

A BLUEPRINT • FOR • TOMORROW'S EUROPE •

Jérôme Gazzano • Andi Mustafaj

A Blueprint for Tomorrow's Europe

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Under the management of Ramona Bloj & Stefanie Buzmaniuk
Translated by Helen Levy

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The Robert Schuman Foundation that was founded in 1991 after the fall of the Berlin Wall is recognised by the State for its services to the public; it works to promote the construction of Europe. The Foundation, which is a reference research centre, develops studies on the European Union and its policies promoting the content of these in France, Europe and elsewhere in the world. It encourages, contributes to and stimulates European debate thanks to the wealth of its research, publications and the organisation of conferences.

In 1957, the Preamble to the Rome Treaty defined the ambitious goals of the European Economic Community: to establish the foundations of an ever closer union of European peoples; to ensure economic and social success by removing the barriers that divide Europe; to improve living standards and employment and to assert the protection of peace and freedom. Since then the European Union has endeavoured to turn these initial goals into a reality, and also to protect them. More than 60 years later, we can say that to a large extent it has succeeded. In response to the initial Europe of peace, there followed Economic Europe in the two stages of our common journey together.

However, the pursuit of these goals alone no longer seems enough today to rally people and convince them of the European project. European integration has undeniably pacified the continent and provided economic advantages to its Member States via the internal market, but these *acquis* are difficult to quantify and rather intangible; from a daily point of view they cannot be used to convince Europe's citizens of the usefulness of the European Union. Public opinion sees the latter as a distant entity lacking democracy, whose technocratic nature and restrictive decisions prevail over the achievement of its fundamental goals.

Although the Europeans' disaffection for Europe is real, it often seems to be related to doubts that citizens have about their own national leaders.

In every Member State populist movements have prospered in this fertile terrain. The presence of Eurosceptic movements has become a constant: National Rally in France, the UK Independence Party (UKIP) in the UK, the 5 Stars Movement and the Northern League in Italy, the Freedom Party in the Netherlands, Law and Justice in Poland, Alternative für Deutschland in

Germany, the “True Finns” of Finland, the Freedom Party in Austria and the National Movement in Bulgaria.

Some of these populist movements have already been elected to power, for example in Austria and Italy. Other Member States, which are not governed by populist movements, like Hungary, have heads of State who are openly hostile to certain fundamental aspects of European integration.

The European populist temptation culminated on 23rd June 2016 in the UK with the decision by its citizens, after a referendum, to leave the European Union. This negative expression of a need for radical change might have forecast a chain reaction, leading to the Union’s dislocation and exit by other Member States.

It had the opposite effect.

Since it was formally triggered by the British government Brexit has constantly highlighted the political, financial and societal cost for the UK in its bid to leave the Union. Brexit has greatly disorganised the British political classes. It has shaken the country’s economic attractiveness and brought tensions, which appeared to have been relegated to the past to the fore once again in Northern Ireland and Gibraltar. With these negative developments Brexit has revealed everything that the European Union provides to its Member States.

This negative populist vote against Europe should lead to conditions for the emergence of a response – a positive one this time.

This positive response is not impossible. It could come from the Member States’ governments, who in their negotiations over Brexit have succeeded in maintaining a united front together and also with the European Commission, as they have faced the British negotiators. It could come from the European

institutions, which have set out their thoughts on the transformations that Europe requires, for example with the White Paper on the future of Europe published in March 2017. It must especially come from the greatest of catalysts – the citizens of Europe themselves, as they express their wish for a new Europe.

A new rise in goodwill toward the European Union seemed to emerge in 2017, notably in France after the election of Emmanuel Macron. For this to last and grow amongst the citizens and in terms of the political action taken by their representatives, this movement requires “creative effort” in both shape and form, in messages and also in acts.

The challenges and expectations are of size. This Europe must be carried forward by a new breath of life, in total harmony with its time and capable of rising to the challenges with which the 21st century is burdening our societies. The present period provides a rare, precious window of opportunity to rebuild Europe.

The ills troubling the European Union are well known: the perceived democratic deficit and its extreme complexity in the eyes of its citizens, its inability to respond effectively to crises, the disparity between its budgetary spending and its political goals, the image of an entity which forces its way in and strips swathes of sovereignty from its States.

This diagnostic should encourage us question what we think and what we want of and for the European Union. To prevent deception, we must rethink and offer new, fresh perspectives about the Union amongst the populations of Europe.

To do nothing or do things badly would expose our societies directly to disillusion and an even greater strengthening of the populist movements. We cannot allow this to happen.

The consequences of inaction are immediate. Europe's failure to respond to the migrant crisis has led to a strong feeling of rejection and isolation amongst the citizens of Italy, which ended with the unprecedented rise to power of a far left/right coalition.

Successive reforms of the Union have failed to reduce the gap between Europe's citizens and the Union's institutions. A lack in terms of both democracy and feeling of belonging to the project for European integration has continued to grow.

If we fail to reform the European Union, the crisis of confidence in the institutions and in the European project itself could grow. Rethinking before rebuilding is not an option, but a vital imperative for the Europe of tomorrow.

Present initiatives do not really gauge what is at stake. The solutions put forward are too often a continuation of the dominant ideological base, with the same means that have been denounced as inadequate, outmoded, technocratic. The alternatives offered for the future of Europe are mainly binary ("doing more" or "doing less"), without suggesting a new approach to the sharing of competences between the national and European levels.

The way of thinking has to be changed, notably to help young people take ownership of the debate over the European Union. Young people cannot be involved in the future of Europe and its reconstruction if there is no anticipation of the goals to achieve and the means to be implemented. But this is what we are witnessing today.

Changing the way we think will offer the new generations of Europeans true freedom to rebuild the Europe they want, which is adapted to the issues of our time and necessary to rise to the challenges of the future. This will help them, as they free themselves of the old ways of thinking, to put forward innovative ideas that are coherent as a whole and which bear a true project that is fully integrated with our time.

To do this thought must reflect a vision comprising enhanced sovereignty, a method to unite via democracy and language and an action plan to facilitate a protective Union.

1. A VISION FOR EUROPE: ENHANCED SOVEREIGNTY

To develop a comprehensive vision for the Europe of tomorrow, it is imperative to discuss a fundamental concept – the transfer of sovereignty – which seems to have become an end and whose initial federating purpose has become counterproductive. A new concept, that of enhanced sovereignty, which would not compete with, but complement national sovereignty, should be considered.

The traditional sovereignty transfer model can no longer drive European integration along

Amongst the causes of disaffection amongst the citizens of Europe for the European Union, the idea of the transfer of sovereignty ranks amongst the first. The European Union is not a federal State; nor is it just a simple international organisation devoted to cooperation between its Member States. On the contrary, it is a constantly developing construction by which Member States pool certain competences.

