

FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN
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RENAISSANCE *for Europe*

A COMMON PROGRESSIVE VISION

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RENAISSANCE



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RENAISSANCE FOR EUROPE

A COMMON PROGRESSIVE VISION

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BUILDING A EUROPEAN PROGRESSIVE 'RENAISSANCE'

The ambition of the FEPS initiative “Renaissance for Europe” has been to reengage progressive leaders and citizens in a political discussion about the state of the Union and the desired directions of integration. The design of the project reflects an idea that the European populations are still very attached to the promise of peace and prosperity that the EU has been a symbol of. However they do not see the mainstream right will uphold this historical pledge. The mission therefore is two-folded: on one hand to politicise the question of the EU and show that an alternative scenario is possible; and on the other to decisively anchor this debate in the context of national politics. Hence the decision to use the momentum of the electoral campaigns in three of the founding states of the EU, namely France, Italy and Germany.

To begin with, the idea united the think tanks from those three countries – respectively the Fondation Jean Jaurès, Italiani Europei and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung – who in cooperation with FEPS began deliberations on how to create an intellectual ambiance that would lead to a creation a truly politicised European public sphere. The effects of these deliberations were reflected in the very first declaration that had been elaborated through a set of consecutive working sessions in Brussels and Paris. This document made a strong contribution to a debate on how to overcome the effects of the disastrous economic crisis at hand. It provoked further deliberations, that were both echoed during the first seminar of the “Renaissance for Europe” (which gathered over 100 prominent academics from the EU and the US and was held in March in the National Assembly), as also in a book of the “Renaissance for Europe” series – “Austerity is not an answer”.

Parallel to the academic debate, the political commitment from the leaders and their respective parties has been growing – resulting in two fascinating debate that took place in Paris in March 2012 and Turin in February 2013. These were two historical moments as progressive leaders from both the three founding member states and the EU level came together to pledge their will to uphold Europe, to change it accordingly to a common agenda and to support one another in re-Europeanising the politics in their respective countries.

The “Renaissance for Europe” became herewith a widely-recognised and highly appreciated programme, that incorporated a broad range of activities (from closed high-level seminars to



public events opened to thousands of people) and publications (the above mentioned already “Renaissance for Europe” book series, which was inaugurated with the pamphlet presenting the memorable speech of Helmut Schmidt from the SPD Congress 2011 in 16 languages).

Following the great success of the memorable Paris and Turin events, the partners continued their work until the third and last step which took place in Leipzig on 22th May 2013 in the context of the 150th Anniversary of the SPD. As much as there was a focus on economic questions in Paris, a focus on institution in Turin, the third of the three events focused on Social Europe. The fact that the EU has just been granted a Nobel Peace Prize for abiding by an honorable, historical mission of consequently implementing its core values for the sake of political and social stability allows a new hope that a new energy can be found among European societies to support the progressive “Renaissance for Europe”. This proves the transformative strength of a political will once forward-thinking leaders come together – and this understanding will undoubtedly guide the project in 2014 with the EU Elections.



Massimo D'Alema
President of FEPS



10 PROVOKING THOUGHTS



RENAISSANCE FOR EUROPE

RENAISSANCE FOR EUROPE 10 PROVOKING THOUGHTS

Renaissance for Europe initiative was born out of intellectual and political desire to open a new chapter of a conversation about the future of the Union. The upcoming national elections in the three founding states of the EU – France, Italy and Germany – seemed a window of opportunity to reach beyond a discourse on crisis and decline. A motivation to deliberate upon an alternative scenario and propose a progressive way forward for Europe translated. The project under the auspices of the FEPS President, Massimo D'Alema and with the support of Fondation Jean Jaurès, Italiani Europei and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung featured conferences in Paris, Turino and Leipzig. The text below was drafted as a record of provoking thoughts that these exchanges inspired.

The recent decade has witnessed a deterioration of the Europe that came together while fulfilling a promise of a post-war generation. Though memories of the cataclysm of 1939 – 1945 have been most vivid at the beginning – the real motivation was not just a fear to prevent the story repeating itself. *No more wars, no more poverty and hunger, no more some against others* – those notions may have brought states, societies and individuals together, however what has kept them united has been an idea that jointly they can make a new history. Altogether they could fulfil dreams of long lasting peace, overall prosperity and democracy. This vision has been meaningful and worth fighting for - always and forever, despite all the challenges, detours and predicaments.

The progressive family has always strived for a political Union that puts people first. The initial scepticism of many parties versus an initiative that was initially driven by an economic cooperation has become this political movement's inspiration to develop an alternative proposal. Common market and tighter industrial relations would not be enough, they decided. This became a promise of a *Social Europe* – which would carry a promise that benefits of the Union would first and foremost serve improving working and living conditions of the citizens. They, being the members of herewith created polity, would be the ones to have a decisive say about the future of the Community and this was why the idea of establishing direct European elections was so important.

The successful achievements of the past sixty years are undeniable. But this does not stop the contemporary to ask the existential question what is the sense of Europe today. The Treaty of

Maastricht that was to empower citizens and deepen the European democracy brought on the Union an imbalanced construction. The uncompleted Monetary Union with insufficient tools for Europe to react became its liability in times of crisis. The Growth and Stability Pact imposed requirements, while not being supported with strategies that would assist all the members to comply with the expectations. Though the Lisbon Strategy was a beacon of hope in terms of transforming the labour market and herewith also adapt the European Social Model, it did not live up to witness the fulfilment of the ambitious commitments that had been made then. Finally, the Constitutional Treaty, which was to voice people's vision of Europe of the new millennium, was rejected by the citizens of the two founding member states. Though it is hard to believe that with so many brave ideas, the results can be so discouraging – the case still is that the reoccurring question across the continent seems to echo a sentiment of disbelief: “*do we really need this Europe? And what for?*”

The progressive response to those queries remains a decisive one. Yes, we need Europe – but not *this* Europe. The ruling centre-right has been consequently and forcefully decomposing the communitarian sphere in order to give ways to their *Europe of nations*. It results in an image that the Union is not more than a loose confederation of states, among which one member assumes leadership in trying to satisfy anticipated demands of the markets. But such a Europe does not work – neither figuratively nor literally. The demand for an alternative is real and can be heard on the streets, in unemployment offices and in queues for social security assistance.

Renaissance for Europe was a response to those calls, while trying to place the answer in a political context. The circumstances gave a hope that with the changing climate there would be a chance not only to argue for a change, but also to fulfil hopes for one – while winning the elections and returning to governing. For the symbolic and historical reasons to show that a new beginning is possible at the source of already existing initiative, the focus was on the three founding member states of France, Italy and Germany. Politicians, academics and experts gathered together in Paris, Turin and Leipzig with an aim to go beyond more common technical debates on Europe. The objective was to reach further than analysis of the crisis and to break out of the confinement of the existing discourse. *Renaissance for Europe* was about retrieving sense of solidarity in order to push together the limits of political imagination and mobilise political courage to articulate bold proposals. Here below is a record of 10 provoking thoughts that these debates inspired.

1. **Lisbon Treaty must be fully implemented, while the debate on institutional architecture must be re-launched.**

Democratic crisis of the European Union is a fact. The institutions that lack provisions to live up to the expectations, the decision making sphere that is distancing itself even further from citizens and the declining turnout in the European elections are only a few of its indicators. The European Constitutional Treaty should have been a panacea. Though it



had been negotiated thoroughly through the European Convention, it failed, having been rejected in referenda in France, the Netherlands and Ireland. After a “*Period of Reflection*” the EU came with perhaps less ambitious, but nevertheless important alteration in the form of Lisbon Treaty. It is not perfect. But it is the only compromise that has been possible and it remains a step forward. Hence **the Lisbon Treaty articles must be used to their full extent**. The institutional architecture of the Union has been shaped in an evolutionary process, hence small steps are the ones that effectively make a historical difference.

The implementation of the Lisbon Treaty is a task for today. But a United Europe is and has always been a project about the future. That is why the search for better operational solutions should never stop, especially that the Union is growing and the challenges it needs to be able to face are also multiplying. The crisis impressed on people a belief that politics is about daily management and not about seeking new horizons. The “*There is No Alternative*” logic confines politics, especially when voters don’t believe that any change would be bringing any good. Those are hostile circumstances for anyone to inaugurate grand political debates – and especially the ones that touch constitutional matters. They must be faced, as a new concept of the Union’s architecture is indispensable. **A new, profoundly transformative Treaty must mark a new horizon**. The path to it must lead out from what seems a platonic cave of technocratic debate. Instead, a modern version of citizens’ agora – where matters gain bright, politically tainted colours must be framed in order to succeed.

2. Political Union must be further developed, while there is an effort to strengthen the ideological quality of political discourse.

