

Electoral Manifesto *Huub Hoven*

Foreword

LYMEC: Connecting liberal youth, Learning through action, Driven by you

Dear reader,

After a lengthy period of talking to people, thinking about my added value, and what I would like to accomplish within our organisation, I felt that running for the LYMEC bureau is the next step for me in liberal youth politics.

I want to thank the many people who have inspired, counseled, and supported my ambitions at every stage. This also requires me to acknowledge that, despite some of my mistakes throughout this process, many have shown me a great example of professionalism and forgiveness, even when emotions ran high. Thus, lastly, I also need to recognise that perhaps my biggest personal takeaway from creating this program is that where disagreement and conflict can run high, an environment of reconciliation and compassion is most important.

There are three main goals making up this program: connecting liberal youth, learning through doing, and being driven by you. Firstly, connecting liberal youth: LYMEC should function more as a forum, and we should stimulate lasting connections between our members. Secondly, learning through action: LYMEC is policy-oriented, and we should keep it that way, but I do believe in a shift towards a secondary educational focus. Lastly, driven by you: while a difficult exercise, we should strive for LYMEC to be more accessible to the larger membership.

In the spirit of these points, this program is drafted. Thus, I ask the reader to look at every suggested idea through the lens of these values. Most plans are means to achieve something, whether to connect, teach, or include. The goal is to equip as many individuals as we can to spread our values.

We learn from failure, not from success.

Huub Hoven

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Synopsis

While I greatly encourage eager readers to read the entire program, it is worth having a distilled version. If any specific parts interest you, do not hesitate to click on the corresponding section in the Contents table above. And for the most avid readers, I am always available to hear your thoughts.

Keeping in mind the three main goals, this program focuses on expanding the options for our different bodies, such as Libertas, our ALDE delegation, IMS, and our MOs and their membership. I want us to achieve this through new media formats, including new types of articles, but also media beyond the written format. Media should also be platformed more effectively and incentivized by engaging people more and rewarding effort.

Another aspect I want to tackle is budgeting, not only by expanding income sources such as an alumni network, but also by looking at how to organize or operate more economically using our own solutions or free software.

Furthermore, given our priority for good policy, I want to work on improving the way we adopt and lobby our policies. Besides fixing the policy book, I believe in a stronger ALDE delegation that has more freedom to explore their methods and go beyond writing ALDE resolutions to carry out our policies. In addition to this, I want us to focus more on how we get our broader members to the table to discuss our positions.

Lastly, I want to work on improving the way we disagree and the institutional matters of LYMEC to avoid future issues and further improve trust.

Interconnecting liberal youth – familiarising MOs

Being a new delegate, participant, or even an International Officer (IO) can be daunting. You are thrown into a magical but wild world, and it takes a while to get accustomed to LYMEC. And that is only if you are fortunate enough to participate in an event in the first place. Members need to be exposed more easily to LYMEC, and we should help to have members hit the ground running within LYMEC.

Introducing LYMEC

LYMEC is composed of Individual Member Sections (IMS) and its Member Organisations (MOs), and we should showcase that more. During events within my MO, Jongliberalen, I often throw around MO abbreviations, and then promptly lose whoever I'm talking to. "Oh that's our sister organisation from country x" doesn't do it justice. Being able to put a face to something helps, so let's start there.

The first thing is being more proactive in onboarding new IOs and participants. For IOs, I think a brief call from at least one bureau member is a minimum. Having someone take the initiative lowers the barrier for new IOs to contact us with any questions. Besides an informal introduction, it can also be used to run down the list of administrative responsibilities that IOs have regarding LYMEC. For participants, if the event is relatively exclusive, we can do the same. If that becomes too laborious, a small introductory video can be produced instead.

Introductory videos lead me to my second point: every congress should have a brief video from the bureau to briefly explain what to ex-

pect from a LYMEC congress. Having the bureau explain the basics helps people put a face to the organisation and sets the tone for what to expect. This can be brief, where every bureau member only speaks a couple of sentences. Videos could even be reused. Texts never express someone adequately, so let's show our faces more to the membership.

