

**YOUR EUROPE,  
YOUR FREEDOM:**  
DELIVERING CHANGE FOR YOU

# From crisis resolution to delivering positive change for our common future

In the last few years, we have been rudely awakened. The pandemic, Russia's atrocious war against Ukraine and the cost-of-living crisis it triggered have put all of us to the test. It has been a stark reminder that we cannot and should not take our democracies, peace, and economic opportunities for granted.

Despite social and economic hardship, you, the European citizens have shown impressive resilience and solidarity. Equally, the European Union has demonstrated that it can and does deliver on what really matters, when it really matters. We have come together on core issues previously thought impossible. During the war against Ukraine, we stand united against attacks on democratic values, and we are seeing individuals from across Europe volunteering to fight in the Armed Forces of Ukraine against Russian aggression, supporting and helping our democratic neighbours. During the energy crisis, we stood united to find solutions to support you with the increasing cost of living. During the pandemic, pooling and sharing medical equipment and resources, jointly investing in the development of and purchase of vaccines. It has not always been easy, and there have been bumps along the way. But we have accomplished what was unimaginable five years ago.

It is time to build on this. As Europe's centrist force of liberal and democratic parties, we share the desire and impatience for better, easier times. By moving forward together, we can and will overcome ongoing threats to our internal and external security, economic challenges, and the climate crisis. Europe needs to become less complicated, and this includes strengthening the principle of subsidiarity. We should not associate the EU with over-regulation or bans, but with simple, quick and comprehensible solutions to the challenges of our time. We will fight to make Europe a safe and prosperous place to live. Uncertainty comes with change, but in every change, there is opportunity. We are committed to find a way through science to make sure these changes create jobs, maintain our welfare model, and uphold our world class schools, daycares, and hospitals, and bring open strategic autonomy to key sectors. Our aspiration is that you and future generations have the freedom to choose your own life path.

That is why, as the liberal force in Europe, we want to focus on:

- **Keep Europe free, safe and democratic:** Help Ukraine win the war, enhance our defence capabilities and economic security for Europe's increased independence.
- **Boost economic growth for your freedom:** Invest in your skills, and digital and sustainable technologies to create jobs, reduce our dependencies and decouple growth from the use of natural resources, rising negative climate and health impacts.
- **Earn your trust through action and reform:** Give you a say in how your country and Europe are run and create efficient and transparent institutions, holding accountable those that breach the law.



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**KEEP EUROPE FREE,  
SAFE AND  
DEMOCRATIC**

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# Keep Europe free, safe and democratic

It is time for us to take action and deliver on our promises to maintain freedom, openness and democracy. Europe must stand on its own feet and act in our own right to guarantee your security and safety, but we must continue collaborating with democratic allies while reducing dependence on single suppliers, especially from authoritarian regimes.

We have witnessed how the war against Ukraine has brought us together as a united continent, demonstrating our commitment to defending democracy and security in a positive and responsive manner. It is vital that we reaffirm our long-term commitment to Ukraine in its quest for stability and progress.



## ALDE Party fights for: Make Europe a safe place to live

- While maintaining a balance and avoiding overlap between EU defence cooperation and NATO, all European countries must invest in pan-European defence capability. It is vital to invest in advanced cooperation in the European Defence Union across land, sea, air, and space as well as research and development to improve the European capacity to act independently, boosting European production capacity and creating the conditions to enable synergies between our countries' militaries, without duplicating or replacing NATO-structures and while acknowledging that NATO remains the primary structure for military cooperation.
- Base and focus a new, revised and enhanced EU defence policy on the speedy and effective development of the EU's own military industrial and production capabilities, with Ukraine being an active participant, contributor and partner in the upcoming large-scale investment programmes in the relevant sectors. Establish a European Commissioner for Defence, to ensure a unified approach to EU security and defence policy.
- Set a clear mission to build a European Defence Union in close cooperation with European and NATO partners by 2040, allowing Europe to defend its territory, provide collective security to its citizens, and to counter fragmentation and give an impulse to standardisation between our armed forces to boost safety and cooperation. The European Defence Union will use its considerable means - the triple D of diplomacy, development and defence - to defend European values. It will be prepared to deploy military capacity efficiently and quickly.
- Develop autonomous European strategic military capacity and make it permanently available. Augment the EU pillar within NATO by strengthening our Permanent Structured Cooperation mechanism to create a high level of efficiency, recognising some member states maintain neutrality while actively participating in peacekeeping missions and pursuing a values-based foreign policy.
- Bolster our European defence industry to strengthen our open strategic autonomy.
- Strengthen the EU's role on the global stage by acting as one: shift to qualified majority voting in foreign affairs, defence and security policy, preventing individual countries from obstructing our joint ability to act, enhance the roles of the High Representative and the European External Action Service, and give the EU a seat in the UN Security Council.
- Introduce a military area of free movement to guarantee your security and be able to move our military personnel and weaponry quicker within Europe. Come up with a concrete defence investment plan worth of €100bn, which will be used to bolster Europe's defence industry.
- Establish foundational rules governing states' use of digital technologies in warfare and boost EU joint capacity to act and respond to evolving digital threats and disinformation, including through public-private partnerships and rapid information exchange between countries to safeguard our collective digital infrastructure, ensuring a resilient cyber landscape, and keep investing and prioritising digital technologies so the EU will not fall behind.

