

MINUTES

Bureau meeting

Vienna, Austria

22-25 August 2024

Start of the meeting at 10 h 15 am CEST on 23 August 2024

Present: Ines Holzegger (IH), Alexandre Servais (AS), Marten Porte (MP), Willemijn Krans (WK), Dimitra Papadopoulou (DP), Sean Bennett (SB), Sorcha Ni Chonghaile (SNC) and Balint Gyevai (BG).

Attending online: Alexandre Servais (AS) for the first part.

Also invited: Chiara Liguori (CL).

1) Autumn LYMEC Congress Warsaw

- Bookings and logistics

BG explains the progress made over the summer:

- We encountered some challenges in securing venues and accommodation with the amount of people we have planned.
- We eventually booked the Mercure hotel in the centre for accommodation for 150 people.
- Novotel was booked for Congress venue and lunch for 150 people as well.
- Dinner plans are still unclear - we might have Mercure for Friday with local sponsoring and Saturday a room rented with catering instead.

It was very difficult to find appropriate venues and accommodation options for this Congress despite the efforts from both LYMEC staff and the local Nowoczesna Youth team.

There is a discussion on the corporate support we could get from Microsoft for the Saturday evening event. They are willing to help us cover some of the costs. We have the next call planned with them early September - we have issues funding people under public funding. That's a compliance issue for them so we have added a box to tick in the registration form.

The call for hosting the next Autumn Congress 2025 should be open towards the end of 2024 already to ensure enough time for the organisation and block the date ahead with our partners.

- Bureau responsables for the fringe sessions

1. Poland joining the EURO with Ola and the Economic Freedom Foundation - **SB in charge**
2. Security and enlargement with FNF - **WK in charge**
3. AI focus with Microsoft - **MP in charge**

- MO issues: applications and others

Cooperation and application:

- **The Moderates** from Denmark are perhaps applying to join as associate members at this Congress. SB reports from the meeting he had with their President. BG and IH were also present.
- **Polska 2050** from Poland will be approached for cooperation, they don't have a structured youth organisation just yet.

Suspension:

The Bureau will propose some organisations for suspension in order to avoid debt piling up meanwhile we sort out the cooperation. These organisations aren't in touch with us anymore unfortunately.

- **Nova Stranka Youth, Serbia**
- **Jeunes Radicaux, France**

Disaffiliation:



- **Joves Liberals, Andorra** doesn't exist anymore so we will proceed.
- **Youth Forum of AKR, Kosovo** are proposed for disaffiliation, we don't know what happened to the organisation and their positioning so it's safer to move forward.
- **Liberal Alliances Ungdom, Denmark** as per discussion at the agenda point 8 below.

- Congress chairs

The Bureau proposes the following team:

Mateusz Gwozdz as local chair from (Vice-President Nowoczesna Youth - Poland)

Yevheniia Fedotova (LDLU and former IFLRY Bureau member - Ukraine)

Ellinor Juth (SU and former Communications officer LYMEC Bureau - Finland)

- Guests

The Bureau has briefly discussed the guests to be invited to open the Congress.

- Openslides and newbies session

The session will take place on 8 October 2024 in the evening at 18 h 30 CET. IH and BG with the new SG will deliver it. We follow the usual format.

- Working Group on resolutions, amendments and MO applications

The event will take place on Saturday, 2 November 2024 in the morning, till early afternoon. SNC can't do it this time unfortunately as Policy Officer. Two Bureau members will have to take the lead and additional two to be present as well. Secretariat is doing the voting part, an unknown variable as we don't know who will work for LYMEC then. Chairs are needed as well, we will ask them for availability at an early stage. **WK, AS, MP and DP are volunteering from the Bureau side.**

The membership applications part was discussed: it wasn't a success last time; it just doubled the presentations so we will leave it out. It was relevant to try it but it didn't deliver unfortunately.

2) Programme of Action and priorities for the mandate

The Bureau goes through the content, each member presents their part, comments from the Bureau members are taken on board orally and in the document directly. Priorities and actions for the mandate are discussed based on the document that was compiled prior to the meeting. The document will be edited further in the two weeks after to arrive at a final version.

