

liberal



# bulletin

We're #InTogether

**Determined to fight a positive campaign** Interview with UK Liberal Democrats leader, Tim Farron • **A new reality needs modern trade deals** Commissioner Malmström on TTIP and its benefits • **As long as human rights are violated, liberals cannot rest** Interview with Jordi Xuclà, leader of ALDE-PACE

FIRST ISSUE 2016

# Individual membership

## is boosting the ALDE Party

Julie Cantalou

Chair of the ALDE Party individual members Steering Committee

When the Individual Membership was introduced in 2011 and later on, when the Steering Committee was created and first elected in 2014, it seemed pretty much an experiment. The success of this experiment has been a surprise to all: big increases in membership, more and more activities across Europe, cross-border events, among many other achievements. The individual membership of the ALDE Party has moved from being an experiment to becoming an integral part of the party and a strong voice for liberalism in Europe.

## 01 challenges

The first Steering Committee has been very active in recruiting new members and setting up local structures with over 40 coordinators. Coordinators have been able to attract members by organising events in the local language, focusing on local topics of European dimension and building up relationships to key multipliers. In the upcoming years, it will be key to keep up these efforts in attracting more members, but we also want members to be active. For that to happen, the individual membership has to offer a platform to influence change, develop political proposals and create a sense of belonging. However, it is also crucial to offer clarity about what individual membership entails in order to avoid generating expectations we would not be able to meet.

To build trust in the ALDE Party is crucial to increase our say within party structures. At the same time, we will need to develop a distinctive voice and maintain our independence, both within the ALDE Party as well as at national level. We thus need to be professional and more importantly contribute with political proposals.

However, generating a pan-European debate that is both relevant and sufficiently coherent to come up with concrete resolutions and amendments to present at Congresses is one of our biggest challenges. For that to happen, we need to improve our structure both geographically and thematically. We need to create an accountable system, in which all members have a voice while at the same time being able to generate common positions. It will be challenging to set up communication channels that work both ways: for members to be able to participate and for the Steering Committee, coordinators and other decision-makers to present and explain actions.

## 02 vision

We envision a pan-European community of liberals committed to making the ALDE Party a stronger, truly transnational, more democratic and more transparent organisation.

We want to:

- Bring to life a truly pan-European party
- Offer a home for liberals across Europe
- Build communities based on ideas therefore creating an identity for liberals across Europe

The individual membership is built on fundamental values of participation, initiative, commitment and the will to build a pan-European community of liberals. It was never envisaged as a hierarchical party structure. It relies on the ideas and initiative of each and every member to be successful. We envision the individual member as a progressive force that excels at drawing from the knowledge of its members to develop shared positions.

For these reasons we want Individual Membership to be structured to allow all members to participate. At the same time participation comes with responsibility – the responsibility of every member to contribute to the development of individual membership and to find common positions.

# 03 objectives

In the next two years, the Steering Committee is committed to strengthening the structure and processes that govern the Individual Membership. This will be achieved through the implementation of a broad range of activities and by working closely with the ALDE Party Bureau, the Secretariat and other key actors. We will also be reaching out to organisations outside the sphere of the ALDE Party and build new partnerships.

## Bigger

- 01 Increase membership and empower individual members and coordinators through regular training
- 02 Improve internal and external communication
- 03 Set up an efficient structure at a geographical level and in the thematic working groups that will allow decentralisation to avoid bureaucracy
- 04 Increase engagement (i.e. bottom-up projects, questionnaires, ballots, competitions, etc)



In this picture in the yellow shirt, Julie Cantalou, chair of the individual members Steering Committee

## Stronger

- 01 Make the voice of individual members heard through pan-European, regional and national campaigns
- 02 Strengthen thematic working groups and enhancing participation.
- 03 Make use of delegations at ALDE Party Congress and Council to successfully adopt resolutions
- 04 Secure necessary resources to further develop individual membership
- 05 Strengthen ties between members in different countries through cross-border events and online tools