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- In our strategic geopolitical stance, we stand in unity with Ukraine, pledging increased military assistance until Ukraine's victory, and post-war reconstruction support, including identifying a legal mechanism to utilise frozen Russian assets and ensure accountability. We will create a European Union Special Representative for Ukrainian Military assistance and Reconstruction. We support Ukraine's full membership of NATO and the EU to increase both Ukraine's and Europe's security, with all the security guarantees it entails.
  - Implement Magnitsky-style targeted sanctions on Chinese officials and other members of the Chinese Communist Party who violate human rights in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong under the National Security Law and protect any resident in Europe from extradition to China.
  - Oppose any attempts by China to challenge Taiwan's right to determine its own future, or to unilaterally change the status quo in the Taiwan straits, especially through the use of force.
  - Step up the fight against foreign interference in all democratic processes in the European Union, including disinformation, as well as political instrumentalisation by third countries.
  - Tackle the rise in drug-related crime in Europe, which has become a prime market for international drug traffickers. Increase collaboration between Europol, Interpol and national law enforcement agencies through enhanced information and data exchange for all serious cross-border and organised crime. Strengthen Europol's right to initiate new investigations and execute law enforcement activities in and with the Member States and to proactively engage in and handle cases on its own.



*Without peace there is no prosperity. Europe's security needs a serious makeover. The shockwave from Russia's war against Ukraine, the unrelenting menace of terrorism, and the growing security concerns because of China's policies have shown us that our current systems simply are not cutting it anymore. We must strengthen Europe's autonomous capabilities and maintain an open and collaborative approach with like-minded countries to strengthen our global influence and address main challenges. We firmly oppose governments suppressing minorities and violating human rights and commit to safeguarding our own economic and strategic interests and a sustainable and equitable world order.*



## ALDE Party fights for: Enlargement as a tool for reform and security

- Reaffirm our commitment to an open-door policy for European countries that fulfil the Copenhagen criteria and make sure that the EU sends strong signals that compliance of the criteria and benchmark achievements brings tangible results. In that sense, our ambition is to ensure that the countries of the Western Balkans, Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine are ready to meet all accession criteria by 2029. Besides meeting the Copenhagen criteria, EU candidate countries should align themselves with the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). The EU will seek close cooperation on foreign affairs and security policies with like-minded European countries outside of the EU, like the UK and Norway.
- Invite candidate countries to participate in the next EU elections by offering them observer non-voting status in the European Parliament and other EU institutions until their full membership, as done previously.
- Build on the Windsor Framework Agreement to enable the EU to develop a closer relationship with the United Kingdom.
- Welcome the European Political Community as a forum to bring European countries to the table, though not an alternative to EU membership.
- Invest in core public infrastructure and connectivity, with a special emphasis on improving electrical and transportation systems. Guarantee equal opportunities for educational institutions in all candidate countries, comparable to those associated with the Erasmus+ Programme, and support initiatives in candidate countries and prospective candidates, such as the concept of "Roam like at Home" between the EU and Western Balkans.
- Provide capacity building to support candidate countries to meet accession criteria, for instance by helping professionalise public administration and develop governance.
- Prepare the EU for further enlargement. Reform the EU decision-making procedure to ensure efficiency also with a larger number of Member States and diverging views. Reform the EU budget so it is ready to absorb financial consequences of enlargement.

*EU accession benefits us from the political, economic, and security perspectives. The EU, its values and standards remain the great unifying factor for all the people of the Western Balkans, Moldova, Georgia, and Ukraine. It is crucial to support the development of our sister countries to work their way to candidate status and stabilise the region, push for integration and counter disruptive efforts from Russia, China, and other disruptive countries.*



## ALDE Party fights for: Enhance Europe's economic security

- Revive the push for EU trade and investment agreements with open, market-based economies such as the US, Australia, Mercosur, selected African partners and the Indo-Pacific region based on international commitments to rule of law, human rights, biodiversity and climate, reciprocity in market access and adherence to existing WTO rules. The EU must conclude ongoing negotiations, start new talks with other partners and speed up the ratification of all trade agreements and investment protection agreements that have already been concluded, with the exception of the investment agreement with China.
- Achieve a trans-Atlantic free trade agreement with the US as the best way to fulfil our shared climate objective and create jobs and growth opportunities, while reducing the negative consequences of the US Inflation Reduction Act on the EU.
- Reduce dependency on regimes that do not share our European values using a de-risking and diversification principle. The Comprehensive Agreement on Investment (CAI) agreed with China can only be revisited once Chinese counter-sanctions on European elected officials and scholars are completely removed, and when the agreement provides real commitments and results from China on human rights, democracy, labour, environment, market access and intellectual property protections for European companies.
- Deliver a bilateral investment agreement between the EU and Taiwan to enhance our open strategic autonomy for our high tech and sustainable industries.
- Revitalise our trade and political relations with Africa to enhance Europe's economic integration with key African countries in line with their economic strengths and interests, reflecting an equal partnership, countering Chinese investment and influence.
- Take the lead on World Trade Organization (WTO) reforms to restore the appellate body as soon as possible and achieve new commitments on technological know-how and trade secrets, subsidies and competition, as well as contractually enforceable, strong social, environmental and human rights standards.
- Explore joining the Trans-Pacific Partnership and establishing an economic security council of like-minded countries.