According to article 5 of the Treaty on European Union, “*the Union shall act only within the limits of the competences conferred upon it by the Member States in the Treaties to attain the objectives set out therein*”. Moreover, “*Competences not conferred upon the Union in the Treaties remain with the Member States*”. The competences that the States decide to pool under the European Union through the various entities which it comprises have been defined in the Union’s successive treaties. These transfers are both restrictive and consensual.

Hence, the consensual pooling of competences by the Member States with the institutions of the European Union (the Commission, the Court of Justice and also the Union’s various agencies) takes the shape of transfers of sovereignty. The European Union has been built via successive transfers of sovereignty. The complexity of the ensuing structure and institutions is undeniable. It is

the result of the Union's history and the different arbitrations and balances made between the Member States as European integration has occurred.

These transfers of sovereignty have often been the focus of lively debate. Some States have considered that the pooling of certain competences (monetary policy for example) an excessive, unacceptable divestiture of sovereignty. In response to this several circles have gradually been created. The Economic and Monetary Union is one of them: the euro is used by 19 Member States at present. The same applies to the Schengen Area, which does not include Ireland and the UK.

These transfers of sovereignty have been made acceptable for public opinion by a functional approach to European integration. In line with the vision of the founding fathers, Jean Monnet and Robert Schuman, the Union has been built progressively: *“Europe will not be made all at once, or according to a single plan. It will be built through concrete achievements which first create a de facto solidarity”*.

The functional approach has been effective. Thanks to this the European Union has been able to grow by defining its goals, then by pooling the competences necessary to achieve them. Noting the efficacy of the action taken it has been possible to deepen these goals and the competences pooled have been extended. The de facto solidarity created around steel and coal has developed into a common market; a customs union was established, followed by the internal market and its four freedoms of movement (goods, capital, services and people).

These progressive achievements have created real solidarity and objective interdependence between the Member States. They have also been a source of strong symbols of solidarity between the citizens of Europe.

However, for a long time now the success of functional integration has masked the problem set by the consensual transfer of sovereignty to the institutions of Europe. These transfers are separated, public policy par public policy, and systematically match an understandable goal for the greater achievement of the European Union's goals. And yet if we add them together, they represent a major share of competences, which are normally the responsibility of a sovereign State. The grip of the European Union over the sovereignty of its Member States is reflected in the extent of European normative production or the position occupied by the European Union's Court of Justice.

Public opinion sometimes feels that the transfers of sovereignty are limitless and that the European Union's competences increase automatically, without any consultation of the citizens themselves. This feeling is partially true, since the interpretation of certain European goals has been extensive. The European Union has for example claimed competences in terms of culture in virtue of the completion of the internal market in the area of the cultural goods trade.

The European Union has acquired so much sovereignty from the Member States that the issue of its transfer can no longer be eluded by the functional integration method. Public opinion finds it increasingly difficult to accept their State's relinquishment of competences to the European Union.

Brexit was a radical challenge to the transfer of sovereignty on the part of the UK. Likewise, the failure of the referendum in France in 2005 on the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe was a rejection by the citizens of France of a text that presented *en bloc* the transfers of sovereignty granted to the Union.

The transfer of sovereignties has therefore become counter-productive. They encourage populist movements. Increasingly they are perceived with a critical

eye and crystalize tension and also damage the perception people have and their confidence in the European spirit. In this sense it is the success of European integration which has caused the challenge it now faces.

The levers to contain the transfers of sovereignty agreed by the States are symbolic and weak in reality.

The idea of subsidiarity comprises one of these levers. Defined in article 5 of the Treaty on European Union: *“the Union shall act only if and in so far as the objectives of the proposed action cannot be sufficiently achieved by the Member States, either at central level or at regional and local level, but can rather, by reason of the scale or effects of the proposed action, be better achieved at Union level.”* This concept, which aims to be structuring in nature, is only “real” in the Treaty. Its generality is the first reason for its inefficacy. What is it that defines what a State can do better than the Union and vice-versa? Without a vector, a directive, without meaning, this idea disengages the national parliaments and has become a formal path for the European institutions.

The second lever to contain the transfers of sovereignty is an extreme one. It can be found in article 50 of the Treaty on European Union, added at the time of the Lisbon Treaty, and defines the conditions to leave the Union. This radical solution cancels the agreed transfers of sovereignty by a total exit of the European Union.

The reconstruction of Europe must be based on the quest for shared, enhanced sovereignty

Considering the extent of the pooling of competences and the weakness of the tools that aim to frame this, transfers of sovereignty to the European Union can be considered a disproportionate interference with the States and their capacity and freedom of action.

This is not however the only reason why State sovereignty is being reduced. Beyond European issues, the competence of the States within their own borders has progressively been challenged, notably by globalisation and increasing digitisation.

The traditional idea of sovereignty is outmoded, because it has not been reconsidered. The traditional tools in the exercise of State sovereignty do not provide the tools to rise to the challenges of globalisation, digitisation or even climate change.

These phenomena have all had a severe effect on State sovereignty. These issues, which intrinsically go beyond State borders, and therefore the latter's own field of competence and action, highlight the limits of a State's power. They reveal the competences that a State is unable to exercise alone, bringing to the fore a fragmentation between what State sovereignty fully grasps, and what it can only partially control.

Hence, as an example, the mobility enabled by globalisation is exploited to the full by criminal networks without any adaptation being made in terms of penal proceedings at European level. One State acting alone can no longer counter the threats associated with cross-border crime effectively. The latter is multifaceted – from cross border criminal networks to the terrorist threat. With each terrorist attack we are reminded of the States' incapacity to counter these phenomena effectively.

Regarding the new digital order, sovereignty issues are of major importance to the States of Europe, in a context in which today, the major digital stakeholders are either American or Chinese, and in which increasingly Russia is systematically suspected of trying to influence elections in Western States. An individual State's capacity is limited in this ever-changing area which disregards all physical borders.

The climate threat, accentuated by the US' present policy, places even more responsibility on the Europeans. They must imperatively take the lead in this, and, as a matter of growing urgency, try to provide a response.

Who in Europe can still believe that the answer to these problems can come from one Member State alone? Without questioning the development of our societies and the world we continue to transfer certain areas of sovereignty to the European Union and we retain at State level – under populist pressure, partial sovereignty in areas of public policy which quite evidently should be the focus of joint action.

When a State has partial sovereignty in an area it tries to set out rules and implement them, without its action being fully effective. Because the level of decision making and action is inadequate, the State's action is vain. There is partial sovereignty within each State, whilst it would be total at a wider level, in this case, European, for example.

