



**Alliance of Liberals
and Democrats for Europe**

ALDE PRIORITIES

2010-2011



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Alliance of
**LIBERALS and
DEMOCRATS**
for Europe

ON YOUR SIDE



State of the European Union

The European Commission must use its right of initiative and the full range of powers under the Lisbon Treaty to address the concerns and fears of Europe's citizens for their jobs, security, freedom and the environment.

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe has seven priorities for the Union in the year ahead:

- Accelerate the response to the financial crisis,
- Set the framework for genuine pan-European economic governance,
- Complete Europe's Internal Market - especially transport infrastructure,
- Rigorously monitor and uphold fundamental human rights across the EU,
- Draft a new strategic vision for Europe's External Action Service,
- Regain leadership of the international climate change agenda,
- Provide the Union with a sustainable system of own financing.

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ALDE Priorities
2010-2011



The latest Eurobarometer shows an all-time low in our citizens' confidence in the Union. Yet 86% of Europeans believe that the Union can provide the solution to the financial and economic crisis. The ALDE Group strongly agrees with them. The reticence by Member States to take action quickly and effectively - and sometimes at all - has largely contributed to citizens questioning the Union's relevance. Yet the Union, with its new Treaty of Lisbon, has many of the powers required. They need to be applied and the Commission must take the lead.

The ALDE Group sets out below its 7 main priorities for the coming year. We strongly believe that if these issues are tackled, confidence will start to return to the Union and we will be able to demonstrate the added-value of the Union. We must start immediately. Results are urgent.

1. A European response to the financial crisis

We need to accelerate the response to the financial crisis. The crisis is far from over and not enough has been done to prevent a recurrence.

Although it is true that new dispositions for capital requirements and bonuses have been agreed, that stress tests have been undertaken and that a new financial supervisory system has been agreed, still more needs to be done. A comprehensive overhaul of the credit rating agencies, the MiFiD and Market Abuse Directive is also required. The ALDE Group calls for the Commission to urgently come forth with these measures.

We strongly believe that even if the recent 'special vehicle' has been essential in assisting Greece, the Union needs to equip itself with a European Monetary Fund. Such a fund would receive contributions linked to GDP and enable any Member State to draw funds up to the amount it has deposited.

The stability and growth pact can no longer be an empty text. It must be applied with the possibility of real sanctions such as naming and shaming, withdrawing voting power, or reducing subsidies from structural funds.

2. Genuine European economic governance

Recent events have clearly demonstrated that the eurozone is in need of bolder economic governance and that a monetary pillar without a social-economic pillar is doomed to fail.

To ensure this, a real economic government is required to give the Commission a proper and stronger responsibility for management, enabling it to use existing tools as well as tools newly provided by the Lisbon Treaty, and to confer on it the task of coordinated action plans, as well as establishing a common strategy.

In this context, we strongly urge the Commission to establish a "carrot and stick" approach, using compliance mechanisms such as economic incentives as well as sanctions aimed at supporting specifically the EU 2020 strategy. We are also strongly in favour of strict adherence to the Stability and Growth Pact by the Member States.

We therefore expect the Commission to propose a comprehensive package on economic governance that takes into account the above mentioned points, as well as any proposals that may flow from the Working Group set up by the European Council.

3. Relaunching the Single Market - Investment in the Future

The Single Market provides the engine of the Union's economy and growth. And it must be re-launched. The recent Monti report must be quickly cast into a feasible but ambitious action plan in order to provide the Union with additional growth and competitiveness.

One priority must be the networks binding the Single Market together. They remain poor. A large programme of Trans European Networks (TENs) must be re-launched, either in energy supply and interconnection, in physical transport, especially rail, or telecommunications by increasing the broadband networks and enhancing the digital economy. This is especially true within the new Member States where interconnections between themselves are insufficient as are links to the more western European states.

Especially important is the development of a smart energy grid. New technologies must be used to take advantage of the energy savings that can be made through a smarter distribution of energy, taking into account real energy requirements, though the use of smart meters.

4. An Ambitious Budget with Own Resources

The Union has to establish a new multi annual financial framework. This requires a radical rethink as to the organisation of the Union's finances. The cycle must be brought down to a more realistic 5 year period to coincide with the mandates of both Parliament and Commission. Most importantly, a real system of Union own resources must be established. This must provide for a reduction in the direct contribution that Member States pay to the Union and also move away from the often unhelpful division of the Union between net beneficiaries and net recipients. This new system must respect the principles of transparency and fairness.

At a time of clear budgetary constraint, the Union must show its added value. In many areas, joint investment and funding provides for large economies of scale and synergies. Not only can they assist Member States in reducing certain expenditures, but it can also provide the necessary investment in the future the Union requires.

5. Fighting for Civil Liberties on our own Continent

For the ALDE Group, the protection of human rights, be it inside or outside of the Union is essential. We cannot as a Union based on values and the respect for legality be seen to compromise on these fundamental principles.

So we must first ensure that our human rights are respected within our Union. We therefore believe that a more rigorous monitoring mechanism must be set

up to supervise and detect any internal breaches. And real consequences must arise from the potential non-respect of human rights.