The European Union has been constructed in a spirit of mutual respect of all actors involved. The decision making processes were abiding by an ambition of a grand multilayer and multidimensional compromise, through which vital interests of all have been safeguarded. This was the logic that underpinned upholding also a right to veto for member states in the Council. And although for many years “*united in diversity*” illustrated primarily willingness to cooperate, in the recent years the emphasis shifted onto diversification aspect. When things go well, they are explained to citizens as a success of respective head of state - but if they go wrong, and recently they have been going wrong a lot, enigmatic “*Brussels*” is blamed. **The debate on Europe became nationalised, but not politicised – and this is the trend that the progressive family must reverse**. A struggle of different ideas is an essential ingredient of democracy. There must be a choice for citizens, and there must be a clear mandate that obliges politicians to assume responsibilities. This is why the European Parliament, remaining still the only directly elected body of the EU, needs to be further strengthened. Growing coherence within the political groupings during the votes should be applauded and continued. Perhaps breaking loose of the “grand coalition” settlement that

has been ruling the Assembly is not miles, but just few steps away.

To build a Political Union one may not focus only on communitarian pillar. Equally important is the intra-governmental one. The Lisbon Treaty and the substantial changes in Rules and Regulations empowered the so called “europarties” to assume new responsibilities. Their budgets increased, there have been provision to set up the europarties’ related foundations, they are entitled to campaign on the national level and also they are invited to nominate ‘top candidates’. These are all important incentives; however there must be a political will of actors involved to transform them from the confederative organisations that they effectively still are into vivid political players. **Europarties should move from hosts of the pre-Summits’ fringe debates to a position, in which they can actually shape the plenary debates.** Their role is in increasing coherence among the actors from the Commission and the Council, and herewith assuming the responsibilities for the initiatives presented and carried by the Union. They should become also more of the relevant junction, where leaders from both the governments and the opposition of a political family meet, debate and agree. This is not a symbolic exercise, but an important mechanism that empowers also the leaders of the opposition parties to step in fully informed on the level of national debates. It is a check-and-balance issue, which must be restored – if there is ever to be a rescue from blaming anonymous ‘Brussels’ for all.

3. European cooperation must stop being seen as a threat to sovereign powers, while the intra-institutional equilibrium is re-settled.

The political theatre of the European Union has been a stage for many dramatic gestures in the last years. Even though Brussels is perceived as a capital of sophisticated diplomacy, there were rather hot tempers and cold calculations that seemed to have ruled. It has seen blackmails of withdrawal, it has seen exposures to blame and humiliation, as also it has seen desperate requests for aid. The more the spectre of crisis were haunting Europe, the less spirit of solidarity was there to be found. The conservative vision of Europe of Nations led to an awkward institutional set up, in which the Council became an arena for a ruthless game of some versus the others, where calling names such as PIIGS or REBBL was no longer out of line. The Commission on the other hand was commented widely to have subordinated itself to it, assuming a role of its Secretariat. These diminutive practices must be stopped. **The equilibrium within the institutional set up of the European Union must be retrieved.** The crisis is of a European scale; hence the solution has to be a European one. The Council must remind itself of the core values that the Union was established to serve, recalling that cooperation is not a synonym of betrayal of national interests. The mechanisms of enhanced cooperation, shall they lead to depending of the Union, should be enabled – however, as in the case of the eurozone, while established, they must operate on the bases of democratic principles and effective mechanisms in order not to fail hopes



that have been entrusted in them.

The Lisbon Treaty presupposes that the President of the European Commission will originate from the political family that will gain the largest number of seats in the European Parliament. Though in 2009 the provision was not yet really implemented, the largest europarties have already declared willingness to use it and nominate 'top candidates' in the upcoming elections. This is expected to elevate the campaign to a new level, on which different personalities will take on battles in the name of their respective europarties. What is to happen the day after the electoral votes were casted and counted is still slightly unclear – especially that it is highly unlikely that any of the groups will have a landslide victory and will enter the European Parliament holding a majority of seats. Regardless of the procedure, the profound change is that there will be an element of politicisation of so far a-political body. This is an incentive to think what the next steps could be. There are those who argue, that each europarty could nominate also number two – namely a candidate to assume responsibilities of High Representative. This would import a US-styled model onto the ground. But **one could imagine a europarty nominating a top candidate and a team, which would encompass candidates for all the European Commissioners.** This would ensure a better link between the still national-European campaigns and in the post-electoral arrangements would enable creation of Shadow-Commissioners. Their role would be to serve in further politicisation of the debates, as also to ensure yet another mechanism of multi-layer check-and-balance.

4. No space must be given to anti-democratic tendencies, while Europe seeks to re-establish its founding values as guiding objectives.

Democracy, respect for human rights and rule of law remain guiding principles around which the European Communities were established and have been successively built upon. The mission has remained to promote them beyond the borders – providing inspiration and support for those struggling with authoritarian and totalitarian regimes. This is why the subsequent enlargements have been so important, marking historical turning points from which onwards people in different states hope to lead lives enjoying freedom, dignity and prosperity. But what once has been a common desire, now is rather taken for granted. Democracy seems to appear rather as a static arrangement that is there because it is agreed upon in treaties. It is not seen as an ideal that requires all to assume responsibility for its constant development. And even the recent Arab Spring has sadly not revitalised memories on how it used to be before. This democratic lethargy combined with anxieties that crisis brings about and the above already described confinement of politics, gives a way for anti-democratic tendencies to rise again. They use discourse of fear, build upon disenchantment and despair. They grow stronger day by day, trashing democratic politics and actors involved. And they will, unless challenged properly, increase in numbers in the

European Parliament – which emerges from every election more and more fragmented. Progressives must take on the fight against those tendencies. The strategy to fight their *cheap* anti-European discourse is however neither a euro-enthusiastic sermon nor threatening the voters with the image of what they do, shall they win. The progressive approach should be based on giving EU values a new and tangible meaning in policies and in practice. Realising the pledge of deliberative democracy must involve modernising the movement and opening it to new ways of political participation. **Progressives must start talking to voters about politics instead of giving into a tendency of “explaining the Union” instead.** A1s literature points out, these are the best informed citizens ever that they are dealing with.

Post-crisis anti-scepticism is also a trend of a new kind. It can be sensed also within the progressive circles. The doubts concern sense of the European cooperation. For many, the EU became a synonym of a burden. Those from the countries hit by the crisis, blame it for their misery, lack of aid and harshness of austerity that their countries apply. Those from the states, which escaped the blow, see injustice in being required to take on responsibilities and “pay for others”. These attitudes show how little solidarity and aspiration to cooperate is left. Without these values the Union can neither lift itself out of the current calamity nor advance in the future. The progressive agenda must therefore become a realistic one. Citizens, and among them party members are entitled to doubt and debate. Indeed, **there is a new euro-scepticism, hence there must be a new pro-europeanism developed - which will not be enlightening but nor a quasi-dogmatic *pro-forma* attitude.** It needs to retrieve the end of the 1990s logic, which spoke on the ‘added value of the EU’ and underpin it with modern strategies to fight inequalities among states, societies and individuals. The agenda must stand for a pledge that EU brings a new, better quality life for all everywhere. Herewith citizens should be able to regain confidence that the Union also about socio-economic rights, and not only about financial duties. The pan-EU strategies for growth and jobs should serve this objective, together with the Cohesion and Solidarity Funds – which all should be remodelled according to a new paradigm and used in better, more efficient ways.

5. Austerity discourse must end, while the new strategy for jobs and growth has to be put on the table.

The European Community was founded on the idea that the states involved can mutually benefit from cooperation. Their respective contribution would not only lift them out from the ruin of the post-war times, but also would allow them to better develop. Hence even though the immediate goal was to fight poverty, hunger and speed reconstruction, the long term horizon has always been prosperity and welfare for all. This dream was already challenged in the past, enduring through diverse crises. But never before has it been so



much endangered as in the recent crisis aftermath. The neo-liberal doctrine has succeeded in explaining the crash as a result of “*excessive expenses of states*”, which spending are still used to sustain “*unaffordable, inefficient unsustainable welfare systems*”. As soon as the states stepped in to rescue the banking sector, the respective balance sheets went off the equilibrium – seemingly leaving countries with not much choice but austerity. It has been argued that its application is necessary from the EU point of view in order to safeguard the Union, while observing the mutual obligations enlisted in treaties and protecting the euro. This mainstreaming explanation made the EU lose its credentials as a promise of prosperity and lies at the heart of its current resentment. It is high time to stand against that. Public debts have always existed – and though their relevance should not be neglected, they should not be elevated to a cause of unavoidable doomsday to come. On the contrary, Progressives must show that austerity is not the prudent and responsible financial strategy as it is being portrayed, but is a civilisation's debt for which the next generation is to be billed.

