

# CONCEPT NOTE

## Redrafting Europe

### *The Young Liberals' White Paper on European Institutional Reform*

#### 1- DESCRIPTION

The *White Paper on European Institutional Reform* intends to be a document gathering the opinions of a large number of young European Liberals regarding the European Union: the problems we are facing, the origins of such problems and the solutions to solve them. While selection will be needed to ensure the best quality possible in the published papers, it is intended to be as open as possible, with no taboos. Because so much is left unspoken in the usual channels of discussion, everything must be open in this White paper.

#### 2 - CONTEXT

We are definitively at crossroads in the European Union. Following a decade in which public consultations (we should never forget the failure of the European Constitution in the French and Dutch referendums) would result in popular rejection regarding European institutions, we are now facing a financial and economic crisis that challenges the survival of the common currency and of the European project at large.

The governance of the EU is based upon three different logics: the diplomatic (Council); the bureaucratic (Commission); the democratic (Parliament).

While many start talking more openly about the democratization of the EU, the dominant trend is, of course, and as usual, the choice for more power concentration in the Commission and in the Council through an economic governance that de facto consists in the deliverance of growing powers to unelected and unaccountable officials and diplomats.

This in turn, reinforces social rejection and distrust towards traditional, moderate politics.

#### 3 - PROBLEMS

- Widespread popular discontent.
- Citizen/ policymakers' divorce.
- Decision-making complexity.
- Rise of populist forces.
- Economic and financial crisis to which the present institutional framework seems incapable to answer.

#### 4 - GOALS

- Assessing national and regional contexts and problems.
- Developing a theoretical discussion that creates a normative framework for political discussion: instead of continuing sterile debates ever-more technical, we must get back to the basics, defining what we stand for and where we really want to go.
- Elaborate concrete proposals for the reform of the Union: which institutions, with which powers, constituted by which means. Also, different policies (e.g. agriculture and fisheries; information technologies; regulatory policies; social rights; human rights) may be approached by participants, should a relevant pool of potential articles be achieved.

## 5 - FORMAT

- Three to four sections, answering each above-mentioned goal:
  - *Context* (opinion texts on the general feeling in each country; maximum 3 papers per country; a larger number of papers can focus in the Union, the continent and the institutions);
  - *Liberal Values and the European identity* (reaffirming and clarifying core concepts for Liberalism as an ideology and Europe as a civilizational space; remembering important thinkers or books; reflections on the concept of European identity);
  - *Institutional reform* (papers defending concrete proposals, either for the whole institutional framework, or for each institution);
  - *Policy reform* (reform of specific European policies).
- The first chapter is to be composed of opinion papers, with no major technical considerations, other than good writing and sound argumentation with trustworthy data, should authors include it. Recommended size: 3600 to 4800 characters, spaces included.
- The second should have a more academic/philosophic tone, authors being encouraged to treat specific themes or ideas thoroughly, rather than general comments on broad issues. Recommended size: 3600 to 4800 characters, spaces included.
- The third may demand the use of figures or tables. Authors should provide the texts and, apart, the tables and pictures. When very specific proposals regarding issues such as decision-making processes are done, a more thorough revision may be required to check the accuracy of arguments. Recommended size: 3600 to 9000 characters, spaces included (dimension to be evaluated depending on the relevance and complexity of the article).
- The fourth is only to be included if a reasonable number of articles qualify for a number of core European policies. For each policy approached, at least two articles are desirable, to avoid giving the idea that such papers represent LYMEC's official position regarding such topic. Recommended size: 3600 to 6000 characters, spaces included (dimension to be evaluated depending on the relevance and complexity of the article).

## 6 - PARTICIPANTS

- Members of LYMEC Member Organizations and Individual Members of LYMEC. ELDR Associate Members, members of ELDR parties and members of ELF organizations up to the age of 35 are also accepted.
- Some guest authors may be invited to improve spectrum of potential readers, including: representatives from ELDR, ALDE, other Political Party Youth Organizations, young artists, entrepreneurs and academicians, Commissioners, journalists of European affairs, etc. Recommended size: 2000 to 4000 characters, spaces included.

## 7 - DEADLINES

- The first call for papers in the beginning of July 2012. In every newsletter, repeat the information.
- Pre-evaluation of sections and articles before the Autumn Congress.
- Last day to receive papers: Friday 14 of December.
- End of selection: mid-January.
- Between mid-January and mid-April, preparing publication.

## 8 - FINAL EXECUTION

- A pdf version should be available for free, as well as an ebook.
- Should we find sponsors, publish it as a book. Depending on the dimension of the book and the choice of paper and covers, something between 8 and 20 euros per unit is to be expected. If possible, we may also put a symbolic price to help cover some expenses and use traditional commercial means (bookstores, Amazon, etc.).
- A presentation of the White paper is to be done; at least one in Brussels and the second either in the Rome 9th of May event, or the Tallinn congress.