It is discussed that we should update the general manifesto of LYMEC, what binds us rather than divides us. The communication strategy for the new mandate is presented and discussed. The use of TikTok was addressed. Further discussions took place on fundraising, alumni network and the IMS.

3) Finances

- 2025 LYMEC budget

The process is starting now since we have the inputs from the previous agenda point and the priorities are taking shape. MP will make a first draft in the coming weeks and during the first weekend of September at the Internal Audit in Brussels. **The YLM Bureau meeting in Ljubljana, Slovenia will have to approve it.** The draft will be shared with the Bureau beforehand.

The staff changes will have an impact on the budget. We will have decreases on some of our funding including the Renew Europe funds already this fall and even more on the 2025 side that will impact this budget.

- Membership fee proposal 2025

MP proposes that we stick with the same fee proposal. WK suggests that if needed in the future we could look at increasing the membership fee for big organisations, as this was brought up by one of the IOs at the Spring Congress. For now, we will keep it as it is.

- Corporate sponsorships update

We have had contacts with a few potential corporate partners - Vodafone, Pharmaceutical, Microsoft and Apple. We have sent concept notes for sponsoring side events in Estoril and in Warsaw. We are in talks with Microsoft for our Congress. There have been positive contacts but no clear outcome yet on that front. We will ensure there is



more transparency with the whole Bureau about future talks, we have not updated everyone enough in the past weeks.

-Internal Audit September 2024

It will be on the 1st weekend of September in Brussels. Petrine and MP will come to Brussels. This is the interim audit for 2024 but also induction for our new internal auditors. Alex, the second auditor can't make it this time, he will be online. Flights and accommodation have been booked a while ago.

-Alumni Network updates

The Bureau of the Alumni Network has been re-elected, no changes there. They are planning an event in Brussels at the beginning of September about the local elections in Belgium in October, an event with a charged entry fee of 5 EUR. We won't do an event at the ALDE Congress this time, instead advertise the section at our stand.

4) Moniteur belge update of administrators

IH stresses that LYMEC is a Belgian non-for-profit organisation. As a Bureau, everyone is financially liable for the continuity and running of the organisation. All documents were handed in and submitted to the Belgian Gazette to register this Bureau, so everyone around the table is officially in charge and liable.

We noticed during the process at the bank registration that there were still too many people registered that shouldn't be there from past records and leaderships. Contact has been made with most of those people. They have to provide some information that we can then submit asking to delete them. Hopefully submission begins in September with all we received.

5) Upcoming events and responsibilities

-YELL September 2024 updates

AS + CL are in charge. The event is taking place between 12-13 September in Brussels with the Renew CoR together with YDE as well. We have a side session on Thursday 12 September at the ALDE Party HQ, then the main session at the CoR the day after. YDE participants will join the LYMEC programme on the first day.

-YLM September 2024 updates

AS + CL are in charge. The event is taking place between 20-22 September in Ljubljana with our Slovenian partners. We are missing one speaker and AS will coordinate with the Bureau about the different sessions. Everyone in the Bureau is in charge of a different session. We also have a Bureau meeting planned on Sunday morning. We had one participant cancelling, it has been replaced. We have planned a session with Irena Joveva (Renew Europe MEP) around dinner as the cooperation project fund for the EC deliverable.

-ALDE Party Congress updates

SNC explains that our resolution was handed in last week, there are a total of 5 submitted for this Congress. There will be some urgency resolutions as well on top of that. Flights and accommodation are booked, the delegation is ready and will work on the amendments now. Everyone has also registered through the form to attend the event.

BG explains that we received an invitation to the Non-EU ALDE Party meeting in Estoril. The aim is to strengthen the force of non-EU members and organise their voting and amendments ahead of the sessions. SB explains the importance of this since we represent more non-EU as well. It is decided that we would send someone if we have the resources and are not busy with setting up our own stand etc.

BG also clarifies that we aren't doing a fringe session at the end this time.