The conservative strategy of austerity is the one of “pick-choose-cut”, while Progressives need to put forward an alternative, holistic agenda of “embrace-reform-grow”. For too long there has been consent, that this is the economy that brings the member states together and to that extent, social policies are of secondary and supplementary character. The rhetorically appealing division into ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ aspects of the Union is a politically misleading concept. As long as it prevails, the EU will always be tossed in between anticipation on ‘what markets may say’ and the despair that people seem not to follow or support it. The lesson that the crisis should have taught the political class is that there is a public demand to restore primacy of politics and that there is a need for politics to serve social objectives. This is why austerity will also fail as a short-term attempt to manage, lacking totally a feature of a long-term sustainable strategy that would reflect a vision for Europe of a new quality. The battle of ideas is not to be led within the technocratic dialectics of multi-packs and annexes to them, but should be fought on the level of paradigms. **The European recovery plan must entail a macroeconomic framework, within which there is a set of complementary and coherent wage, fiscal and public policies. Economic, monetary, fiscal and social aspects have to be seen as elements of a consistent agenda.**

6. The solution to the European crisis must be European, while solidarity is being retrieved as the construct of the Union.

The European Union is often shamed as a community, where *form grew over the content*. There is a severe criticism as far as its bureaucratic character is concerned, but even worse, the ethical fundamentals on which it was built seem no longer clear. Relevance of cultivating the values such as solidarity has been initially blurred by the flow of time, while their sense was further questioned in the crisis aftermath. In the times of *blaming and shaming* –

there is very little, if anything left out of mutual respect and responsibility for one another. The difficulty that the Union faces is of course that the crisis affected respective member states in different ways. The responses given, illustrated diverse capacities of crisis-management based on sundry traditions, political set ups and welfare traditions. These differences have to be always taken into consideration, while however they should not blur the picture. Though the states may face dissimilar challenges on the national level, in the context of Europe they are in difficulty altogether. The mutual inter-dependencies and the junctions of different policies within the common market are real. **The future credibility of the European promise depends finding a joint solution, which can be adjusted to the respective national specificities and at the same time still remains a common way forward.** As such it should be not only about what states need to do to comply with the Union's requirements, but also what kind of empowerment such a responsible membership brings about.

This is why the conservative ideological framework of a Europe of Nations, which emphasises the need for peaceful coexistence, is neither ambitious enough nor adequate to lift the Union out of the crisis. What is needed is cooperation among states, societies and individuals. Only then, as in the past, can reconstruction be possible. Yet in order to achieve such a broad alliance for recovery, there must be an alternative offered. To begin with, the discussion on the options has to be emancipated from brackets of technocratic discourse. There is no need to neither worship nor to fear financial markets, as neoliberals would have people to believe while saying that these markets can "react" negatively or positively to what people choose when voting in respective elections. They must however be regulated and supervised, operating in accordance to the rules and in the space provided. Furthermore, there is need to impress on all importance of involving everyone in a deliberative process on possible scenarios. **Progressives must lead the search for a new socio-economic paradigm on the European level, whilst engaging with trade unions, civil society organisations and directly with citizens in a dialogue.** The jointly elaborated proposal should be anchored in a common understanding, which takes into consideration the fact that not only economic quantifications but also criteria of evaluating politics have changed. The progressive alternative agenda built on jobs' creation and restoring growth, must apply tangible measurements that will successfully pass the test of confrontation with reality of people's living and working conditions.

7. The EU budget must be used to help gear the Union out of crisis, while a new vision for budgetary framework should be elaborated.

The ambitious course that the European integration has taken meant that many of its features originate from a practice that had been initiated thanks to a political will and in the run became framed through respective treaties. The growing powers of the European



Parliament are stupendous examples of this. The transformation has been possible due to perseverance of members involved, as also because of a debate that raised awareness of the citizens. And while the argument about strengthening the EP is a reoccurring feature of at least every European election, not equally as much attention is given to other institutions or tools of the Union. Though many of them appear adequate for the Union of six members and insufficient to serve the community of twenty eight, their reform seems not to be subjected to a real European public debate. Instead they are held hostage to numerous fears, which underpin the claims that changes may harm sovereign interest of some members. Such is the case of the EU budget. The debate on each of the subsequent frameworks has been a hostage of pre-emptive conflicts, which derive from an anxiety that the negotiations may lead to financial losses of respective states. Especially in the crisis aftermath, the trepidation has been growing. Many politicians have been arguing that there would not be a public consent on changes in the times of austerity – as there is so much effort put in balancing the national budgets and eventual reforms could pose a threat of misbalancing the European one at the same time. Even, if the later one is anachronistic in many ways. Though progressives have been internally divided in that debate, this is a time to cope with these divergences and reach a compromise within the European movement. **The progressive family must elaborate a vision of a modern EU budget, that serves the objectives of the Union of the 21st century and of which means' allocation illustrate it.**

The European Union's budget must reflect an understanding of what objectives the Union is to serve and hence what the allocation of its means should be. It must pair with the recovery strategy of jobs and growth, and envisage a much higher proportion of resources necessary for investments in education, research, innovation and infrastructure. It must stand for the criteria of efficiency in order to finally combat the illusions that grew around it. Sadly, it is not infrequent that a pejorative image of *"overgrown bureaucracy that wastes tax payers money"* prevails over all important investments that the EU enables thanks to its resources. No amount of advertisement boards and information campaigns can win over the discourses that accuse the EU of *"requiring the contributions from the members that do not translate into overall improvements"* - which false arguments are especially in the crisis aftermath raised by populists and euro-sceptics. But effective strategies on one hand, and more transparency and continuous pan-European public debate on the other perhaps may. **Progressives must advance the initiatives seeking to equip the Union with so called "own" resources.** The campaign on FTT (Financial Transaction Tax) is one of the outstanding examples of successful proposals; however more can be done – in the issue of carbon tax, for instance,. While investigating those paths, Progressives must aim at rebuilding trust in EU capacity to manage its finances. Its restoration is connected with establishing better mechanisms that enable public scrutiny. This places the reform of the European Central Bank at the core of the consideration of what institutional architecture would serve the EU the best in building together an economically and socially sustainable future.

8. The divide between “hard” economic and “soft” social policies must end, while the European Union is given a clear social objective.

The historical social objectives of the European integration processes was to establish mechanisms of inter-states cooperation that would protect people from conflicts, poverty and hunger. While the traditions that underpin different post-war welfare systems may differ, the overall principles of equality and social justice have been common and hence allowed to speak in terms of an ideal of a European Social Model. This has been the motivation for already generations of social democrats, which has made them strive for establishing the social dimension of the Community (and then the Union). Their vision of a Social Europe has been to ensure that the common effort for the Union translates into an improvement of living and working conditions. Hence diverse standards have been proposed and eventually established. It has always been taking much of political courage and persistence to negotiate those different compromises. Especially, that the strategies for social transformation take long time to show results – so when they finally reach that stage, the benefits of them are often already taken for granted. This is also one of the reasons, why some of the welfare arrangements have evolved to be old-fashioned, not really keeping the pace of changing society. But while the crisis hit, no differentiation has been made by conservatives and social provisions in general have become the first target of austerity. Much has been said and written in the name of protecting welfare state. But this has been a defensive strategy. **Progressives must put forward a new concept of European Social Model that escapes the entrapment of bargaining around “limited resources”. This alongside assuming a need for bold transformation that will serve in realising a vision of a better, fairer society.**

The social objectives must translate into both labour and social policies. The recent years have seen detachment of the debate on these, which induces the intrinsic conflict even within the progressive movement. There seems to be a growing anxiety that with the lesser financial means, the states and hence the politicians will need to make drastic choices. The options seem to be categorised into two groups – one involving policies of “activation”, which gained grounds especially towards the end of the 1990s; and the other encompassing all those provisions that respond to the so called “old social risks” and are essentially focused on social security. A profound mistake is to allow this illusory conflict to emerge. There is a need for both the pillars for Social Europe to serve its objectives and enable all to engage in reconstructing the post-crisis Union. Ensuring the efficiency of the European Social Model does not lie therefore in eliminating one or another, but rather to transform the policies so that they better serve changing societies. Furthermore, European added value must not be mistaken for Europe’s capacity to compete on the national level at any cost. The European labour standards have been too frequently portrayed as the reason for the industry to leave the “old continent”. This argument is false – as there is no trade off between efficiency and equality. On the contrary, even speaking in strictly economic terms, it is the egalitarian societies, where workers enjoy rights and protection



are the ones, which are the more productive ones. **Progressives must reopen the debate and embark on the struggle for quality employment for all.** This is especially essential now, when they are formulating their proposals for a re-industrialisation strategy.

9. European citizenship must become meaningful, while there is an expansion of ways people can engage in decision making process in Europe.

