

EMPOWER – European Civil Society Forum  
Bergamo Forum 9-10 November 2006  
Hosted by the European Commission.

**Recommendations following the meeting.**

By Raymond Van Ermen.

**1. Lessons from Bergamo.**

The Bergamo Forum has been focused on “Civil Society”. The Civil society has emerged "as a powerful social force. According to Nicanor Perlas, “civil society is the most important innovation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is as important as the invention of the nation-State in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the establishment of the modern market which dates from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, or the creation of trade unions in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 21<sup>st</sup> century will be the time for new partnerships, a source of innovation and competitiveness”<sup>1</sup>.

However the Bergamo Forum has underlined the difficulty to “*exercise collective intelligence*”. “After nature, civil society is the most powerful force. It could quickly shut down any business or government. However, the public is highly vulnerable to misinformation. As a result, civil society often does not understand its best interests or does not act in a coordinated manner to achieve them.”<sup>(2)</sup> The time has come for European civil society organisations to exercise “a collective intelligence” in a new way. The tools are available.

**The Directorate-General Communication and Civil Society Groups need to do more to exercise “collective intelligence” and address the specific expectations and needs of the different “communities” of civil society groups communicating about Europe.** Civil Society is a “galaxy” of communities of organisations which, with regard the European Union, have defined for themselves diverse “missions and objectives”. Civil society, which is made up of all citizens, relies on a fabric of non-governmental organizations. These NGOs communicate with their members, among themselves and with political, economic and social players. Their mission is to promote, support, defend and implement the common good and/or sectoral interests as well as solidarity between their members at a local, national, European or world level. A EU Communication Policy should address the specific expectations and needs of these civil society “communities” .

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<sup>1</sup> Nicanor Perlas, *Shaping Globalisation. Civil Society, Cultural Power and Threefolding*. Ed. Yves Michel, 2000.

<sup>2</sup> System Change. Frank Dixon [ww/globalsystemchange.com](http://ww/globalsystemchange.com).

Communities	EU Communication Initiatives
“The values relay”	A pilot “Communicating the Human Rights in Progress
“The lobbyist”	A tri-partite drafting process of a Participatory Democracy Action Plan
“The engineers of three fold partnerships”	A pilot “Communication and the EU Sustainable Development Strategy”
“The activist”. Internet and political empowerment	The 3 dimensions of the Re-Foundation of the EU
“Second voting right user” Internet and “the emergence of an economy of the people, by the people and for the people”	The EU as responsible investor and purchaser”

2. “Empower” is directly linked with “Active Citizenship” which is the aim. One of questions of a communication policy on Europe is indeed to decide to what extent it should embrace an “empowerment strategy”.

The answer should take into account the following :

2. 1. The Bergamo Forum has confirmed that, from a civil society perspective, “**a communication strategy cannot be de-linked from the “values” and the “policies content”**”. To communicate about these policies and their content in support to a “Europe of Results” require to focus on the key dimensions of social quality. In the R&D studies done for the Commission (<sup>3</sup>) social quality is defined as “the extent to which people are able to participate I the social and economic life of their communities under conditions which enhance their well-being and potential”. The overall experience of social quality is attributed to four interdependent factors to be addressed by a communication policy :

Socio-economic security	Financial resources, housing and the environment, health and care, work, education
Social cohesion	Trust, integrative norms and values, social networks, identity
Social inclusion	Citizenship rights, labour market, services (public and private), social networks
<b>Social empowerment</b>	Knowledge base, labour market, openness and supportiveness of EU Institutions

As noted “essential in this process are the rule of law, human rights and social justice, social recognition/respect, social responsiveness and the individual’s capacity to participate”.

## 2.2 Stress and the welfare regime.

Today, as R&D studies demonstrate “there is a strong evidence of significant, perhaps critical erosion of social cohesion within and between the EU societies. Several R&D projects highlight the stresses to existing community structures due to rapid socio-economic change (EU enlargement, transition to market-driven economies with ‘globalisation’) and suggest the

<sup>3</sup> Social, Economic and Governance Aspects of Sustainable Development. Policy Review Series n°3 DG Research EUR 22093

importance of **governance innovation** and rebuilding communities to cope with new challenges under radically changed conditions. (...).<sup>(4)</sup>

A communication strategy needs to have in mind the analysis of welfare regimes, leading to different families, employment and incomes experiences linked to

- A 'social-democratic' regime, found in the Scandinavian countries ;
- A 'liberal' regime in the UK and Ireland;
- A 'corporatist' regime in Continental Europe
- A 'residual welfare' regime represented by Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece.

A communication strategy needs to address how Europe can become a 'source of stress' due to the enlargement. Enlargement can be seen as a *threat* or as a *response* to globalisation on the one hand, and the ageing of population on the other hand and their respective impact on welfare systems

### 2.3 The frontiers

Public policy in all domains must designate, construct and modify the *frontiers of community* within and across which different forms of duty, respect and solidarity are affirmed or denied". This is also relevant for a communication policy.