Now what's left is showing the MOs themselves more. This is something to do on a rolling basis, to the desire of the MOs themselves. The idea is to build up a set of videos from each MO where they can explain themselves, their views, and their core values briefly. These videos again help put a face to the organisation.

The general idea of all these points is to create a more accessible way to learn about each other without the need for online or in-person events. Many of these things only need to be made once, or once every few years. Furthermore, this is mostly only a burden once for every person. I think the return on investment is well worth the effort and makes us far more visible to the membership.

Stronger inter-MO connections

We are already a closely knit group with a lot of contact between MOs. In this regard, IOs, participants, and members should also receive help to hit the ground running. While this is largely an informal aspect, especially in politics, personal and professional relations overlap. Having a strong informal network helps a lot with getting anything done.

The first step is making working groups more accessible. Ideally, we somewhat formalise these groups. They need to have a clear lead responsible person and clearly communicated existence. Who is allowed in is at their own discretion, but there needs to be a transparent process in which people can apply. Ideally, these working groups are formed dynamically at the will of anyone in LYMEC, paired with a platform where they can be announced.

A second possibility is creating knowledge networks. Within LYMEC, people have a diverse set of professional backgrounds. We can platform their expertise and bundle their knowledge together. Having a central place for communi-

cation, legal, economic, financial, or technical experts makes it easier for both MOs and LYMEC to extract needed knowledge for any project. These groups should only be set up once there is an actual need for their expertise, but the construction of these groups can go beyond just writing LYMEC policy.

Furthermore, we should increase our connection with other international liberal organisations. A great example is the Young Democrats of America, who are always very enthusiastic about staying in touch with us.

Lastly, we need more collaboration. In the past, I have worked with a few MOs for joint events or for a joint social media post. We should encourage that. Joint communication is effective to reach a larger audience and shows our true commitment towards international cooperation. But also beyond joint social media work, let's show whenever our MOs have a joint event. LYMEC can function as a middle-man for more synergy!

Networks+

This again leads me to the ideal translation of these prior points: a central hub for all working groups, networks, and teams. This way, we have a central hub to tap our talents and to cooperate together. This way, we build truly lasting connections, even outside of events and congresses.

A media network - expanding Libertas

Libertas is a great example of how a membership-driven platform generates high-quality content. I have to be honest; I always knew about its existence but only recently started appreciating the quality of Libertas. Perhaps that's just me living under a rock, but I don't think we do Libertas the justice it deserves. I had the opportunity to function as Editor-in-Chief for my faculty's student-run magazine for a year. Aware of the struggles leading a volunteer-led editorial team, I believe Libertas has so much room to grow.

Increasing visibility

Libertas is largely hidden away in a tab on the LYMEC website, with the occasional social media post. Putting Libertas more in the foreground requires some energy. However, there are a few relatively low-effort investments that could yield a lot more visibility.

First, in my opinion, a separate social media page for Libertas is warranted. This, paired with some new graphical templates and corresponding styling guides, creates its own identity and platform to reach more people in a more appealing and neat fashion. The main benefit is a separate feed with only Libertas content makes it more accessible to scroll through the available content. Another advantage is that each post can have its writer as a contributor, and it is also easier to share by third parties.

Another improvement is the formatting on the website itself. It is somewhat cumbersome to find, navigate, and read Libertas articles on

the website. A first step is simply improving the website. If it's possible, Libertas could even be given its own subdomain, with its own corresponding style. If that proves to be infeasible, publishing on essay-focused platforms could also be considered. Lastly, articles should also be easy to find and read on mobile, let's be honest, that's the most likely place more people will actually read it.

Lastly, we should consider publishing a paper version. The aim here isn't to distribute this widely, nor is it to publish frequently. Having a physical edition ready to give out has a lot of benefits. First, to give to the writers themselves if the opportunity presents. That might sound redundant, but having physical proof of your work is a simple way we can reward effort. Secondly, to give out as a goodie in fringe events or to other liberal initiatives, which is another way to expose Libertas to more people.