The ambition to establish a *true* Political Union is perhaps as old as the European integration process itself. It has been deliberated upon in length, while different mechanisms enabling citizens' participation have been put in place. The turning points of this process are marked by the first direct European elections in 1979, by the Treaty of Maastricht establishing the provisions for the European partisanship system to be developed and also by the Lisbon Treaty with its articles on Citizens' Initiative. But although these show a gradual development of possibilities for citizens to get engaged and for the political debate to evolve, the terms such as "European Citizenship" or "European public sphere" still seem most enigmatic. The turnout in the subsequent European elections is falling. The support for the European Union pairs with this tendency of decline. It is furthermore frequently said, that even if there are referenda held on the EU-related matter, they are hardly ever taken by the voters as a chance to speak up as far as the direction for the Union is concerned. They are rather seen as an opportunity for domestic issues to be debated and as the pre-election contest of the government versus opposition. Although this is changing in recent years mainly – while the EU matters enter the national debate due to the crisis. It is no longer the thematic thread reoccurring only every five years or being served in the context of 'defending national interest' by the occasion of the EU summits. The strategy *towards* the EU and *for* the EU is becoming more and more a criteria according to which the national politicians are being evaluated. **Progressives must anticipate on the European elections being no longer the "second order ones".** They must drop the falsifying image of "under-informed voter" – who doesn't vote, because he/she does not understand the EU. This is both arrogant and false, especially that contemporary voters are, as mentioned, the most informed ones in history. Instead they must seek to politicise further the debate and seek to have a common, tangible pledge for the European electorate, especially in the times of the European elections.

European citizenship is frequently comprehended in only one specific dimension. This translates to its understanding as sort of a supplement to the national citizenship. It then entails pretty much only the exercise of voting every five years. It is expected from the voters and lamented as "*unattended civic duty*", once the participation continues to decrease. Such an approach would seem extremely reductive however. It does not even encompass the entire range of political and civic rights that should constitute this

citizenship, without even spelling the social and economic rights. These seem somehow attached to “different packages”, turning a *blind eye* that every person can be described through multiple identities and that the socio-anthropological European one may in their hierarchy not be the strongest among them (if exists at all). This approach must profoundly change. **Progressives must find ways to connect with citizens, basing their appeal on a holistic approach that would bond also with them in their capacity of workers/employees, trade unionists, activists, party members, students etc.** Following that, they must make an effort to ensure that their vision for a Political Union entails mechanisms enabling more of civic participation on the EU level, both in individual capacity as also through civil society sector. The new ways must be found to strengthen the role of the EU level tri-partite summit and enhance political relevance of the trade unions. And last but not least, the new opportunities to engage and organise themselves must be identified for the party members. Decline in membership, which affects most of the traditional parties, is diagnosed as a result of incapacity of those parties to offer space that modern citizens seek to become active within. This must be a warning signal also for the europarties, which with no doubt have a potential to advance with seeking new formats and opening their structures up for the “European activists”.

10. European elections must be a time for a real debate, while different parties compete for taking responsibility for the future of the Union.

It is a bit less than a year ahead before the European elections. There is a hope articulated by many that they will be much different than any vote before. The historical reason is that they are the first occasion for the European electorate to speak up altogether in the aftermath of the crisis and herewith take a stand point on the direction that Europe has taken. What is more, the institutional set up enables the europarties to campaign. Much relevance is given in that dimension to the fact that most of them also declared willingness to nominate so called “top candidates”, who is following the Lisbon Treaty provisions would become the President of the European Commission (shall the party in question win). Even though all those elements would encourage to indeed trust that 2014 will mark a transformation of the European elections, there are also worrying signs. Even though the European thematic entered the respective national political debates, there is a danger that it will mean *nationalising* European debate rather than *Europeanising* national one. In the circumstances of anxieties and mutual blaming, it can potentially lead to further entrapments, and instead of advancing with the European agenda, the entire attention may be consumed by bargaining and blackmailing. **Progressives must prove that European elections are about political responsibility. It is about obtaining legitimacy for the heritage of the five years’ legislative on one hand, and about gaining mandate to implement electoral pledges. This is why every vote matters.**



Though spin-doctors claim that *no voter gets excited about the past record*, there is a need to make a clear cut between the destruction that the conservative rule caused in Europe and the new chapter, which progressives aspire to *write* for Europe. That is why this campaign should be seized as an opportunity for a proper debate and herewith for deliberative democracy to develop. It is extremely relevant that it is not a simple communication exercise, which provides a shining general package to what has been in the past 27 (and now would be 28) different elections. It must be about formulating alternatives, allowing the voters to be able to choose. And as mobilisation starts from an inspiring idea, Progressives must try hard to address their internal divides. It will take much courage and may be a challenging exercise, but the success depends on how far the movement will be able to unite behind a common vision for Europe. **It is essential for all progressives – among them militants, politicians, trade unionists, intellectuals, civil society activists, experts – to connect on all levels (from local to European) and in all pillars (inter-governmental and communitarian), to join forces and make “Renaissance for Europe” a reality.**

Dr **Ania Skrzypek**

FEPS Senior Research Fellow

PARIS





TURIN





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**SELECTED
REFLECTIONS
FROM THE DEBATES**

RENAISSANCE FOR EUROPE

SELECTED REFLECTIONS FROM THE DEBATES

SELECTED REFLECTIONS FROM THE DEBATES

RENAISSANCE - 16/17 MARCH 2012 - PARIS, FRANCE

- *The resurgence of nationalism, populism and extremism in Europe, fuelled by the current economic, financial and social crisis is one of the main challenges in Europe today. (...) the austerity will have damaging effects on social programs and public budgets that are already being cut down. This will once again hurt the less favoured and the most vulnerable. This is not my definition of a Europe based on solidarity. Europe that shall mean equality, gender equality and social justice.* **Zita Gurmai**
- *Social democracy would be at its best when socialism is perceived to be linked with three main reputational factors: modernity; progressiveness and internationalism.* **Antonio Estella**
- *The solution to the European crisis must also be European. We need European public budget rules: reasonable, not to lock weaker states in stagnation and unemployment; but clear and strong, as needed by the single currency, to increase reciprocal confidence, avoid opportunistic behaviours, defeat financial speculation. But we also need a truly European strategy for growth and inclusion.* **Gianfranco Viesti**
- *Politics is squeezed between the financial markets on one hand, and the electoral markets on the other. The big question is: will the public, will the electorate swallow the eurocrisis-solutions, or will they not accept it. (...) The paradox is that 'Brussels' must become more European. Those who want to make the EU less neoliberal, less uniform, and more democratic, need the strongest sense of European cultural history. Not crude 'economism', but inhibited cultural inquisitiveness is the right elixir to avoid long term animosity between different countries.* **René Cupeus**

- *To redirect Europe onto the road to growth and solidarity it is necessary to fight ongoing crisis in its financial, macroeconomic and social aspects and to give up the one-dimensional and ill-fated focus on reducing public deficits only. **Ulf Meyer-Rix***

- *La plus grande contribution que l'UE pourrait faire aujourd'hui à la croissance mondiale est de transformer l'eurozone en une euro-Communauté au sein de laquelle la BCE retrouverait enfin toutes les marges de manœuvre dont elle a besoin pour contribuer à réduire le coût de la dette et à grandir le bon fonctionnement du marché du crédit. **Pierre Defraigne***

- *The financial sector, both national and international, should have two main functions. Firstly it should serve the needs of the real economy. Secondly, it should help manage and mitigate risks. In the last three decades the private financial sector has done neither, especially since it was liberalised. (...) This is not inevitable. When the financial sector has been well regulated and controlled – and when well-run public banks have played an important role – the financial sector has played a positive role to support real economy. **Stephany Griffith-Jones***

- *Where governments are in a position to do so, they should support domestic growth in the Eurozone's export countries. Innovative approaches to supporting economy, redistribution means – such as minimum wages – and an effective state spending policy could contribute to that. **Toralf Pusch***

- *Re-building the European Social Model must be the priority for all progressive forces in Europe. Many Europeans fear that governments are neglecting citizens and are obsessed by appeasing the financial markets; have a very narrow view of "competitiveness"; and with fiscal rectitude. (...) A Common Fiscal Policy is key to addressing inequality, sorting out the banks and boosting demand by underwriting an EU stimulus programme. It may begin with a small budget overall, but a small budget in EU terms is still a lot of cash. I would go for tax coordination rather than harmonisation where member states can set rates, within bands, though a common tax base for companies makes sense in a single market. **Paul Sweeney***

- *The adoption of revenue package by the European Union should be encouraged. (...) I argue that such a package including a financial transaction tax, a European carbon tax, a common corporate tax and a European strategy against tax may yield substantial amounts. This can create opportunities to avoid excessive austerity programmes and help financing new European strategies. **Rémi Bazillier***

- *(...) the evidence is clear that an FTT at EU-27 or at Eurozone level would help strengthen Europe's finances and reduce the likelihood of crisis. And being one of the first international taxes, a proportion of its revenues should be ear-marked for helping to finance solutions to some of the world's most difficult international problems like poverty and climate change. **Stephany Griffith-Jones and Avinash Persaud***