### 2.4 Europeanisation

Research demonstrates that "there exist very significant differences in the conceptions, expectations and operational conventions of public accountability across EU and candidate countries. The "Europeanisation" of public accountability procedures and discourses has had various impacts, for some people unexpected or counter-intuitive, that a communication policy should take into account.

### 2.5 Accountability

One of the questions some how reflected in the Bergamo process is to debate if it is illusory to imagine a rapid convergence of governance models and practice and if it would be both premature and counterproductive to push for a rapid pan-European harmonisation" <sup>(5)</sup>.

### 2.6 A Key Innovation and Competitiveness Tool.

By 2025, the level of global and EU economic prosperity will be 40% higher in an Open-Door scenario. The Bergamo Forum 2006 underlined that to implement the "principle of participatory democracy" as a "*Connecting Citizens with Public Institutions initiative*" is a key issue for a new trust as well as innovation and a new competitiveness. The "open doors" approach (described by several Institutes – Shell global scenarios for 2025 as well as Futurible) is a world in which civil societies in different countries are reassured that their fundamental values can be affirmed and strengthened, not only domestically but across borders, and in conjunction with market forces.

## 3. A shift from "government to governance".

3.1. There is an emerging paradigm, that of network governance. This refers to partnerships between different types of players around a common objective. In a knowledge-based,

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<sup>4</sup> ibidem

<sup>5</sup> Ibidem

networking society, these new, complementary forms of governance play an important part. Two categories may be distinguished:

- action-oriented partnerships between the public and private sectors and civil society aimed at solving problems;
- “learning organizations”, which are interactive structures helping discussions on progress and sharing intelligence.

Multi-level and participatory governance (an other way to define empowerment) is representing a shift from “government to governance”. The open-coordination method, the lessons of the Lisbon and Göteborg strategies do indeed encourage to explore more participatory approaches. However, “institutional history and specific societal context really do matter for governance effectiveness and accountability”.

3.2. Participants in the Bergamo Forum 2006 recommended to address new participatory democracy rules, which should be set, for some, in the Constitutional Treaty, for others in an EU Regulation and relate to politic, economic and social rights and business governance. Since the signature of the Constitutional Treaty, in Rome on October 29, 2004, Civil Society organisations were pleased with the recognition, in its Article I-47, of the principle of participatory democracy. They regretted however that, since then and with the notable exception of the “citizens’ permanent Agora”<sup>6</sup> proposed by the European Parliament, the other European institutions did not take any concrete initiative on the matter.

3.3. Participatory democracy and establishing a civil dialogue with NGOs are two distinct issues, requiring distinct “instruments”.

3.4. The Permanent Forum of Civil Society asked in the framework of the Bergamo Forum 2006 working group on connecting citizens with the EU Institutions– but the Contact Group facilitator did not registered the proposal - that the Commission urgently use its right to take initiatives and engage without delay the legislative procedure on participatory democracy while starting with a preliminary consultation for the development of proposals regarding the following four themes of Art I-47:

- (i) Give citizens and representative associations the opportunity to make known and publicly exchange their views in all areas of Union action
  - To create a system of European public investigation in particular within the framework of the structural funds.
  - To give means to European associations to regularly organise meetings, exchanges, debates, independently from the conferences and meetings organised by the Commission, allowing thus gradually million citizens to forge a European political culture and feel implied in a more democratic construction of Europe within which diversity would be an asset and not an obstacle<sup>7</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> The citizens’ permanent Agora is a project that was prepared and presented by Gerard Onesta, Vice-president of the European Parliament. See document PE 368.803/BUR/REV February 2006.

<sup>7</sup> See on this subject the Declaration of the European civic Forum, signed by thousands of citizens, <http://www.forumiviqueeuropeen.org>.

(ii) Maintain an open, transparent and regular dialogue with representative associations and civil society

- To create the function of mediator and a conciliation procedure<sup>8</sup> on the basis of the results of public investigations.
- To establish the authorities, and define their working procedures, which should be responsible to evaluate and debate over the Strategic Impact Analysis (SIA) as regards sustainable trade, and over the impact of studies proposed by the Commission.
- To establish a European participatory budget.

(i) In order to ensure that the Union's actions are coherent and transparent, the Commission shall carry out broad consultations with parties concerned.

- To set up procedures to associate civil society in the implementation of the European strategy for a sustainable development.
- To adopt the European referendum.
- All associations and civil society are stakeholders concerned with the Union values and objectives and not only the actors present on the single market or the social partners. The Union also works for peace, the wellbeing of its people and the sustainable development.

(i) To guarantee the citizens' right to take initiative and lay down the relevant procedure.