New media formats

Libertas is mainly limited to the written op-ed format, which can be massively expanded. The only constraint is finding people willing to create content. Providing a large array of options gives everyone an opportunity to contribute according to their own strengths.

The first possibility is experimenting with written formats. For example, I'm sure there are enough interesting figures in the liberal sphere willing to be interviewed by one of us. This creates opportunities for our members to approach these people and get inspired by their views. Furthermore, every LYMEC event ideally should have a little report in Libertas. Having a small report written by a participant helps inform possible future participants. Another format is where MOs can share their main purpose and the things they stand for in their country. In essence, there is a lot to be ex-

plored purely in the written formats that Libertas can produce.

A second, more radical option is expanding Libertas beyond the written format. Inspiration can be taken from classical media: satirical cartoons, video reports, visual explainers, etc. One option I would love to explore is a podcast format. I'll admit that it's technically difficult to organise, however, I see it as a great medium through which members can learn to debate and talk about their values.

We all flourish in different ways. Thus, to give all an opportunity and to showcase our diversity, we need a platform fit for everyone. Maybe the quality of most work isn't extraordinary, but maybe we uncover great talents in our members. The only way to find these hidden talents is to try.

Libertas+

If most of the prior points are achievable, then here's my absolute pipedream: Libertas+. A central hub for all media from LYMEC and its MOs. This platform can then function as a hub for MOs to also share their own media to create a true media network between our MOs. Fully launching such a platform is ambitious and demands time. However, if the prior ideas come to fruition, this would be the next step.

Keeping the lights on - healthy budgeting

In the end, everything is always about the money. I'm not going to pretend I have extensive knowledge about fundraising, nor about bookkeeping. But the thought experiment about expenses needs to be made by everyone, especially if you want to introduce new ideas. One way to keep things realistic is to keep things economical, another is by finding ways to save old or find new sources of income.

Alumni network

The outgoing board has already put in work to introduce an alumni network. This is great, and we should really put in the effort to make this a success. To put it bluntly, our alumni are generally successful people. And there are more than enough of them who have a fond enough memory about LYMEC to donate. We just need to give them the right motivation, reason, and opportunity to do so.

There are the usual basic benefits to offer: a name on the website, a thank you post, displaying their names at events, etc. A secondary benefit from a sturdy alumni network is that they are another pool of people to source speakers or panel members from. In general, it's a good idea to keep our previous members in a close loop. More broadly, any (older) liberal sympathiser should have an easy time finding us and contributing.

Cutting excess costs

It feels necessary to address the possibilities of cutting current costs. However, in my experience, truly redundant costs are always hard to find or are often relatively minor. Nonetheless, budgetary prudence is important. The only true promise I can make is that I will

make an effort to critically assess our expenses. With the knowledge I currently have, the only possible minor improvement is looking at more economical website hosting and openslides hosting.

Freeware and Open source programs

I love open-source software, aware that it's often the bane of professionals. But, in my experience,

most amateurs can get really far using free software, as long as they are offered

guidance for their use case. Two great examples are Inkscape and Scribus, not the easiest to get accustomed to, but so powerful even knowing only the basics.

This is not so much a cost-saving effort for the bureau to me, but more a gateway to

make homebrew projects more feasible for our members. To have our members make more impact in public debate, we all need to have the basics to run our own advocacy. Giving them the right tools and rudimentary training makes it possible for every individual member to do activism in our name!

Developers group

We have a good amount of in-house talent regarding IT, coding, and computer science. Some MOs even have their own in-house built software for their websites and congresses. It seems worth exploring, perhaps we can run more things by ourselves. If my Libertas+ idea comes off the ground, this could even be supported by our own infrastructure.

Having an actual impact – lobbying policy

This is personally the most important individual section of my program. LYMEC is a policy-driven organisation, and I do not intend to step away from that. We are liberals; policy is our thing, or at least, realistic and effective policy. I believe that LYMEC could do more with the policy we pass during our congresses. Both within, and in tandem with ALDE is the way we have the most impact. However, we can also provide the tools to individuals to have more impact on their own.