- *... over the medium-to-long run the EU needs to design and introduce a number of pan-European taxes to finance the Union's budget up to 15% of the Union's GDP – as this will substantiate the*



issuance of euro-bonds by some EU institutions. The design of transfer mechanism for financial equalisation across the EU will make sure that the less advanced and competitive countries can reduce if not close the gap separating them from the others. Real convergence of all EU member countries is indeed crucial for enhancing economic growth and solidarity across the whole Union. **Sergio Rossi**

RENAISSANCE - 8/9 FEBRUARY 2013 - TURIN, ITALY

...the European re-birth needs to be based on citizens' participation. If we can provide a clear vision and we empower people, we can build a European democracy in which citizens want to participate. For this, it is necessary to show both in theory and in practice, who does what in the new Europe. (...) We also need to show that Europe is about alternatives – there is not only one way to do things, austerity is not the only possible 'medicine' for the crisis. **Mercedes Breso**

If European socialists want to challenge the inevitability of a decade of austerity and recession with all its social, economic and political dangers, they now need a programme not just for the 2014 elections but as a roadmap for an alternative Europe. Its starting point has to be a pitiless assault on the record of the centre-right's management of the euro crisis and the economic devastation in its wake accompanied by a fierce denunciation of the excesses of corporate power and the irresponsible behaviour of business boardrooms. But the effective channelling of anger requires more than just giving it strong expression. It requires a reassertion of values and principles, and then some concrete proposals in a bold and relevant programme of radical change which should convey a sense of urgency to match the crisis. **Julian Priestley**

A clear and ambitious vision has to be drawn up, a vision that identifies reforms and measures that can be put into effect as from now. An exit from the crisis that combines rigor, growth and solidarity, to strengthen democratic legitimacy and the central role of the EP, to having a Multiannual Financial Framework reflecting our ambitions to give a driving force to innovative investments and lead job creation. We must have a true Economic and Monetary Union based not only upon rules but that also has a coordinated economic policy, a "European Social Pillar" and an ambitious industrial policy. All this should be done in accordance with the community method, so that the transfer of sovereignty is done with the aim of stronger common decisions and not that the strong decide and the rest suffer. **Anna Colombo**

We know that distrust for the EU is strongly increased among the peoples of these countries due to the impression that EU fiscal policies are driven from self-interests and calculations of some of the major member states. Such impression sheds a sinister light on the fact that all these states are expected to serve both their citizens and the macroeconomic imperatives as laid down in the EU legislation **Cesare Pinelli**

- *This 'permissive consensus' about social-democratic internationalism has been broken. International and European affairs have become highly politicised, even within the social democratic constituencies. A lot has to do with the populist challenge to social democracy; in fact, all establishment consensus politics has been scrutinized and challenged by the populist revolt against "elite politics" in Europe. But the most affected seems to be international and European politics, which depend mostly on a representative mandate of trust in 'far from our bed' diplomats, NGOs and experts. **René Cuperus***
- *The European project has still enormous potential to unleash political energy for progressive change in Europe. Yet this energy, carried by all sorts of extra-parliamentary organisations and individuals campaigning for the European common good, is poorly absorbed by often outdated party structures. The Left should seize the opportunity and radically open itself up. EU democratic politics must be more than just horse-trading among the political establishment. **Olaf Cramme***
- *If social democracy wants to promote the interests of the popular classes and the community of citizens in a context that has nothing in common with the post-war era, it will have to depart from the path it has taken over the past century. It will have to struggle for a radical change of direction in the European project, to imagine how to meet the most urgent social needs without high levels of growth, and to introduce more democracy at the heart of the capitalism economy. **Fabien Escalona***
- *Ai partiti progressisti spetta in particolare l'onere di rompere il silenzio delle istituzioni europee sulle violazioni dei diritti fondamentali e dei valori comuni che si compiono anche sul territorio dell'Unione, affinché questa appaia, come è e deve essere, quell'unione di diritto che è disegnata dalla Carta dei diritti fondamentali. **Elena Paciotti***
- *EU leaders need to craft a political discourse that legitimizes the deeper political integration that any such solution entails. EU leaders require narratives to help build a sense of European identity and solidarity as they seek to legitimize 'more Europe' to the citizens of Europe. At the same time, however, for citizens' sense of identity and solidarity to grow, voting in first-order EP elections for the Commission President can only be one small part of the identity-building process. The other would be making the EU part of everyday national discourse, parliamentary debate, public deliberation, and, yes, contestation—and not solely on Eurozone issues. **Vivien A. Schmidt***
- *Sebbene sia un passo avanti, non é sufficiente che il Presidente della Commissione sia nel 2014 il candidato del gruppo político della maggioranza nel Parlamento Europeo, né é suficiente una campagna elettorale orientata in questo senso in tutta Europa, se non si stabilisce un quadro costituzionale nel quale risultano fissate le competenze reali delle istituzioni. E nel quale le massime autorità abbiano la massima legittimità e, quindi, siano elette dai cittadini. **Diego Lopez Garrido***
- *The elections to the Presidency of the Union would allow the articulation of new cross-cutting political majorities, (...) Elections of this kind would be really founders of a new political system that would allow the creation of European leaderships. They would require European political programs capable to overcome the national specificities and to give to the European citizens of*



Europe a new political reference. These would contribute to building a new european common public space. **Albert Aixalà**

- The Commission should be brought back to the center of the EU system and, along with it, the role of the European Parliament should be strengthened as the one institution that confers political legitimacy (through its power to approve or dismiss the Commission) to the Union's executive. The main political parties should propose, on the occasion of the next elections of the European Parliament in 2014, their respective candidate for President of the Commission, transforming those elections into the arena for politicising the policies of the EU. **Sergio Fabbrini**
- This crisis has taught us that we are already politically integrated because profoundly interdependent. The question of political community and democracy has therefore been wrongly formulated in Europe. The question is not whether we have the conditions necessary to integrate politically. The real question is how best and legitimately to govern our already integrated political space. **Miguel Poiares Maduro**
- A more equal distribution of income is a factor of economic stability and development in the long run. Countries should be pushed to reduce income inequality through more redistributive fiscal policy. It implies to reverse this tendency of national policies aiming at increasing the level of price competitiveness through decreasing taxation at the expense of other European countries. In times where European Union is seeking for common policy goals, a coordinated strategy favoring income equality can be a mobilizing goal for European citizens. **Rémi Bazillier**
- Convergence and adjustment do not happen automatically in EMU, but need to be policy driven. New policy and governance priorities are thus required in the Eurozone to put more emphasis on cooperative games in convergence and competitiveness. (...) Central to the new mandate must be a new fiscal regime based on a symmetric imbalances procedure as outlined above. Big trade surpluses will thus remain a powerful drag on economic activity in the Eurozone and put a big obstacle in the way of the needed adjustments between member states. [Though] ...economic integration is necessary, it is not sufficient. Success requires political integration in parallel, within which the democratic mechanisms must be strengthened. (...) **Paolo Guerrieri**
- At a moment when millions of citizens are struggling to fare through the troubled waters of economic distress and are being asked to shoulder an additional tax burden, tax evaders and avoiders are busy abusing our tax systems. A political agreement on importance of halving the tax gap by 2020 is the first necessary step. But without a timely adoption of concrete and cohesive national, European and international strategies, the empty words alone will not get us anywhere. Europe has an obligation to its citizens, an opportunity in the global arena and a need to step up its efforts in solving the systemic crisis, to act as a frontrunner in this fight against tax fraud, tax avoidance and tax havens. **Mojca Kleva Kekuš**
- Eurozone countries may regard Britain's existential debate on the EU as an unnecessary distraction at a time of economic crisis but it is also worth understanding the currents of public opinion which

make this conversation necessary. Those who wish to see Britain remain in the EU should do all they can to support EU reforms that promote growth and democracy. This is the best way of ensuring that pro-European voices in Britain are able to make the pro-European case. **Will Straw**