3.5. Participants in the Bergamo Forum suggested to design a Participatory Democracy Action Plan. A Participatory Democracy Action Plan could include an EU Regulation on Participatory Democracy which would address, i.a.:

- a system of public investigation of projects financially supported by the ERDF<sup>9</sup>, with the designation of "investigating officers" who agree on working procedures and write a report on their conclusions.
- The shift to an "EU participatory budget". As noted by Estonia in its comments to the White Paper, *"the idea of involving citizens must be supported in every possible way (...) for instance disclosure of the recipients of financial support from the entire EU budget, including funds administered jointly by the member state and the EU"*.
- "The second voting right". The future lies in "responsible competitiveness". Simon Zadek<sup>10</sup> stresses that there is a potential for a simultaneous increase in productivity, human development and environmental responsibility. To be effective, one must pay attention to the role of consumers, investors/savers and other sectors of civil society. First priority should be given to Disclosure Rules (see Eurosif), based on the principle of harmonization taking into account existing legislation in Member States concerning:
  - (i) companies' sustainability reporting (including carbon disclosure);
  - (ii) Pension Funds SRI policies. Reporting.
- New mechanisms:  
There should be new institutions for the 'participatory route' to

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<sup>8</sup> The White Paper provides that "five principles are at the base of good governance: the opening, the participation, the responsibility, the effectiveness and coherency", the application of these five principles should "reinforce the principles of proportionality and subsidiarity".

<sup>9</sup> European Regional Development Fund.

<sup>10</sup> Simon Zadek, *Responsible Competitiveness. Reshaping Global Markets Through Responsible Business Practices*, AccountAbility, December 2005.

-negotiate tri-partite compacts (Public Authorities-Market-Civil Society) in line with the concept of “innovation by agreement” of the Feira council (enlarged here) towards a Well-Being Society;

- monitor, feedback and implement how (i) the EU institutions, the private sector and civil society are working in partnership, in support of human rights, participatory democracy and the EU Sustainable Development Strategy, (ii) EU funding is supporting networks’ and citizens’ efforts within and outside Europe to meet this objective, (iii) the purchasing and investment power of EU institutions, the private sector and civil society is leveraged in support to human rights and sustainable development, (iv) companies and local authorities are developing an approach to responsible competitiveness.

A “*continuous improvement cycle*” addressing partnership between Network Europe and the EU institutions towards “a flourishing and sustainable society” needs to be put in place.

4. The Bergamo Forum should lead by 2007 to three “Pilots” supported by “the Empowering tools” debated in the White Paper and “Networks”:

- (i) European Discovery. **A Civic Education Initiative** focused on the evolution of Fundamental and Citizens’ Rights and progress thanks to the EU and “next steps”.
- (ii) Pathways. **A Connecting Citizens with Public Institutions agenda**. A tripartite drafting process for a “Roadmap on participatory democracy and European societal contract”, followed by implementation steps such as an EU Regulation on Participatory Democracy and an EU-NGO Compact (see ECAS).
- (iii) Network Europe. **A Connecting Citizens with one another and Public Institutions agenda and a volunteer programme**. A joint action plan entitled “A Well-Being Society for All” with a multilingual forum system, focused on networks and citizen action plans to communicate and implement the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. The pilot would be based on the “communication” dimension (inform, empower, feedback) of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy – The Commission Communication strategy should focus a campaign on the Well-Being Society is a federative project implementing one of the three core objectives of the Union as defined in the draft European Constitutional Treaty : "*The Union’s aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples*" (Art I-3, §1). The Well-Being Society can mobilize people around a positive dynamic that does not negate crises but responds to them proactively. This project provides powerful leverage for "remobilizing" the general public as well as for businesses from the private and public sectors, social entrepreneurship, public services and voluntary organizations; it is a factor of innovation for new products and new services and a "creator of progress". This strategy would serve as a pilot because it is as an EU transversal policy requiring citizens’ action in seven fields: public health, social inclusion, demography and migration, climate change and energy, sustainable transport, sustainable consumption and production, conservation and management of natural resources. The pilot would include the recognition of volunteers’ work and could be “an accelerator of progress” both from a citizens’ and business perspective.

5. The Commission might wish to explore the potential to empower citizens by

- identifying for each pilot Champions/Trust Ambassadors, individuals involved in partnerships with the Commission which are success stories. They will help shape the new proposals to be submitted to “empower people”. The Commission consultation system with stakeholders can thus move to a new paradigm from a “one-shot” consultation process/event to a “permanent platform of debate and a participatory democracy continuous improvement cycle”, from “commenting” to shared ownership” and “collective intelligence”;
- setting up new mechanisms for an initiative to connect citizens, EU public institutions and stakeholders from third countries in fields where European organizations and citizens are “Ambassadors of Europe” as related to human rights, participatory democracy and sustainable development” (transatlantic, Mercosur, Asia, ACP, Med, Neighbourhood Policy);