Hence, we find areas of public policy in which sovereignty is fragmented. Only the acknowledgement of joint competence in these areas would enable the exercise of full sovereignty.

Public policies which have developed due to globalisation, digitisation and climate change are perfect fields of investigation for the quest of areas of sovereignty which escape the States. In terms of security, defence, energy, agriculture and even economic protection, action at European level is not as complete if State and Union sovereignty is to be maximised.

Fragmented sovereignty means there is a threat to the citizens of the Union in all areas in which the latter and its States relinquish their capacity to protect. This risk can come in different shapes, from the economic risk, to one that endangers security or society.

Fragmented sovereignty, in all areas that it affects, represents a waste of power. If this power were to be exercised by the Union, it would not be removed from the Member States, since the latter cannot exercise it in effect.

Rather than doing what the States can do themselves, the European Union must urgently address these new areas of public policy which the States struggle to assume alone. By doing this the Union will increase the States' overall sovereignty and help them exercise it in areas which they struggle to control alone.

Symbolically and via real policies, the Union would become a source of sovereignty which is both joint and enhanced for the populations of Europe.

The quest for enhanced sovereignty is a continuous prospective approach, to identify new public policies which are impacted by the fragmentation of sovereignty. By doing this the principle of subsidiarity will also be stimulated, as it becomes its vector of analysis.

By assuming areas of lost sovereignty tomorrow's Europe will offer citizens protection which would otherwise not exist – or which would be only partial.

By focusing its competences on areas of fragmented sovereignty and not on policies which might be undertaken at national level, the European Union will show that the distribution of competences is not a zero-sum game in terms of sovereignty.

The Union will not be armed for the challenges of tomorrow if it continues simply to follow the principles which dominated at the start of European integration and with old ideas of sovereignty that simply feed populist discourse and fear on the part of European citizens.

The acceptance to direct the reconstruction of Europe towards the quest for enhanced sovereignty will address these issues. This must be our priority today.

2. A METHOD FOR EUROPE: UNITING THROUGH DEMOCRACY AND LANGUAGE

For too long now debate over a method to reform the European Union has systematically referred to questions regarding the decision-making procedure (community, intergovernmental etc ...) or the instruments used to implement decisions (regulations, directives etc...).

This dichotomy, like rails guiding these debates, has become immutable, inhibiting all innovation and new ideas. And so, the Union continues to feed populist attacks, pushing it in fact into an almost permanent position of justification and defence. This is typified by its communication policy.

If the method to reform the Union is to focus on the ways and means for institutional action, it must also simultaneously entail political impetus that aims to create federating factors for European citizens for the guarantee of strong European integration and the creation of a truly common destiny.

A new vision of Europe must obligatorily go hand in hand with a new method. To do this Europe must democratically consolidate its construction and relay its action using language that will encourage support.

Democratically consolidating reconstruction

A basic premise must continuously be repeated with strength: the legitimacy of European integration is intrinsically linked to its democratic nature.

The weakness of the EU's institutions' democratic foundation was understandable in the initial stages. It was justified due to the context of the time and the end of the Second World War and especially the very nature of the Union, which was just starting to form: an international organisation governed by the conventions of international public law linking the signatory States together.

However, these reasons are no longer valid today. After Europe of Peace, that of the Economy was already a step towards the change in the Union's nature. This change in nature has gradually gone hand in hand with a greater consideration of the need for democratic consolidation, notably via referendums in the member countries for the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty and via the increase in the European Parliament's competences.

By wanting to go too far too fast the Union did not sufficiently anticipate the persistent reticence of the European people, notably in 2005. Since then, the priority given to the democratic nature of European integration has not significantly increased.

To understand this we must adhere to two fundamental elements in our democracies which are lacking today: on the one hand, as a last resort, the people must be able to decide its future; on the other hand, the power given to the European institutions must go together with equal accountability.

Regarding the European Union, the people's inability to decide their future as a last resort is the result of an extremely simple fact: the European people does not exist. It consists in the populations of the Member States and therefore only has indirect influence over the Union's policy.

Moreover, the constitutionalisation of the treaties, enabled by extensive interpretations of the EU's Court of Justice, has led to a major imbalance in

the hierarchy of standards. The European treaties only partly cover the issues that fall within the constitutional area (such as the organisation of power) and mainly focus on issues, which in the Member States, come under statutory law.

Constitutionalisation renders a great number of issues non-negotiable, which should not be the case. It takes them out of the political field, the one in which the people can intervene. *“European integration no longer depends on consent, but has become the business of the European Union’s executive and judicial institutions.”*¹

This constitutionalised area favours the two least democratic entities of the Union, which are the Commission and the Court of Justice, to the detriment of elected bodies such as the Parliament and the Council. Making a significant change to this operating method would require a modification of the treaties. Apart from the fact that the required unanimity is almost impossible to achieve, a revision of the treaties in the present context would imply opening a real Pandora’s Box.

Political Europe continues to develop in a non-political world and beyond the reach of the people’s will, whilst it affects extremely sensitive areas as far as the Member States are concerned.

To this immunity over the sphere of action there is also an immunity over the institutions themselves, which conflicts with another fundamental concept of democracy i.e. accountability: *“In a multi-level system, democratic accountability is based on two things: 1) the electorate identifies which level*

¹ Interview with Dieter Grimm, interview with Olivier Beaud, « Démocratie européenne : les raisons de la défiance », *Esprit* 2015/7 5 July A), p. 83-94.

of government is responsible to take a specific decision; 2) the electorate sanctions the government based on its results.”²

Regarding the first point, it is admittedly extremely difficult to identify clearly the authority responsible for decision making at European Union level. The decision-making process and the areas of competence (national, European) are complex and understanding them is reserved to a small number of citizens who are initiated in terms of European issues.

Even if this authority is identifiable, citizens have no means to influence or control their action. Hence to the out-of-reach Commission and Court of Justice, we might add a Council, which is difficult to sanction in national elections for its European decisions and a European Parliament whose mode of election is totally separate from its mandate of action. Indeed, the mode of election allows political parties to “nationalise” debate and to prevent the emergence of a political line or programme to which one might refer.

Ultimately the people of Europe cannot decide on European issues and it cannot control any of its institutions. As a result, it does not exist as a political group. The people of Europe, in light of the European Union, is therefore a myth.

The European Union has not provided any real solution to this problem and contents itself with addressing the symptoms. It has not learnt from the diagnosis. Firstly, giving more power to the European Parliament does not make good the democratic deficit. This increase in power has not managed to prevent rising abstention levels during the European elections, because it does not settle any of the questions that have been mentioned (role of the ECJ, political identification, accountability). The same goes for petitions and

² Nathalie Brack, « Construction européenne et légitimité démocratique. Les relations difficiles entre l'UE et les citoyens », *Politique européenne* 2015/1 (nr. 47), p. 146-154.

citizens' consultations. These measures, although they are a move in the right direction, do not address the cause of the problem.

