

Stronger through cooperation in Research, Education and Innovation

The Congress of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) Party convening in Dublin, Ireland, on 2-4 June 2022:

Notes that:

- Europe is currently facing its biggest challenge to freedom, democracy, security and prosperity for decades. The COVID-19 pandemic has further stressed the importance of international cooperation. Europe's answer to these challenges has always been and will remain cooperation;
- research and education have contributed significantly to Europe's prosperity and security;
- Europe is home to world-class research institutions;
- European countries have been ranked among the most competitive and innovative countries for years;
- innovation is a major engine of economic growth;
- innovation is occurring at a fast and ever-increasing pace.

Believes that:

- research, education and innovation are essential for Europe's future. Investments in these areas are of crucial importance for European citizens and the economy;
- academic collaboration has always thrived on international cooperation. The best science and technology emerge from international networks and consortia;
- in times like these it is essential to continue investing in and strengthening European-wide cooperation in research and education. An overly protective 'EU-first' approach could hamper ground-breaking research and innovation thus negatively impacting productivity and growth;
- if Europe wants to strengthen its global competitive position, cooperation among strong and reliable research partners is key;
- this is a time to strengthen and not to cut formal links between historical partners that stand by the same values of excellence and inclusion in research and education.

Calls for:

- continued building on decades of investment and strengthened cooperation to maintain Europe's leadership in education, research and innovation;

Resolution:

Stronger through cooperation in Research, Education and Innovation

Year and Congress:

Dublin, June 2022

Category:

Culture, Education and Research

Page:

1

- increasing investments in education, research and innovation and in particular in key enabling technologies including microelectronics, biotechnology, photonics and quantum computing;
- laying the basis for future prosperity and growth in Europe through improving cross-border cooperation, building of critical mass in science and technology and enabling continent-wide competition;
- strengthening of the European Research Area (ERA);
- creating a single market for research, innovation and technology across Europe, by aligning research policies and programmes as well as enabling the free circulation of researchers and knowledge across Europe;
- increasing support for knowledge transfer and valorisation of research to benefit European citizens;
- continuing the long-established and mutually-beneficial cooperation in research, education and innovation between European countries, meaning the EU and third countries, such as non-EU EEA countries, the UK and Switzerland;
- the establishment of a European Digital University (EDU), a European online university. The EDU would allow for online study all around Europe with a pan-European approach;
- to promote “early stage” entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education and support youth start-ups and SMEs and working to provide educational support to SMEs, taking into account the energy transition, which has to be fair and sustainable and be carried out in a proportional manner, for what the SMEs need to prepare themselves beforehand. In this regard, an incentives scheme would be a policy to consider;
- to promote and encourage technological progress, and to remove any barriers to the development of new, sustainable technologies and to actively invest in R&D, especially when it comes to green technologies.

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Culture, Education and
Research

Page:

2