STUDENTS FOR LIBERTY
EUROPE

LIBERTY CON EUROPE

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EVENT REPORT

LIBERTYCON 2023 | APRIL 22-23 | LISBON, PORTUGAL

Prepared by Tamar Tarsaidze, Conference Director

LIBERTYCON EUROPE

22 - 23 APRIL 2023 | LISBON, PORTUGAL

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Report Structure

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2. Program Overview
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1. General Overview

The 11th annual premier European Students For Liberty event, LibertyCon Europe 2023, took place on April 22-23, 2023, in Lisbon, Portugal. We welcomed **601 participants from 49 different countries. The total number of registrations was 821**.



For 2023, the event particularly focused on ideas and principles around free markets, an open society, new technologies, and the role these can play in turning the dream of a freer future into reality.

Europe today faces important challenges with the ongoing war, as well as economic and energy crises looming. This LibertyCon Europe was an exceptional opportunity for the pro-liberty movement to connect, exchange ideas, and work together to combat the biggest threats to liberty we face today.

601
participants in total

49
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821
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2. Program Overview

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE | DAY 1: SATURDAY, APRIL 22

22 CONFERENCE DAY SATURDAY

CONVENTO DO BEATO
Address: Alameda do Beato 40

09:00 - 10:30	**Registration**	
10:30 - 10:40	**Opening Speech** Dr. Wolf von Laer	Cloister Room
10:40 - 10:45	**Online Keynote Address** by Mikhail Khodorkovsky	
10:45 - 11:15	**Keynote Session 1** **Libertarians in Politics** Cloria Alvarez and Tiago Mayan | Moderator: Bill Wirtz	Cloister Room
11:15 - 11:30	**Break**	
11:30 - 12:15	**Breakout Sessions 1**	
	Will the EU's Tax and Regulatory Regime Hurt Competition With China? Eline Chivot, Andreas Hellmann, and Matthias Bauer | Moderator: Lorenzo Montanari	Adam Smith Room
	The Future of Europe Paulo Portas and Daniel Hannan | Moderator: Martin Panek	Elinor Ostrom Room
	The Economics of Education Carlos Cuimarães Pinto, Carlos Novais, and Tim Vieira | Moderator: Ricardo Lima (Português)	Cloister Room
12:15 - 12:30	**Break**	
12:30 - 13:30	**Keynote Session 2** **New Strategies for Free Market Climate Policy and Innovation Acceleration** Opening Address by Rod Richardson Daniel Hannan, Pieter Cleppe, Lorenzo Montanari, and Rod Richardson Moderator: Martin Gundinger	Cloister Room
13:30 - 14:30	**Lunch**	
14:30 - 15:15	**Keynote Session 3** **Russian Influence in Europe** Alexander Sikorski, Hanna Liubakova, and Maryan Zablotskiy Moderator: Dr. Tom G. Palmer	Cloister Room
15:15 - 15:45	**Break**	
15:45 - 16:30	**Breakout Sessions 2**	
	One Tweet Away From Becoming President Bernardo Blanco and Sebastian Rodriguez | Moderator: Viktorya Muradyan	Adam Smith Room
	Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics Mark Littlewood	Elinor Ostrom Room
	The Web3 Contribution to Freedom Fred Antunes (Português)	Cloister Room
16:30 - 16:45	**Break**	
16:45 - 17:30	**Breakout Sessions 3**	
	Why Socialism Is Still a Thing? Dr. Nikos Sotirakopoulos	Adam Smith Room
	How to Unleash Innovation Federico N. Fernández	Elinor Ostrom Room
	How SFL is Shaping the Future of Liberty in Brazil, and How You Can Too? Raphael Lima (Português)	Cloister Room
17:30 - 17:45	**Break**	
17:45 - 18:15	**Keynote Session 4** **The Future of Money: Free-Banking or Bitcoin?** Stephan Livera and George Selgin | Moderator: Dr. Wolf von Laer	Cloister Room
18:15 - 18:30	**Break**	
18:30 - 19:00	**Keynote Session 5** **Making the 8 Billion Safe and Rich** Dr. David D. Friedman and Dr. Tom G. Palmer | Moderator: Jan Mošovský	
20:00 - 22:00	**VIP Dinner**	
22:00 - 02:00	**Saturday Social Party** **NAV – Núcleo Alexandria Viva** | Campo Pequeno 79	

Our student volunteers arrived on Friday to prepare the venue for the first day of LibertyCon Europe. Preparations included setting up event signage, registration desk, and SWAG tables.