It is for these reasons that the democratic consolidation of Europe must be the first priority of change in response to a much deeper need, which is the political emergence of the European people.

Firstly, the election of the Members of European Parliament must be politicised. The political parties of the European States continue, in a totally paradoxical way, to work independently from each other on European issues, campaigning independently for the European Parliamentary elections before the elected members join together in "major parties" once they have integrated Parliament.

It is vital to end this paradox. To do this there is no need to amend the treaties; determination will suffice. The way the European parties consider their work together must be changed. The EPP, which only really exists in the European Parliament, cannot serve as a model. Each national party that is a member of a European party would have to elect, via a members' vote, a "Council for European Affairs". During an exceptional Congress, several months before the European elections, the representatives of each party's European Affairs Councils would convene. This Congress would elect a representative to become President of the Commission if the party in question were to win the election.

Then this Congress would also define – on the basis of the candidate's programme, but also respecting the ideas of the different trends, not a detailed programme, but the main outline of the future Commission's mandate. This programme framework would be used in the national campaigns whilst retaining the necessary room to adapt to specific local situations. Mid-

mandate this exceptional Congress would meet again to confirm the next political guidelines.

Then it would be possible to set out a political programme ahead of the European elections to ensure that at least a part of the debate really takes place at European level.

Moreover, during the legislature it is vital for European decision-making to be brought as close as possible to national democratic venues. Via the Council people take indirect part in European decision making. Via the European Parliament they also participate. Admittedly though national political debate – in France at least – struggles to align itself with European political debate. Unlike some Member States, notably the federal ones in which the Government must refer more systematically to Parliament than in France before adopting a European position, France distinguishes itself by disconnecting its own political situation from the legislation being debated in Strasbourg and Brussels.

Without challenging the balance of power defined by the institutions in the V Republic it appears urgent to bring European and national political agendas closer together. This might involve for example more systematic debate over the positions that France is prepared to defend within the Council. These debates would be totally relevant in the National Assembly and the Senate.

The European Affairs Committees in these two houses should see their position enhanced by the institutionalisation of their role in the construction of the French position in the Council. These Committees, duly informed of future debates, could trigger public debate with the ministers in question. If the French position before the Council is to remain a last resort for the Government, any occasion for public debate over these issues, which are on

the European agenda, must be considered to be a means to bringing European decision-making closer to the citizens.

Finally, to strengthen democratic anchorage it is important to curb an apparently growing trend: the Union's punitive nature, represented by the Commission and the Court of Justice's work.

Today the solution to Europe and the Member States' problems lie all too easily in a sanction, without the reason for this always being understood. The Commission should favour mediation and the Court of Justice implement a charter on the extent of its power of interpretation, to avoid decisions being taken which manifestly go beyond the aim of primary law or the will of European legislators.

Too often citizens hear of Europe only when the Commission or the Court of Justice have triggered procedures for shortfalls, sanctions and restrictions. Instead there should be support, the sharing of expertise and cooperation. As an example, what should the Commission do when it notes that several Member States have not respected European air quality standards: threaten them with sanctions or adopt an advisory role and identify the means available to achieve the goals as they work together with the administrations of these States?

And similarly, might the Commission not be able to share its best officials, sending them to the Member States to support the introduction of certain public policies? In places where Member States' expertise or experience is lacking, the European Commission should be seen as a pool of experts made available to the States and local communities for the time necessary. These exchanges between Brussels and the Member States can but help towards a better understanding of the Union's issues by national civil services and national issues by the Union's officials. Creating this proximity seems vital

today. It is a prerequisite to make each stakeholder responsible and for the adequate consideration of national and local issues by the institutions of Europe.

Concern for European democracy must be constant. It implies several necessary developments: a political European Parliament to enable identification and empowerment, more engaged national parliaments and non-elected bodies, which do not systematically seek sanction, but rather mediation and support to change, with greater physical presence in the Member States.

At a time when more and more States, including in the European Union, are challenging democracy, it is vital to recall its importance and to make it the banner of the European project in all of its future stages. The contrary would mean agreement with the enemies of European integration. It is now and in this new stage of European integration that it is vital to hold the European Union up as an example.

Winning the language war

Language is the conduit for the transmission of ideas. Without it the latter are empty shells that are misunderstood, go unseen and unperceived. Language is used to craft them, but also and especially to communicate them, to foster understanding and to create assent.

The European Union it seems has never really understood the importance of this. Firstly, it has exclusively relied on the formulation of ideas, understanding when it was too late the importance of the communication of ideas.

The Commission undertakes ambitious but isolated communication campaigns (InvestEU, EUandMe, EUprotects), that are inadequately

coordinated with other major stakeholders in the Union, whilst joining forces with other institutions would provide them with much greater strength.

The European Parliament considers communication above all else as a legal obligation – which incidentally, it takes its time in justifying on its internet site basing itself on the treaties and the European Union’s Charter of Fundamental Rights³.

The Member states have adopted an ambiguous position as they do not defend directly the ideas of the European Union. This distance between what they represent in the institutions of the European Union and what they defend in their own country allows the Member States to avoid taking political risks associated with the ideas of the construction of the European Union although they can benefit from the advantages (such as European financing).

Political parties are reluctant to send leading political personalities to the European institutions to support the projects and the spirit of European integration. European issues are underestimated, based on the supposition that they provide little political credit.

Conversely, aware of the importance of the Union’s words and weaknesses, its enemies and adversaries have launched a real language war, waged by all means available to them (communication campaigns, increased media profile and on the social networks etc..) and in all of the institutions or bodies to which they have access (national parliaments, governments, media, European Parliament etc ...).

By occupying the communication stage, they have imposed the framework of public debate and drawn it to their view of the world. And without us even

³ EP, thematic files on the European Union, “Communication Policy”.

realising it, they have imposed a framework based on which we observe and question Europe.

The vision of the world which has gradually taken hold of our collective subconsciousness is that in which Europe has become a problem, a technocratic impediment. Hence, for completely independent reasons, Europe has always been to blame for the crises that our continent has experienced: the economic crisis, the migrant crisis, Brexit, the Greek crisis, the crisis of liberal democracies etc ...

At the same time the European Union has indirectly colluded in the imposition of this framework through its policy of “non-rebuttal”, which has consisted in not responding to inaccuracies in the media. When it has decided to act, it has too often been in a position of defence and justification, basing itself far too exclusively on factual details to counter anti-European discourse. These two strategies have led to the strengthening of the Union’s negative image.