*The cost-of-living crisis, the pandemic and global lockdowns and conflicts have shown that we rely too much on countries that do not share our values. This puts our democracy, economy, and way of life in danger. However, free trade remains key to bring you growth and jobs. It is only by strengthening trade that we can strengthen our economy and ability to act independently, working in your and the EU's best interest while setting standards worldwide. Not to close the EU off to the world but work even more closely with the United States and partners who share our values, economic model, and environmental and climate objectives.*



**BOOST ECONOMIC  
GROWTH FOR  
YOUR FREEDOM**

# Boost economic growth for your freedom

Our economic freedom, today's and tomorrow's jobs and our ability to tackle climate change depend on the successful shift to a sustainable and digital economy that empowers you. We can turn these major changes into opportunities if we clearly and strictly prioritise and target EU money.

This is not just a question of spending levels, but how we spend it. The EU already has a €1.1 trillion investment capacity until 2027, easily measuring up to our economic competitors. But we are too slow to spend this money, and spread it too thin over too many overlapping programmes. By the end of 2023, only 1/3 of the EU pandemic recovery fund had been used. All EU policies and economic instruments should be spent on and in support of the shift to the sustainable and digital economy.

EU public investments cannot stand on their own. Our businesses' ability to invest in and deliver a sustainable, competitive economy depends equally much on Europe being an attractive and easy place to do business. We must make it easier for businesses to invest, grow and expand within Europe. This means breaking down barriers and cutting red tape for entrepreneurs, small and large businesses in Europe. Keeping our markets open and resilient against hostile activities and malign behaviour and actors encouraging healthy competition and harnessing digitalisation is the only way forward.



## ALDE Party fights for: An EU spending compass - sustainable, efficient, digital

- Consolidate the EU's many budgetary programmes, funds, and facilities to simplify spending and clearly prioritise investments and innovation in the sustainable and digital transformation, resilience, and security across Europe, taking into account the real costs and benefits of investments for your future prosperity, resilience and security.
- Shorten time for EU money to reach you and bring benefits in your community. Provide municipalities with more direct access to EU programmes such as the European social funds and open more avenues for direct funding for municipalities, cities, and civil society organisations. For nationally and centrally managed investment programmes, prevent duplication with additional national layers and rules and provide digital, "one-stop" application procedures to ensure Europe achieves the economies of scale of our global competitors.
- Ensure funding programmes, in particular regional and social funds, are robust and flexible enough to adapt to strategic challenges, including security, sustainability, and the digital transformation. These programmes should be capable of being directed for crisis response targeted at communities and citizens, when needed, rather than creating additional red tape and administrative processes.
- New EU resources from the Emissions Trading System (ETS), the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and the international tax on multinationals should be fit for purpose and earmarked to the sustainable, resilient and digital transition, not just a way to fill gaps in the general budget.
- Prioritise EU public investments that have a cross-border dimension in order to achieve the economies of scale that the Single Market offers and promote industrial cooperation across the EU. Enforce the EU's State Aid rules and avoid a generalisation of national subsidies that risk fragmenting the Single Market.
- Adapt fiscal rules that promote healthy and prudent fiscal policies and do not open up for Member States to spend beyond their means. New fiscal rules must incentivise countries to reorient public investments towards the sustainable and digital transition. Any flexibility should not create distortions in the Single Market. Pensions and social security policies should ensure fairness to both current and future generations, through reform ensuring long term solvency in light of changing demographics and ageing populations.

*Major crises have forced the EU to target and clearly prioritise funds towards strategic challenges: investing in your security and ensuring you benefit from the sustainable and digital transformation. The current inflation and debt accumulated due to the pandemic and energy crisis are challenges that require targeted investment and healthy budgetary management by the EU and Member States. European liberals will deliver a resilient EU economic system through pragmatic and enforceable budgetary policies geared towards smart investments and budgetary discipline.*



