



'Europe for Citizens' Programme

Project held under the auspices of Mr. Václav Havel

Prague International Meeting
25 – 28 April, 2010

DECLARATION

"This is our Declaration. It is something for European people and we come from a lot of different European countries. It struck me that everybody left national ideas, national interests aside, to promote universal values of the European Union and, in a larger area, of the world." (Oscar Coppieters, Prague elected delegate)

The European Union: function, scope, purpose and values

- We encourage the existence and strengthening of pan-European political parties in the European Parliament
 - National candidate lists could be used as an initial step; such a system would ideally evolve to permit cross-national voting
- We support the direct election of the President of the European Union by citizens of the European Union
- As a means of improving the competence of the European Commission, we support selecting members of the Commission from an EU-wide talent pool without regard to nationality
- We advocate strengthening the authority of auditing and control mechanisms which oversee national budgets and independently verify reported figures
 - In the case of national or transnational economic crises, stimulus packages and economic rescue policies are encouraged; they would, however, be subject to improved control
- We encourage and support the right of the EU to initiate environmental protection policies and solutions at the international level
 - An increase in budgets and incentives for developing alternative energy sources would boost this role
 - Introducing legislative initiatives for promoting and regulating the activity of companies that produce energy would also serve this end
- We encourage the EU to speak with a unified voice based on common values, as defined by the European Charter of Human Rights and accepted environmental protection standards, while simultaneously integrating these values into both external and internal policies
 - We also recommend incorporation of these common values into current and future commercial contracts
- We support the establishment of a single permanent seat on the UN Security Council representing the EU; this would replace current member state permanent representations on the Security Council
- As a means of promoting a European identity, we recommend the creation and implementation of an EU-wide curriculum, during the period of compulsory education, which emphasizes shared culture, institutional knowledge, civic participation, and European rights and values
- We support legislation which would ensure that all EU member states allow their citizens to be able to spend one semester abroad, with full credit, before the end of compulsory education
 - Funding for this programme would be means tested, so household income levels would not influence rates of participation
- We advocate the founding of a "European University" with branch campuses in every EU member state
- We recommend increased EU investment in student scholarships, as well as greater promotion of such programmes

- Programme guidelines would ensure an equal exchange between East and West, going both directions
- Programmes would also place an emphasis on maximizing the number of languages in which classes are taught

The mass media: content, access, etc.

- Being the first generation to have come of age during the so-called information revolution, we believe that it is essential for the EU to organise campaigns and workshops on educating citizens about the power of media manipulation; this would preferably start in primary schools
- We support a positive trans-national publicity campaign which discusses the internal workings of the EU in order to increase citizens' understanding of and engagement with Europe
- We encourage active EU support for the independence of public media in order to ensure their freedom from manipulation by political and/or business interests
- We believe the EU should provide free broadband internet access across the territories of all member states for all citizens who desire it
- We advocate the establishment of centrally-funded, commercial-free, independent, EU-wide media consisting of a digital TV channel (with local subtitles in each country or region, as applicable), a radio station, and an electronic newsletter
 - As a means of fostering access and diversity, any EU citizen would be able to apply to create a feature or documentary programme, article, or other relevant content to be used by these media services

Freedom and democracy

- We advocate increased discussion and constructive decision-making concerning migration and asylum-seeking from non-EU countries
 - This includes establishing an official EU border police force and common migration and asylum guidelines, in line with UK standards; harmonization of guidelines will equalize burden-sharing
 - More openness within the EU to external migrants and asylum seekers, as a means of providing long-term budgetary and other benefits where populations are aging and migration is necessary for demographic reasons
- We encourage the creation of specialised EU anti-discrimination agencies with transparent rules and procedures, as well as equal access
 - Such agencies would have the authority to impose harsher punishments for discrimination and reward those who apply fair treatment
 - These anti-discrimination bodies would also promote the participation of women in politics in both the formal and informal sectors; Scandinavian practice could serve as an example
 - One unit of the anti-discrimination office would promote knowledge of history from a female perspective
 - Official policy would take into account all types of discrimination based *inter alia* on age, gender, religion, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, etc.
- Where appropriate within the borders of member states, we recommend a system promoting community service or education credits in exchange for social services
- We support the right of EU citizens under 26 years of age to be able to purchase standby tickets to travel on planes and trains if not fully booked

Prague 28 April, 2010

Signatories:

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