Firstly, the defensive position has comprised constant entry into populist territory with the aim of waging battle, whilst this kind of strategy simply strengthens their positions. Indeed, the fact of denying an accusation indirectly activates it, since everyone is reminded of it. By placing it at the centre of debate it is strengthened by denial⁴. Using the populists’ language and responding to their arguments and their way of seeing Europe has contributed to undermining the discourse of the European institutions.

As far as countering populist argument by pointing to the facts is concerned, we have seen European institutions like the Commission base their campaigns entirely on the enumeration of what the Union does for the citizens

⁴ See G. Lakoff, « *The All New Don't Think of an Elephant!: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate* », Chelsea Green Publishing Co, 2014.

of Europe. For example, the aim of EUandMe is to show the practical added value of Europe in daily life. Likewise, EUProtects aims to present European work as it is done by those working for the EU or on its behalf to ensure the safety of its citizens and greater stability in the world.

However, the enumeration of a list of facts is not enough to convince citizens of Europe's usefulness. The victory of the populists today using programmes and discourse which often have little foundation in fact is a striking demonstration of this. Given this irrational situation the Commission continues to adopt a technical stance, without passion or politics, in which the citizen, who is drowning in a highly disturbed political and media system, ought to be convinced of Europe's positive effects (and not the European project) based on the information presented as objective facts.

This method is wrong. Facts have no independent existence in politics; they must match a project and fit into a framework. But as they are presented right now by the European institutions, the facts do not match a project and especially, they fit into a discourse set for years by the populists and other adversaries of European integration.

It is urgent for the European Union to state that it has acknowledged this reality. The reconstruction of the European Union must include these details in its method and understand the importance of language.

Winning the language war must firstly be achieved by the return of ideals and beliefs. This means answering the right questions: "why do we want to build Europe?" and not "what is Europe doing?". Likewise, purely factual communication has contributed to the reversal of the meaning of the messages to convey. A return must be made to strong ideas: firstly, that the European Union is a project and common dream and not a series of measures and institutions.

It is by answering the question “why do we want to build Europe?” that citizens can convene and unite around a European idea. It is by answering this question that citizens will be able project themselves and give life to a much wider framework. The answer to the question “what is Europe doing?” then becomes complementary; but it cannot be the sole base of what is fundamentally, the European project. A European programme can then come from this project, but it cannot precede it.

We should recall that before this is exactly this approach that the European Union adopted. The project ran deep: uniting people to prevent war. Then came the programme, as it linked our futures together. Finally, its practical declination was defined; in the area of steel and coal. The same applied to Europe’s second stage, Economic Europe, in which the project was to achieve economic prosperity and in which the programme comprised linking the economies together in a grand common market.

If we do not grasp these points it means we have misunderstood the motivating forces required for the reconstruction of the European Union in the third stage, which is what we now call for.

And so, winning the language war means that we must first relinquish the terminology used by the populists, who constantly refer to the crisis to impose their negative terms. We have to create a new framework with specific terminology to reach the various publics in question. This goal must be shared by all of those involved in communication regarding the European Union.

Winning the language war then means the adoption of a political approach to communication, clearly distinguishing between the official communication of each institution, from general communication regarding the European project. A great deal has to be invested in this.

Political communication on the project would be defined in each Member State, not with a subsidiary role played by the Union's representations, but with a real obligation to produce results. Winning the language war cannot just be the affair of the stakeholders in civil society, who cannot fulfil this role, and who sometimes undermine the message by each interpreting it as they wish.

Communication work regarding the European project should lead to the emergence of Europeans who can defend the Union and palliate the inadequacies of the traditional parties. The latter will know how to respond to the new generation by understanding their codes and by taking the language war to all of the areas where the populists are active.

To do this the mechanisms used to reach out to young people have to be stepped up, to prepare them for tomorrow's debates, so that they can take back ownership of Europe. This should be done by using new technologies, the benefit of which the Union does not enjoy at present, either in the area of education (edtech) or in civic education and citizen participation (civictech).

These measures should be part of a long-term strategy. Changing the dominant framework in Europe and modifying in depth the perception citizens have of the European project will take time, patience and a great deal of rigour.

3. AN ACTION PLAN FOR EUROPE: A PROTECTIVE UNION

Given the difficulty, strong resistance and fear in the face of change in Europe, the European Union must be able to simplify, correct and even abandon policies that do not achieve their goals.

The introduction of new policies by the European Union in the field of enhanced common sovereignty requires rational focus on Europe's historic areas of action. Thought into the future action plan for Europe should lead to the reconciliation of the European programme with the European project.

This discrepancy is particularly visible if we look at the European Union's spending. In 2018, for a budget of 145 Bn€, the European Union spent 56Bn€ on the Common Agricultural Policy and 47 Bn€ on the Cohesion Policy, i.e. 70% of the budget. As a comparison it only spent 11Bn€ on research and innovation, 3 Bn€ on security and citizenship (including the management of migration) and 2Bn€ on Erasmus.

We should be able to challenge some of the Union's historic policies, which would be costly and difficult to reform. Some would benefit from being returned in part to the Member States. It should be possible to progressively reduce others which have already produced the desired result (such as the regional policy, which has already significantly reduced development gaps).

There are domains that Europe can protect more effectively than all of the Member States together. In these instances, the European Union would create enhanced sovereignty, which is beyond the reach of single States working alone.

We have identified three areas of protection which should guide the Union's work transversally to lend it both legibility and meaning.

Europe which protects its populations

Peace and the physical security of Europeans are the origin of European integration. Whilst economic stakes have become dominant in the second stage of European integration (Economic Europe after Europe of Peace), the context of insecurity in which the European Union finds itself today, both

within its borders and in its neighbourhood, opens the path in terms of security and defence to which the Union must devote itself more. But integration in terms of security and defence does not exist, despite a failed attempt by the European Community of Defence in 1954 and some limited operations within the European framework. In terms of security, cooperation is lacking, and the level of integration limited. Regarding the borders we have Frontex of course, but the refugee crisis has shown that the control of migration is neither guaranteed nor does it find consensus.

If we speak of the “protection of populations” the advantage is that of a wider concept – therefore one that can develop -which is more positive and inclusive than the notion of security, thereby responding to populist criticism without encouraging it however. Hence it offers the possibility of covering all aspects of internal (crime, terrorism, civilian security) and external protection (military and diplomatic), as well as all types of protection associated with the management of the migrant crisis (protection of people covered by the right to asylum, balance of systems of reception and the unity of the Member States).

In the short-term support to a project for internal protection could be given.