## ALDE Party fights for: A competitive European market for you and businesses to thrive

- An ALDE-led Commission would put the Single Market, which is still the backbone of our competitiveness and ability to create jobs, back on the EU agenda. Advancing and modernising our Single Market is the only way to genuinely enhance Europe's open strategic autonomy; through efficient regulation, increased economic integration and removal of all internal borders and existing barriers for products, services and public procurement, making sure our innovators can access venture capital and investor funds across Europe.
- Deepen both the European Capital Markets Union and the European Banking Union. On the primary capital market, the aim is to create better financing opportunities for private investments. A strong European capital market is needed to finance these investments.
- Prioritise cutting administrative burdens and red tape by following the simple principle of "one market, one rule". Increase European Parliamentary scrutiny on implementation to ensure that, once something has been regulated at the European level, the same rule, not 27 variations of it, applies across our internal market. Eliminate the need for European businesses, large and small, to jump through 27 national translations and agencies just to sell their goods and services. Equally, areas such as defence equipment, subsidies, and infrastructure should whenever possible be adapted to fulfil one common standard, rather than separate ones across Member States.
- Set up a uniform digital reporting portal for the European Commission, where companies can find relevant information on their different reporting obligations and submit all their reports thereby eliminating duplication and reducing the administrative burden on companies.
- Support industries of all sizes across a wide variety of sectors, by enabling European innovative industries to scale up and go global and by maintaining the EU as an attractive investment destination for foreign businesses. Not by picking the winners and relying on industrial "champions".
- Provide equal opportunities for companies in taxation, while respecting national right to taxation. Member States are competing with each other for fiscal benefits that work for larger companies and undermine public spending. Simplify tax reporting arrangements and administration for workers and businesses operating across borders within the EU, and support the implementation of the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB), to create a fairer and simpler corporation tax system across Europe.
- Protect the integrity of our internal market by making sure Europe's economic rulebook is fit for purpose to ensure all businesses play by the same rules and focus on better enforcement of EU legislation in all Member States.
- Conclude the Association Agreement between the EU and Andorra and San Marino to enhance the single market by strengthening ties with these microstates closely linked to EU decisions.

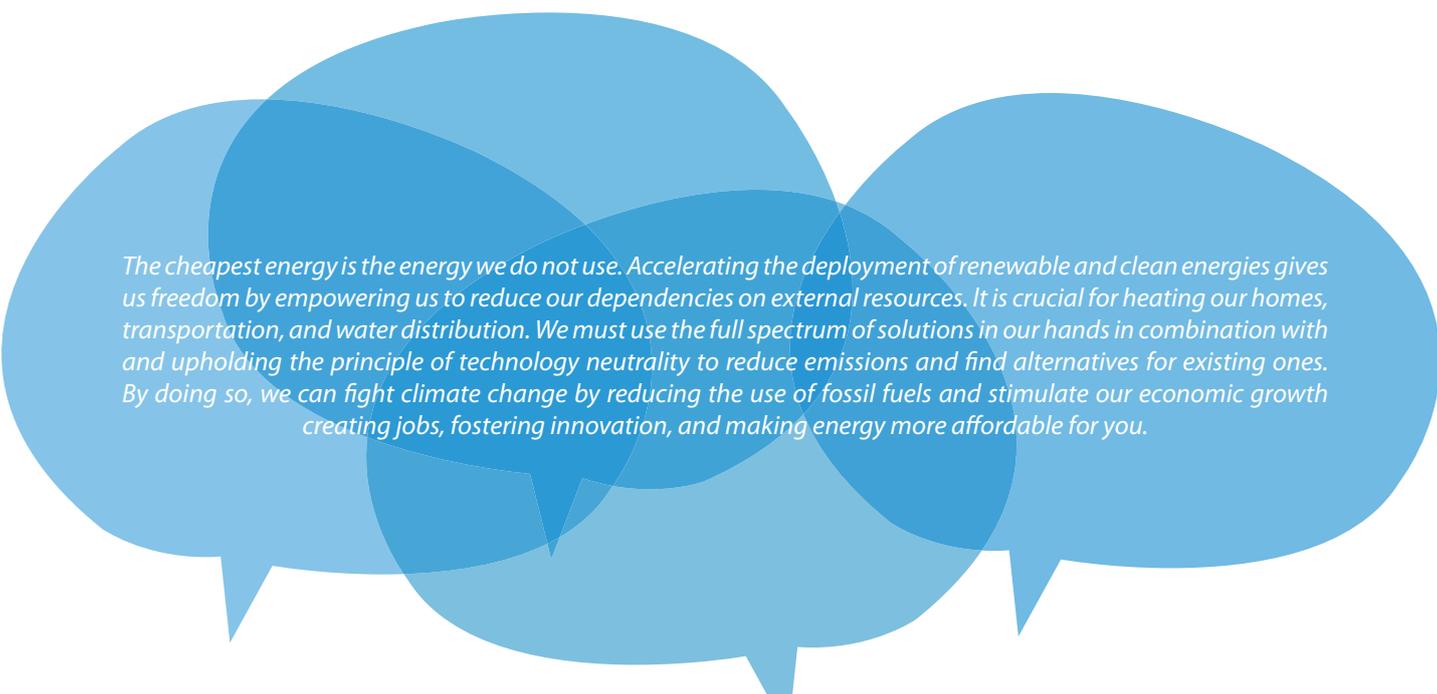
*The Single Market is the strongest and most successful part of the European integration and is setting standards worldwide. By creating a strong internal market, we have lowered costs, increased choice, and quality for you as a consumer, and created opportunities for our businesses to grow and create jobs. However, the internal market is still incomplete. We advocate for a frictionless Single Market that ensures an equal and competitive business environment at the EU level, while protecting consumers. Instead of focusing on subsidies for large national companies, the EU should focus on structural competitiveness of the Single Market with special attention to small and medium-sized businesses and entrepreneurs, as they are the main job providers of the economy. The Single Market is Europe's industrial strategy and the road to open strategic autonomy.*