RENAISSANCE - 8/9 FEBRUARY 2013 - TURIN, ITALY

- *We cannot tolerate, under the pretence of budgetary constraints or competitiveness, rising inequalities, extreme poverty, social exclusion, (youth-) unemployment and precarious jobs that are ethically unacceptable and which are creating a social emergency in Europe. Both democracy and the chance of creating good policy are undermined when ineffective and blatantly unjust policies are introduced. (...) As a trade unionist I believe that it is just no longer possible to support a unilateral direction towards more fiscal and economic integration without flagging up an alternative vision. (...) steps to strengthen the social dimension in the EMU are a necessity. However, from a trade union perspective, a discussion on the social dimension of the EMU is only acceptable if it triggers social progress and not social regression. **Sina Frank***
- *Advocates of austerity often portray it as a choice of short term pain in order to achieve long-term gain. However, prolonged periods of high unemployment and low business investment caused by austerity may do long lasting damage via so-called hysteresis mechanisms. For instance, unemployment caused by consolidation may turn structural as the long term unemployed lose vital skills and work habits, and the young never gain them. Lower business investment implies slower growth of the physical capital stock and may slow the pace of technological change. Thus the weakening of economic activity caused by austerity may do long lasting damage to the productive capacity of the European Economy. **Ansgar Rannenberg***
- *My thesis is that as a result of the government debt crises, not only the institutional deficits of the common currency became obvious, but they also lead to a growing social divergence within the Euro area. However, the European rescue measures to support the weak Euro states focus merely on economical aspects, while social problems are ignored and therefore rather exacerbated. Based on these considerations it will thus be argued that the social destabilizations in some Euro countries, in combination with the ignorance on the European level concerning these problems, will in the long run considerably threaten the institutional balance of the Euro and along with that the EU as a whole, and that a fundamental readjustment will be necessary. **Jenny Preunkert***
- *There is an inverse relationship between solidarity and coordination in the European Union today. Capacity and institution building are considered as instruments to compensate for the inadequate level of solidarity. Is this a viable strategy? If solidarity is based on a combination of normative and institutional allegiance, the current measures do answer to the rational dimension of solidarity,*



to the expectation that resources will be spent appropriately and effectively? Creating new rules and mechanisms may help to repair the lack of trust and commonly felt responsibility, but it seems highly questionable if it can be the ultimate response to the lack of a deeper sense of communality, of shared Europeaness as a driver for solidarity in the European Union. **André W. M. Gerrits**

- ... conceptualisation of Social Europe has been originating from a traditional understanding of the role of social democracy; namely it has pledged as a political movement to deliver a compromise between labour and capital. Empowering Europeans socially, economically and politically would signify making them signatories of the historical contract. (...) The call therefore is about re-assuming a historical responsibility for shaping a new social deal on the European level. It is about restoring the sense of politics that does not subordinate to financial capitalism, but that serves people. Exercised on their behalf, politics must pave the way towards a fairer, better society. It is therefore about re-establishing logic of the alternative, both in political terms and on the individual level – while empowering all women and men to self-determination and to a choice. **Ania Skrzypek**
- The transition from “finance-capitalistic” to “real-capitalistic” framework conditions usually takes many depressive years as governance according to the old navigation map makes things only worse. Such a transition phase calls for a New Deal which changes the direction of the course even without guidance by a new theory. (...) A New Deal for Europe should include many components, in particular as regards the additional regulations of financial markets/actors and public investments in infrastructure, education and environment. **Stephan Schulmeister**
- This is the time to regenerate and mobilize Europe with a unifying new narrative, to deepen our bonds and transform into a real Community, a Federation of Nation States. Let us make the center-left the catalyst and take the initiative, make the effort and trickle down the message of why we need more Europe. To eliminate once and for all any risk of dismantling the most noble and genuine accomplishment of Europe’s political history.(...) **Anna Diamantopoulou**
- Real convergence is absolutely necessary as a simply nominal one has proved ineffective and totally unrealistic at this stage. We need to reform the EU’s fiscal rules with the aim of protecting public investments, also through a “golden rule” excluding productive investment and national contributions to the EU budget from the SGP computation of deficits. We also want the creation of a European fiscal capacity in the form of an anti-cyclical fund financed with own resources. **Anna Colombo**
- The EU needs to promote a new European social contract along the following lines: • Adoption of a European emergency action plan, financed by mutualized debt and EIB loans, that promotes economic growth and employment, especially for young people. • Adoption of a European wage policy that reflects productivity gains and implementation of a European minimum wage. • Support for a social security system that ensures a high level of health, family, unemployment and retirement protection. Combating poverty and social inequality therefore seems to remain a priority goal for a Social Europe. As poverty has many causes, we may reflect on market income, namely wages, regulation, redistributive and social service policies of the welfare state and labour market participation of families. Thinking on what would be the role of a Social Europe in

these areas we may concentrate on some normative reflections on minimum wage setting and its coordination with social policies. **Irene Dingeldey**

■ Consideration of the possibility of implementing unemployment insurance to complement national subsidies in the Eurozone countries. • Implementation of guarantees to strengthen collective bargaining and worker codetermination. • Inclusion, in a reformed treaty, of a social progress clause that guarantees basic social rights and endorses the European social model. **Diego Lopez Garrido**

■ Je veux proposer ici trois mesures simples et concrètes, la première pour limiter certains licenciements, la seconde pour faire gagner de la croissance à court terme, la dernière pour engager enfin la croissance durable qui n'existe aujourd'hui encore à Bruxelles que dans les discours. Mesure n°1: faire payer davantage aux entreprises en bonne santé qui annoncent des plans de licenciement, le coût social réel des mesures qu'elles envisagent. Mesure n°2: donner au « semestre budgétaire européen » actuellement prévu par les institutions de l'Union une dimension « jeu coopératif à somme positive » actuellement complètement ignorée à Bruxelles. Mesure n°3: relancer la mise en oeuvre par l'Union européenne d'une taxe carbone efficace, dans des conditions qui retirent aux entreprises concernées leur principal argument contre cette taxe: celui du risque de perte de compétitivité au niveau mondial. **Gérard Fuchs**

■ The basic idea underlying the corridor model, developed in the 1990s, is the maintenance of a close connection between levels of economic and welfare state development in the EU member states. During periods of crisis in which drastic cuts are made in social security systems European regulation of this kind is crucial. This concept can also be used to prevent social dumping between member states and to facilitate welfare state catch-up processes on the part of less developed members. **Klaus Busch**

■ In the global economy, young people must be educated and prepared for rapid technological change and competition from workers around the world. This economy demands that all students attain at least a high-school diploma; that they be educated to global standards of excellence. It increasingly requires that they attain some higher-education or substantial on-the-job training. Progressives should make investment in education with the goal of achieving a world-class education for all a key pillar of their economic agendas. Specific measures are needed to tackle the barriers facing disadvantaged youths who are neither in employment, education or training. It is up to progressives to get the word out and steer funding to programmes such as second-chance schools in Europe. Youths should work, train, or actively search while receiving assistance. **Yannis Mastrogeorgiou**

■ ... the EMU should be equipped with a proper fiscal capacity able to cushion asymmetric shocks, whatever the Member State, and able to promote catching-up and structural convergence between Member States by focusing on capacity building. The financial resources of this fiscal capacity (preferably own resources) can provide a basis for borrowing via Eurobonds in order to finance European investments, complementing the national ones. This can become an embryo of European Treasury. (...) such a development of the Economic and Monetary Union should be based on a New Deal whereby Member States should accept: - stronger European supervision on their banks, if a common bank resolution and deposit guarantee is build up; - stronger coordination of their economic



and social policies and reforms, if a fiscal capacity is build up; -stronger sharing of sovereignty at European level, if the decisions are taken in more democratic terms. **Maria João Rodrigues**

■ It is clear that European public opinion will support such a policy that involves giving more resources to the EU only if the objectives are prescribed clearly, and provided that the potential benefits are effectively communicated, including: - Reduction in high, socially unacceptable unemployment levels, especially in the hardest-hit places in the EU; - A new economic model that is not overly-dependent on financial services but which instead focuses on constructing a solid industrial basis for the EU which ensures both competitiveness and solidarity; -A European Union that becomes a coherent economic and political actor internationally, able to defend the general European interest against other economic powerhouses such as the US, China and the BRICs; - European Union that supports decentralisation, subsidiarity and regional and local self-government for all policies which are not strategic for the defence of the common European interest.. **Gerhard Stahl**

■ The development of a Social Europe (as an equivalent to the existing economic Europe and as a complement to the single market) has since a long time being hampered by indifference, if not obstruction from certain member states. Like in other policy domains in which no basic agreement has been found, this has led to a Europe à la carte with a number of member states having opt-outs (or strictly speaking: opt-ins) whereas applicant member states have to stick to a fixed menu. () **Steven van Hecke**

■ ... the quality of democracy should be a priority at all times and that politics and policies need to be at the centre of the crisis debate. Our basic argument is that such a deep economic and social crisis is also inevitably a crisis of democracy. It is also a challenge for social democracy today to provide a coherent and intuitive interpretation of the crisis and an integrated policy proposal based on the need to balance economic sustainability with social cohesion and democracy. **Zinovia Lialiou**



**GROWTH
SOLIDARITY
DEMOCRACY**

MANIFESTO FROM PARIS

GROWTH, SOLIDARITY, DEMOCRACY: SETTING A NEW COURSE FOR EUROPE

In September 2011, the social democrats returned to power in Denmark. November 2011 saw the resignation of Italy's conservative government and, in December of the same year, a socialist prime minister was elected in Belgium. Forthcoming elections in France, Italy and Germany, this year and next, could prove crucial to setting a new course for Europe, driven by a broad alliance encompassing the full spectrum of socialist, progressive and democratic forces.

That is the aim pursued by progressive groupings at national and European levels.