6. Citizens’ trust

The “re-foundation of Europe” on a “new cornerstone” the fundamental rights, the importance of “participatory democracy” as a new European value and a European Representative, Participatory and Equal Democracy as the “new framework” are the 3 pillars of a process to regain Citizens trust. It has been reminded that “the People” is the “Sovereign Power” in Europe and, as such, Citizens should “empower themselves” and not “be empowered” . *By “empowering” himself or herself and co-operating with others, each of us can contribute to bringing change, innovation, human security and well-being and create an accelerator of progress which will improve our life and the life of our family, as well as having an impact both on European policies and businesses*

7. “Empower” will require:

- a “new European Vision”, *part of a civic education agenda*, underling the “re-foundation of Europe” on a “new cornerstone” the fundamental rights as well as the importance of “participatory democracy” as a new European value and a European Representative and Participatory Democracy as the “new framework” deriving from the draft Constitutional treaty. Themes are suggested by the European Social Forum draft charter : (which campaigned for the NO) :
  - (i) Peace and Security
  - (ii) Europe in the World
  - (iii) Equality and Difference
  - (iv) Democratic Europe
  - (v) European Citizenship based on a Social Citizenship
  - (vi) Social Common Goods
- a “new European Conscience”, *resulting from connecting citizens with one another*, expressing their “interdependence” . NGOs convey their vision of the world and Europe, highlighting what is at stake in their view, together with opportunities and threats. They address themselves to their members or speak on their behalf. They are “mediators” building or undermining trust. They make symbolic gestures which have an impact on people’s minds. We all need symbolic gestures, whether at Commission or association level, in order to communicate what the Union and its values are.

- “new instruments” – active citizenship needs new instruments to “empower” people; they will be needed to “*connect citizens with one another and with public institutions*” It has been proposed to design a “participatory democracy action plan” and making use of the “double voting right” citizens (their political vote and their purchasing and investment vote) to influence policies and regain control on their economic and social destiny in a global economy.
- a focus on people’s agenda, the field to “*connect citizens with one another and with public institutions as well as developing volunteer programmes*. The definition of a “Well-Being society for all” is probably the best way to capture citizens’ agenda. It relates to the EU agenda (see the EU Sustainable Development Strategy) and the UN agenda on “human security”.

#### 8. The Bergamo Forum has underlined that

- with Internet citizens have the mean to “empower” themselves , and have started to do so as exemplified with UN Treaty on Landmine, the Social Investment and Responsible Purchasing Movement or the Bloggers campaign for the No to the EU draft Constitutional treaty.
- with Internet, “ *one is observing the emergence of an economy of the people, by the people and for the people*”<sup>11</sup>. The tools of a e-democracy are in place and have already been used (as during the Greek Presidency).

#### 9. Communication and Empowerment. An Action Plan

It is suggested to launch the drafting of an Action Plan on “participatory democracy” .and societal dialogue” to be drafted by a tripartite committee: European Institutions, social partners and civil society.

This “Action Plan” could lead to

- a European Charter of Active Citizenship as proposed by the Active Citizenship Network;
- a “European Compact with civil society” as proposed by ECAS
- a “European Regulation” as proposed by the Permanent Forum of Civil Society.

This drafting process should start by a survey of the proposals submitted by the Contact Group, ECAS, the Permanent Forum of Civil Society, the Active Citizenship Network, the European Citizen’s Initiative etc.

#### 10. Conclusions.

*A Communication strategy needs to address people’s fears and desires. Europeans need to imagine new ways to secure “progress for all” and “trust”. It is in relation to globalization that the EU has appeared as a threat: the threat of impoverishment for Europeans, according to some, the threat of a lack of solidarity and justice for a better world, according to others. The European Union must review its strategy and its message and demonstrate that together and individually, we are not “powerless”, in particular in the face of globalization.*

*A “New European Conscience”, revisiting the reasons why the European Union is an “added value” to meet our desires, should emerge, built on rediscovering the proactive power of our*

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<sup>11</sup> Joël de Rosnay, *La révolte du [pron@tariat](mailto:pron@tariat)*. Ed. Fayard, 2006, p. 194.

*interdependence. It is of major importance for the Union to become again, in the eyes of all European citizens from new and old member states, a major lever for a flourishing economy and a society of well-being for all, and to be perceived again as an accelerator of societal progress able to “re-enchant the world”<sup>12</sup>.*

*The European Commission should undertake a strategic review of its vision, its methods and its procedures in the field of partnerships and support to the agents of change. All this, in particular, in order for the threefolding partnership between public and private sectors and civil society – which will be a source of innovation and competitiveness – to be brought fully into play, in order for a multiplier effect and a scale effect to be produced and in order for the transition to be sufficiently accelerated to manage to contain mega risks.*