## **ALDE Party fights for: Accelerate energy saving and the deployment of renewable and clean energy**

- Prioritise implementation of adopted energy and climate rules to reach our targets, including the 2040 target proposed by the European Commission, and ambitions to ensure you can fully benefit from and adapt to the sustainable transition. Empower the European Environmental Agency to become a fully operational authority ensuring consistent implementation of environmental standards across the EU and supporting the Member States on this.
- To effectively manage geopolitical risks, it is imperative to consciously reduce dependence on external resources, especially those from non-democratic countries, notably Russia and China, placing a greater emphasis on this strategic imperative. This approach will enhance the resilience and autonomy of our funding programmes, ensuring they are better aligned with our broader geopolitical and security goals.
- Invest in all types of renewable, carbon-neutral, low-carbon and waste-based energy sources, including nuclear energy, complemented by carbon removal, capture and storage technologies. Increase public and private collaboration and investments in grid capacity and storage. Embrace the use of nuclear power as a tool that can accelerate decarbonisation by reducing reliance on gas, oil, and coal power, while strongly rejecting the idea of “green” natural gas.
- Accelerate energy efficiency and savings by empowering you to optimise energy use and insulate and renovate your homes through incentives, digital solutions, and the creation of “one-stop” renovation offices, where you can easily access all the information and services required for your renovations. Governments must lead by example by promoting energy efficiency programmes for public facilities.
- Simplify, shorten, and speed up the digitalisation of licensing and permitting procedures of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects across EU Member States.
- Deepen electricity interconnections between Member States to improve the efficiency and integration of EU electricity markets, increase security of supply and reduce dependency on third-country suppliers. We must ensure that the EU interconnection target of at least 15% by 2030 is reached.
- Expand the scope of the European Emissions Trading System (ETS) to cover all remaining carbon-polluting sectors and develop a technology-neutral certification system for verified negative emissions.

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- Develop a European strategy for the bioeconomy, including the sustainable use of biomass incorporating land use considerations.
  - Facilitate intra-European cooperation across sectors, such as a functional pan-European rail network as well as research, innovation, and development and deployment of clean technologies. The European Investment Bank should contribute with investments in critical products and projects within green energy production, technology, and infrastructure, to ensure competitiveness against non-EU manufacturers, and ensure open strategic autonomy for the EU.
  - Enable decarbonisation for all types of transport, whether cargo or passenger, through infrastructure development, including the completion of missing cross-border transport connections, electrification of public transport and charging infrastructure in less densely populated areas, active mobility across national, regional, and local levels as well as using sustainable and innovative technologies to decarbonise the freight and heavy goods transport.



*The cheapest energy is the energy we do not use. Accelerating the deployment of renewable and clean energies gives us freedom by empowering us to reduce our dependencies on external resources. It is crucial for heating our homes, transportation, and water distribution. We must use the full spectrum of solutions in our hands in combination with and upholding the principle of technology neutrality to reduce emissions and find alternatives for existing ones. By doing so, we can fight climate change by reducing the use of fossil fuels and stimulate our economic growth creating jobs, fostering innovation, and making energy more affordable for you.*



## **ALDE Party fights for: A digital transformation that empowers citizens and businesses**

- Ensure a stable and clear digital rulebook to foster private investment, by focusing on the implementation of recently adopted rules. When new digital legislation is needed to address new consumer protection and potential harm, such regulation should focus on incentives, technological openness, the protection of citizens' data and privacy and the power of innovation to free up space for more investments. Ensure that digital technologies contribute to building democratic, creative, and humanistic public domain and force regulations which support its enlargement.
- Implement a digital-first principle to promote the potential of digital technologies to facilitate your interactions with public administration, payments, or funding processes, and create the right environment to accelerate the digitalisation of European businesses and the public sector, such as healthcare.
- Accelerate deployment of secure, resilient, very high-capacity networks using already allocated funds to bridge the connectivity gap, in particular in small cities, rural and remote areas by streamlining approval processes and strengthening public-private partnerships. Support the green transition by ensuring high quality mobile network connectivity, capacity, and latency on railways. Ensure all such critical digital infrastructure complies with European and international security standards and does not create vulnerabilities and exposure to foreign interference from hostile state and non-state actors.
- Embrace the potential of new digital tools such as artificial intelligence to boost our economy and improve our lives. Foster a European-specific vision of artificial intelligence as a human-centric innovation that prevents authoritarian practices through rules to protect our fundamental rights. European digital tools should reflect European values and contribute to tackling climate change, fostering individual freedom and equality of opportunity, and enhancing democratic participation. Create a safe online environment by protecting you from disinformation made by foreign governments, through the enforcement of recent digital rules, the EU Code of Conduct on Disinformation, and a European Digital Watchdog. Ensure that the online environment is a safe space for all users, in particular women and girls, and addresses the increase of cyberbullying.