■ **Europe is our shared heritage. Our duty is to strive to build a more united, democratic Europe.**

The lack of effective, democratic European economic governance clearly threatens to drag Europe into recession.

By focusing on wage deflation at the expense of policies that promote growth and jobs, neglecting solidarity and the fight against inequalities, reducing Europe to nothing more than a zone of supervision and sanction, and failing to foster social dialogue and democracy, we are turning our backs on the imperatives of both the combat against the economic crisis and the European project itself.

While all the signs suggest that Europe is not yet out of the crisis, with a recession looming and unemployment and poverty continuing to rise in many European Union countries, there is an urgent need to set a new course for Europe, a course of budget responsibility based on growth, solidarity and democracy.

■ It is now up to the European Union to provide an appropriate response.

Budget responsibility and fiscal discipline are key to ensuring stability in the Eurozone and reviving the European social model. A framework should be established in each State to guarantee a reduction in deficits and debt. In order to make public finances less dependent on market fluctuations and free up resources to invest in social progress and growth, European sovereign debt levels must be reduced.

This would entail a shared strategy, adapted to the reality of each Member State. It would have to be implemented responsibly, according to the democratic rules of a new shared European sovereignty and in keeping with the principles of equality and social justice. The European Union should waste no time in launching initiatives to stimulate sustained and sustainable growth.

The future Union budget for 2014-2020 should provide a more effective, transparent response, not least through dynamic and economically consistent management of European structural funds – with a clearer focus on the imperatives of social justice, employment, education and professional training. The European Investment Bank should play a greater role in this. Creating jobs and combating labour market segmentation, particularly for young people and women, should be priorities. The existing European Globalisation Adjustment Fund should be extended and renewed to alleviate the negative impacts of austerity measures on employment.

■ Our industrial policy must be developed and reinforced.

Industrial policy should be reshaped to drive the development of major industrial, technological and infrastructure projects, and promote Europe's environmental transformation. For instance, it should focus on projects delivering high value-added industry founded on technological excellence. It should promote low-carbon industry based on green technologies, providing lasting, highly-skilled jobs. In order to contribute to the fight against climate change, we believe there is a clear need to support the widespread use and standardisation of green certificates now used in some European Union countries.

■ New resources must be created.

The proposal, long championed by European progressives and recently presented by the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament, for a tax on financial transactions should be adopted by the Council without delay. It would raise the cost of speculation, redress the imbalance between capital and labour taxation and combat fiscal injustice. It would increase the European Union's resources. It would



help to finance investments in major European projects, which contribute to sustainable growth and employment, while also funding aid to developing countries and helping them adapt to climate change.

This tax will ensure that those responsible for the financial crisis contribute to economic revival.

Other resources could be raised to finance shared investment projects, through the creation of «project bonds».

The European Union should take steps to address its relationships with «tax havens» in order to combat tax evasion and help to bolster public finances.

Nevertheless, stimulating growth requires above all an increase in demand and completion of the internal market. Serious efforts are needed to tackle the profound macroeconomic and social imbalances that are key causes of the crisis in the Eurozone. Measures to boost competitiveness in countries with trade deficits should be accompanied by reciprocal measures to stimulate domestic demand in surplus countries. This would help to reverse the trend of recent decades towards the uneven distribution of wealth. Investment expenditure should also be distinguished from operating expenditure.

■ **Solidarity must take centre stage in European policies. That is how the stability of our currency will be guaranteed.**

We think it is worth considering increasing joint European responsibility for a portion of sovereign debt. Eurobonds would contribute to a new fund to reduce debt and make it possible to rebalance public finances.

The failure of attempts made by conservative governments in Europe to respond to the Eurozone crisis has led the European Central Bank to play an active role in financial markets with a view to preventing the crisis from deepening, allowing member States to refinance, and instilling confidence in the financial markets. If this lack of political leadership were to continue, the European Central Bank would ultimately be obliged to play an even more prominent role in combating the financial crisis.

These are the imperatives which should be addressed in the essential rebalancing of European policies in order to supplement the budget treaty with measures focusing on growth, employment and solidarity.

This will be impossible without effective financial regulation, so that financial markets once again serve the real economy and the necessary link between finance and the economy

is restored. In this context, the ratings agencies should be reformed to put an end to the current oligopoly, particularly with regard to the valuation of sovereign debt.

■ This will all have to be backed up by real European democracy.

The European Union needs greater powers and a genuine system of governance. Citizens of Europe should be given the opportunity to make clear decisions on the thrust of EU policy. The intergovernmental method implemented by conservative governments does nothing to help achieve this. Co-decision should also be extended to fundamental economic and social policy choices.

This means a form of European democracy based on the community method, subsidiarity and citizen participation, with a greater role for the European Parliament and national parliaments, accompanied by measures to increase the influence of European political parties. To this end, European progressive parties should nominate a joint candidate for the post of Commission President.

■ An alternative path for Europe, one which respects the Charter of Fundamental Rights, is possible.



A DEMOCRATIC UNION

MANIFESTO FROM TURIN

A DEMOCRATIC UNION OF PEACE, PROSPERITY AND PROGRESS

2013 is a crucial year for a progressive Europe. After the socialist victories in Slovakia, France and Romania in 2012, the elections in Italy and Germany might change the balance in the European Council, paving the way for a progressive majority in Europe after the 2014 European elections. The Paris declaration and the launch of the *Renaissance for Europe* initiative in March 2012 focused on the need to go beyond austerity policies, drawing the lines of a new and more balanced course for a Europe of stability, growth and solidarity. In Turin we want to elaborate our vision of Political Europe: a Union of democracy based on shared sovereignty, which is essential to address the crisis, empower the citizens and restore confidence in the European project. What we want to deliver is a Union of progress and prosperity for all, with a strong mandate from the European citizenry.

■ Reshaping the fundamentals: Developing democracy

The economic and financial crisis has highlighted the weakness of the governance of the Euro. The introduction of a common currency has not been underpinned by the completion of a true economic union. Hence even though the Euro has become an important symbol of the progress of integration, it has failed to become synonymous with European security, stability and scrutiny. The lack of appropriate institutional architecture meant that there has been a trade-off between intergovernmentalism of resources and community method of rules. The first envisaged channelling financial aid from the member states through intergovernmental bodies. The second leaned towards stricter rules of fiscal discipline at EU level and the subsequent implementation of the austerity policies. This set-up has proven to be ineffective both politically and economically. It has not enhanced financial stability and fiscal sustainability. Instead it has triggered a vicious circle of recession and worsening of public finances. The economic and above all social consequences of it are devastating. The democratic deficit of EU policies has spilled over into the Member States, undermining not only public support for the European project but also for national democracies.

A Union of fiscal rules managed by technocrats cannot go beyond austerity and deprive citizens



of their right of self-determination. A sense of security has to be anchored in a financial discipline and mechanisms which are sustainable and not subjected to permanent negotiations within and between member states. Continuous bargaining only further undermines European solidarity. It incentivises a model of governance based on balance of power and a hierarchy based on wealth, while putting national democracies on a collision course between those who perceive themselves as shouldering others and these others who feel to be governed by the former.

The paradox is that the attempt to protect national sovereignty and avoid fiscal transfers has produced a system of governance which is less effective, more intrusive and less respectful of state sovereignty than any of the existing federal models, while at the same time risking more expense for taxpayers.

Restoring Legitimacy: Empowering Europeans

A genuine Economic and Monetary Union needs a different model of governance, based on the following elements:

- a balanced implementation of the Stability and Growth Pact reconciling fiscal responsibility with growth and employment, safeguarding public investments and public services, while pursuing deficit and debt reduction;
- a stronger and more balanced coordination of economic policies at EMU level and new and enhanced EU policies;
- a comprehensive banking union and an active European Central Bank to promote financial stability and an effective regulation of financial markets to incentivize long term investment instead of speculation;
- economic policies have to be accompanied by a solid set of responsible social policies, which become binding targets reflecting pledges of progress and prosperity for all. This is why a new Social Pact should be framed in such a way that it becomes a guarantee for all Europeans. The autonomy of social partners and their role must be safeguarded and strengthened, promoting the emergence of European social dialogue.
- an adequate budgetary capacity, based on own resources, to promote growth and competitiveness and to address cyclical and structural imbalances supporting social and territorial cohesion;
- a borrowing capacity to give stronger foundations to financial solidarity and support debt redemption.

This model of governance requires a better and clearer division of competences and resources between the EU and the Member States, and stronger democratic legitimacy and accountability at both levels. It must not be based on intergovernmentalism but on the EU institutions and the “Community method”, with a strong European Commission acting as a true government and full co-decision between the Council and the European Parliament.

The EU and EMU budgetary capacity must come from own resources clearly linked to EU-generated wealth and specific regulatory functions connected to Union's competences. Member States should keep responsibility for the implementation of economic policy guidelines co-decided at EU level, and on national budgets within the boundaries of EU's fiscal framework.