*The participatory route for Europe would consist in establishing new mechanisms that would respond to the “systemic changes” required and facilitate partnerships via a network type of governance supplementing the multilateral system that the Union already is. Other steps will be needed, including addressing what Perlas calls “threefolding” – a partnership among the public sector, the private sector and civil society – which is first and foremost a social process and it is expected to lead to new forms of governance and management of “corporate” or “governmental” systems.*

*The Bergamo Forum has been the opportunity to propose an alternative “vision” of Europe and an alternative “narrative” about Europe, which would lead to its “re-foundation” on updated bases. As long as both the Commission and the other EU institutions will not be able to convey another vision and another narrative about Europe, they will not succeed in bridging the gap separating them from citizens. This is why the Bergamo Forum should have helped the Commission forge a new vision and work out the explanatory narrative that goes with it. DG Communication will gain in credibility and support if the Directorate-General would embrace the participatory democracy agenda as the implementation phase of the European Public Sphere the DG Com White Paper is advocating .*

**New Vision:** *We think that Europe should be “re-founded” on a new “cornerstone” – fundamental rights. New Narrative:* *We believe that the meaning and strength of interdependence must be rediscovered in a European Union whose diversity is its real wealth.*

*There is a convergence of interests today around the development of the fourth engine in the rocket “Europe”: the participatory route. The European Union has been built over the past fifty years through the implementation of three “routes”: the intergovernmental route (e.g. European Council), the federalist route (e.g. European Parliament) and the functionalist route (e.g. the internal market and the euro).. An Empowerment and participatory democracy process should be put in place. DG Communication will gain in support if the Directorate-General would embrace the “Re-Foundation and Participatory Democracy agenda” as the implementation phase of the European Public Sphere the DG Com White Paper is advocating .*

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<sup>12</sup> To quote an expression used by George Corm, former Lebanese finance minister, in *Orient Occident, la fracture imaginaire*, Ed. La Découverte, 2002.

## **Annex 1 . The side-event. DEBATING VALUES**

*The Bergamo Forum side event on “Debating Values” has been an “unexpected gathering” of pro and anti “old” draft constitutional treaty dialoguing with A. Duff, Member of the European Parliament and S. Collignon, Professor at Harvard University and the London Economics School, advisor of the Amato Group. It is expected to have a follow up.*

The Bergamo Forum side-event underlined the convergence of opinions on the need for

- a Re-Foundation of the European Union on a new Corner Stone, “the Fundamental Rights”
- a “Fundamental Law” of which the neo-liberal EU “policies” would not be part as their effectiveness are questioned and could even endanger European competitiveness. See S. Collignon, advisor of the Amato Group and Professor at Harvard University and the London Economics School )
- both supported by a “Pan-European Consultation/Referendum”.

**A Symbolic gesture:** It was suggested that this “re-foundation” of Europe should take the form of a Declaration of Interdependence, providing a new start for Europe through handing it out to the President of the EU main Institutions together with a high number of citizens’ signatures on the day of the 50th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome.

It has been proposed to arrange by March 2007 an exploratory meeting of representatives of

- the European Social Forum (with delegates coming from France, the Netherlands, Denmark, Poland and Austria)
- the European Federalists Movement (with delegates coming from Italy, .....
- Websites managers (with delegates representing Café Babel, ACIDD, ESF, Taurillon,)
- The Permanent Forum of Civil Society (the authors of Plan B).

The objective of the meeting would be to explore if this “unexpected gathering” of pro and anti “old” draft constitutional treaty could agree and submit together : A new draft “Constitutional treaty” , opened by a Citizens and States “Declaration of Interdependence”, to be submitted to a pan-European consultation.

Participants underlined the importance of a pan-European consultation/referendum on the same day about issues such as the EU Constitutional Treaty. If there is indeed one lesson to be drawn from the ratification process of the draft Constitutional Treaty signed in Rome, it is that another method must absolutely be introduced. The formula used is bad: it is too long, it does not lay emphasis on the joint and additional elements of European citizenship, it does not create a “European public area”, it takes everyone hostage for the problems of each State and for national debates, and it excludes the States where ratification is the sole responsibility of parliaments from the right of exercising their European citizenship. This is why the pan-European June 2009 consultation of all European citizens at the same time is a must, a fundamental element for changing the context and help European citizenship progress. However, the question faces major reluctances from the European Parliament side. It has been suggested to put this issue at the agenda of the AGORA of the European Parliament..

The Bergamo Forum side event demonstrated a support for the “Re-foundation “of Europe on the basis of the Fundamental Rights as a new Vision for Europe. Universal human rights appear today as the sole paradigm that can substitute itself, at a global level, for regulation

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through unlimited accumulation. Europe, because its supranational organisation goes beyond the states' structures and generates its own methods of regulation where legislation plays an essential, structuring role, has the appropriate regulatory tools, with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its two Courts of Justice (Luxembourg and Strasbourg) within the framework of which fundamental human rights are the basic reference.