All the participants were welcomed with a “SWAG bag” that contained a t-shirt, a “Why Liberty” book, coaster, a lighter, stickers, Speak Freely magazine, and an event guide.



We also had a table at the Liberty Fair where attendees had a chance to get more SWAG (rolling papers, sunglasses, camera covers, bottle openers, etc.) and to find out more about joining our organization. We got over 50 sign-ups and many applications for our Local Coordinator program in Europe.

For the second year in a row, our Local Coordinators running the SpeakFreely blog published a print magazine for LibertyCon Europe. This year’s edition focused on conflicts in our time.

If you haven’t grabbed a copy in Lisbon, you can read the online version here and do check out the blog for more in-depth and thought-provoking articles written by our students, alumni, and partners.



Registration opened at 09:00 on Saturday, and right after registration, we opened our doors to the Liberty Fair exhibitors.







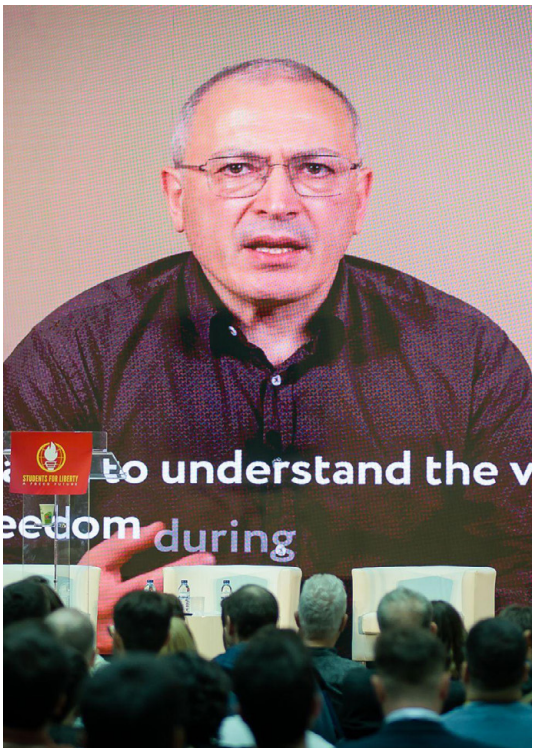


35 local and international pro-liberty organizations presented their work at our Liberty Fair. This year, we hosted the biggest-ever exhibition of pro-liberty organizations in Europe.

The conference program started with our MCs - **Elizabeth Hicks** (Consumer Choice Center) and **Adam Bartha** (Institute of Economic Affairs) greeting guests, continued by Students For Liberty's CEO **Dr. Wolf von Laer**'s opening speech, followed by an inspirational online keynote address from **Mikhail Khodorkovsky**, an exiled Russian businessman and opposition activist.







Following the opening ceremony, **Gloria Alvarez**, **Tiago Mayan**, and **Bill Wirtz** (moderator) took the main stage for the first keynote of the day, titled '**Libertarians in Politics.**' This session answered questions such as what the most pressing political issues are in the home countries of the speakers (Guatemala and Portugal), whether it is hard or not to promise freedom when all the others are promising handouts, and what can be the message to libertarians who don't see politics as a good vehicle to achieve liberty.



We continued our conference program with breakout sessions. **Andreas Hellman**, E**line Chivot**, **Matthias Bauer**, and **Lorenzo Montanari** (moderator) discussed the EU's tax and regulatory regime and competition with China.
Paulo Portas, **Daniel Hannan**, and **Martin Pánek** (moderator) talked about Europe's future, while **Carlos Guimarães Pinto**, **Carlos Novais**, **Tim Vieira**, and **Ricardo Lima (moderator)** covered the economics of education in Portuguese.







The first block of breakout sessions was followed by a keynote panel about new strategies for free market climate policy and innovation acceleration. The speakers of the session were **Daniel Hannan**, **Pieter Cleppe**, **Lorenzo Montanari**, **Rod Richardson**, and **Martin Gundinger** (moderator).