-Liberal Hack October 2024 updates

WK + CL are in charge. It is taking place in Skopje, North Macedonia between 11-13 October 2024. There are 5 groups for the hackathon. The programme has been drafted. No luck with the European Commission on securing biodiversity or CAP experts as speakers. They have reached out to think tanks to find an expert to join the event. Reading material is ready with background information about the 5 event topics. Registrations are on-going until the end of the month. Selection will be done next week. For local speakers, Jelena has secured a jury member, speaker and the LDP Party President. **The Bureau had to decide who would be the second person we send to the event from LYMEC side. DP will go there to help WK.** We will book flights for her in the coming days.



The winners' team has the advocacy trip to Brussels during the first or second week of November, to be decided later. They will meet MEPs then thanks to one night stay in Brussels.

- YCA 3 October 2024 updates

SB + CL are in charge. It is planned for 18-20 October in Brussels. A draft programme was put together. Accommodation is booked. Participants are doing their e-learning as we speak. Logistics are sorted and we will have a dinner to celebrate the last part of the YCA. Both mentors and alumni are invited for that occasion.

6) 2025 ELF Project Proposals

- Dates and locations

CL presents the draft that was made in cooperation with the Bureau members. It follows strategic decisions and political considerations. The Bureau members have each completed proposals for their respective projects 2025.

The Bureau decides about the locations and dates as follows:

Young Changemakers' Academy

YCA 1: 21 to 23 March - London, United Kingdom

YCA 2: 25 to 27 April - Stockholm, Sweden

YCA 3: 17 to 19 October - Brussels, Belgium

Young Leaders' Meeting

YLM: 12 to 14 September - Bratislava, Slovakia

Liberal Hack

LH Event: 13 to 15 June - Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

LH winners' meeting: 23 to 24 September - Brussels, Belgium

Liberal Communicators' Network

LCN: 16 to 18 May - Frankfurt, Germany

- Budgets 2025

MP will start working on the budgets based also on the locations. MP is asking Bureau members to check indications on prices and some initial offers on what it would cost. It is also important to have the number of participants. AS stresses the importance of using partner organisations active on the ground within the ELF umbrella. It is reminded that the logframe should also be followed and aligned with. MP will send an email on what he needs from each Bureau member to prepare the budgets.

- First dates for 2025 calendar (including Spring Congress)

After discussion, the Bureau decided that the Spring Congress would be between 4-6 April 2025 in Zagreb, Croatia. We will propose this date to the local hosts. For the future, the date of the next Autumn Congress in 2025 will be decided after the 2024 Autumn Congress. A call will be prepared and launched after the Warsaw Autumn Congress. It will be on the agenda of the Bureau meeting taking place after the Congress in Poland.

Another date that is flagged: 2025 September 28 - German federal elections

7) Future accommodation - LYMEC Congresses

IH explains that we are encountering issues finding accommodation and venues for a growing number of members with 3 delegates. The Working Group discussion on adapting the formats brought up the question on not providing accommodation and focus on the venue instead. Mixed feelings from people on that proposal - especially smaller member organisations pointed out that the provided accommodation should remain.

MP intervenes on the financial aspect by stressing the importance to have a look at the type of finances we have. Direct funding of some of the items for example from Renew, including accommodation until now could also result in loss of money on our end. We would still have participation fees, but we would ask for less of course. The Bureau supports the idea of going for less expensive accommodation options (lower level) and being more creative on the venue options. DP proposes a buddy system where locals host some of the delegates that are there for the first



time. It's important to limit the financial burden on all sides. Thinking will go forward on this topic during the course of this Bureau mandate.

The Bureau concludes that there will be no issue for next Congresses to split venue and accommodation locations to reduce costs. We would still provide accommodation for delegates but at cheaper places with more creative solutions. The venue will be the priority when booking in order to try to fit more people.

8) Discussion on certain MOs affiliation and next steps

Liberal Alliances Ungdom - LAU: Their mother party, Liberal Alliances has officially joined the EPP Group in the new European Parliament. We got inputs on them going more right-wing than previously as well. The biggest issue is about compliance, their mother party is funding the youth organisation however the mother party is EPP linked and funded by them now.