The fight to counter radicalisation and terrorism cannot be the sole goal of the project; it would have to form part of a wider package. Because organised crime has mostly adapted to globalisation, to technological development and because today it can take advantage of Europe by prospering, notably thanks to the free movement of people, it is an eminently European issue, which calls for a European response. The same applies to issues linked to cybercrime, and even civil protection. Cooperation between States is not enough. The means have been dispersed (Europol, Eurojust, European Police Academy, Coordinator to counter terrorism, Intelligence Centre, Schengen Information

System, EU mechanism for civil protection etc ...) which is impeding the emergence of powerful coordinated action, whilst it blurs everything, both for citizens and the Member States. We now need to build tools and knowledge together in response to the new stakes of European security.

A European Investigation and Prosecution Agency might for example be responsible for this task and embody – both symbolically and concretely - the fight to counter organised crime and radicalisation, which cover the entire European area and know no borders between States. We need to be pragmatic and create a functional system which will then support more ambitious reform. Hence, this agency might first concentrate on certain cross-border crimes such as the trafficking of human beings and drugs, whose real achievements, notably marked by major series of arrests would convey a powerful message.

Again, in the short term, this means guaranteeing the protection of the borders, whilst ensuring the operational capacity of action of the European Agency of Border and Coast Guards (Frontex), whose inefficacy perceived by public opinion, is damaging to the Union's image.

The area of freedom created by the European Union is only possible if there are common external borders. These borders are those of the European Union. If we fail to guarantee the protection of these it means that all Member States are at risk – and not just the States that lie on the border. Hence the Union must manage the external borders. Frontex will therefore have to have at its disposal significantly larger sums which correspond to the missions to which it is assigned.

External protection will have to be achieved in two areas, which are two sides of the same coin: defence and diplomacy. In terms of defence Europe has often suffered from making overly ambitious promises and unrealistic declarations:

some tools have been established, such as the battle groups; others have only been announced, like the European Defence Fund.

In terms of defence, article 42 of the TEU provides that “the common security and defence policy shall include the progressive framing of a common Union defence policy”. This goal must become a reality. To do this, after the clear expression of the wish to move forward together on issues of sovereignty, a schedule should be defined, aiming for example the effective pooling of operations within the next ten years. This schedule should allow the States time to adapt their military organisation and to increase smoothly the budgetary spending they devote to defence.

The European Defence Fund might be extended beyond the aspects of research, development and acquisition. It might usefully finance external European operations or become a low-rate debt instrument to help States finance their military investments. Similarly, a peer review mechanism should be introduced whereby Member States would commit to annually reviewable defence spending targets.

The Union’s goal might also be for example to acquire a European aircraft carrier. A key piece enabling the assertion of its power at sea, it would be highly symbolic of Europe’s military and diplomatic strength. This symbol is however cruelly lacking when the Union or its Member States want to engage in the defence of our principles in today’s major conflicts.

From a diplomatic point of view the European Union will have to address many issues, starting with its neighbourhood policy.

As an example, the European Union must imperatively take into consideration the dynamics now affecting the Western Balkans. To the growing, complex influence exercised by foreign powers (such as the

Russians, Turkey, China and the USA) which illustrate a certain ability for cohabitation, there is only one lever of action possible: a promise to integrate the European Union, the possibility of which it should be noted, is ebbing slowly but surely.

These foreign influences on the Union's doorstep have the potential to destabilise seriously the region, and even the continent as a whole, and severely weaken the Union.

In response to this, enhanced cooperation policies between the European Union and its neighbouring countries must be developed in terms of terrorism, cross-border crime, cybersecurity and even education and the fight to counter religious extremism via the promotion of existing models of religious cohabitation. These cooperation programmes must be redesigned so that both sides have more active roles. They must rise beyond the idea that the development of a country entails the formal adaptation of its laws. By promoting real successes and maintaining strong ties the Union will go beyond the overly normative diplomacy that it exercises today.

Finally, the protection of populations involves the management of the migratory crisis. This crisis and its poor management have led to an accumulation of problems that have affected refugees who have the right to protection in virtue of the right to asylum, and the systems of reception in certain Member States and also the unity of Europe itself. Italy and Greece must no longer feel that they are alone to face the migratory movements affecting Europe.

Moreover, it is imperative to identify clearly the migrants who come under the right to asylum from those who come under the category of economic immigration. The reason for this is simple, those who fall in the first category, for moral and legal reasons must be welcomed by the Union's States, whilst

those in the second have to be received in respect of the national law of each State.

To do this it is vital to abandon the Dublin Agreements and provide each Member State with a single European asylum law. The Union will help the States each time it is necessary and show its active commitment in support of the States who need it.

Once the situation is clarified it will be up to each European State to define, in line with its national expectations, the policy it wants to conduct in terms of economic immigration.

Europe that protects the economy

For several decades the European project has focused on the creation of an area of economic prosperity, growth and catch-up for the new Member States. It appears increasingly difficult to convince the public of the key role of the internal market in this area, even though debate over Brexit and the fear on the part of British economic stakeholders of being cut from the internal market have helped promote the economic interest of the European Union.

The European Union is not cut off from the world. It represents an economic area amongst others, even though it is of exceptional size. The globalisation of trade and the grand opening of the European economy have provided Europe with undeniable growth but have also subjected it to economic crises that have come from elsewhere and have accelerated certain socio-economic transformations (notably de-industrialisation).

In a world context in which populism uses international economic competition to justify closure and protectionism, a European response is necessary. More than ever before the European market must be open to fair competition but closed to all goods that would pose a risk for people's health. Likewise, the internal market must be better equipped to respond to

protectionist acts on the part of its trade partners and unfair practices of technological dumping or espionage. The same applies to the protection of European businesses and the people they employ.

In the face of rampant protectionism, praised by populists on all continents, Europe must respond by protecting the economy: with a fair, open but strong, realistic policy that aims to protect the Union's consumers, workers (wage earners or not) and businesses.

The protection of European consumers means having policies on consumer goods (notably sanitary standards and monitoring). The communication deficit in this area is considerable: some of the Union's decisions on these issues have irritated Europe's citizens (as an example, the calibration of consumer goods), whilst they are supposed to protect them as consumers. European mistrust is considerable in terms of the role played by lobbies. The Union will constantly have to ensure it responds to this.

From the point of view of the digital economy the development of a European alternative to American domination of the market requires adapted regulation. The personal data of European users must not be offered to American businesses and Europe must demand the processing of these data within Europe. Likewise, the American digital giants must be taxed proportionately to the revenues they draw from their activities in Europe and thanks to European users, in order to re-establish fair competition with their European counterparts. They must contribute, like any other business, to the public finances of European States.