6. A new strategic framework for Europe in the world

The establishment of the External Action Service and increasing globalisation requires us to update and review our strategy toward our partners.

The High Representative/Vice President of the Commission must as a matter of urgency develop a new strategic framework for the Union's relations with its partners. This must include classic foreign policy issues but also new ideas such as climate diplomacy and the inclusion of trade and development concerns. And it must also ensure that the Union speaks with one voice in world fora.

We must also honour our pledge for the Millennium Development Goals and ensure that the contributions by Member States are adequate.

7. Europe - regain leadership in climate change

The Union has been in the leadership of the fight against climate change at the world level. At the Copenhagen summit last year we lost this leadership. The forthcoming Cancun summit looks set for failure unless the Union can regain leadership in this field. This will require the Commission to be the single interlocutor and single

negotiator for the Union. It will also require the Member States to step back and give their full support to the Commission. If this does not happen quickly, we will again lose out in terms of achieving a world agreement and the Union will be further marginalised. A single voice and a strong position is urgently required.

The ALDE group firmly believes that the success of the Union lies in the 'Community' or federal method, which enables the Union to promote its general interest. Recent events, such as the negotiations on the assistance to Greece, have aptly demonstrated the limitation of an intergovernmental approach. If we want the Union to succeed, it must become more federal not less. We will continue to work to strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the European Parliament.



COMMITTEES



AFET

Foreign Affairs



- ALDE believes that it is essential that the High Representative establishes herself on the global scene as a key world figure, in line with her Lisbon Treaty based mandate and delivers a more **coherent, visible and consistent policy**.
- It is critically important that the **External Action Service** be successfully and efficiently established as an EU diplomatic service and provided with sufficient personnel on the ground, whilst at the same time ensuring both that double structures are avoided and that community aspects are safeguarded.
- ALDE firmly believes that the Union must strengthen its presence and coherence at **international fora** such as the UN.

- **Human rights and democracy** building remains for us a keystone and should therefore be an integral part of all EU external action.
- The reinforcement of the **EU-US relationship** is essential, as is the forging of a common approach to the Afghan crisis.
- Shares the American President Barack Obama's vision of **a world free of nuclear weapons** and strongly endorses the NPT Review conference's call for universal adherence to the Treaty, in order to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.
- The strengthening of the Union's **common defence capabilities**, and improvements in the cooperation with NATO, while enabling the Union to autonomously conduct its own risk assessment are all necessary. The revision of the Union's strategic priorities should also be considered.
- The successful management and conclusion of negotiations with **Croatia** leading to accession during the Commission's current mandate.
- A responsible handling of sensitive **relations with Turkey**, where the membership process plays a crucial role. Ensure that negotiations with Turkey continue, and support the internal reform process in the country.
- Reinforce, and if needed, re-evaluate, EU policies towards the **Western Balkans** and finally secure tangible results in terms of political stability and

economic growth after years of significant EU and IC support.

- Develop the **Eastern Partnership** through real issues like visa free travel, the establishment of a free trade area and gradual inclusion in community policies, matched by adequate EU funding.
- ALDE will continue to play an important and active role within the Parliament's Middle East Working Group.

DEVE

Development



- ALDE believes the **Millennium Development Goals**, in particular the **0.7 of GDP should be binding**, despite economic recession and obvious financing problems. Requests for additional money for financing of new challenges (i.e. climate change) may be necessary too.
- Enhanced **promotion of democratic values** and improvement of good governance in developing countries remain core elements of an authentic liberal approach in this domain.
- We are determined to maintain **autonomy of development policy** in the establishment of the EEAS and to ensure policy coherence in the field of external action.

- ALDE requests **reform of the Development Cooperation Instrument** (DCI) and re-shifting of budgetary allocations after 2013 in order to stick to the main target of poverty eradication; the primary and overarching objective of cooperation.
- Greater focus needs to be brought to **private and public partnership** initiatives enshrined in the Cotonou Agreement.
- The **regional dimension** of EU cooperation and development policy has to be strengthened.
- Revision of the **banana regulation** under the leadership of an ALDE rapporteur, especially concerning the accompanying measures to assist in the restructuring of the often single crop markets and thereby provide for greater long term diversification.
- Following ALDE insistence, the Commission will present a proposal on the setting up of an **EU rapid reaction** force to coordinate responses to humanitarian disasters. The recent flood catastrophe in Pakistan demonstrates that a better coordination between all humanitarian actors and greater integration of instruments is urgently requested.

INTA

Trade



- **ALDE wants a positive conclusion of the Doha Development Round** whilst respecting the protection of geographical indicators and intellectual property rights (IPR), market access for industrial goods and services and public procurement in both developed and developing countries. Minimum requirements for environmental and social standards should also be included.
- Conclude negotiations on bilateral and regional Free Trade Agreements, as a complementary strategy to the multilateral framework, taking into account the special requirements and challenges of SMEs. ALDE insists that the EP be involved in the negotiating mandates and regularly informed.