The next keynote panel talk covered the topic of Russian influence in Europe with **Alexander Sikorski**, **Hanna Liubakova**, **Maryan Zablotskiy,** and **Dr. Tom G. Palmer** (moderator) on stage. The session covered what tools the Kremlin uses to influence European politics, the Russo-Ukrainian war, Russian corruption and soft power, the current situation in Belarus and its connections with Russia, and to what extent European actors have been complicit in enabling Russian aggression.





We resumed our program with further breakout sessions. **Bernardo Blanco** and **Daniel Ruiz** held a discussion about the role of social media in politics, moderated by **Viktorya Muradyan**.
Mark Littlewood delivered a talk titled “Lies, Damned Lies and Statistics”, while **Fred Antunes** covered the topic of Web3’s contribution to freedom in Portuguese.







During the third block of breakout sessions, **Dr. Nikos Sotirakopoulos** gave a presentation titled “Why Socialism Is Still a Thing?”. **Federico N. Fernández** gave tips on unleashing innovation, and **Raphaël Lima** delivered a talk about how SFL is shaping the future of liberty in Brazil.







After the end of the breakout sessions, participants moved back to the main stage for two remaining keynote sessions. With **Dr. Wolf von Laer** as moderator, **George Selgin** and **Stephan Livera** discussed “The Future of Money: Free-Banking or Bitcoin?”.





Dr. David D. Friedman and **Dr. Tom G. Palmer** delivered the final keynote session about "Making the 8 Billion Safe and Rich". The panel was moderated by our own **Jan Mošovský**, European Programs Manager at Students For Liberty, and focused on the perceived issue of overpopulation, as well as market solutions to ensure prosperity and dignity for all the world's people.





After the conference at Convento do Beato officially ended, we hosted a VIP Dinner with 170 attendees at Sheraton Lisboa Hotel & Spa. **Dr. Wolf von Laer**, Students For Liberty's CEO, delivered the opening speech, which was followed by Daniel Hannan, author and columnist, delivering a toast for liberty.



Later on, all attendees were invited to a social party at a local nightclub, NAV – Núcleo Alexandria Viva, giving them an opportunity to socialize and network in an informal setting.



FESTIVAL SCHEDULE | DAY 2: SUNDAY, APRIL 23

23 FESTIVAL DAY SUNDAY

SUSPENSO LISBOA
Address: R. de Santiago 19

SPECIAL EVENT (Sign up in advance **bit.ly/ClimateFreedom**)

10:00 - 13:00	**LibertyCon Policy Innovation Workshop: Designing a Climate & Freedom Accord** Sponsored by Grace Richardson Fund Facilitators: Daniel Hannan, Rod Richardson, Pieter Cleppe, Martin Gundinger