The ALDE delegation

Having the privilege of being part of the ALDE delegation, I have noticed that we have a strong standing in ALDE. With the current delegation working on three resolutions for ALDE, we are ambitious and showing ALDE our ideas. What I have also noticed is that there is residual energy and ambition to do more than just this!

The first thing to address is that we are practically limited to only a few resolutions every congress. With this limitation, I think it's fair to incorporate more MO feedback to decide which topics to prioritise. Being timely with a questionnaire to evaluate internal priorities is one of the ways to do this. Furthermore, we should incentivise more dialogue between MOs and delegation members, this way we know more deeply what really matters to us, and what we're doing in ALDE.

Another thing to consider is formalising the internal roles within the delegation more. Besides the policy officer, there should be a head secretary and one head responsible per resolution that is being written at least. In essence, this already happens to some extent, and this

current group is very dynamic in picking up work whenever someone else is busy. So having a clear chain of responsibility will help even more in keeping people to their tasks.

The work done by the delegation should also be showcased more. Having meeting minutes or some type of reporting in place again helps with keeping people to their tasks, but mainly, it also helps to be more transparent about what work is being done. This goes hand in hand with wanting more MO feedback, the delegation should have a dialogue with our members. Lastly, some extra social media presence is always great too.

I have also noticed how difficult it is to plan a meeting with such a diverse group. To make sure everyone remains involved, more small group meetings should be the focus. This current delegation already practically does this, however, also formalising this more will aid in not excluding people. This ties in with the idea of having meeting reports.

Principally, I want the delegation to have more freedom and to not only focus on writing resolutions. The delegation is there to represent

us, our policies, and our positions in ALDE, and this can be done in more ways than just writing resolutions. Quite a few in this delegation have expressed great ideas that are worth exploring. We need to accommodate these ideas. To

round off, maybe a certain topic we care about isn't viable yet in ALDE, why not put people on lobbying for it to make it more passable in the future?

Fixing the policy book

Our policy book is a behemoth, which shows how much we care about policy. Sadly, the consequence is that it has become unordered and unwieldy to actually utilise. With my editorial and coding experience, I hope to write a program that makes generating new policy books easier and improves aspects such as in-text hyperlinks and keywords.

The way I would tackle this is by translating all policies into plaintext files. If these files are then structured homogeneously, they can be used by an interpreter to translate into the policy book. This way, we can also earmark resolutions automatically for things like the new sunset clause. Furthermore, having plaintext versions available makes it possible for our members to more easily copy resolutions for further use.

I have experience in creating documents using LaTeX, and this could, for example, be used to generate this new policy book. Generally, when the template is made, it's relatively foolproof. For example, this document is made using this software. In my opinion, it creates neat and easily repeatable designs if you put in the effort.

Lastly, lookup work needs to be easier. Fixing the table of contents to link to the corresponding policy will already help a lot in this regard. However, introducing keywords to every resolution will also make scanning for relevant policies much easier. Ideally, we make this a practice for new resolutions, but an effort can also be made to retroactively add them to previously passed policies.

A seat at the table

As Mark Carney phrased it so well: "If you're not at the table, you're on the menu", this quote transcends geopolitics. So often I'm frustrated with the observation that liberal parties aren't able to be an important part of public debate, often even when it's concerning our core values. We need to ensure that the topics still associated with us are kept, while winning back-ground on the issues where we should be asso-

ciated with.

I strongly believe that one of the biggest issues we face is that we've ceded many places of public debate to extremists and populists. The best example can be seen when lies and irresponsible policies are repeated enough, people will start believing them. These beliefs then become increasingly normalised and ac-

cepted. Thus, we need to be more visible with our values and opposition to indecency. Whether it's pride, Ukraine rallies, or other protests, it is so important to just show up. In these cases, quite literally to wave our flag.