Finally, the determination to protect European consumers has to be firmly re-asserted under trade negotiations. With each new free trade agreement negotiation, the European Union has been accused of only having businesses'

trade interests at heart. It is unacceptable for the image to spread of a Union which neglects the health of its citizens for mercantile ends.

The protection of workers, whether they earn a wage or not, is the second stage in terms of the protection of the economy. The theme of Social Europe emerges in official discourse and in articles of reflection on the future of the European Union, but the echo of these initiatives remains weak.

Social Europe can take direct shape in redistribution via dedicated funds or the adoption of common rules impacting the labour market and the minimum salary. More indirectly it can be implemented by the transversal consideration of social aspects in other policies, for example in terms of trade policy, competition policy or within the European Semester.

The challenge to protect workers will firstly require the implementation of common standards within the European Union to end all conflicts and frustration which result from superfluous competition (or the impression of competition), between workers within the Union itself. The diversity of the Member States' economic fabric is a strength and a competitive advantage which certain industries, with chains of value that are based on the opportunities offered by the internal market, know how to exploit. It should not be source of fear or encourage withdrawal and the closure of the borders to people and merchandise.

To avoid this pitfall – which is one of the reasons behind Brexit, such was the place taken by the issue of the free movement of people during debate prior to the referendum – national standards should be progressively brought closer together and the effect of unnecessary competition between Member States should be limited until harmonisation is complete. The theme of detached workers should no longer be a weapon for the populists, and it should be put

back in its rightful place: a useful tool for the freedom of investments in Europe and for the temporary mobility of workers.

Once the first challenge of protecting workers has been settled, the Union will be able to start encouraging and supporting the improvement of social standards within its Member States. Given the interdependence of European economies, these factors of socialisation might be imagined at Union level. It would mean for example a European unemployment insurance. This would enable a minimum level of redistribution and automatic equalisation which would then allow the provision of more direct response to crises that do not affect all of the Union. In this sense this kind of social policy would share the same goals as a euro zone budget.

Finally, European social policy would be more relevant if certain transversal goals could be achieved via action that would be impossible or difficult to support financially at national level. For example, to support gender equality, the European Union could help the Member States finance paternity leave equal to the length of maternity leave. It would act like a public policy which the Member States would not all have been able to try on their own.

Regarding the protection of businesses, the European Union really does not use all of its strength in the face of a world typified by technological revolutions (digital, big data, biotechnologies etc ...) and by strong interventionism on the part of Europe's competitors (US, China). Europe must have a more pragmatic and less naive approach to its industrial and trade policy, without which it will lag behind in terms of growth and world innovation in the long term.

This industrial policy may adopt different shapes and form.

A fair normative framework must firstly be re-established, to allow European businesses to develop on an equal footing with their extra-European competitors. In this sense the rules pertaining to the control of monopolies might be relaxed when the rapprochement of European companies leads to the emergence of European champions.

In terms of international trade, the European Union – the world’s leading market – should demand real reciprocity (for example for public procurement), develop new trade defence tools enabling action against unfair behaviour (notably dumping), impose the respect of European patents and effectively counter forgery.

Finally, the European institutions must be able to condemn or implement sanction regimes on non-European businesses in the same way that American jurisdictions condemn European businesses, for example regarding the scandals in the car industry linked to diesel. The Union already has most of the legal arms to allow it the extra-territorial application of its law, just like the US. It must now provide itself with the institutional tools and especially the political will to implement them.

To be credible the policy to protect businesses should guarantee the prevention of the emergence of unfair competition within the Union. In this sense corporate tax rates should be more closely harmonised.

Europe of protecting common goods

If it wants to remain an area for tomorrow and guarantee Europe’s future place in the world, the European Union will have to try to protect and maintain the factors that are necessary for its sustainable growth. This implies the creation and protection of common goods, via European action, notably

regarding the environment (issue for which the national level is surpassed), likewise education and innovation.

Regarding the capacity for innovation, European policies must first address education, higher education and culture.

European policies could help create an ecosystem that will foster scientific exchange and innovation at continental level. We must continue to foster the learning of languages, in addition to English, everywhere in the Union and extend Erasmus further to high school children, to apprenticeships and create common European tests for the *baccalaureat* and its equivalents.

Europe would also benefit from starting strong symbolic action to counter the brain-drain. With Brexit the European Union will lose some of the best universities in the world. This might be the signal to encourage the greater pooling of research tools and projects between European universities and to organise and support certain vital, ambitious research at European level, for example against Alzheimer's.

By creating common European level working habits and by facilitating mobility from one Member State to another, the Union will be increasingly able to bring together and pool its efforts in every area of research and innovation and facilitate the emergence of centres of excellence at world level. Europe can but benefit from the pooling of its brains and its policies to support innovation.

The European Space Agency could be quoted as an example of what this type of cooperation on the part of several countries might bring with the common goal of research and innovation. Being ambitious at European level will always enable us to go further than being content to finance competing research programmes State by State.

Research Europe already exists thanks to the Europe Strategy 2020. There is however a margin for greater progress for the European Union to become an Innovation Union in its own right. With a support policy the Union will have to palliate the Member States' investment deficits in innovation, to enable sufficient support to research all across Europe.

It will also have to promote young European researchers and artists, for example via the creation of the equivalent of a European Nobel Prize for young people, a strong sign for real determination to promote the Union's values.

If Europe is to maintain conditions to create and invent, it must encourage risk taking and the will to act at the same time.

Today digital is synonymous to modernity. But Europe has largely remained a spectator to the major digital innovations of the last decades. We are happy to watch the race to the top by American and Asian businesses. However, many businesses amongst the present digital giants did not exist ten years ago. This is the time we need to allow to see European businesses to enter the big digital league.

Europe must create the conditions for the emergence and growth of innovative businesses. If there is an area for the unlimited implementation of the competition policy, it should be in the digital area.

To encourage the growth of innovative businesses a European solution for the financing of businesses would be welcome. Start-ups often struggle to cross certain development hurdles. They must be helped to become both European and world businesses. Support must be given so that they do not relocate to the US under the pretext that financing is more accessible over there.

The US have the NASDAQ. This market is a formidable force of attraction for innovative businesses the world over. It provides powerful support for

American innovative businesses. If the ecosystem of innovation is not rich enough for a French NASDAQ, surely it is for a European NASDAQ.

The financing tool for innovative businesses at European level will help them to deploy across the whole of the Union, and not just on the national market, which too often is insufficient to transform them into world businesses.

