

A New Narrative for Europe

Bonn, Germany

31st August – 3rd September 2014



CONGRESS-PAPER

A NEW NARRATIVE FOR EUROPE

- ABSTRACT -

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PREAMBLE

We, the Youth of the 28 Member States of the European Union, came together in Bonn (Germany) to acknowledge that the future of Europe is defined by our actions and is of our common concern.

We wish to underline the importance of the promotion of the European identity based on the common cultural and historical heritage of Europe, to strengthen the inclusive Europe based on the promotion of human rights, equality and tolerance and to endorse the fundamental values of democracy and individual freedoms.

Furthermore, we believe that there are many urgent environmental issues that Europe will be facing in the decades to come. Environmental change permanently casts its shadow over Europe, and therefore it is something that we will inevitably have to deal with together. However, we believe in a bright future, and we believe that the EU can - and should - play a crucial role in a sustainable future.

The last years have shown us that the European Union needs to strengthen the economic integration of its members into one common framework if it wants to protect its single market from interior and exterior crises. There were huge differences in how strongly the member states were affected by the turmoils of the last financial crisis, which shows us that there is a strong need for European economic solidarity and cooperation.

We have joined our thoughts on these issues in this new narrative for Europe

and

have concluded the following New Narrative for Europe:

(ABSTRACT)

ENVIRONMENT

The future environmental challenges are well known and frequently discussed in public. We were raised in the awareness of climate change and the effects which our current lifestyle has on all living things. However, we have to deplore the fact that sufficient steps have not been taken yet to tackle the arising problems.

The EU should aim at implementing a harmonized labelling and recycling system.

Furthermore, we have to underline the significance of education and information. The EU should create additional guidelines and tools to allow its citizens to compare products in terms of their ecological character.

Special attention needs to be paid to the matter of sharing. Food-, bike- and car-sharing should be utilized and extended within the entire European area.

SOCIETY

In conclusion we would like to achieve a European Union which every inhabitant feels a part of. Therefore we need a European identity. This could be enhanced by European education, awareness, exchange of ideas among people with different backgrounds and through economic and political cooperation. Mobility would support the idea of European identity as well as it would fight against discrimination. In order to be able to develop a European identity, people should be involved in political decisions. They should be included in the political decision process if they are affected by the policy. That would help to counteract people feeling like their votes are not taken seriously, and prevent euroscepticism. Furthermore more European media are needed that put national politics into a European context and inform about European politics as well. That should go hand in hand with a 'European Media Code of Ethics'.

ECONOMY

In the area of economy, we would like to see the EU take actions in the following fields: From our positive experience of the single market we see that a trading agreement with the USA could be beneficial for the European economy and its citizens. However, we are concerned that our current levels of health, environmental and food standards could be compromised in the process and that competition caused by the implementation of the agreement could equally have a negative impact on European economies. We hope that future negotiations will be more transparent and that potential lawsuits also be filed in existent law courts

We think that Europe has the potential to become an idyllic place to live in. This could be achieved by supporting entrepreneurship on a European level by raising awareness, training citizens and building opportunities. We support implementation of standardised regulations on virtual currencies and a single digital market. ?

Six years after the debt crisis started, some European countries still find themselves struggling with the challenges it has caused. We think it is important to tackle (youth) unemployment, bureaucracy, and public debt. However, the EU should also not forget the dangers of private debt, especially for public morals. We also think that the persons responsible for the crisis should be held accountable. Measures ought to be taken to tackle brain drain in affected European member states.

The benefits of the European single market are plentiful. However, action should continually be taken to strengthen and further develop the single market project. There are still differences in the quality of products in each member state. We seek equal standards across the EU. It remains difficult to return items when shopping online. For a functioning single market this issue should be addressed. In the past the EU already has reduced irksome transaction fees, however this should be taken even further, for example in the field of personal banking. To ensure fair competition in the single market, tax policies should ideally be harmonised. ■

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