the votes.

- Young Leaders' Meeting 2022 in Copenhagen

- *Participants*

We had more interest than ever before so we had to open extra spots. They have until Sunday to confirm their seats through Eventbrite.

- *Programme*

It will be focusing on youth unemployment. The draft programme is set. We miss **2 speakers** out of the 3.

- *Logistics*

We need to find a **venue**, we are on it but it looks expensive overall. A lot of locations are already taken.

- *Side event with MEP Karen Melchior*

Evening dinner/event with her on Saturday. We have a meeting with her on Wednesday to discuss details.

- Liberal Hack 2022

- *Programme*

We have the first draft for it. We have a first call with our partners from Neos Lab next week to check for speakers and venue locations.

- *Logistics*

Call for participants will open on 5 September 2022. We need validation from ELF in the meantime.

- YCA 2022

- *Latest updates*

We had an online session to assess e-learning before the summer break.

- *E-learning*

It is on-going for the second block.

- *Last event of 2022 YCA in Brussels in October*

The speakers were contacted. We have half of them confirmed so far. IH travel was booked. Accommodation was booked and the meeting room is foreseen at the office.

8) Invitations

- **Eastern European Summit.** The event takes place in Prague, it is the third edition. It's about Russia and Eastern European partnership. DAS can't go but IH will take this spot and attend. Draft programme was sent. We will have to confirm her.
- **Radikale Congress:** we don't go as we will be in Denmark one week after anyway.
- **European Liberal Forum General Assembly:** DAS is checking to attend as the voting delegate. BG and CL will be there anyway.

- **European Youth Forum General Assembly:** 24-27 November in Tirana. LYMEC can send 2 people. TY should be going. IH potentially can go through the statutory working group otherwise she is the second person. Elections for the Bureau but also new rules with statutes are set to be accepted. DAS will check if he can be the back-up in case the spot for IH is free. It's an important event.
- **YFJ Elections:** Potential candidates are being discussed. There will be interviews with the candidates, IH and TY will do them together.
- **Fianna Fail Congress:** we can't attend unfortunately.
- **3H Movement from Turkey:** There is an event on 10 September in Istanbul and we received an invitation. If FNF can pay for it (accommodation and travel) then EJ would go.

9) News from IMS and MOs

- Newly elected IMS Steering Committee outlined priorities:
- New team met and there is a willingness to move **from Telegram to a Whatsapp chat**. They reviewed all the communication channels and practices in place to come to this conclusion.
- They decided to organise several newbies sessions to integrate new members and take care of on-boarding.
- SC and delegates also wanted a less formal means of communication to activate new members. SC could send them a message on whatsapp through NB access.
- WG will be launched on taxation by the IMS. The first meeting will be on 1st September. A few words will be delivered at the Digital Assembly about it. The call will be open soon.
- LYMEC IMS Facebook page was proposed in the SC. The issue with IMS is not numbers but rather activation of the membership. **The Bureau wouldn't implement this idea but encourage activity and engagement within the current settings. The rest is acknowledged and validated by the Bureau.**
- 3H movement in Turkey updates: They are very interested in joining as associate members of LYMEC. They sent their statutes and it's true that they aren't an NGO, because of Erdogan it's less clear. They are an advocacy association focusing on human rights.
- IH met with an organisation from Georgia (LELO). The youth is interested to join, the party is a member of ALDE.
- Youth organisation of Poland 2050, they are interested in joining us. IH is in talks with them to follow up on the expressed interest.
- Estonia 200 was contacted by Tuuli. They have a youth and Estonian parties are in favour of them joining the liberal family.

10) AOB

Diversity action toolkit from the Council of Europe: CL will send it and discuss with EJ for communications purposes. AS and TY will also have a look to include it in our events in an active way.

ELF Board nomination: The Bureau approved Antoaneta Asenova-Bihlmayer's nomination for Board position.

Working groups:

- Some were launched and others weren't. Some people asked to launch a call.
- Include in the newsletter that people can join a working group giving the contact detail of the coordinator(s) in place:
 - Climate and sustainability: Tanzer Yuseinov
 - Security and Defence: Jaroslav Ambroz/ Yaroslav Vasylyuk
 - ELSN: Alexandre Servais
 - Minority and Civil rights: Chris Jefferies

LYMEC 2023 Spring Congress in Budapest:

The Bureau decides to hold the Congress between 5-7 May 2023 which has a financially more attractive option.

11) Next meeting

Sunday 25 September at 9 h 00 CET in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Meeting ends at 18 h 00 on Friday, 26 August 2022.