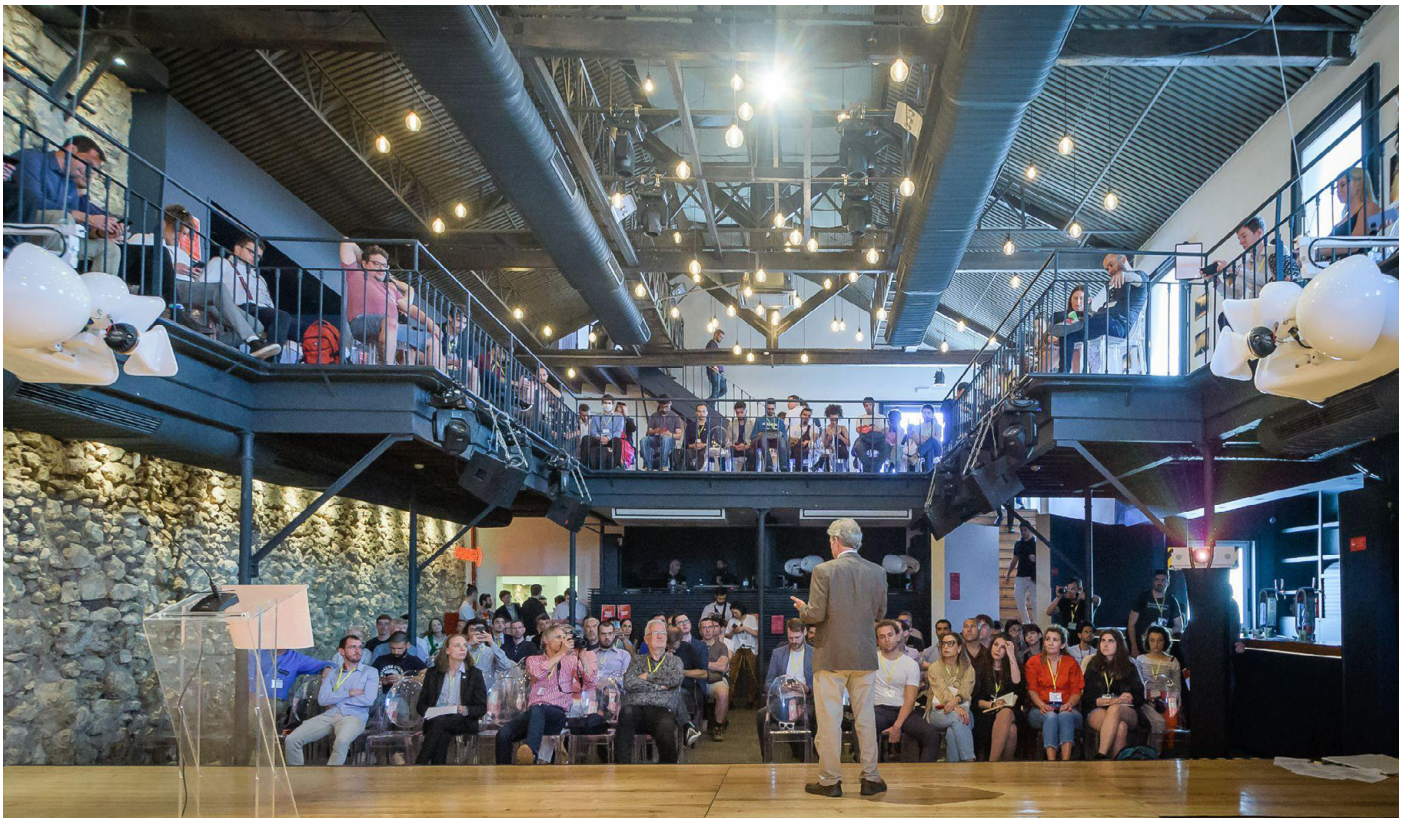
TIME	MAIN STAGE	STUDENT STAGE
13:30 - 14:00	**Doors Open**	
14:00 - 14:30	**How to Make the Moral Case for Liberty** Craig Biddle	
14:30 - 15:00	**The Problem With Externality Arguments: Population, Climate, COVID** Dr. David D. Friedman	**A Clash of Titans: The USA and China's Battle for AI Leadership** Benaya Cherlow
		Become Ungovernable: Finding Liberty in Your Lifetime Danilo Silva
15:00 - 15:30	**Champions of Liberty** Prof. Hannes Hólmsteinn Gissurarson Interviewed by Robert Tyler	**Global Liberals Are Needed More Than Ever: A Lesson From Syria** Amjad Aun
		Austrian Economics as the Key to a Better Life Luis Craca
15:30 - 16:00	**From Orwell's Ministry of Love to Liberals' Ministry of Solitude** Felicita Medved and Milosz Hodun	**Rebuilding Ukraine** Oleksandra Romantsova and Anna Tymoshenko Moderator: Stefan Acimovic
16:00 - 16:30	**Why Freedom Matters and Two Ways You Can Make the World a Freer Place** Pericles Niarchos	**Why You Should Never Stop Learning** Angel and Thomas Walker-Werth
16:30 - 17:00	Presentations: **Lamassu Industries** **Free Cities** **Young Voices**	**A Ukrainian In, a Ukrainian Out: Perspectives on the War** Tetiana Rak and Ketevan Kartsydze Moderator: Elizabeth Tsereteli
17:00 - 17:30	**Liberty and Our Place in the Cosmos** Antonella Marty	**Student Activism** Vera Kichanova and Raphaël Lima Moderator: Aleksandar Kokotovic
17:30 - 18:00	**Be the Living** Matt and Terry Kibbe	**SFL Alumni Advancing Liberty Through Politics** Irune Ariño and Jorge Miguel Teixeira Moderator: Jorge Jraissati
18:00 - 18:30	**How to Be an Artist Before World War 3** Badiucao	**Web3 and Defi - Paving the Future** José Paulo Miler
18:30 - 19:00	**Making a Case for Comedy** Remy	**The Phantom of Liberty - The Revolution after Five Decades** Pedro Schuller, Gonçalo Sousa, and Eva Brás Pinho Moderator: Octávio Rebelo da Costa (Português)
19:00 - 19:30	**Film Screening**	**Board Games**
19:30 - 21:00	**Bitcoin FilmFest Mini**	
19:00 - 22:00	**After Party in Garden Room** | Suspenso Lisboa	

