

500 millions Europeans take a hand in their future

Newropeans

First trans-european political movement



HOW TO MARRY DEMOCRACY AND EUROPE

The European Union is certainly the most important political project in these last 50 years. It is, however, today in a profound crisis. The politicians no longer have any idea of how to steer the immense European "super tanker" and as hence have left it in the hands of the bureaucrats. Citizens do not have access to the ship's control room, and, in the absence of political relays at the continental level, increasingly tend to abstain or to vote for extremists.

The public refusal of the Constitutional Treaty sharply revealed the need for a democratic transition of the European Union. For Newropeans, there is only one way of catalysing the necessary forces to ensure this transition, and that is by the creation of the first trans-European political movement, which will present lists under the same name and programme in all of the European Union at the European elections in 2009. Newropeans, by its very example, shows how democracy and European integration are compatible.

This historic first will offer all European citizens the possibility to vote for a common vision of a future democratic European Union. It is also a unique chance for these very same European citizens to show that they also are henceforth able to "make Europe work"!

A POLITICAL MOVEMENT UNLIKE ANY OTHER

The European integration process is today at of those crucial crossroads that all of our nations have crossed in history, when the political question of the day is "how to give citizens control over the main decisions that are being taken in their name?"

For this transition to succeed, it has always been necessary for a new political movement to emerge temporarily, a force that is very different to the traditional political parties, gathering together as it does all those who think that democratisation of their political system is a priority which goes beyond the usual left-right divisions.

Newropeans is not therefore a traditional political movement. Its objective is to accompany the political transition at the level of our continent, in order to allow citizens and peoples to control the European project better. And the European Parliament is the natural target of such a movement.

This year, Newropeans will bring together its first 1000 active members who are going to contribute to the development of the network and of the political platform. All finance donated to Newropeans will be dedicated to developing its infrastructure and the organisation of information and working meetings. No salaries will be paid as Newropeans will only have voluntary workers.

10 ADVANTAGES FOR CHANGING EUROPE

Newropeans is fundamentally different to all other political structures you know. The 10 advantages of Newropeans, which generate a single possible catalyst for fomenting democratic change in the European Union, illustrate this fact. They are all advantages which will allow Newropeans to gain a 5 to 10% share of the vote in June 2009.

1st Act only on the level of the whole of the European Union

Newropeans is a trans-European political movement, without any national level, which will only present candidates for the European elections.

2nd Act for a limited time

Newropeans is a political movement with a limited life span (10 to 20 years maximum), which has as its sole raison d'être the aim of ensuring the successful transition of the European Union to democracy.

3rd Bringing together those on both sides of the national left-right divide

Newropeans accepts members from all national and regional political parties, except if they are anti-democratic or xenophobic.

4th Speak the languages of all Europeans

Newropeans communicates with European citizens in their own language.

5th Understand the opinions of Europeans

Newropeans will use its direct relations with European citizens to launch political debates throughout the continent. Through its active and close dialogue with citizens throughout the EU, Newropeans, in contrast to other political parties, will be able to build its trans-European credibility and will not loose touch with the citizens of Europe.

6th Directly link citizens to European decisions

Newropeans wants to be a show case of democratisation of the EU, in letting all its members directly participate in the major decisions of the movement (election of leadership, development of the programme, ...)

7th Integrate e-democracy into the European democratic process

All Newropeans members can participate in the debates and internal votes via the Internet.

8th Develop the programme in 3 steps up to 2008

Newropeans will adopt the whole of its programme around a core of 16 propositions, in three steps at the time of its Agora (general assemblies) in June 2006 (Governance structures for a democratic Europe, External Relations, Defence, Education, Immigration), June 2007 (Economy, Social policy), June 2008 (Research, Ethics, Environment, Culture).

9th Build a solid and reliable trans-European network

In order to keep its commitment to help the democratic transition of the EU, Newropeans must dispose of an efficient trans-European organisation. Newropeans has conceived a four-step recruitment strategy: a hard core of 1.000 active members in June 2006, 10.000 members organised in local and sector networks for June 2007, 100.000 members et sympathisers in June 2008, and 1.000.000 members, sympathisers et fellow travellers by June 2009 to convince the 10 to 20 million electors that Newropeans hopes to win over.

10th Catalyse political forces inside and outside of the European Parliament

Newropeans will use its status as the first trans-European political movement, and first group in the European parliament to directly represent citizens from the whole of the EU to gather other political forces around its core proposals. It will thus oblige the European institutions to connect directly to the citizens.

SPOTLIGHT ON KEY PROPOSALS

To succeed in the democratic transition of the European Union, is at the same time to push out the way the anti-democratic forces that are blocking the democratisation process, whilst at the same time proposing innovative policies, and a complete re-build of the system inherited from the 1950s. To manage the challenge of governing 500 million Europeans democratically, Newropeans, at the time of the Newropeans Democracy Marathon in 2002/2003, drew up a core list of 16 propositions which will serve as the basis for elaborating its whole programme between now and June 2008. Here are five of the more innovative and fundamental proposals from this list:

Proposition 1: Eliminate the anti-democratic principal of life-long judicial immunity for community officials.