- ALDE would like to see through its commercial policy a better **promotion of the Union's core values, such** as the promotion of human rights, democracy, rule of law and fundamental freedoms, the defence of the environment and the promotion of ILO and social standards.
- The EU should play an active role in the **future institutional reform of the WTO** including the promotion of a WTO parliamentary assembly.
- **Regional integration** should be promoted when negotiating trade agreements and **coherence between trade and development policies** should be ensured.
- The **strategy on Economic Partnership Agreements should be reviewed**. An **impact assessment** should be regularly undertaken and after their conclusion the **EP will closely monitor their implementation**.
- The regulation on the **origin marking of imported products (Made in)** must be adopted in order to protect consumers and European competitiveness.
- Customs legislation must be amended to **end the detention, seizure and destruction of legitimate generic medicines in EU transit**. Whilst there must be an effective anti-counterfeiting policy, this must be balanced between illegal counterfeit medicine and legitimate generic medicine. The EU should therefore respect its commitments of the 2001 WTO Doha declaration.

- Greater attention must be given to the initiatives which will lead to commercial openings in certain sectors in the future, such as **green products and technologies**, or trans-technology products and products for international standardisation, particularly sectors with great potential.
- Development of a **strategic high level dialogue** to discuss issues such as market access, regulatory framework, global imbalances, energy, climate change, access to raw materials, poverty reduction, education and development. The EU shall reinforce dialogue with the USA and also high level dialogue with China and try to deepen our relations with other areas of the world, in particular Japan and Russia.

BUDG

Budgets



- The ALDE believes that in order to determine the size and shape of the new budget, the Commission must undertake a clear assessment of the **financial impact of the Lisbon Treaty**.
- It is imperative that the Commission finally undertake its long awaited **mid-term review** and revision of the current **multi-annual financial framework 2007-2013** (MAFF). The current system does not work as is clearly demonstrated through the numerous recent revisions of the MAFF. The Commissioner for budget must undertake a mid-term review and propose a mid-term revision of the financial programming (2007-2013) in the course of the first year of his mandate.

- The Treaty of Lisbon provides for **multi-annual programming** and its articulating with political programmes. In good time for 2014, the Commission must propose a calendar paving the way for the adoption of the next MAFF. The framework should be based on a fundamental review of the multi-annual budget priorities to ensure a budget that not only matches our political ambitions but that also gives greater emphasis to flexibility. Special attention needs to be paid to EU external relations, the new endeavours of stimulating research and innovation and to maintain solidarity. The EP Special committee on the policy challenges and budgetary resources for a sustainable European Union after 2013 (SURE) will conclude its work in July 2011. It is of the utmost importance that the European Commission wait for the EP position before issuing a proposal on the next multiannual framework post 2013, and ensuring that EP priorities are duly taken into consideration by the Commission.
- A **post 2013 MAFF** should mainly be based on a transparent and, if possible, **independent system of own resources**. The Commissioner for budget must launch an in-depth reflexion on this issue as soon as possible, associating the Council, the European Parliament as well as national parliaments.
- A **simplification of the financial regulation** to enable an easier and accelerated implementation of EU programmes and funds (such as the 7th Research and Development Framework Programme and the Structural and Cohesion Funds, for instance).

CONT

Budgetary Control



- In 2004 the Commission promised that by 2009 it would achieve a **positive Declaration of Assurance** (DAS) on the reliability and legality of transactions. Despite certain improvements this has not happened. This remains a fundamental priority.
- The introduction of **National Management Declarations**, a key and longstanding ALDE demand, by Member States remains crucial yet uneven. The Commission should ensure correct implementation by all Member States.
- The College takes collective responsibility when signing the Annual Activity Reports but

the **Commissioners** should take **individual responsibility for their portfolio**.

- The **reform of OLAF** remains a high priority and the Commission must bring it forward and increase its independence.

ECON

Economic and Monetary Affairs



Economic Governance

- The European Union needs **improved economic governance** and cooperation inside the euro area. ALDE believes that the **Stability and Growth Pact** needs to be strengthened and implemented more effectively, notably by **expanding economic surveillance**, an ex-ante control of Member States' budgets, automaticity of the Excessive Deficit Procedure, **tougher sanctions** and the reduction of macroeconomic imbalances with the aim to increase competitiveness throughout the EU.
- It is essential for the Union to develop **EU crisis-management capabilities** in the form of a **European Monetary Fund** and coordinated crisis response at EU level.

- A clear strategy must be developed for the efficient **enlargement** of the **Euro area** as is the urgent requirement to provide the euro with single representation of EU positions in international economic fora.
- ALDE underlines the necessity to ensure that the “**EU 2020**” **strategy** prioritises growth, jobs and competitiveness based on a low-carbon and resource-efficient economy.

Markets

- An **effective micro- and macro-prudential supervision** of cross-border financial institutions is urgently needed and the ALDE Group believes that this can only be achieved with a **single European financial supervisor** and genuine pan-European oversight by the three new supervisory authorities based in London, Paris and Frankfurt.
- The Union needs to deliver on **financial market regulation** to avoid wide-spread financial distress and ensure a sustainable contribution of the financial sector to the real economy.
- The **protection of consumers** is also very important within a properly functioning competitive European market, particularly during times of economic crisis.
- **Good governance** in the area of **taxation** is needed as is the introduction of strong measures to combat cross-border tax fraud, tax avoidance and tax evasion.

