

Proposal for Skopje Spring Congress 2020

Proposal
901

LYMEC Spring Congress, April 3 to 5, 2020 in Skopje

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Status: accepted rejected transferred to _____

The Skopje Spring Congress 2020 may decide:

1 **We Are Europe Too**

2 **We Are Europe Too**

3 **Recalling:**

- 4 • The LYMEC Resolution on the Western Balkan Enlargement Process adopted on the
- 5 2017 LYMEC Autumn Congress in Sofia;
- 6 • The ALDE Resolution on Opening of EU Accession Negotiations adopted by the 2019
- 7 ALDE Congress in Athens;
- 8 • The expressed urge to support Western Balkans in their attempt to transform their society
- 9 and political systems according to EU standards, stated in the ALDE Resolution on
- 10 Improving Europe's Capabilities to Address the Rise of China adopted by 2019 ALDE
- 11 Congress in Athens;
- 12 • The ALDE Resolution on North Macedonia's Membership in NATO and the EU adopted
- 13 by the ALDE Council in Berlin, in February 2019;
- 14 • The ALDE Resolution on European Integration of the Western Balkans adopted by the
- 15 2015 ALDE Congress in Budapest;
- 16 • The fact that the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties has backed visa
- 17 liberation for citizens of Kosovo.

18 **Considering that:**

- 19 • The 5th of February 2020, the European Commission put forward a proposal to drive
- 20 forward the EU accession process, aiming to making it more credible, with a stronger
- 21 political steer, more dynamic and predictable, by adopting a *revised enlargement*
- 22 *methodology*;
- 23 • The risk of rising populist and nationalist political options (*anti EU movements*) is still an
- 24 obvious possibility all around Europe;
- 25 • The Agreement between Belgrade and Beijing about joint police patrols, whose
- 26 implementation started to see light in October 2019, when Chinese patrols operated on
- 27 Serbian soil;
- 28 • Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Montenegro are only partner countries in
- 29 the Erasmus+ Programme, as opposed to Croatia, Serbia and North Macedonia, which
- 30 are programme countries;
- 31 • Students from Western Balkan, who have ambition to complete their education within
- 32 European Union previously need to apply for visa;
- 33 • The demanding challenges young entrepreneurs from the Western Balkans have to

- 34 endure, if they wish to do business in member states and enter the EU single market;
- 35 • In respect to EU granted autonomous trade preferences to all the Western Balkans, it is
- 36 difficult for the Western Balkan states to compete with Europe's trade partners and
- 37 benefit from Europe's free market given the customs duties;
- 38 • There are continuous demands from both citizens and political leaders from the Western
- 39 Balkan for lowering the roaming charges with the EU.

40 **Believing that:**

- 41 • The EU motto “United in Diversity” perfectly describes the values upon which the idea of
- 42 European Union is established; and that Western Balkans, diverse as they are, would be
- 43 the perfect ingredient for underlining these values in the future;
- 44 • Young people in the Western Balkan, especially young liberals, have a strongly
- 45 developed European identity, which can be confirmed by the fact that, when in search for
- 46 a better future, they mostly migrate towards EU member states;
- 47 • The EU is where young people from Western Balkans turn to, when value crises in the
- 48 region occur, as they perceive it as a beacon of hope that these values can be preserved;
- 49 • The increased influence of various foreign actors in the region, we perceive that it also
- 50 can have an effect on youth and their identification with European values, proven by
- 51 recent poll results, which state that support for EU accession in the Western Balkans has
- 52 significantly dropped;
- 53 • Young people coming from Western Balkans shouldn't eagerly search for a wireless
- 54 internet connection when visiting EU member states, because being online means to be
- 55 up-to-date with the current global events;
- 56 • The future belongs to the youth and most of Western Balkan youth is hoping to have a
- 57 future based upon EU values – they rightfully feel that they are Europe, too.

58 **Therefore, we call for:**

- 59 • LYMEC, ALDE, Renew Europe, IFLRY, Liberal International, other liberal networks and
- 60 liberal politicians in the EU and beyond to make a greater effort to nurture the European
- 61 identity of the Western Balkan youth and the youth in Balkan EU member states,
- 62 especially that of young liberals, aiming to make them feel as part of Europe.
- 63 • Liberal political parties and liberal politicians (elected officials, prime ministers, party
- 64 officials) to consider the impact their political decisions and public statements make on
- 65 political activities of liberal partner organisations in the Western Balkans.
- 66 • LYMEC, ALDE, Renew Europe, IFLRY, Liberal International, other liberal networks and
- 67 liberal politicians in the EU and beyond to ask for opinions from partner organisations in
- 68 the Western Balkans prior to discussions and decision-making, regarding topics relevant
- 69 to the future of the region, such as EU enlargement and multilateral relations with/within
- 70 the Western Balkans.
- 71 • Advocating, as liberals, for that the new methodology does not apply double standards to
- 72 the Western Balkan countries currently aspiring to join the EU, compared to those that
- 73 have already become member states, as well as for the accession process reaching its
- 74 final goal – consolidation of the entire European territory – instead of lasting indefinitely.
- 75 • Additional support and empowerment for civic society movements, which promote EU
- 76 values in Western Balkan.
- 77 • Liberal politicians to continue emphasising the values EU was established upon and not
- 78 give in to populist rhetoric, so the European Union stays that beacon young people in the
- 79 Western Balkans can turn to, when looking for a model of a society they can identify with.

Attention: This is a preview! The official text is printed in the proposal book for Skopje Spring Congress 2020 03 - 05 April 2020.