To give an example where we absolutely need to ensure we lead the debate is Ukraine. Luckily, we already largely do that, but I believe liberals can play a pivotal role in successfully rebuilding Ukraine. Here, the path is clearly the liberal one. We need to make sure the

focus is on re-establishing Ukrainian institutions and opening opportunities for European investments. It is so important that we are able to take the lead in these talks, also as youth, because if we won't, someone else will.

Generally, as youth, we always need to be radical. That is the way we can open up debates and have more control over the narrative. This requires us to be vocal and not be scared to ruffle some feathers.

The policy officer

Previous points explained my general views on how we should tackle policy. However, when talking about policy, it's also worth discussing the responsibilities of the corresponding officer. There will be big boots to fill; it's a position that has a huge impact on our internal agenda setting. Every policy officer has their own style and their own qualities, so it's worth elaborating upon.

The first responsibility is to be a contact point about policy to our membership. Not only to help retrieve relevant policy if necessary, but also to help discuss their ideas for future policy. Taking an active approach to talking with MOs will help them be more effective in finding the right partners and the right approach to submitting policies. I also think the policy officer can function as a proofreader for MOs; however, it is important to uphold neutrality.

Knowing the whole policy book by heart is impossible, so it is important to appropriately anticipate what policies might become relevant in upcoming events and share those transparently. If the policy book gets reformed in the

way described in the previous subsection, it would be relatively easy to generate a neat overview document of these policies.

Given the quality of the Policy Debates that were held by LYMEC, I think it's a shame so few people participated in them. The panels were always diverse and well-constructed. I'll be honest, I won't be able to level that. Luckily, I believe that having more in-house sourced panels is an alternative that hopefully will also help with attracting more participants. These events could then also be used to debate policies that have some level of disagreement internally.

This leads me to the next point: some topics are perhaps too controversial for a policy debate. Often, these are also the topics where it's so important that we have a clear stance. The Policy Officer can act as a mediator for these topics. This way, hopefully, a few MOs can be brought together, representing all sides, and an agreeable middle ground can be found before presenting to congress.

While our policy book is comprehensive, some important topics are lacking in my opinion. We have surprisingly little about topics such as recreational drugs, housing, and monetary policy. But also more recent topics such as AI, the two-speed capital union, and EU Inc.

Neutrality is again important; the Policy Officer should maintain an open list of these gaps, open to be filled by anyone. Another relevant responsibility is flagging conflicting stances within our policy book.

The liberal divide – stronger together

Ask two liberals for their opinion, and you get three. Furthermore, we all know the typical way to differentiate liberals: the classical and social ones. We can grumble about disagreements or the fact that we decide to further identify ourselves with these specifiers. However, within the right margins, I believe this is to be encouraged. We keep each other sharp and still share the same fundamental beliefs.

We all care about our values, so when disagreement inevitably occurs, passion and emotions can run high. Thus, it is so important we ensure we remain appropriate in the ways we debate contentious topics. No matter how strong the disagreement, there is no argument to attack someone personally. This is why during congresses it is so important to have chairs who moderate strongly.

Another advantage is that we can function as our own moderating force. Our disagreements and the subsequent debates help us nuance ourselves and be better prepared to sell our positions to a larger audience. A different way to look at it is a more scientific view on how we can convince or change each other's opinions. We all enter congress with our MOs' positions and priors and leave with a posterior. Even if

we do not end up passing a resolution on a certain topic, having debated it is worthwhile on its own.

In many countries, the populist fringes in national politics have formed a sort of symbiosis where their antics only fuel each other. They win, and we often lose out because of this. Due to my great dismay, I see it happen in my region far too often: a topic that should be ours is completely captured by populists because we fail to become part of the public debate. The more successful liberal parties are the ones that are able to enter these debates. Here, as youth, we have the duty to help liberals enter these debates. In LYMEC, this means being nuanced internally and daring to be radical externally.

Evolving LYMEC – educational shift

I have grown incredibly thanks to the things I have learned through LYMEC. And most of this growth is not in formal educational events, but by just getting involved. The most you'll learn in LYMEC is by just becoming part. This means we need no radical change to put a stronger emphasis on education. All that needs to be done is making everything that LYMEC can offer more accessible.