Exhibition | Floor -1

Traditionally, Sunday at LibertyCon Europe is for interactive sessions, music, drinks, food, and socializing. This year, we organized an upgraded full-fledged festival! The festival was held at Suspenso Lisboa, and before opening the doors officially, we held a special Policy Innovation Workshop: Designing a Climate & Freedom Accord with the support of the Grace Richardson Foundation.

The festival's programming started at 14:00 with the MC of the main stage, Nathan Fatal (Leadership Institute), delivering a welcome address, followed by an opening keynote talk delivered by **Craig Biddle**, Executive Director of Objective Standard Institute.

From 14:30, we opened the second stage, student one, too, which featured our outstanding coordinators and alumni as speakers, together with other local and international speakers.



The sessions continued on both main and student stages before 19:00.
The speakers on the main stage included **Dr. David D. Friedman** (The Problem With Externality Arguments: Population, Climate, COVID), **Pericles Niarchos** (Why Freedom Matters and Two Ways You Can Make the World a Freer Place), **Antonella Marty** (Liberty and Our Place in the Cosmos), **Matt** and **Terry Kibbe** (Be the Living).





The main stage included diverse types of sessions. For example, **Robert Tyler** interviewed **Prof. Hannes Hólmsteinn Gissurarson** (Champions of Liberty), and **Milosz Hodun** interviewed **Felicita Medved** (From Orwell's Ministry of Love to Liberals' Ministry of Solitude). One of the sessions was also dedicated to upcoming projects by our partners - **Lamassu Industries**, **Free Cities Foundation**, and **Young Voices**.



Besides, the main stage of LibertyCon Europe 2023 festival included sessions by **Badiucao** (How to Be an Artist Before World War 3) and **Remy** (Making a Case for Comedy) for the first time in SFL history.









As for the student stage (MCed by **Kevin Flanagan** from Students For Liberty), our top coordinators and alumni - **Benaya Cherlow, Danilo Silva, Amjad Aun, Luis Graca, Elizabeth Tsereteli, Aleksandar Kokotovic, Vera Kichanova, Raphaël Lima, Tetiana Rak, Ketevan Kartsydze, Jorge Jraissati, Irune Ariño,** and **Jorge Miguel Teixeira** covered topics like ongoing war in Ukraine, Austrian economics, student activism, advancing liberty through politics, the situation in Syria, AI leadership, etc.





The student stage program also included other local and international speakers. **Oleksandra Romantsova** (Center for Civil Liberties, the first-ever Ukrainian organization to win Nobel Peace Prize) and **Anna Tymoshenko** (Ukrainian Students for Freedom) discussed the topic of rebuilding Ukraine with our very own **Stefan Acimovic**, European Programs Director at Students For Liberty.



Furthermore, **Angel** and **Thomas Walker-Werth** delivered a presentation about why youth should never stop learning. The student stage program was concluded with talks in Portuguese: **José Paulo Miler** discussed Web3, and **Pedro Schuller**, **Gonçalo Sousa, Eva Brás Pinho**, and **Octávio Rebelo da Costa** (moderator) covered the topic of the Carnation Revolution.



During the whole festival, the garden room of the festival venue was open, where guests could visit food courts and bars, interact with our partners and socialize with other guests. On the balcony of the main stage, guests could visit Liberty Photo Exhibition organized by Tbilisi Collective. The exhibition was dedicated to the recent historical victory of Georgians against the adoption of the so-called “Russian Law.”





From 19:00, we continued and closed LibertyCon Europe 2023 with film screenings (which itself also included Bitcoin FilmFest Mini) on the main stage, board games on the student stage, and a social party with a DJ on the garden stage.


Yes, where men like you wouldn't
be let in through the back door.
END THE DRUG WAR
STUDENTS FOR LIBERTY
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3. Partnerships

LibertyCon Europe 2023 was supported by the biggest number of pro-liberty organizations in its history. In total, we raised over **€110 000** from more than 25 different partners and sponsors. The total budget of the event was around **€140 000**.