EMPL

Employment and Social Affairs



- For ALDE, a key priority is the **reduction in unemployment** levels and in particular among young people, older people and disabled people.
- **Investment in training and education** must be increased in areas where employment is likely to grow.
- Synergies must be established between the European Years - 2010 Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, 2011 Volunteering & 2012 - Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity.
- An effective and speedy adoption of the **Antidiscrimination Directive** in access to goods and services is of great importance to reducing inequalities in society.

- In light of the upcoming revision of the **European Globalisation Fund** Regulation in 2011 – ALDE will focus on the importance of effective re-training and re-integration measures - with a strong emphasis on promoting entrepreneurship and improving the efficiency of the instrument.
- Combating **the gender pay gap** and discrimination in the workplace on all grounds remains an important priority for ALDE too.
- We support improvement to **women's participation** in the labour market by promoting flexible working arrangements for both women and men in order to reconcile family life and professional life - including support for Carers to combine employment with caring responsibilities.
- Improving coordination in the social field and helping to deliver an effective exchange of best practice in areas such as social exclusion and the fight against poverty should be actively addressed.
- More effective implementation of existing legislation, particularly in the health and safety field must be pursued more rigorously.
- Promoting adequate and **sustainable pensions** is especially vital in times of economic downturn.
- Microfinance Facility - a priority for ALDE is to support the Microfinance Facility and to ensure it works effectively in support of small businesses.

ENVI

Environment, Public Health and Food Safety



Environment

- ALDE seeks the adoption of an ambitious new headline target for the **protection and restoration of biodiversity**, and a programme of practical steps to ensure that it is achieved. The Commission's forthcoming Communication must take a holistic approach, addressing problems across the EU policy areas, and contain concrete and measurable sub-targets to ensure effective implementation.
- We want the **EU 2020 flagship initiative on a resource efficient Europe** to be supported by concrete proposals, including binding targets. This must include an EU funding strategy to promote resource efficiency, and market-based

instruments in order to change consumption and production patterns and ensure that rare but vital metals and other substances are collected and recycled.

- **A thorough assessment of the application and effectiveness of current environment legislation needs to be undertaken.** Particular regard should be made to the failure of Member States to take such measures and to introduce such sanctions as are necessary to ensure that it is applied effectively. Equal and effective enforcement of existing and future legislation is essential, and we want the Commission to demonstrate its commitment to finding new means of securing its implementation. In order to avoid an oil spill disaster in European seas, all possible legislative loopholes need to be identified and relevant EU legislation adjusted accordingly. The protection of coastal ecosystems should also be a priority.
- ALDE believes that the EU budget must be rethought towards a support for green growth and jobs, not least by promoting manufacturing that is energy and resource efficient. We call on the Commission to conduct a sector by sector review of the environmental impact of subsidies in order to eliminate subsidies which are incompatible with sustainable development. We call for an ambitious initiative related to renewable energy which can boost the SME sector, create new jobs and ensure security of supply and green the economy. Policy coherence has to be improved by linking Environment and Health financing instruments and Kyoto targets.

- We expect the European Commission to raise its game and to **make better use of the EU's diplomatic influence** in order to secure greater success in international negotiations to promote environmental protection.

Health and Food security

- On an important ALDE policy, we want in early 2011, an agreement on the proposed directive on **Patients' rights in cross-border healthcare** to ensure free movement for patients and more transparency in health care systems. We also want a strengthening of European patients' rights with an overall goal of guaranteeing equal access to safe and high-quality health services and treatment.
- **Health concerns** should be included into all relevant policies. The impact of food quality on human health must also be addressed. While respecting the principle of subsidiarity, a smoke-free environment in all public and work places should be a concrete objective for the Commission.
- Preparations for a new **EU post-2013 Health Strategy Programme** must be started addressing health inequalities and the wider factors determining health and strengthening preventive measures, as well as incorporating the impact of ageing on public health and healthcare systems.

- ALDE wants the Commission to report back on, and fully implement, the Council Conclusions of December 2008 calling for an improved implementation of the legal framework on **GMOs**. All decisions on genetically modified organisms should be taken based on pluralistic and unbiased scientific advice, and on other legitimate factors such as socio-economic criteria, using clear and transparent evaluation procedures for long-term risks and benefits.

Climate Action

- ALDE calls for the setting of an EU target to **reduce CO2 emissions by 30%** by 2020 without regard to the outcome of international negotiations, recognising that this will create incentives for low carbon investment and stimulate innovation and energy efficiency that is essential for our industrial success.
- We support the use of the **Emissions Trading Scheme** as the principal means of reducing CO2 emissions, emphasise the importance of ensuring that it is compatible with trading schemes that evolve elsewhere, and seek its extension to embrace other sectors, such as shipping if no acceptable agreement is reached in the International Maritime Organisation.
- The introduction of **binding efficiency targets**, including for buildings – which account for nearly 40% of emissions – is regarded as a priority.