The Bergamo Forum side event on "Debating Values" dialogue with S. Collignon, Professor at Harvard University and the London Economics School, advisor of the Amato Group and former German civil servant having been involved in the Ecofin Council process has confirmed the need of a Fundamental Law which would not incorporate, the "neo-liberal policies" of part III as they are questioned as the leverage for growth needed in Europe.

The Bergamo Forum side event underlined the convergence of opinions on the need for

- a Re-Foundation of the European Union on a new Corner Stone, "the Fundamental Rights"
- a "Fundamental Law" without the neo-liberal EU "policies"
- both supported by a "Pan-European Referendum".

## **Annex 2.. Communicating Values. New Metaphors for a New European Vision.**

### **Summary :**

We need new metaphors to facilitate communication and to describe “changes”

Metaphors should be tools to help to

- describe
  1. our vision of Europe’s future;
  2. our expectations as far as the EU is concerned;
- mobilize citizens/residents and NGOs;
- prepare the forthcoming debate on a revision of the EU Treaties.

A series of metaphors should

- (i) be submitted to a European internet forum (*a virtual meeting place*);
- (ii) be a source of inspiration for cartoonists;
- (iii)** launch a Eurobarometer test later.

### **1 We are making progress**

Europe needs new metaphors to communicate with its citizens and propose a “new vision” of its “Values”. What should replace the too well-known formula: “market”, “competition”, “democratic deficit” and an easy cynicism and euro-scepticism? Empathy, Embeddedness, Unity in Diversity, Reliance, Solidarity?

#### **1.1. Beacon or Magnet: the European Dream**

Today’s Europe is envied by the other regions of the world. It marks a new stage in the history of mankind, since it is the Europe of peace-building between countries that used to repeatedly take up arms against each other, a Europe promoting the collective well-being of its peoples, a Europe of values in a society that has succeeded in establishing connections between local and global levels and between the past, the present and the future, fostering unity in diversity.

(See Rifkin).

#### **1.2. The Metamorphosis**

With the integration of the Charter of Fundamental Rights as a cornerstone of the Treaty and the new objectives of the Union described above, European policies will have to change. The very text of the draft Treaty can therefore be the starting point for a real "metamorphosis" of Europe – and for giving it a new face – as well as a metamorphosis of business and macro-economic models.

### **2. Human Rights, the New Cornerstone.**

The draft Constitutional Treaty provides the means to further transform the European project at the service of the peoples. Until now, some only regarded the Union as a large free trade area. With the Constitutional Treaty, the cornerstone of the EU will no longer be the market but the fundamental rights that have become the "heart and soul" of the Treaty.

#### **2.1. Universal human rights**

Universal human rights appear today as the sole paradigm that can substitute itself, at a global level, for regulation through unlimited accumulation. Europe, because its supranational organisation goes beyond the states' structures and generates its own methods of regulation where legislation plays an essential, structuring role, has the appropriate regulatory tools, with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its two Courts of Justice (Luxembourg and Strasbourg) within the framework of which fundamental human rights are the basic reference.

## **2.2. Charter of Fundamental Rights.**

For civil society, one of the main accepted points resulting from the draft Constitutional Treaty is the introduction of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution itself. This is the product of a long process initiated by the Magna Carta in England in 1215, then the Bill of Rights in 1628, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in France in 1789. The process accelerated after the Second World War and is still going on today, with in particular the Convention of Rome of 17 July 1998 establishing an International Criminal Court or, more recently, the adoption of a draft Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Diversity on 17 October 2005 by the United Nations General Assembly.

## **3. Unity in Diversity**

### **3.1. A Galaxy Europe**

An obvious mistake that is frequently made is to regard Europe as a circle with the Union's institutions in the centre or as a pyramid with the Institutions at the top. Europe is polycentric, the institutions are not at the top of an imaginary, non-existent pyramid. We are increasingly living in a world which is not "State-centric" (like the communist system) and we must be aware of the strategic and tactical implications of this polycentrism. We do not underestimate the importance of the institutions, far from it, but to be efficient at the institutional level, we believe they should be positioned in the right place together with their links with the other players in the "European galaxy".

### **3.2. Europe Orchestra**

A Polycentric Europe is taking us into the global age. EU Institutions, Business, Civil Society shaping, implementing and monitoring policy together is what Romano Prodi calls "Network Europe". The EU institutions help coordinate activity among a range of players. The EU's primary role has become "orchestral". It facilitates the coming together of networks of engagement that include nation-states but also extend outward to transnational organizations and inward to municipal and regional governments, as well as social partners and civil society organizations. From this perspective, the European Union is the "first governing experiment in a world metamorphosing from geographic planes to planetary fields".