Thanks to our sponsors, without whom hosting LibertyCon Europe 2023 would not have been possible!

DIAMOND

ATLAS NETWORK

OSI Objective Standard Institute

LGBT FOR LIBERTY

The Grace Richardson Fund
New Free Market Policy Solutions for 21st Century Challenges

PROMETHEUS FOUNDATION
ADVANCING OBJECTIVISM

PLATINUM

THOLOS FOUNDATION

fidinam

elf

GOLD

Human Rights Foundation

EPICENTER European Policy Information Center

We Are Innovation

AYN RAND INSTITUTE

iea Institute of Economic Affairs

LAMASSU BITCOIN ATMs

péro

FRIEDRICH NAUMANN FOUNDATION For Freedom. Spain, Italy & Portugal

SETTEE

SILVER

ECAEF

Young Voices

CENTER FOR LIBERAL STUDIES

Free Cities Foundation

BRONZE

Ayn Rand Centre UK

VOEX

LIBERATION.TRAVEL ENJOY YOUR LIBERATION

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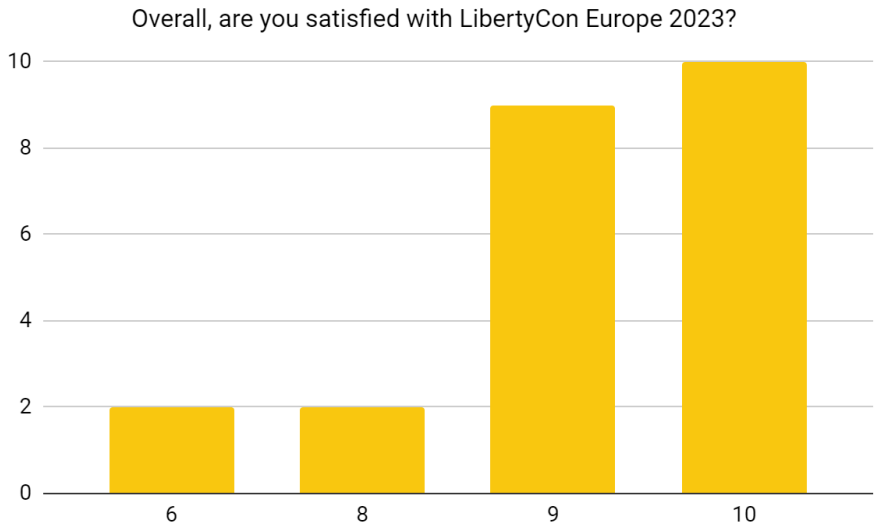
FREETHEM

4. Survey Results

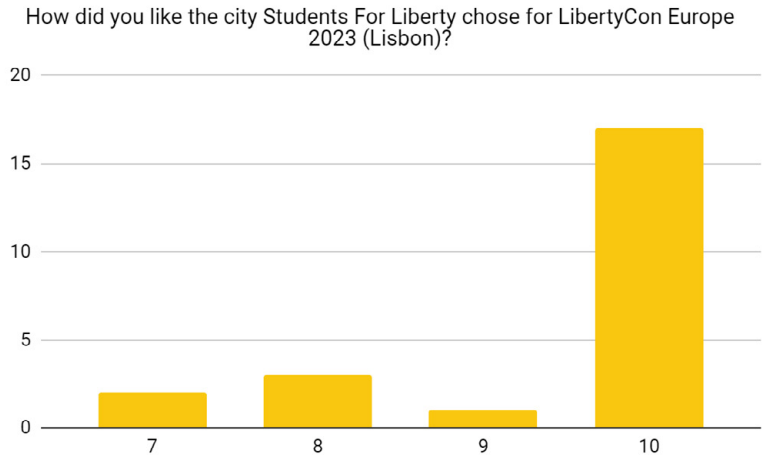
According to the post-event survey which was sent to all of the attendees, LibertyCon Europe exceeded expectations.

In most of the segments, this year's LibertyCon Europe was better than the previous one, with some space for improvement. As every year, networking and speaker line-up turned out to be the best parts of the event.

LibertyCon Europe 2023 achieved a high satisfaction rate from attendees, with an average grade of 9. For comparison, last year's average grade was 8.56.



