

ALDE Congress Report

During the first days of December 2017 liberals from all over Europe gathered in Warsaw, Poland, for the annual ALDE Party Congress. LYMEC was represented by a strong delegation of ten voting delegates and the Bureau and office as a supporting team. Besides the official LYMEC delegation many of representatives of LYMEC member organisations were included in their mother parties' delegations, so all in all the young liberals were strongly and visibly present at the congress.

For the LYMEC delegation, the preparations started months before the actual congress, by deciding on the theme of our first and second resolution and later by making amendments to most submitted resolutions. The delegation met in person during the LYMEC Congress in Sofia and over Skype several times ahead of the ALDE Congress, discussing the LYMEC stance on the topics of the resolutions, amendments as well as deciding on the responsibilities within the delegation.

LYMEC with ten delegates at the Congress, presented two resolutions, Educating Europe and on Tackling Propaganda and False News from Russia. Both resolutions were adopted with strengthening amendments and an overwhelming majority support.

Also, the LYMEC delegation proposed a large number of amendments to the resolution on Preventing extremist violence and defending Europe's liberal principles, which were all but one adopted. LYMEC was also particularly active in amending the resolution on a liberal drug policy and strengthening the resolution on the rights of LGBTI asylum seekers. The LYMEC delegation was eager to support religious diversity and freedom of expression, expressed the need to end the war on drugs and called for European states to abstain from enforcing the discretion requirement. The LYMEC delegation was also happy to see their strong vision for engaging youth and gender mainstreaming in the resolution on Promoting Green Solutions at the ALDE Congress. LYMEC contributed to the debate on Palestine as the LYMEC delegation presented amendments on the resolution on the Centenary of the Balfour Declaration in keeping with the LYMEC stance on the recognition of a two-state solution.

The LYMEC delegation at the ALDE Party Congress received excellent feedback from the other delegations and put a clear mark on the Congress with all its contributions in shape of resolutions, amendments and input in the debate. Exceptional for this year's negotiations and meetings with ALDE Member Party delegations was that very many delegations approached the LYMEC delegation before and during the ALDE Congress in addition to the meetings and negotiations initiated by the LYMEC delegation members themselves. This shows that LYMEC is seen in high standing by our mother party and its members. Parties are seeking out the young voices at the Party Congress.

According to tradition, LYMEC interviewed all the candidates for the ALDE Bureau positions. The interview session is a longstanding tradition for the LYMEC delegation and gives the delegates and other present young representatives the opportunity to learn more about the future ALDE Bureau members and set a basis for the relationship and future cooperation.

The LYMEC delegation of 2017 was lead by LYMEC Policy Officer Lena Höglund and consisted of Alistair Spearing, Laura Neijenhuis, Hans Maes, Marina Sedlo, Marit van der Pol, Gyulfie Arnaudova, Mitja Schultz, Gaspar Shabad and Alexander Bjorn Jensen (replaced by Sissel van Run-Kvist at the ALDE Congress due to illness).