## **4. The fourth engine in the rocket "Europe": the *participatory route*.**

### **4.1 Participatory Democracy.**

The European Union has been built over the past fifty years through the implementation of three "routes": the *intergovernmental route* (e.g. European Council), the *federalist route* (e.g. European Parliament) and the *functionalist route* (e.g. the internal market and the euro). Political circles (because of the gap between the European elite and its citizens, the blocking of dossiers that have become taboo and the rise of mega risks), business circles (with in particular the rise of the reputational risk), trade unions (with the rising risk of social dumping) and civil society (with the delays in meeting the major demographic, ecological and social challenges) all

share the same interests: *recreating social capital* through a participatory approach that involves public authorities, businesses and civil society. The European draft Constitution is a major step towards participatory democracy.

#### **4.2. The Triangle**

The inclusion of a section on participatory democracy is another new significant lever, as it will help develop a complementary engine in the 'Europe' rocket: *the participatory route*. We shall have increased means to turn the project of a super-state at the service of the market (which is how some people view the Union) into that of a Network Europe with multi-level partnerships that are no longer established between the State and the Market but between the three elements of a triangle "Government-Market-Civil Society" at the service of the Common Good.

#### **4.3. A system less and less "stato-centric"**

Europeans, who would like a more interdependent world, consider that the EU must play the major pilot role of a "normative power" in many important world issues such as the Millennium Objectives for poverty alleviation, the so-called Kyoto Process against climatic change, the 2010 Countdown for the safeguarding of biodiversity, the UNESCO Convention on cultural diversity, the World Summit on Sustainable Development to change consumption and production patterns, etc. But these issues also illustrate a system that becomes less and less "stato-centric". The concept of shared and differentiated responsibility highlights the "specificity", the "necessity" and the "complementarity" of the few actions by the "state", the market and civil society, which are necessary to overcome the challenges of our time.

### **5. A Better World is possible**

#### **5.1. A Pathfinder**

"Europe as a pathfinder for the global transition to sustainable development. Globalisation is a transforming force. The rate of increase in interconnectedness and mutual interdependence is unprecedented. (...) The European Union is the world's most advanced experiment in sharing sovereignty while maintaining diversity. (...) We need a politics that is not driven by anxiety but by confidence. The European idea is a powerful weapon of mass construction – we just have to learn how to use it". (see E3G, 'Europe in the World' Roundtable)

The draft European Constitution Art I-3, §1 states that "the Union's aim is to promote peace, its values and the well-being of its peoples" and its Art I-3, §4 states that "in its relations with the wider world, the Union (...) shall contribute to peace, security, the sustainable development of the earth, solidarity and mutual respect among peoples, free and fair trade, eradication of poverty and protection of human rights".

#### **5.2. An economy for the people.**

To be efficient, we must now accurately assess the potential and real power at our disposal both individually and collectively to make a better world emerge by using market forces. We can change the market and change Europe if every one of us changes his or her behaviour as a purchaser and as an investor, so that markets which are still only "niche" markets can become mass markets (mainstream) – all the more so since, as J. de Rosnay writes, "*with internet, one is observing the emergence of an economy of the people, by the people and for the people*"<sup>13</sup>. In fact, the concept of "empowering people", a concept also used by multinationals, is nothing

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<sup>13</sup> Joël de Rosnay, *La révolte du [pron@tariat](mailto:pron@tariat)*. Ed. Fayard, 2006, p. 194.

revolutionary. The multinational Shell has devised scenarios up to 2025. One of these is called “*Open Doors*”. The participatory approach generates growth<sup>14</sup>, because it generates more innovation, including in terms of products for the poorest, as is the case in the pharmaceutical field or with micro credits.

### **5.3. Social Entrepreneurship.**

Europeans are several lengths ahead in terms of social entrepreneurship, a concept commended in Davos, New York and London as the new mantra to change the world. In these matters, Europe has “champions and leaders”, which are already very well connected at a world level. It is quite ironical that we need the Davos Economic Forum and the Schwab Foundation, the British and the Americans to start singing the praises of the third sector to rediscover our own infrastructures in this area. According to data supplied by the European Commission, the organizations in the social and inclusive economy sector represent a total of 8 million full-time equivalent jobs, i.e. 7.7% of salaried employment. Their members represent over 30% of the population. Cooperative banks have 36 million members and 91 million customers and hold 17% of the banking market, with cooperatives and friendly societies holding nearly 30% of the market<sup>15</sup>.

### **5.4. The two voting rights.**

It is by demonstrating that “a better world is possible” with the participation of everyone exercising his or her political, economic and social citizenship, using his or her “double right to vote” in ballot boxes on the one hand, and purchases and investments on the other hand, that the “context” can be changed. Europe is able to act as “a global civil power at the service of sustainable development in the world”, as Romano Prodi declared in Strasbourg in 2000. The ‘new’ is already here: ethical investments, new forms of consumption, new forms of solidarity economy such as micro credits, fair trade, clean and energy-efficient technologies, etc. These are all “markets” which already exist and are supported by European enterprises – banks, retailers and manufacturing companies.