- ALDE stresses the importance of introducing ambitious measures that link the reduction of global warming emissions to the **improvement of resource efficiency** and consequent financial savings; for example, by means of requiring significant improvements in the fuel efficiency of road vehicles.
- We regard it as important that the EU prepares a **long term climate strategy aimed** at securing 80%-95% CO2 reductions by 2050 and thereafter adopts the practical measures necessary to promote the investments that are essential if the target is to be met.

ITRE

Industry, Research and Energy



Research

- ALDE calls for a rapid transition to an **eco-efficient economy with binding targets**. The Union must strive to make low carbon technology, and wind energy available to all countries by enhanced cooperation between universities, the Commission and the business community.
- **Public Private Partnerships** must be improved with a reduction in Red tape. The Commission should implement a more risk-tolerant and trust-based approach to its programmes.
- Barriers must be removed for the free movement of knowledge by creating a **'fifth freedom'**.

Cross-border mobility of researchers, students, scientists and university teachers must be boosted. Labour markets and work conditions for European researchers must be improved and higher education must be reformed. Furthermore, talented people from outside the European Union must be encouraged to study and work within it.

- To meet these objectives, the ALDE believes that the **European budget** and the national budgets must be in line with the goals of the Europe 2020 strategy. The budget for research must be increased.
- The EU should come forward with legislation to make the **forest strategies** of Member States more climate-friendly.

Telecommunications

- ALDE calls for proposals on **collective rights management**, in particular in view of pan-European online licensing.
- We also believe that a legal framework is required for **cross-border recognition and interoperability** of secure eAuthentication and eidentification systems, for eInvoicing, and the revision of the eCommerce Directive.
- The legal framework for **combating cyber-attacks must be strengthened**.

- The **harmonisation of national telephone numbering regimes** must be improved, including Europe-wide phone numbers, such as 112.
- Greater guidance must be brought to the **implementation of the Telecom package** with regard to the protection of individuals' privacy and personal data.
- ALDE calls for a **study of the cost of "non-Europe"** in the field of telecommunications.
- Adopt proposals on facilitating **the use of ICT** in various sectors - such as energy (smart grids & lighting), climate change & environment protection, transport and public health.

Energy

- A priority must be an ambitious and comprehensive **Energy Efficiency Action Plan** to also include binding targets. Equally important is a proposal on **energy storage capacities**.
- ALDE wants the work on setting **ecodesign** requirements for energy-using products, including IT equipment, to be accelerated.
- The adoption of a plan on **Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)**, investments in LNG vessel transportation capacity and LNG re-gasification terminals.

- Adopt proposals ensuring binding requirements for **biomass sustainability** and indirect land use change.
- **Work to ensure the safety of nuclear energy generation sites, both inside and outside the Union, including by monitoring the implementation of the nuclear safety directive in Member States.**
- The work on **Energy Performance of Buildings Directive** must be strongly pursued, in particular in view of targeting (renovation of) the existing stock of buildings.
- Better cooperation between the transport and energy sector in order to make energy efficiency a higher priority.

Industry

- ALDE calls on the Commission to establish a **real SME strategy** including the setting up of one-stop shops for company registration. No improvements have taken place since the 'Think Small First' policy in November 2005. SMEs still complain about **red tape**.
- The **EIB** should play a major role in **financing research and innovation activities**, especially industrial innovation projects and clean technologies. This could be achieved by a different approach to innovation in regards to the methods to measure cost-benefit ratios used by national authorities. We should also

look at workforce potential, future job profiles and explore the potential of E-mobility.

- For the ALDE group, **Galileo** must remain a top priority for the Union. We call for full parliamentary information and scrutiny rights. Galileo must be deployed on time and without further escalation of costs.

Internal Market and Consumer Protection



The ALDE group supports:

- The timely transposition and proper implementation of internal market legislation, especially on the Services Directive and the Professional Qualifications Directive.
- **Completion of the single market** including a thorough follow up and implementation of the Monti Report and the planned proposal of Commissioner Barnier for a **“Single Market Act”**. **Promoting the annual Single Market Forum.**
- A **reduction of administrative burdens** in Single Market Legislation and the full use of **Solvit**.

- Improving **consumer protection** for citizens by revising and amending the proposed Commission **Directive on consumer rights**.
- Better protection for **consumers** through the **revision of the General Product Safety Directive and the Travel Package Directive**.
- Better **standardisation** which is essential for a functioning single market.
- Member States to strengthen **market surveillance** in order to avoid counterfeiting and product piracy.
- Revision of the publication of the **Consumer Market** and the **Internal Market scoreboards** as these are not designed to inform the public but Member States. ALDE calls for a comprehensive summary in all official languages to be established.
- ALDE is pushing the Commission to come forward with a proposal on **Online Gambling**.

TRAN

Transport and Tourism



The ALDE group will work towards:

- **Completion of the internal market in all modes of transport.**
 - **Review of the First Railway Package** to clarify the current rules and improve its implementation. ALDE wants to see the independence of regulatory bodies reinforced and new charging principles to take into account the environmental effects of rail operations. **Domestic passenger markets** must be further and effectively opened and there needs to be a greater separation of infrastructure managers and railway undertakings.