The environment is another common good which resolutely deserves European action. The protection of the environment will at first imply the smooth implementation of the Paris Agreement on the Climate, which should be a major European goal, especially after the withdrawal of the USA. It is both a necessary, strong tool for soft power, considering the stakes involved in climate change

The European carbon market has proven ineffective. If the introduction of a stability reserve of the market has been decided to enable the Commission to intervene regarding quotas, then more ambitious measures can be put forward to turn Europe into an exemplary space and an engine for decarbonisation. The ceiling price on carbon must be increased regularly. The achievement of the Member States' CO₂ emissions reduction target commitments might be more clearly monitored, for example by a peer review mechanism.

Moreover, other aspects of the European environmental protection policy (notably waste management, the fight to counter air and water pollution, the protection of biodiversity) suffer a weakness which demands response: issues involving the protection of the environment are not integrated transversally enough in the Union's other policies and often do not appear to be a European priority. These issues however clearly fall within the Union's competence. Air and water pollution know no borders between States and biodiversity is a world issue.

Moreover, the European Union could be a powerful lever of action, at international level, to encourage other States to raise their own environmental standards. Via its trade and consumer policies, the Union must be in a position to encourage and impose - if necessary –practices that are less damaging for the environment and climate.

This action must involve stricter criteria for products that are allowed to enter the European market, for example in terms of the manufacturing process, animal well-being and deforestation. During the signature of trade agreements, the Union must systematically impose (the dynamic) alignment regarding environmental standards, (i.e. which would gradually integrate the new standards defined for the Union) for the closest States.

CONCLUSION

We are living in an intense time for the European Union, full of risks and opportunities in a world undergoing profound constant change. The period following the European elections in May 2019 represents a precious window to make our voice heard.

It is true that in response to populists, who criticize the Union permanently and irrationally, there is the “Europhile”, with requests based on the needs expressed by the European citizens and the challenges that the Union faces.

Il est vrai qu’à la voix des populistes, prompts à une critique irrationnelle de l’Union, répond celle d’eurobéats qui font des demandes profondes exprimées par les citoyens européens et des défis qui touchent la construction européenne. It is just as true that a new generation’s voice, which wants to take control of European integration, is making itself heard. This new generation wants **its** Europe. The construction of this Europe will support its own integration shaping of its own political and social conscience.

This new generation comes with major proposals in many areas. Innovative, and forceful, most of them do not fit into a comprehensive project - a project which, in the wake of Europe of Peace and then Europe Economy, would mark the new stage in European integration.

This comprehensive project, as well as the deep reasons which drive it are vital to provide coherence, strength and energy, which are the only things that will allow this new generation to acquire the moral ownership of its Europe. This will be the only driving force behind the Union’s success.

The path that the idea of enhanced sovereignty opens up is different from that of the development of European integration based on sectoral proposals, on specific public policies and even on technocratic principles which, although

mostly driven by real political ideas, are today contributing to the growing gulf between the citizens of Europe and their Union.

Enhanced sovereignty enables the full adaptation of the European Union to contemporary challenges and also the provision of a driving force that can open the third era of European integration. Europe will help the Member States to recover a share of their national sovereignty, which has been fragmented by major phenomenon linked to globalisation.

Then, the unity recreated by a method founded on democracy and the conquest of language will form the steadfast, vital based on which European citizens will convene to provide this new common impetus.

The deep reassertion of our belief in democratic principles will facilitate the emergence of a community of daily, vigilant, rigorous ambassadors via the inclusion of the greatest possible number of citizens. Winning the language war, which is starting finally to be within reach, will create a new balance of power with the populists, who to date have been the only ones to define the framework of thought regarding Europe.

In the long-term, protecting populations, growth and common goods, which the single State can no longer guarantee, will provide the Union with a new dimension. Protection should be the result of a coordinated, pragmatic, concrete action. This protection should be the result of strong symbolic measures, symbols of the future.

Symbols are a structuring force in any society. Whether they are negative or positive, they are a point of reference, present and future, that can federate and especially transcend individuals.

If the creation of symbols can be the result of will, it is also the result of events. Hence, it becomes a process that is imposed. This is how negative symbols

have progressively been created and multiplied around the European Union. These symbols can be people like Viktor Orban, and illiberalism, which he supports, objects like the Aquarius and the failure to respond to the migratory issue, events like the murder of journalists in the Union's Member States and corruption and also democratic events like the referendum over Brexit.

The Union must reassert the structuring value of symbols in our societies and seek, amongst the Union's goals, its functioning method and its real policies, new symbols for Europe. These symbols should help the Union to take back ownership (and no longer submit to) of the symbolic narrative. This narrative, in response to negative symbols, whilst constructing symbols of the future, can be divided into three dimensions: the strength that the Union provides, the unity that it makes possible and the innovation that it encourages.

Firstly, symbols of strength, which in this new symbolic narrative should respond to a primary human, yet highly present instinct in our societies. A strong Union reassures in a world undergoing profound change.

Then come symbols of unity. Unity, a key factor for success in European integration, which today seems threatened by a multitude of phenomena. Many types of discourse prosper, pitching Member States against each other or States against the European institutions.

Finally symbols of innovation, because the Union's image and that of its institutions too often seem old, slow and out of line with its time. In history Europe was great when it was innovating. The major architectural, philosophical, artistic, technological moments of Europe have always occurred and strengthened at continental not national level.

These symbols will naturally result from the vision, the method and plan of action that we put forward for Europe. Their establishment in the collective

narrative of the people of the Union will be the sign of renewed success in the European project.

Tomorrow's European Union must enhance State sovereignty. This Europe will be made democratically with the support of the people. It will act to protect populations, the economy and common goods at continent level.

We must accuse no one for not being convinced by a Europe that is not convincing. However, a vision, a method and a plan of action must be put forward that will lead to support. This convincing Europe must be built together, this Europe which inspires, tomorrow's Europe.⁵

⁵ This drafting of this essay was completed in August 2018.

A Blueprint for Tomorrow's Europe

The period in which we are living is key for Europe. Although the Union has kept its promises of peace and freedom and has mainly achieved its goals of economic and social progress, by eliminating barriers between States, the future is full of uncertainty. Given the rise of populism, climate change and the loss of confidence in the institutions, maintaining the *acquis* is no longer enough to unite the people of Europe.

Where many would see a crisis, we want to see an opportunity, to rethink the European Union so that it can face the challenges of this century head on.

The European Union of the future must enhance State sovereignty. With the definition of common enhanced sovereignty, the Union can be complementary to its Member States and not in competition with national sovereignties. This Europe will only be made democratically, with the support of the people, by developing a positive discourse and by creating a truly European political space. It must act to protect populations, economic activity and common goods at continental level by a clear redefinition of its priorities and its fields of action.

For it to become a reality this call for the reconstruction of a strong, united, innovative Europe will require courage and lucidity. It lays out the possible blueprint of this European re-invention, which is as urgent as it is necessary.