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youth wing of ALDE Party

Secretary General's Report Danica Vihinen

November 2016-May 2017

Dear congress delegates, dear members,

It is my pleasure to present to you my second report as Secretary General. One year into the mandate I am still as enthusiastic as ever to work for this great organisation and assist you all in our common goal of liberalising Europe.

Since we last met in Tallinn, I have had the opportunity to represent LYMEC externally, we have organised successful events and I have had the pleasure of welcoming many member organisations at the office in Brussels. This report is an attempt to give an overview of my work since November.

Almost immediately after our own congress in Tallinn I represented LYMEC at the General Assembly of the European Youth Forum (YFJ) in Varna, Bulgaria. YFJ is the umbrella organisation of international non-governmental youth organisations based in Europe, as well as for European national youth councils. As the European Youth Forum is the "official" representative of youth in Europe, that especially the European institutions turn to when they're interested in the youth perspective on different issues, it is in my opinion important that LYMEC continues having an active presence in YFJ. I am therefore happy to announce that I was elected to the Financial Control Commission of the organisation for the mandate of 2017-18.

One of the last events for LYMEC in 2016 was the ALDE Party congress, where the efforts of the office were limited to the logistical side, but it was a joy following the LYMEC delegation that got much praise from other delegations for their activity during the congress. The last event of the year was also one of the largest ones, as the ALDE Winter Academy that we organised together with Young Democrats for Europe gathered almost 100 young liberals and democrats in the European Parliament. The last weeks before the office closed for the holidays we were occupied with finalising the reporting and preparing the closing of the books for 2016.

The new year started with the recruitment process for getting a new administrative assistant to the office, and it was encouraging to see how many good applicants that were interested in working for our organisation. The fact that we were approved as employers in the Brussels Region's internship scheme both provides us with the opportunity to have a full time assistant again, and is also a testament that LYMEC is seen as a serious organisation capable of providing learning opportunities for young people. This is not something that has happened over night, but rather a result of conscious efforts both by my predecessors as Secretary Generals as well as current and previous bureau members working hard for the organisation, and something well worth celebrating.

In January and February I had the great pleasure to represent LYMEC at the "Investing in NEETs" conference organised by Social Doers, the Youth Intergroup and EU40 at the European Parliament; at the Roundtable on the Future of Europe organised by Marietje Schaake, MEP at the European

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Parliament, and at the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of the Treaty of Maastricht and the Citizens' Dialogue organised by the Committee of Regions in Maastricht.

The first event of 2017 was the seminar "The New Europeans" in Athens, organised together with FNF Greece with the support of ELF. The event was a success and will result in a publication on liberal integration policies that will be published this summer. In connection to the event we also held the first face to face bureau meeting of the year, and I think I speak for everyone when I say it was really important to have the possibility to have a longer, unrushed meeting.

In March I participated as LYMEC's representative in a study trip for Party Political Youth Organisations to Cyprus, to learn more about the reunification process. Besides providing the participants with a great programme and a lot of food for thought, the trip also doubled as an opportunity to strengthen our cooperation with the other PPYOs. While in Nicosia I also had the opportunity to meet with representatives from ALDE Party member the United Democrats Party and its youth organisation, that used to be a member of LYMEC.

I am very happy that we managed to reallocate some of the ALDE Group grant towards making it possible for a delegation from LYMEC to participate in the March for Europe and the celebrations of the Treaty of Rome in Rome at the end of March. With anti-EU populists and nationalism on the rise all over our continent it is as important as ever to stand up for our vision of an open, united Europe.

Finally, I also got to represent LYMEC at the JuLis congress in Oberhausen and in connection to that visit the Young European Socialists' congress in Duisburg, where I took part in a debate between PPYOs on behalf of LYMEC. I attended the ELF Competence Centre meeting for project managers in Brussels and represented LYMEC at the European Youth Forum Council of Members and extraordinary General Assembly in Brussels.

I'd like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Bureau on a successful first year of the mandate, and thank my former assistant Fenia Lymperopoulou as well as the current assistant Paulina Gono for excellent work, I would not be able to manage the office without you!

If you have any questions regarding the report or my work for the organisation in general, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Liberal regards,
Danica

Events attended: European Youth Forum GA, Varna; ALDE Party Congress, FNF meeting on fighting populism and LYMEC Bureau Meeting, Warsaw; ALDE Winter Academy, Brussels; ALDE Group New Year's Reception, Brussels; Investing in NEETs conference, Brussels; Meeting at the US mission to the EU, Brussels; Roundtable on the Future of Europe, Brussels; Internal Audit, Brussels; Jong VLD New Year's reception, Brussels; Committee of Regions' Citizens' Dialogue, Maastricht; My Body My Rights conference, Brussels; Bureau Meeting and the New Europeans seminar, Athens; PPYO Study Trip to Cyprus, Nicosia; Meeting with the President of ELF, Brussels; "Europe Fights Back" Forum and the March for Europe, Rome; External Audit, Brussels; JuLis 54. Congress, Oberhausen; YES Congress and PPYO debate, Duisburg; ELF Competence Centre meeting, Brussels; YFJ Youth Up Gala, COMEM and Extra GA, Brussels, Magma Akademin, Brussels.

Visits to the LYMEC office: Jeunes MR Brussels; Balkan Political Academy; YMRF; Thorbecke Academie; JOVD; LY.