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- Foster vocational programmes to urgently upskill key professions, in areas such as manufacturing, education, cybersecurity, healthcare, and agriculture with digital know-how, to accelerate the digital transition and increase competitiveness. Vocational certificates should be recognised throughout Europe.
  - Foster digital equality by allocating European Social Fund (ESF), where legally possible, and Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) resources for the development of digital competencies among adults, via employers and workplaces, with a specific focus on targeting vulnerable groups such as the elderly, those with low competencies (early school leavers), individuals with disabilities, and residents of underdeveloped regions. Additionally, enhancing the digital skills of students and teachers in public education is of paramount importance. This can be achieved through the development and implementation of a programme by the EU, which also defines a jointly-agreed minimum level of outcome competencies.
  - Increase European, as well as attract highly skilled professionals to meet the growing demand by the digital sector, with a specific support given to women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), in order for the European digital sector to compete globally. With our societies becoming more digital, we need to increase the digital literacy and skills of all citizens to be safe and secure online.



*We support a safe digital environment open to innovation and competitive for our small businesses and entrepreneurs. In the last decade, the EU has made a major push in regulating digital businesses in favour of competition, privacy, and equal opportunities in our Single Market, as well as safety for consumers. These rules are milestones on the global stage, but for the European model to be successful, they need to be fully and correctly implemented. New legislation should prevent over burdening businesses with regulatory contradiction and duplication. In the future it will not be the digital economy, the economy will be digital. We support bold action for a fair and competitive digital transformation.*



## **ALDE Party fights for: A sustainable agriculture system that guarantees food production and safeguards biodiversity**

- Reform the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) with the aim of lifting bureaucratic burdens for farmers and supporting a sustainable food production with respect for biodiversity and animal welfare. Streamline the distribution of existing funds and incentivise the adoption of sustainable practices and tools such as crop rotation, biochar to reduce carbon leakage, and precision farming. The main purpose of the future CAP should be to compensate farmers for these collective goods that the market does not take into account, and which we expect them to provide. Reduction of bureaucratic burden for small and middle size farmers is of importance especially in some Member States.
- Introduce new rules for genetically-engineered crops to increase productivity and to reduce the amount of pesticides used.
- Actively share data, foster innovation, and invest in breakthrough technologies to make better decisions, manage our resources efficiently, address the effects of climate change, make groundbreaking advancements in agriculture and fisheries and safeguard biodiversity.
- Increase the capacity of transport routes through the EU to secure food supply at affordable prices.

*We want to foster an environment where you can thrive and seize opportunities, whilst mitigating the challenges of climate change, keeping food affordable, securing our food systems, and promoting rural development. We are committed to supporting and providing opportunities for consumers and farmers to adapt to the sustainable transition while reducing our agricultural sector's climate impact. This significant shift can be done with collective effort and responsibility. Adopting sustainable agriculture and food system is essential for our well-being and to give farmers and fishers - whether small or big - a long-term perspective and predictability while safeguarding biodiversity, ocean, and water systems, preserving natural resources, and fostering economic growth.*



## ALDE Party fights for: An innovative, diversified and circular economy

- Provide businesses with incentives to invest in and adopt sustainable production to decouple economic growth from use of primary resources, including via diversification, reuse, and repair. Empower you to make informed decisions through carbon footprint transparency on product labels, as well as changing the rules on the date marking of food products.
- Vigorously oppose premature obsolescence across all commercial and industrial sectors, in alignment with our commitment to promoting the reuse and repair of electronic appliances.
- Tackle waste efficiently through innovative product design and packaging. Explore the possibilities of an EU-wide deposit return scheme for packaging and advanced container standards. Promote investments in waste management and recycling facilities within Europe. Encourage food donations and make it easy to avoid food waste.
- Advance the quality of our living environment through policies and economic incentives accessible to you and aimed at making living spaces more affordable, sustainable and energy efficient, while decreasing the material footprint of the built environment.

*We are committed to use our resources more efficiently and move to a circular economy, to reduce our dependencies on importing critical raw materials, especially those we need for clean energy and environmental improvements such as electric vehicles, smartphones, or solar panels. The EU is currently using more natural resources than our planet can replace in a year, causing climate change and harming biodiversity, while also making products more expensive and harder to get. We must harness the opportunity of renewables, innovative technologies, and nature-based solutions to move to a circular and sustainable economy. This will not only improve our quality of life, but also secure vital resources for our businesses, make less waste and protect the environment.*



## **ALDE Party fights for: Equip you with the right set of skills for the digital and sustainable transition**

- Continuously support the Bologna Process and further develop the European Universities Initiative to ensure a thriving and durable European higher education system; this is vital to promote your lifelong learning and a genuinely mobile labour force, and that is prepared for the digital and green transitions.
- Ensure every European child learns at least one foreign language starting from primary school to enable them to communicate outside their Member State, regardless of their level of education.
- Embrace transformative education strategies that foster opportunities for all children regardless of their background while incorporating a vision that prepares our children for the digital and green transitions ahead.
- Create a truly interconnected labour market by revising the mutual recognition of professional qualifications and academic and vocational degrees, to ensure that formal and informal learning is recognised and facilitate remote working across Europe.
- Provide apprenticeships for the mid-career and extend the Erasmus+ programmes to students at all educational levels to ensure that everyone is skilled to contribute to our labour force, regardless of age.
- Grant EU-sponsored summer Interrail passes to all young Europeans completing a vocational degree, to reward beneficial career choices to the European economy and to make Europe's riches known to the many, not the few.
- Implement fast lanes (EU blue card) to attract highly skilled specialists from outside Europe in key sectors such as engineering, sustainable and digital technologies, and healthcare, but also lower skilled labour. Efforts should be made to facilitate third-country nationals holding national work permits to work in other Member States.
- Facilitate legal pathways for labour migration within and across the EU, by implementing an EU talent pool and simplifying the connection between employers and third-country nationals in areas with labour shortages in Member States.