The Bureau discusses this worrying case. At the YLM, the President is confirmed to come. LAU is also registered to our Autumn Congress. **The Bureau will reach out to them through SB to check what their take is on this situation and if they are still aligned with our political family. If that is not the case, the Bureau will have to propose disaffiliation for the Warsaw Congress.**

It is important to note that LYMEC statutes are clear on political affiliation to another political party, we can't have them within LYMEC anymore if they are linked to an EPP party. It is highlighted that consistency is important and we need to stick to our rules and procedures.

9) Staffing situation

- Institutional memory and handovers current staff

Documents are ready for the next person(s) hired. Both BG and CL have handovers ready for their respective positions. BG will ensure a smooth handover with the new person for the Secretary General position.

- Hiring new Secretary General updates

Updates are made to the Bureau on the recruitment process. The interview phase was initiated. The decision will be formalised during the month of September.

Additional staff and contract related matters have been discussed in the Bureau at this agenda point.

10) News and invitations, IMS and MOs

- General note from IH on invitations and the framework on how to handle them. We always need to have an official written invitation email. Even if it's just an online event, we need one, if the LYMEC title is used.
- FNF Yearly Conference - Berlin - 10 October - speaker on youth engagement. IH can't make it. DP will be the speaker there. She will then head to Skopje for the Liberal Hack.
- ELF training for event organisers - Nice - 13-15 October - we won't send anyone this time, there is no availability in the Bureau and Staff on those dates.
- Julis Federal Congress - Hildesheim - 19-20 October - DP will be there as LYMEC representative.

11) AOB

- Next steps with new young MEPs and advocacy efforts

Overview of what has been done on the induction with the MEPs:

- Cover letter by IH to initiate contact, explaining what LYMEC is to ALDE head of delegations.
- Event with young MEPs in July with ALDE to create a network of 'Under 40' MEPs and link them between themselves and LYMEC. There was a clear willingness from them to get invitations and policy resolutions inputs.
- ELF package with goodies and a letter from IH will be shared with MEPs in September.

Advocacy efforts were done in the beginning of the summer with ELF, ALDE, JEF and Renew Europe with focused meetings with the respective leaderships.

Follow-up with under 40 MEPs to take place in February 2025 with another event with ALDE. We will also check the committees of these MEPs to see the topics we can work on together.



- Questions to Commissioners through Renew

We got an opportunity to channel our questions for the Commissioner hearings through the Renew MEPs. WK will take the lead on this file. A few questions will be drafted to be asked to Commissioners. The topics will follow the new priorities established.

- New IOs induction

Onboarding new IOs should be seen as an opportunity for regional responsible Bureau members to create strong links. Systematically, we should redirect to existing documents, IOs chat, official contact details etc. SB to take on board the revamp of this process. He will propose something by the Warsaw Bureau meeting on the Sunday after Congress.

- Feedback on the Digital Assembly

The DA will be debriefed and evaluated at a later stage in parallel with assessing other online events we organise.

- Website updates

CL is giving updates. It's a long timeline and a lot of work. It has been properly planned through a GANT chart. Advancement of the CRM is needed rapidly. IMS form and payment was created, the main structure is there. Payment needs to be linked to the CRM. There is a knowledge app that we will check at the end serving as a hub for our members. The newsletter function also needs to be checked. Everything from 2020 to now is moved according to the plan. .

ELF might phase out 'MyAcademy' so we will also check what applications on ODOO could be working to replace that. It is reminded to meet all the deadlines that were set within the team in charge of moving the website.

- Revamp of the internal rules

The taskforce met and is meeting again soon, distribution of tasks took place, and some progress made. The goal is to move towards one document that would include all the other documents: Code of conduct, Equality and diversity plan, Congress rules etc. We will harmonize the procedures and merge the different documents. The IMS internal rules could also be included.

Statutes will have to be adapted where needed because we are creating a new document for our procedures, reference to it will have to be there.

- Feedback and appreciation round

DP highlights the importance of working as a team and providing feedback to each other to grow in the positions. It's important to also take the time for this and find some time at next meetings.

AS highlights the importance for Bureau members to come to him if there are any issues - might it be about tasks or relations to each other.

End of the meeting at 17 h 45 pm CEST on 24 August 2024.

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