Within this program, you should look at all points through this educational lens. I don't mind if these things are a resounding success; giving our members the chance to get involved in more ways is the primary goal. For me, writing this program in itself has also been a learning opportunity. For basically everything in LYMEC, I see the final product members deliver as a means to learn, not as the goal itself.

IMS!

The recent IMS delegation election was very competitive, which shows how eager our individual members are to involve themselves in LYMEC. Together with the IMS steering committee, we can make an effort to activate more people to have their meaningful part within LYMEC and IMS. For me, it seems feasible to individually ask our IMS members in what way they would like to get involved. This can be done via

a survey if needed, but we need more opportunities for IMS.

Whether it's them taking the initiative to lead working groups, running smaller-scale online events, writing for *Libertas*, or something else altogether; IMS is a great place to get young liberals dedicated to making LYMEC even more active!

Congress to learn

As I already mentioned, I believe we already function as a great platform to learn purely by attending and getting involved. However, LYMEC could do more to facilitate participants to make them thrive even more. Some MOs and some individuals are very effective at getting their resolutions on the agenda and passed; others experience more difficulty. It is for the latter that we should offer more tools to both learn and be more effective in their goals.

Very often when I discussed submitted resolutions with others, the breaking point to not support a resolution hinged not on the fundamental idea, but how it was worked out. Writing resolutions is an art; getting your core priorities written is already difficult. But adding other factors such as adding the necessary nuance, wording things smartly, and taking other perspectives into account only makes it more complex. With so many resolutions that

either failed or didn't get on the agenda, I felt that slightly different wording could've made the difference.

First, I want to say that even when a resolution doesn't pass for whichever reason, the exercise of drafting and submitting one was already a worthwhile endeavor. The simple reality is that most resolutions submitted will never even make the agenda, and that is okay in my opinion. However, we can and should provide more tools to help with writing. Increasing the overall quality of submitted resolutions increases competition, which further induces more learning opportunities and even better-adopted resolutions!

When you're done writing, the next step is making sure it gets on the agenda. In other words, you have to lobby. Again, this is an art, and even when unsuccessful, you will have

learned. Arguing and talking to people to first get your resolutions on the agenda is perhaps the most important step. Also here, LYMEC could provide tips and tools to help.

In general, I hope to level the playing field for MOs and their participants to have a more equal chance to pass resolutions. It would increase the general quality, and would also help with increasing learning opportunities for all. A neutral person that can facilitate and analyse these matters can be a big step towards this goal.

Someone within the bureau could take up this role; the Policy Officer would make the most sense. It is, however, important that this person is trustworthy, neutral, and transparent about their consults. For this, appropriate scrutiny is necessary. This person should thus report the advice and help they have provided.

Awards

Recognition is important, especially if the effort has proven to be successful. A great way to give recognition is through giving out awards. Matters like best MO communication, political action, an impact prize, or the best Libertas article could be possible topics for such awards. The added benefit is also extra

visibility for others and to possibly inspire them to do the same.

In practice, this could be organised through a neutral committee that receives a selection of nominations. This committee then decides the winners, and this can then be communicated.

LYMEC+

The outgoing bureau has already put in great effort to create an online platform for IOs. This can be improved and expanded, to perhaps even the larger membership. LYMEC can then function as a middleman in an open forum for liberal knowledge exchange, even past our formal events. This can then also function as the hub for all content, tips, and documents.

Improving – LYMEC Reforms

We should always aspire to improve our internal procedures and culture. As liberals, we should also always question the rules we have put in place and, if deemed fit, change them accordingly. This is an ongoing process, and ideally, everyone should have the opportunity to share their views and feedback on how we as an organisation are run.

Improving Congress procedures

In my experience, most congresses run quite smoothly without too many disturbing hiccups. However, I do see some matters that could form an issue in the future if left unaccounted for. The minor mishaps that have risen from time to time show weak spots in our procedures, and we should resolve these before they create bigger issues.