*A dynamic and resilient labour market is essential to ensure you will be able to seize the opportunities from the digital and sustainable transitions. We must build a labour market that is adaptable, inclusive, and capable of supporting you in acquiring the skills and qualifications you need to thrive and have continuous opportunities, whether you live in North, South, East or West, city or countryside.*



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**EARN YOUR TRUST  
THROUGH ACTION  
AND REFORM**

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# Earn your trust through action and reform

European Liberals are at the forefront of defending the rule of law, your civic freedoms and your fundamental rights and ensuring your safety. Attacks on democracy are growing, while attraction to authoritarianism, populism, nationalism and identitarianism increases in many Member States. We should not be complacent, but be the first ones fighting against cynicism.

Defending democracy needs ongoing commitment. As liberals, we must remember that democracy is not only about elections. Democracy is about protecting your individual rights, freedom, and rule of law, ensuring the right tools to tackle crime and keep you safe, and empowering you to shape your own destiny and make your voice heard. Achieving strong, stable, democratic, and functional institutions at every political level remains our main goal.

The EU is a unique democratic project, but reforms are needed to earn your trust. We want to build a space where national, local, and European politicians connect with you to create fair, efficient, and transparent institutions, and hold accountable those that breach the rule of law.

A liberal democracy has three basic features: democracy, respect for human rights and the rule of law. Only when all three conditions are working we can talk about a functioning democracy.

In such a society, everyone can trust that they will enjoy the fruits of their own endeavours, and that authorities are equally bound by the principle that nobody is above the law. In order for the internal market of the EU to work, the rule of law must be respected. By respecting the rule of law, corruption can be fought, and an investment friendly climate is created.



## ALDE Party fights for: Institutional reform to strengthen your voice in the EU

- Reform the EU elections. Give you the choice to vote for any European representative who best represents your ideals, also if they have another nationality. ALDE Party continues to fight for transnational voting lists.
- Reform the EU treaties to strengthen your active participation and increase transparency and accountability for the EU to meet your needs and key concerns. Open the European Commission consultation process to encourage more citizen engagement, your engagement, including by better integrating local communities and subnational governments such as local and regional authorities. They are responsible for executing most EU laws and managing half of the EU's public investment and are crucial for providing feedback on EU operations at the grassroots level.
- Transform the European Commission into a true political leadership body and ensure efficient governance and decision-making by breaking down the siloed approach, which leads to overlapping and contradictory legislation. Implement the "one in, one out" approach where possible, ensuring that with each new regulation introduced, an equivalent existing one is eliminated to avoid redundancy in the same policy area.
- Establish an Erasmus programme for civil servants working at the EU institutions to foster understanding and cooperation between them and the Member States and to bring them closer to you.
- Advocate for a single seat for the European Parliament, with right to initiate legislation and power to cast a no-confidence vote against any member of the European Commission.
- Encourage Member States to celebrate and mark Europe Day by declaring it a national holiday, following the example of Luxembourg.

*It is time to develop functional mechanisms that regain your trust and allow for a meaningful involvement. We believe in a Europe where your voice is prominent, and you have a role to play in shaping the decisions that affect your life. It is only by having stronger EU institutions and vital channels of communication that your concerns and aspirations will be adequately represented in the decision-making processes. Through citizen initiatives such as the Conference of the Future of Europe, we have learned what changes you want. Now, it is time to implement and continue fighting for reform to reassure you that your future is in safe hands.*



## ALDE Party fights for: Defend the rule of law and slash corruption

- Make full use of the conditionality principle in Article 7 and expand the annual rule of law report scope to include all values in Article 2 to protect and promote the rule of law, equality, respect for human rights and rights of minorities, to combat corruption and ensure adherence to our values. No rule of law, no EU money.
- Ensure that the EU effectively guarantees the protection of the rule of law across the Union. Effectively uphold the integrity of institutions and fight against the worrisome erosion of the independence of the judiciary in the Union.
- Remain vigilant on the protection of the rule of law in all Member States. The European Commission should consider the protection of the rule of law and European values as its core task. Any breaches of EU law or values should be followed by infringement procedures.
- Further develop and deploy the EU rule of law mechanism. The next Multiannual framework should have clear conditionalities related to the rule of law.
- Foster a professional, reforming, progressive and responsive civil service across all levels of government and institutions in Europe and put in place anti-corruption policies including a system of indicators for policy monitoring to ensure impartiality, and to end clientelism and party politicisation, as well as to prevent impunity of corruption.
- Make it conditional to receive EU funding to cooperate with the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), which should have the ability to enforce sanctions beyond financial penalties. EPPO's powers should be extended to include all serious, cross border crime that cannot be handled by Member States alone.
- Establish an effective anti-corruption sanction regime in Europe and reinforce national anti-corruption agencies with more funding, possibly through EU-level initiatives. Secure the functioning of the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) by ensuring national cooperation and adherence to recommendations.
- Uphold the right to association and assembly to protect civil society organisations, in particular those fighting to protect and promote democracy under threat.