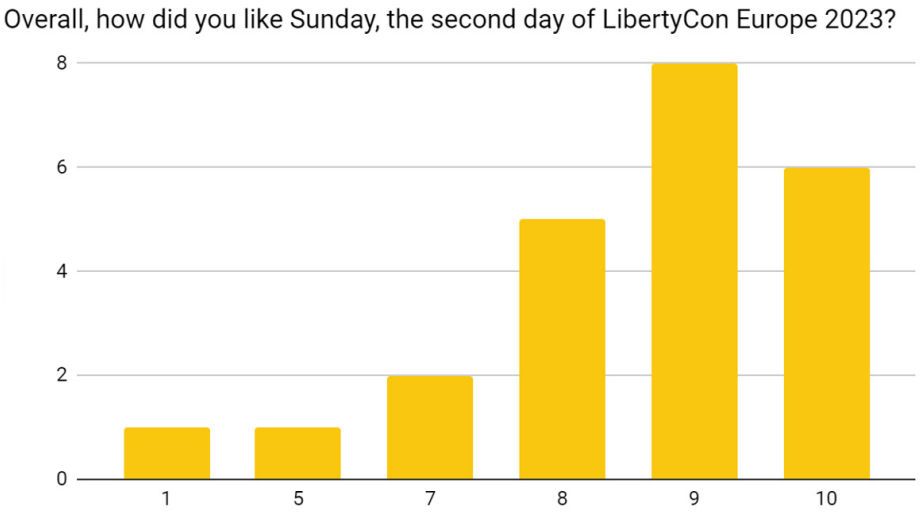
Most of the participants were delighted with the city choice (Lisbon). Here, the average satisfaction rate was 9.43.



The first day of LibertyCon Europe 2023 received an average grade of 9. Last year, the same question received an average grade of 8,78.



The second day of this year's LibertyCon Europe got an average score of 8. For comparison, last year's score for the second day was 7.30.



5. The Impact of LibertyCon Europe

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPACT

The marketing support service for LibertyCon Europe 2023 was provided by **Mission Driven Marketing OU**. The engagement period lasted from February to April 2023. This year's LibertyCon Europe promotion was very successful, with more diverse and interesting content than last year. The results can be best shown in the registration and attendance numbers, but also with the impressions we received on social media before the event.

Table: social media results per month

Month	February			March			April		
Metric	Impr	Eng	+ follower	Impr	Eng	+ follower	Impr	Eng	+ follower
Facebook	30,187	3,232	15	28,062	4,725	30	30,975	36,192	51
Instagram	369,841	829	56	103,054	879	63	886,506	1,461	175
Twitter	29,346	716	30	51,467	1,264	36	50,070	1,340	57
Total	**429,374**	**4,777**	**101**	**182,583**	**6,868**	**129**	**967,551**	**38,993**	**283**

Table: social media results per platform and total

Platform	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	TOTAL
Impressions	89,224	1,359,401	80,295	**1,528,920**
Engagement	44,149	3,169	3,320	**50,638**
New followers	96	294	123	**513**

At the event, **Mission Driven Marketing OU** and our coordinators from different countries provided social media coverage service.

Table: social media results between April 21 and 23

Platform	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter	TOTAL
Impressions	3,850	31,898	28,551	**64,299**
Engagement	4,359	405	634	**5,398**
Followers	9	45	18	**72**

6. Conclusion

European Students For Liberty brought LibertyCon Europe, our premier annual event, to Lisbon for the first time, making it the biggest-ever pro-liberty event being held in Portugal. LibertyCon Europe turned out to become a unique event where political, economic, technological, and entrepreneurial ideas collide with freedom of expression, discussion, and art.

Moreover, LibertyCon Europe 2023 was not just about inspiring sessions or great speakers but also about the energetic atmosphere created by ESFL's staff and over 70 SFL coordinators who worked together for months to create the best event experience.

With 2 event formats, 4 social parties, a VIP dinner, an art exhibition, special meetups, a workshop, 39 sessions, 73 speakers, including 3 members of the Portuguese parliament, a member of the Ukrainian parliament, a British Lord, former Vice Prime Minister, 2 presidential candidates, and Nobel Peace Price winning organization present in 2023, we can assure that LibertyCon Europe 2024 will bring something very special!



SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

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