- Progress towards an **integrated ticketing system** by introducing an online booking tool and a multilingual interface with real-time data for any trip in Europe in any transport mode.
- TEN-T policy must be reviewed to better prioritise **European investment in infrastructure** targeting cross-border sections and missing links. This should be complemented by a consistent funding strategy maximising the impact of EU budget and mobilising alternative financing sources.
- **E-mobility package** must be promoted through the use of concrete technological breakthroughs in support of a sustainable transport system.
- Greater **protection of citizens** through the reinforcement of safety, security, and passenger rights while respecting data protection rules.
- **Europe's tourism sector** must be developed to its full potential and this can now be addressed through the use of the new legal basis created by the Lisbon Treaty.

REGI

Regional Development



- In view of the upcoming proposals for future cohesion policy post-2013 (Fifth Cohesion Report; legislative proposals for the next programming period, proposal for Multi-annual Financial Framework) the ALDE group advocates a strong, **EU-wide cohesion policy with adequate financial resources** to deal with the anticipated challenges. **Any attempt at renationalisation should be resisted.** Renationalisation is not acceptable because internal political pressures deepen differences within countries and regions.
- ALDE will continue to push for **greater multilevel governance.** Member States and managing authorities should fully involve the

local and regional level in all the phases of cohesion policy design and implementation.

- ALDE will put forward proposals to **improve the absorption capacity** of Structural and Cohesion Funds and will ask the Commission and the Member States to speed up their efforts. Low absorption is of major concern to the implementation of EU cohesion policy.
- ALDE will ask the Commission and the Member States to ensure that **regions with specific geographical features** (in particular sparsely populated areas) will continue to benefit from specific provisions also during the next programming period. This is necessary as these regions, as defined in the Commission's Green Paper on Territorial Cohesion, are under pressure from development as well as at risk due to demographic changes, poor accessibility, global warming, migratory phenomena and regional integration.
- ALDE believes that regional policy should more substantially integrate urban policy. Cities contain the majority of the population and bring together many problems such as immigration, social diversity and sustainable development, especially concerning transport and energy efficiency.

AGRI

Agriculture and Rural Development



- ALDE believes that **the reform of the CAP** planned for 2013 must provide for a fundamentally renewed policy that combines an efficient and more market-based production of common goods with support for the fight against climate change.
- The **future financing of the CAP** must be sufficient to meet the new challenges of climate change, innovation which were first introduced in the “Heath Check”.
- **Food security and sustainable food supply.** Accessibility to qualitative and safe foods must be ensured as well as adequacy, availability and stability of continuous food supply regardless of seasonal or yearly fluctuations, or price volatility.

Sustainability must be placed at the heart of the CAP in order to secure the long-term viability of European food production while enhancing farmers' competitiveness and innovation capacity.

- The **quality and added value** of EU agriculture must be maintained, namely, through the delivery of “common goods”. The CAP should develop the right mechanisms in order to balance the work, expenses and efforts invested in the production of safe and high quality foods taking into account the imperative of landscape preservation and bio-diversity whilst also ensuring continuity of the EU heritage of land cultivation and rural development.
- The **EU share in global agriculture**, especially high quality products) should be developed. This will be achieved by the establishment of a free, fair and competitive global market, and ensuring that all agricultural products or agro-foods imported into the EU meet European standards and norms.
- **Increased efficiency and competitiveness** by the reduction in red tape. The burden imposed on farmers must be reduced through simplification and better regulation. Greater efforts should be brought to bear in detecting areas where cost-efficiency improvements can be introduced. Reduction of bureaucratic burden on national administrations must also be brought forward.

PECH

Fisheries



- Under the new Treaty rules, the Commission should stick to a strict interpretation of the exception to the ordinary procedure on the 'fixing and allocation of fishing opportunities' and it should use the delegation of powers in the framework of comitology only in exceptional cases.
- The focus of the legislators in the upcoming five years will be on the reform of the CFP. A fully-fledged renewal of the current provisions and mechanisms are required and the reform should mainly address the following aspects;
 1. A clearly defined **exemption within the CFP for small-scale fisheries**, with particular reference to small coastal islands

where there is often no alternative source of employment. Thus, establishing a de-bureaucratised, liberal and separate regime for small-scale coastal fisheries.

2. A new **impetus must be given to the aquaculture** sector as requested by Parliament in its report of 7 May 2010. Besides the necessity of creating a legal framework, the goal is to develop a sustainable European aquaculture industry that respects the environment, increases its economic viability and offers consumers greater guarantees. However, aquaculture in itself will not be the single solution to overfishing.
3. The CFP must be seen **within an integrated maritime policy**. This includes many measures such as a roadmap towards maritime spatial planning by Member States, a European network of maritime 'clusters', a European marine research network and a European network for maritime surveillance.
4. The **fight against illegal and unreported fishing, as well as discards** (fish or other organisms simply thrown back into the sea), must be stepped up. For this, solutions have to be found together with the Regional Advisory Councils and the fishermen - including possible incentives. Illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing has to be tracked and control regulation should be standardised across the EU with special emphasis on administrative - instead of criminal - sanctions.