*Corruption remains a problem that hurts good government, trust in institutions and even the outcome of elections. Cross-border and organised crime has increased, and some governments are more and more ignoring the supremacy of EU law and EU court rulings, affecting our safety, democratic systems and cooperation. We are committed to tackle crime, slash corruption and address rule of law breaches regardless of the perpetrators, whether governments or individuals, while advocating for targeted sanctions to avoid punishing innocent citizens and businesses.*



## **ALDE Party fights for: Guarantee your individual freedom in an open and tolerant society**

- Legalise and recognise same-sex marriage and rainbow families, and ensure their rights, including free movement within the EU, are enshrined in EU legislation. Continue improving LGBTI+ rights and supporting individuals in building their families through paths to recognised parenthood, protecting the rights of children.
- Secure equal and safe access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, such as abortion and other gender-based care. Incorporate the right to abortion into the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and continue striving for affordable contraceptives and menstrual health products. Introduce an EU-wide ban on conversion therapy.
- Combat gender-based violence by calling for the ratification of remaining countries to the Istanbul Convention, a harmonised definition of rape based on the lack of consent, and the implementation of EU-wide restraining orders. Enhance gender equality and combat the anti-gender movement strategically.
- Break down barriers by increasing diversity in all spheres of influence and ensure sufficient access to parental leave across European countries and institutions, including the recognition of parental leave for Members of the European Parliament and the possibility to nominate another Member as substitute, as well as promoting a more balanced distribution of care responsibilities.
- Fast-track the Horizontal Equal Treatment Directive to guarantee robust equal rights for LGBTI+ individuals in every sphere of life.
- Expand the EU Crimes list to include hate speech and hate crime, and include gender, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation and disabilities, alongside racism and xenophobia, as areas in which hate crime can manifest itself.
- Create a European watchdog to protect and promote media freedom and independence across Europe. Effectively prevent and prosecute criminal offences including child abuse, without thereby infringing the citizen's right to privacy through imposing mandatory chat controls that would place every citizen under suspicion and violate end-to-end encryption. Initiate a European fund for independent media, which will help independent media outlets when they are being targeted by Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation (SLAPPs).

*Every one of us is free to be who we want to be, regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion, or any other aspect of our identity. We are free to express ourselves, pursue our goals and make our own choices. As liberals, it is our duty to create a society that cherishes diversity and safeguards your right to live without fear in a free and just society. We will continue fighting against the increased conservative trends that undermine the principles of equality.*



## ALDE Party fights for: An asylum policy that works

- Reform the Common European Asylum System, aiming to stop the cynical and inhuman business model of smugglers, improve reception standards, share responsibility, and make asylum procedures human rights-based and more efficient.
- Launch a European Action Plan for search and rescue operations in the Mediterranean, prioritising the safety and dignity of individuals in distress. Make sure that there are consequences for pushbacks, mistreatment of migrants, and other violations of the rights of migrants. Make agreements with third countries to halt irregular migration to the EU, while upholding and protecting human rights.
- Simultaneously reduce push and pull factors of migration by developing effective partnership programmes prioritising job creation and climate change mitigation on the one hand, and implementing objective information campaigns about the realities of migration to counter disinformation provided by smugglers, on the other hand.
- Provide specialised legal counselling to protect the rights of LGBTI+ individuals seeking asylum, even if they originate from a country officially-deemed 'safe'.
- Establish EU-managed common facilities outside the EU borders for asylum seekers, responsible for streamlined application processing.
- Reform Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, for effective control of EU external borders with respect for human rights.
- Do away with politically-driven vetoes and fearmongering using migration, and approve full accession to the Schengen Area to all Member States that meet the required criteria. We reaffirm our belief that strong external EU borders and open internal borders boost economic growth, business and transport efficiency, and cross-border employment, all of which serve to speed up the cohesion, economic integration, and stability of our Union.
- Prioritise integration, including through EU funds, to support policies such as the provision of basic skills, applying zero-tolerance for discrimination, promoting intercultural dialogue and language learning, as well as buddy schemes to facilitate integration at a micro-level.
- Develop effective foreign aid programmes prioritising democracy promotion, job creation, and climate change mitigation.

*Migration towards the EU has always existed and will always be part of our societies. We provide shelter to those who are fleeing war or persecution. We need to fight against human traffickers and smugglers, tackle irregular migration and make the return and readmission policy more efficient to address the inhuman consequences for migrants and disruptive effects on our countries. Additionally, with a decreasing and ageing population and worsening labour shortages, the EU must address headstrong the integration of migrants as part of a successful migration policy. We stand against populist anti-migrant rhetoric and policies that violate our liberal values, and worsen our competitiveness in the global labour market.*