Sharing sovereignty on a democratic basis is the only way to recover it and empower the citizens. The European Parliament and national parliaments shall be the driving forces of this process and shall fully cooperate, while exerting their prerogatives at their respective level, according to the principle that democratic legitimacy and accountability must be ensured at the level at which decisions are taken and implemented.

A genuine Economic and Monetary Union requires a Treaty change to be completed. We call for the establishment of a Convention during the next legislature, which could be an opening of a new phase of deliberations on the European Union's future. But this outcome needs to be prepared by the swift and full use of the tools of the existing treaties (from enhanced cooperation and article 136 TFEU to the flexibility clause), and by a broad public debate involving civil society, social actors, political parties, the European Parliament and national parliaments. The progressive foundations shall promote such debate and draw their contribution and proposals for a genuine EMU in a democratic Union.

■ Reviving ambition: Providing hope

Better and stronger EU policies are not possible without true EU politics. A fiscal and economic union requires a political union. An EU wide public sphere must emerge with a view to enhancing European civil society. This unity of the citizens of Europe shall fully respect and enhance the value of cultural pluralism and national diversity. But at the same time it shall frame the debate and the EU decision-making process along cross-national political and ideological lines instead that along national divisions.

Legislative elections at Member State level must be fully conceived as a part of the EU political process. European elections have to be seen not as mid-term tests for national parties in 28 Member States, but as the moment in which the EU citizen chooses the direction for Europe and offers a democratic mandate to the European Parliament and the European government.

The PES has already decided, before the elections, to appoint a "top" candidate for the post of President of the Commission. We invite all the European parties to do the same, following the resolution approved by a large majority in the European Parliament. The appointment of top candidates must be linked to the presentation to the voters of alternative political platforms focused on European issues, and subscribed to by the



national parties and their candidates for the European Parliament.

The politicisation of the Commission and the Europeanization of the elections to the European and national Parliaments are crucial steps towards a political Union, but they are not the only ones. Direct participation of the citizens in the EU decision making process must be promoted and strengthened. The European Citizens' Initiative has to become an ordinary tool for involving civil society and political parties in political campaigns on transnational basis. Strikes and social battles must be conducted at EU level, counterbalancing the growing role of lobbies and vested interests in the EU decision making process with the weight of citizens and workers. Socialist and Democrat political groups in the European parliament and in national parliaments must promote strict cooperation, as with the PES and national parties.

Young people must be the driving force in the process leading to the construction of a true European polity. As such, initiatives that are focused on equal and relevant opportunities, such as the European youth guarantee or the Erasmus programme, should be seen as an investment in the Union's collective future. Progressives should cooperate to promote cross-border dialogue and exchange programmes, which would allow horizontal circulation of best practices and national experiences, strengthening the European spirit and the progressive family. It is a way to restore the significance of partisanship and enrich it through bringing a pan-European dimension to political activism. This could be realised by establishing a progressive partisan Erasmus, which through the collective efforts of the European parties, would enable internships and exchanges of activists among national level organisations.

The global economy requires supranational democracy. A Political Union is the condition to give Europe an effective and legitimate model of economic governance that promotes stability, growth and solidarity. A Democratic Union is indispensable to provide Europeans with a voice and possibilities to shape the world they live in. The pledge of "Renaissance for Europe" is a credible proposal on how to realise this ambitious dream.



PARTNERING FOUNDATIONS





FEPS is the first progressive political foundation established at the European level. Created in 2007 and co-financed by the European Parliament, it aims at establishing an intellectual crossroad between social democracy and the European project. It puts fresh thinking at the core of its action and serves as an instrument for pan-European intellectual and political reflection.

Acting as a platform for ideas, FEPS relies first and foremost on a network of members composed of more than 40 national political foundations and think tanks from all over the EU. The Foundation also closely collaborates with a number of international correspondents and partners in the world that share the ambition to foster research, promote debate and spread the progressive thinking.

The four main topics are:

- **NEXT LEFT:**

Renewal of Social Democracy – New Social Europe – Progressive European Party Systems – Renaissance of a Progressive Europe.

- **EUROPEAN SOCIETY:**

Bridging the gap – Gender Equality – Legal inspiration and integration - Understanding Diversity.

- **SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY:**

Macroeconomic Economy - Financial and Monetary Policy – Economic Governance - Economic Theory.

- **GLOBAL SOLIDARITIES:**

Global Governance and Security - European Policies and Other Continents - Democracy and Prosperity in the Neighbourhood – Solidarity: The Reason to Fight Climate change.

www.feps-europe.eu



On 6 February 1998, a group of leading figures from the Italian Reformist movement held a public seminar in Rome, which was attended by representatives from the political, cultural, business and employment arenas. The day-long event sought to flesh out the nature and purposes of a new politico-cultural Foundation aimed at creating a shared European consciousness and fostering debate on the main issues raised by political and economic innovation in Italian society. It would be a research institution capable of contributing constructively to the country's redefinition of its political and cultural foundations in relation to its national identity, development model and overall system of rules and institutions. It would also function as a public think tank capable of generating ideas tailored to national and international scenarios, with a view to reconciling competition, employment, development and social solidarity needs. In short, the Foundation would serve as a forum for the various cultural traditions in the Italian Reformist movement.

These complex and ambitious objectives would involve activities geared simultaneously at theoretical and political research into future scenarios in the European integration process, and in-depth theoretical analysis of the country's agenda, with a particular focus on economic and social dynamics and long-term investment in human capital and system resources (including continuing education, training and research), without which there would be no competition.

The work of the Fondazione Italianieuropei, which in 2000 was accorded official legal status, has been structured along these lines. We have organised over one hundred fifty conferences, seminars, international events and training courses. We have communicated the results of our activities through our monthly journal "Italianieuropei", by publishing research and analysis documents on specific fields of interest and topical political issues and through our website www.italianieuropei.it. Over the years, the Foundation has forged collaborative relationships with other national and international institutions in the belief that only by creating a global research and analysis network can knowledge be perfected, debate fostered, challenges met and opportunities taken to engage in a process of global integration. The Foundation has conducted its operations independently and autonomously thanks to private donations and contributions from business and other organisations.

www.italianieuropei.it



The Jean Jaurès Foundation holds a mission and ambition to be the place for the renewal of socialist thought in addressing both global and practical solutions. It looks to 2012 as its horizon as this will mark the twentieth anniversary of its establishment.

Beyond requiring open, intellectual and innovative action the Fondation Jean-Jaurès is characterized by two features:

The international dimension: through working with many progressive foundations around the world, and dedicating a department of the Foundation to supporting democracy in countries where it is at its most fragile. The FJJ works, particularly in Africa and Central Europe, to raise questions of democratic governance, staff training policy and supporting the most innovative and promising projects.

The foundation has partnered with the French Socialist Party and the Office of University Social Research to create within the Foundation a central socialist archive to take advantage of the vast wealth of Socialist history.

The FJJ adopts as its strategy collective work: bring together women and men from different backgrounds who too often do not work together, such as politicians, union leaders, and business leaders, academic and multidisciplinary experts. The aim is to put this work to the service of everyone, in the interest of the common good.

www.jean-jaures.org

The aim of the international activities of the Friedrich- Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is to promote democracy and development, to contribute to peace and security, to work to make globalization socially equitable, and to support the continued development of the European Union.

Through its projects in over 100 countries, the FES supports building and strengthening civil society and public institutions. Central to its work are the promotion of democracy and social justice, economic and social development, strong and free trade unions, and the advocacy of human rights and gender equality.

In recent years, the FES has placed increased emphasis on global and regional issues. Special attention has been given to the process of European integration, European Neighborhood Policy, the continued development of the transatlantic relationship, and strengthening the system of global governance. Worldwide, the FES supports regional cooperative efforts on security issues, ecological sustainability, and social progress.

Through its worldwide network of offices and partners, the FES organizes debates and discussions on current political and social problems and challenges. Its partners include political parties, trade unions, NGOs, think tanks, universities, and state institutions.

The goals that guide the political education work of the FES are to enable and encourage citizens to participate in civil society, the labor movement, and to actively engage in the political process. The FES offers a wide variety of programs, which aim to inform, qualify, and engage participants. In these programs the FES promotes and enables citizens to make sound and educated political decisions thereby strengthening Social Democracy. Through its regional discussion forums, workshops, and public dialogues between politicians and civil society, the FES allows citizens to participate more actively and effectively in democratic processes, contributing to the design of social change.

Its network of education offices and academies throughout Germany, special projects, and conference centres in Bonn and Berlin, offer diverse and wide-ranging programs which are also made available online.

www.fes.de



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THE EUROPEAN PROGRESSIVE MAGAZINE

First issue available online on June 26th



Half magazine, half book, Queries is a quarterly magazine that analyses all questions related to Europe through a wide range of angles and perspectives, intending to stimulate the debates by taking sides



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