

# REPORT

## ELF Workshop Liberal Messages for Europe

**16.06.2018, American University in Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria**

The second workshop from the “Liberal messages for Europe” ELF events series in Bulgaria took place on 16 June 2018 in the city of Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria. The event was supported by the Project Office for Southeast Europe of the Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom and the Liberal Institute for Political Analyses and was hosted by the American University in Bulgaria.

The workshop was attended by citizens of different professional background from Blagoevgrad and the region and aimed to identify the citizen’s perspectives on the current key challenges for the European Union. The active participation of all the attendees resulted in a fruitful discussion according to the preliminary set format and topics. After elaborating on Bulgaria’s contribution to the European community for the past eleven years of EU membership, the participants outlined the benefits that the EU has brought to Bulgaria and the areas that that could still be improved, exactly by being a part of the common European community. These are modernisation of the education and realisation for young people, improvement of the standard of living, and the judiciary.

They all can be addressed, however, only by deepening the European integration and strengthening the Union as a whole. Therefore, an active approach towards overcoming the challenges of the day should be taken on both national and European level. Hence, the discussion refocused on the current hot topics for the EU in search of liberal policy approaches from a citizen’s point of view. The areas of Security and Defense, Migration, Human Rights, Environment and Climate Change, and EU Budget were highlighted and each one of them discussed in work groups. All the findings will serve as a basis for the production of a Strategy Paper for the better positioning of the national and European liberal parties at the upcoming European Parliamentary elections and beyond.