5. A specific and long overdue **eco-labelling scheme** for fisheries products should be established. This forms part of a compromise within the European labelling scheme that should apply to all products.

CULT

Culture and Education



Education

- ALDE believes that Commission proposals, including Youth on the Move, should aim at **reducing the drop-out** rate to 10% (currently 15%) and **increasing** the share of the population aged 30-34 having **completed tertiary education** from 31% to at least 40%.
- We must promote **efforts to improve the quality of primary and secondary** education within Member States and address shortcomings identified in national and international research on education.
- **European universities** need to regain their **position as centres of excellence** and poles

of innovation. Student and teacher exchange programmes (Erasmus, Comenius) need to be enhanced and be more inclusive. Stronger cooperation between Universities and businesses should be promoted to include the private sector in the modernisation of Universities.

- **Youth employability** is one of the main challenges we face in securing a future for the next generation. It should be the primary focus of our education policy.

Culture

- **Developing artistic expression and cultural development** is essential for economic growth, creativity and international competitiveness. The long-term competitiveness of European cultural industries must be ensured by protecting intellectual property rights, creating European copyright and patents, achieving increased integration of European markets, and establishing appropriate support mechanisms.

Media and EU Communication policy

- ALDE believes that **media pluralism and freedom of expression** in the EU must be guaranteed with vigour. The promotion and adaptation of traditional media to new communication technologies should be prioritised.

- ALDE considers that a more **effective communication policy** is essential in order to promote better understanding by citizens of EU action. Pan-European debates must be encouraged and public service broadcasters should be urged to inform citizens and civil society about the EU as they do about national legislative developments.

Sport

- Within sport, initiatives must be taken to ensure a **fair and non discriminatory framework for professional sport** consistent with its growing economic significance while respecting its specificity.
- Participation in grassroots and amateur sporting organisations is essential to the integrity and success of sport and there is a need to encourage the exchange of best practice for training, organisation, coaching and professionalism at all levels.

Multilingualism

- As multilingualism lies at the very heart of European cultural diversity, action must be taken to ensure that minority languages especially are protected.

JURI

Legal Affairs



- ALDE calls for measures on **cross-border divorce** (Rome III and enhanced cooperation) to be concluded by end of 2010, whilst ensuring that non-participating Member States can join the measures in the future.
- A Community text on **Succession and Inheritance** must be brought forward by the end of 2010 through a dialogue between the EU institutions and the participation and support of all Member States.
- Greater progress is required in the full use of **e-Justice** to give increased European-wide access to civil and commercial justice.

- ALDE calls for further efforts to facilitate **redress for citizens**, which may include the introduction of collective redress mechanisms.
- Greater encouragement to be given to **mediation** and other **alternative dispute resolution methods** with a speedy follow-up on the implementation of the Mediation Directive.
- We call for progress on the **European Contract Law Project** and continued work on the Common Frame of Reference through the introduction of an optional European contract law instrument, that consumers and small business could choose to apply to their contracts.
- We will work towards Improving **consumer protection** for citizens by revising and amending the proposed Commission Directive on consumer rights to reflect the significant concerns raised in relation to possible loss of national consumer rights, ensuring coherence with the work on the Common Frame of Reference and an outcome which helps reach Europe's 2020 strategy goals.
- Closer links with the **Hague Conference on Private International Law** are needed, ensuring a continued interface between the European Union's legal framework and that of the international community, and building a leading role for the Union in the future planning of the Conference.

- We must encourage and support work on the **free circulation of civil status** documents as per the Stockholm Programme Action Plan.
- The establishment of a **European patent system** including EU agreement on a linguistic regime as soon as possible which will benefit European companies through cost and administrative savings is also a vital factor for our competitiveness.
- The establishing of a cross border EU harmonised and integrated system of **copyright** which balances the inherent value and appreciation of creative and artistic content and consumer rights.

LIBE

Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs



- ALDE is looking forward to the Commission initiatives on the **implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and on the Letter of rights for suspects and arrested persons**. The Commission must not lack the courage to stand up for Fundamental Human Rights, even in the face of pressure from Member States.
- **Implementation of the anti-discrimination directive** is still incomplete. No initiative is foreseen on same-sex couples and mutual recognition of these across borders. Progress must be made on the **horizontal anti-discrimination directive**.

- The strengthening of the (new) **framework for European data protection regime** is a priority. ALDE insists on proposals for the revision of the data retention directive, of the general data protection directive and on the information management strategy in the EU. An ad hoc approach risks undermining coherence of data protection principles in the EU.
- ALDE will work to ensure that the legislative proposals for new EU agreements with the US, Canada and Australia on **Passenger Name Records (PNR)** strengthen privacy rights, redress of passengers and include strict purpose limitations.
- ALDE is also awaiting initiatives against **organised crime and corruption**.
- Greater action is required to deal with a series of initiatives in the Member States that limit **freedom of the media and of information**.
- As regards **legal migration**, ALDE is asking for an acceleration of the procedures of monitoring of the conditions for visa facilitation with neighbouring countries.
- For ALDE the common **EU asylum policy** must become a reality by 2012 as promised.

