

Short report for ELF event “Liberalism and Human Rights – The LGBT Agenda” in Stockholm 20180801-20180805

August 7th 2018 Stockholm

In the middle of the hottest summer ever recorded in Sweden, 17 engaged liberals from 9 different countries gathered for a 3-day event dedicated to the struggle for stronger LGBT-rights in Europe and its neighborhood. The schedule allowed participants to learn about the situation in each other's countries, exchange ideas regarding strategy and best practice for reaching a positive change for sexual minorities, and in general to take part in what was offered in the EuroPride week taking place in the city of Stockholm.

Apart from an internal workshop with sharing of experiences and a public seminar, the program included study visits to an LGBT-certified senior home, lunch with a Swedish MP and famous LGBT-activist and several chances to network with Swedish and international liberals, including two dinner receptions in the City Hall. Participants got to be part of a historic event on Friday the 3rd of August as the founding ceremony of the LGBTI-liberals of Europe, a network of liberal LGBT-organizations associated to liberal European parties, was included in the program. The ceremony was held in the historic 1st chamber of the Swedish Riksdag in the presence of prolific liberals including ALDE-president Hans van Baalen. The program ended with participation in the EuroPride parade where an overwhelmed delegation marched for human rights and tolerance together with around 60 000 others and hundreds of thousands of spectators through Stockholm.

At an early stage, the event seems to have reached the highly set expectations. Participants have made contacts and learned more about LGBT-politics that in concrete ways further European liberalism. LGBTI-liberals of Europe has, much thanks to the project, got the flying start they need to lead the struggle ahead.