

FREE MARKET ROAD SHOW 2019
REINVENTING FREEDOM 30 YEARS AFTER THE WALL

Victoria Schmid*

Since 2008, the Free Market Road Show brings together renowned economists, leading politicians and prominent business leaders to discuss current economic problems and possible solutions at a variety of venues across Europe and the Caucasus. The Austrian Economics Center, in cooperation with over 100 leading think tanks and universities, and international partners is proud to present the 12th Annual Free Market Road Show: Freedom 30 Years after the Wall.

What is freedom?

Present day Europe is under the shade of an unelected body of uber bureaucrats pushing for more centralization in Brussels. These dangerous features leave open many questions. Does the EU today pose more threats or more opportunities to the cause of liberty on the Continent? And more fundamentally, how long will the vestiges of the original liberal project of the European Union endure the assault of those, who want to close and homogenize Europe?

What is more, liberal democracy – a fundamental European value – is in crisis. Many claim that illiberal regimes proliferate across the continent. Extremist parties are on the rise. The very concept of liberal democracy finds itself in question and under attack.

Therefore, the Free Market Road Show 2019 concentrated on the meaning of liberty and its various spheres. Most panelists focused on the issues of economic freedom, entrepreneurship, and the proper role of government. Free trade is essential: “Trade relations are the lifeline of our economies”, as the former minister for Foreign Affairs in Austria, Karin Kneissl puts it.

“The human brain is the only unlimited resource on this planet,” said Gloria Álvarez from Caminos de Libertad, and explained that we need not only trade, but also innovation. Freedom from government interference makes all the innovations the human brain can think of possible. Governments tend to control thinking and learning. So, it is a question of conformity versus daring.

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NOTICIAS

EU elections – what will change?

Numerous experts discussed the then upcoming EU elections and Brexit, against a background of evolving perceptions of NATO, a realignment of geopolitical forces, and a European population ambivalent about the future.

The European Union is still in shock after the Brexit Referendum. Politicians should not be afraid of competitiveness, instead they try to harmonize everything. Richard Teather from Bournemouth University stated that within the EU “we are losing the variety of opportunities to try something, to test new systems, and thus lose flexibility”.

The speakers generally agreed on the impression that Brussels is ruled by bureaucrats. They feared that the bureaucratic mentality aiming at more centralization poses a threat to freedom. The move towards socialism in Europe was considered a major threat, especially with the example of Venezuela before our eyes, a country, which used to be one of South America’s richest, enters the final stages of social collapse.

But Liberty is on the Move

In order to confront these multiple challenges, the Liberty Movement has to evolve. And the Free Market Road Show spearheads that evolution. In 2019, we toured 30 cities across Europe with a clear message for less government and more freedom for all. Thus, the Free Market Road Show has become the biggest libertarian event in the world and the largest European liberty network.

Moreover, in spite of the big government, there are still good news. Humanity is only starting to see the potential of for example cryptocurrencies and Blockchain technology to circumvent centralized governments.

There was no time in history when so many people knew about the ideas of authors like Adam Smith, John Locke, Ludwig von Mises, Milton Friedman, Friedrich A. von Hayek, and Murray Rothbard – just to name a few. Thanks to new platforms and tools it is possible to reach millions of individuals, who are tired of the predominant static narrative.

Thirty years ago, the Berlin Wall fell, and millions were liberated. After three decades, it is high time to have a New Libertarian Revolution. Let’s make this message be heard all across Europe: Individual Liberty is possible in our lifetime!

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