Constitutional Affairs



- ALDE continues to work for the full **implementation of the Lisbon Treaty** and the effective deployment of Parliament's new scrutiny, budgetary and legislative powers with respect to the European Council, Council of Ministers and European Commission.
- ALDE will be proposing a **radical reform** of the **electoral procedure and composition of the European Parliament, including a transnational list**, in time for the 2014 European elections.
- ALDE will push for the early adoption of a law on the **European Citizens' Initiative** to enable its early practical application by citizens.

- We put a high priority on the EU's accession to the European Convention on Human Rights.
- ALDE believes in closer dialogue with national parliamentarians to improve collaboration between the European and national levels.
- Our objective is to frame a law on **administrative cooperation** between the institutions, which would replace *inter alia* the financial regulation and improve the procedure for the approval of the European Commission.
- We propose a framework **regulation for agencies** in order to ensure improved management structures and accountability.

FEMM

Women's Rights and Gender Equality



- ALDE calls for stronger promotion of gender equality and women's rights in all EU Policy areas and a strong new Gender Equality strategy for 2010-2015 to develop in detail and with specific measures the Commission's Women's Charter.
- Combating the gender pay gap remains an important priority for the ALDE group.
- ALDE supports initiatives aimed at the reconciliation of work and family life by *inter alia* measures on minimum parental leave as well as promoting flexible working arrangements for both women and men and help for carers to combine employment with caring responsibilities.

- ALDE calls for the elimination of gender based violence by supporting existing legislation on the protection of victims and calling for a new concrete framework to end gender based violence.

PETI

Petitions



- ALDE calls for the full implementation of the Lisbon Treaty and **European Citizens' Initiative** so that this instrument can fully achieve its purpose and ensure enhanced transparency and accountability in the EU decision-making process, allowing citizens to suggest improvements or additions to EU law.
- The **Charter of Fundamental Rights** is of fundamental importance to the ALDE and we will ensure its full application. We also want all necessary procedural steps to be taken to ensure that the institutional aspects of EU accession to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms are rapidly clarified.

- We will encourage the newly re-elected European Ombudsman P. Nikiforos Diamandouros to keep working to enhance the openness and accountability of European administration and to ensure that decisions are taken as openly as possible and at the closest possible level to citizens

AFET Foreign affairs



Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck
ASP 09G218
Tel: +32-2-28.45661
Fax: +32-2-28.49661

DEVE Development



Charles Goerens
ASP 09G157
Tel: +32-2-28.45612
Fax: +32-2-28.49612

INTA Trade



Metin Kazak
ASP 09G346
Tel: +32-2-28.45924
Fax: +32-2-28.49924

BUDG Budgets



Anne E. Jensen
ASP 09G154
Tel: +32-2-28.45798
Fax: +32-2-28.49798

CONT Budgetary Control



Jorgo Chatzimarkakis
ASP 10G202
Tel: +32-2-28.45149
Fax: +32-2-28.49149

ECON Economic and Monetary Affairs



Sylvie Goulard
ASP 09G103
Tel: +32-2-28.45450
Fax: +32-2-28.49450

EMPL Employment and Social affairs



Marian Harkin
ASP 10G253
Tel: +32-2-28.45797
Fax: +32-2-28.49797

ENVI Environment, Public Health and Food Safety



Chris Davies
ASP 10G169
Tel: +32-2-28.45353
Fax: +32-2-28.49353

ITRE Industry, Research and Energy



Lena Ek
ASP 10G342
Tel: +32-2-28.45714
Fax: +32-2-28.49714

IMCO Internal Market and Consumer Protection



Cristian Silviu Buşoi
ASP 08G258
Tel: +32-2-28.45732
Fax: +32-2-28.49732

TRAN Transport and Tourism



Gesine Meissner
ASP 10G116
Tel: +32-2-28.45578
Fax: +32-2-28.495

REGI Regional Development



Ramona Nicole Mănescu
ASP 08G254
Tel: +32-2-28.45865
Fax: +32-2-28.49865

AGRI Agriculture and Rural Development



George Lyon
ASP 10G210
Tel: +32-2-28.45628
Fax: +32-2-28.49628

PECH Fisheries



Pat the Cope Gallagher
ASP 10G305
Tel: +32-2-28.45591
Fax: +32-2-28.49591

CULT Culture and Education



Hannu Takkula
ASP 09G246
Tel: +32-2-28.45851
Fax: +32-2-28.49851

JURI Legal Affairs



Diana Wallis
ASP 10G102
Tel: +32-2-28.45201
Fax: +32-2-28.49201

LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home affairs



Renate Weber
ASP 08G246
Tel: +32-2-28.45846
Fax: +32-2-28.49846

AFCO Constitutional Affairs



Andrew Duff
ASP 10G346
Tel: +32-2-28.45998
Fax: +32-2-28.49998

FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality



Antonyia Parvanova
ASP 09G265
Tel: +32-2-28.45568
Fax: +32-2-28.49568

PETI Petitions



Adina-loana Vălean
ASP 08G342
Tel: +32-2-28.45861
Fax: +32-2-28.49861

All e-mail addresses are as follows:
name.surname@europarl.europa.eu



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www.alde.eu