At the start of congress, we elect our election scrutineers, and I think we underutilise them. It's something I haven't done myself either, but when there are questions or requests regarding whether votes and procedures are followed correctly, these election scrutineers should be approached, not a bureau member. It's a good sign that we trust the bureau to ask questions, but in this instance, we risk bigger conflict if the approached bureau member ends up making a mistake. Practically, there is little we need to do; we only need to state the responsibilities of our people more clearly.

Besides the way participants can flag issues and who they need to approach to do such, there are also some habits that are undesirable but incentivised by our voting procedures. For me, a growing unease is strategic voting. I believe that in certain aspects and votes, strategic voting is defensible. A great example

is the snap vote on the order of resolutions; in the end, we need to learn to lobby for our values, and this is a great exercise. However, we should be open to tweaking even these voting procedures to get a more representative order of resolutions.

One place I strongly believe we should change our voting procedure is in votes regarding persons. I think strategic voting on the people who lead or represent our organisation ought to be discouraged. Switching to a Single Transferable Vote system is a way to resolve much of this. We should strive to uphold meritocratic principles and elect people based on their qualities.

Paired with voting tweaks, we should also introduce more methods of scrutiny to the people who lead and are responsible for LYMEC. To me, from both a practical and feasibility perspective, introducing a procedure to request a justification in written form would be a big step towards better transparency.

In general, congress shouldn't in any practice be run by the bureau members, but by our delegates led by the scrutineers and chairs. This effectively means understandable and transparent responsibilities, paired with strong procedures that hatches trust in our processes

and the people who lead our organisation. Strong, trustworthy institutions are the cornerstone of a healthy organisation.

Improving Congress culture

I have had my fair share of disagreements with people, both on positions and on more personal matters. This is natural, but it's important that we have the right mechanisms in place to ensure things don't spiral out of control and are mediated appropriately.

The most important aspect here is learning to take responsibility. I have misstepped at times, and during these times, the most effective resolution followed after someone pointed it out to me. We should encourage that dialogue, and if enough people take up this mentality, it will become part of our culture. As I have learned through these experiences, so

can the next person. A way to actively incentivise this is by seeking willing parties with past conflicts to share the stage together and explain the steps they took.

This is a burden we all carry together; we need to step up and stand up when we believe something unjust is happening. I believe I have failed to do so in the past, and even then, if you're not part of the problem, that doesn't make you part of the solution. We should strive to create an environment where people can make mistakes and where people are strengthened to take responsibility.

Quality of life

Lastly, there are a few quality of life ideas that I think are worth briefly mentioning. The first is meeting agenda invitations; it's little effort to get our events in people's agendas. Besides the formal agenda invites, ready-made messages to distribute event updates to our members instead of the message being referred to IOs. A second improvement is office hours. I don't expect this to become a popular event, but it is an easy baked-in moment for bureau members to talk to the membership and dis-

cuss things. These are a few very minor ideas; you might have some of your own, and maybe you could share them in the next membership survey. But I also believe there should be a year-round online ideas box.

Very minor tweaks can sometimes make the difference in whether someone decides to engage with LYMEC. That's why it's important to lower the bar of entry in any way that isn't a large burden on the bureau.

Personal ambitions

Discussing with people while drafting my program inevitably leads to discussions about what kind of position I am seeking. Many people I have talked to mentioned that my ideas generally steer towards the responsibilities of the Engagement or Policy Officer. However, I do not seek a specific title. My priorities are improving LYMEC in the ways I described in this program. However, I would love to take up the leadership for our delegation to the ALDE party congress. This has the automatic consequence of becoming the Policy Officer. That being said, I am not set on this; my priorities are the points in this program, irrespective of the title under which I will carry them out.

This leads me to an important disclaimer: my program is ambitious and covers a lot of different topics. Both from a perspective of practical feasibility and the priorities for our leadership, realistically not all of this program can be exercised. To me, the later sections regarding policy have the highest priority.

To get the tools to bring any of these ideas to LYMEC, I need your support.