### **5.5. A new economic system.**

According to J. Rifkin, “the birth of a new economic system is driving the changes in governance models. What’s pushing institutional changes is a communication revolution that is increasing the speed, pace, flow, density and connectivity of commercial and social life. It is the time of ‘networks’. Networks operate on an entirely different principle from markets (by very nature adversarial forums). Each party enters into the relationship based on the supposition that by optimizing the benefits of the other parties and the group as a whole, one’s self-interest will be maximized in the process. The keys to a successful network are reciprocity and trust. The more *embedded* individual players become with each other, the more likely they will be willing to open up and share, the greater the likelihood of success. Networks spawn greater creativity and innovation for the simple reason that they have a larger pool of the best minds to draw from”.

## **6. The Values of a Well-being Society**

By implementing the EU Sustainable Development Strategy we will build a *Well-Being Society*. This means a society in which, seizing the opportunity offered by our interdependence and the richness of exchanges, every person’s fundamental needs are met,

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<sup>14</sup> With new indexes, as we have developed in the full text.

<sup>15</sup> Jean-Louis Laville, *Une Conception Tronquée de l’Economie*. Politis. 6 November 2003.

their personal dignity is recognized and safeguarded, their personal development is supported, their work is a source of personal enrichment, their active participation is encouraged, their desire for a quality of life and health and their right to a healthy environment are met, in harmony with nature, while respecting cultural diversity and the rights of future generations. A Well-Being Society is a society characterized by prosperity and quality of life, solidarity, equality, in particular between men and women, equity, justice and universal fraternity. For Europe, it is the instrument of unity within diversity, development through education, culture, communication, exchanges of views and innovation.

The Well-Being Society is a federative project implementing both one of the three core objectives of the Union as defined in the draft European Constitutional Treaty (otherwise referred to as the draft European Constitution) and the EU Sustainable Development Strategy. The Well-Being Society can mobilize people around a positive dynamic that does not negate crises but responds to them proactively. This project provides powerful leverage for “remobilizing” the general public as well as for businesses from the private and public sectors, social entrepreneurship, public services and voluntary organizations; it is a factor of innovation for new products and new services and a “creator of progress”.

### **6.1. Our enemy**

It requires an enemy: it will be apartheid and ghettos. It also requires a target date: 2015, the date set by the Millennium Declaration to reduce by half the number of people living with less than one dollar a day. It is thanks to a “Europe of partnerships for a Global Well-Being Society” that Europe can become by 2020 a region of the world that is as essential as China or the United States.

Europe is in a better position than any other region of the world to succeed in turning the Well-Being Society into a project of economic and technological, social and cultural innovation, security and peace, for four reasons: (i) the European Union is the only entity that has defined the goal of promoting the well-being of its peoples AND working for sustainable development as an objective in its Constitution; (ii) Europe has become aware more quickly than the other continents of the importance of these threats and has introduced still embryonic policies and methods which show the way forward; (iii) Europe has “champions and leaders” in these matters, who are already very well connected at a world level; (iv) better than the other continents, Europe is made up of connections between public authorities, businesses, and trade unions/civil society; and it is the partnership between public and private sectors and civil society which will be a source of innovation and of new forms of “competitiveness”. But let’s make no mistake! To be the first in managing to overcome the so-called “evolutionary wall”, we need to change our perceptions and methods in great depth and find new ways of cooperating to fully bring into play the “power of synergies” from partnerships that pool knowledge, skills and resources within a networking society.

### **6.2. Human Security**

“Human security means protecting vital freedoms. It means protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and situations, building on their strengths and aspirations. It also means creating systems that give people the building blocks of survival, dignity and livelihood. Human security connects different types of freedoms – freedom from want, freedom from fear and freedom to take action on one's own behalf. To do this, it offers two general strategies: protection and empowerment. Protection shields people from dangers. It requires concerted effort to develop norms, processes and institutions that systematically address insecurities. Empowerment enables people to develop their potential and become full participants in

decision-making. Protection and empowerment are mutually reinforcing, and both are required in most situations”. (UN Report, see Annex)

### **6.3. The Shield**

How the European Union is “protecting” Europeans, their security, their health, their environment, their purchasing power. A Study (2001) on “Perceptions of the EU”, carried out by OPTEM for the Commission, underlined that:

- many citizens of the European Union are pessimistic about the situation in their country and express concern about the future (speed of current change, feeling of a loss of values and a once-cohesive social fabric, a feeling that economic liberalism has gone too far or gone wrong, and in the new EU Member States the impression of a real deterioration over the past 10 years, a gap between the privileged few and the large majority of the population);
  - what makes Europe is mainly its history and culture. When perceptions of its identity and the feeling of being European are analysed, we can see that the main dividing line runs between a very big South and a very small North – a North-South divide which has deepened.
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