This life-long immunity is not only incompatible with the principal of equality before the law, which is at the heart of every democracy, but also contributes to maintain the opacity of the institutions (which are even opaque to the institutions of justice) and the distance from the normal citizen, which feeds the bureaucratic reflex of the whole community system. Even the EU's political leaders do not benefit from such an immunity which is in effect an almost total impunity which can easily be abused. Newropeans proposes that, except when they are on a diplomatic posting outside of the EU, European officials should not enjoy any particular legal immunity.

Proposition 2: Ratify future treaties and possible enlargements (after Bulgaria and Romania) by trans-European referenda.

European citizens want to give their views on the major decisions affecting the EU, and are no longer prepared to trust their leaders to negotiate these fundamental points in their name. This was visible given the high level of turnout for the French and Dutch referenda on the constitution, and with the audible popular refusal in those debates of the prospect of a possible Turkish membership of the European Union. In parallel, the multiplicity of procedures for national ratification pushes the EU towards paralysis. It is therefore urgent for both democratic and efficiency reasons to introduce a single ratification system : a trans-European referendum, where a double majority is needed for success (in this system a majority of citizens in all the EU, plus a majority of countries voting in favour would be needed. This would prevent small countries from losing all possibility of influencing the result).

Proposition 3: Introduce a neighbourhood policy in order to organise the EU's relations with all neighbours from Russia to Morocco ;

and in particular to develop strategic partnerships with its most important neighbours such as Russia, Turkey or Ukraine.

In this matter Newropeans draws its conclusions from numerous debates with citizens from all over the EU, and from its proposal for trans-European referenda on future enlargement. Notably it is illusory to imagine that in the next two decades a majority of citizens will accept the accession of e.g. Turkey to the EU. It is urgent to take this into account in order to avoid that in a couple of years dangerous developments do not take place, notably anti-European feelings in Turkey and anti-Turkish feelings in the EU. This requires the development of a new framework for sustainable relations with Turkey as well as with all the other countries in the neighbourhood.

Proposition 4: Decentralise the institutional system and community policy in order to move closer to the 500 millions European citizens.

The current concentration of European institutions serves to accentuate the distance between the EU and its citizens. As it is impossible to move 500 millions Europeans closer to Brussels, Newropeans proposes to move the European institutions closer to the 500 million Europeans, by dividing the institutions into two "European institutional rings" and linking them by using the technologies of the XXIst Century (Internet, high speed trains and low-cost air lines). This makes sense given that the current system dates from the time of steam trains and telephones! A first ring would around Brussels would be constituted of London, Paris, The Hague and Frankfurt. These cities would receive the main institutions. All the others would be divided in a second institutional ring including one major metropole per country in order to avoid the current parcelling out of a multitude of European agencies which nobody knows where they are located. Geography is also power. And a democratic form of power needs another type of geography than bureaucratic one.

Proposition 5 : Change the electoral system of the European Parliament in giving two votes to each citizen so that he/she can elect 50% of the parliament from trans-European lists and 50% from national or regional lists (according to the preference of each country).

Such a system of double votes exists in many countries where there are strong regional components (such as in Germany). Everybody has noticed the regular decrease in turnout for European Parliament elections. Less than 50% of Europeans now turn out to vote. Nevertheless, the referenda on the constitution proved that Europe can mobilise a lot of people

to go and vote, so long as Europe is actually the theme of the election, and that each person is able to express the double feeling that he/she has of with regard to the European project: on the one hand each wants “more Europe” in certain areas, on the other each one is afraid of “too much Europe” in some other sectors. If one wishes to reconcile the European Parliament with its citizens, the latter must be allowed to express this duality of feelings which lies at the heart of European identity. Otherwise abstention will continue to grow, and playing into the hands of the extremists, and will result in a total loss of democratic legitimacy for the whole European project.

NEWROPEANS: AN UNRIVALED EUROPEAN STORY

Newropeans is the fruit of 20 years of commitment throughout Europe, aiming to advance European unity and common democracy in parallel with each other.

- In 1985, the first large European network was created. Since then, AEGEE-EUROPE has over 200,000 members. In 1988, AEGEE decisively contributed to the creation of the **ERASMUS programme**, which has allowed a million students to study outside of their home country.
- In 1989, the first trans-national political campaign for the European Parliament was launched with the Initiative for European Democracy.
- In 1991, Newropeans were the first to publicly call into question the lack of efficiency and transparency of the European programmes and recommended new methods for developing and managing them. This is the time of the “**Tempus Affair**”.
- In the 90s, the group gathers experience of European affairs, with its members working in governments and European institutions. At the end of the 90s, they establish a cutting-edge European ideas laboratory with **EUROPE 2020**.
- In the years that follow, the network organises a series of large trans-European events. The Newropeans 2000 conference: New Europe, New Challenges, New Generations » gathering 2000 Europeans with dozens of prestigious speakers from all over Europe. The **Newropeans Democracy Marathon** with 100 conferences in 25 European countries gathered more than 10.000 participants in 2003. The creation of the **Newropeans Magazine**, one of the most read on-line trans-European magazines, then allowed the creation of a unique network of around 100,000 European citizens.

Born as a political movement in June 2005, Newropeans is henceforth ready to receive you as a member who contributes to our common success – which is nothing less than the democratic re-foundation of the European Union.

To become a member :

Join on-line on www.newropeans.org
Or send a message to contact@newropeans.org

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To find more daily analysis on European current affairs, read the Newropeans-Magazine www.newropeans-magazine.org