DEMO Committee

Entrance Statements

Committee concerning necessary reforms to allow the EU institutions to be more democratic and to better address the needs of Citizens.

Synoptic Table

The following table is not meant as a complete synthesis of the Entrance Statements. Its aim is to simplify the recognition of the final decisions took by the different Parliamentary Groups during the online training.

Parliamentary Group	Issues to discuss	Proposed solutions
EPP	Bridges between european policymakers and ordinary people	(a) support development of civic society organisations that operate on a transnational basis (b) more attention to information platforms (c) build a system of formal cooperation between EU Commission and civic platforms (d) a forum of National Parliaments
S&D	1) lack of transparency and coherence of the EU institutions 2) lack of responsive society	(1.a) Enhancing the role of National Parliaments on EU institutions (2.a) extend the knowledge of EU institution tanks to a vast educative program (internships in eu instituion for young people; educative travels to Brussels; study of the functioning of eu institutions at school etc)

Parliamentary Group	Issues to discuss	Proposed solutions
ECR	Excessive competences of EU Institution	Radical reduction of competences to make EU what it was at the beginning: an economic trade agreement
ALDE	(1) Lack of respect of the subsidiary principle (2) Lack of checks and transparency	(1.a) Commissioner at the "Subsidiary principle" (2.a) Extension of check-competences of the European Parliament (2.b) Inclusion of National Parliament in the decision making process of Commission and Eur. Parliament.
GUE/NGL	(1) A radical reform of nonetary and financial functioning of ECB and European Intitutions (2) Clarification about accountability of the different European Agencies	A Fundamental Law for European Union on the model of the one proposed by the "Spinelli Group"

Entrance Statements

EPP

There is a group of scholars (among them M. Jolly, S. Hix, C. Lord., C.Q. Castro, and etc) who claim that EU runs a deficit of democracy. In other words, the EU institutions lack legitimacy. The argument is based on the geographical and cultural distance between ordinary people in the streets and the EU institutions. Indeed, today Brussels is not only a name of a Belgian province, it is an embodiment of European policymakers – unreachable and unattainable elites.

The European Union is the world's most successful experiment in regional integration. Those nearby want to join, those further away want to imitate but it is still an experiment; and as well as successes there are failures that should be corrected.

Some might claim that in such a huge and heterogeneous sphere as the European Union, the problem of deficit of democracy is unavoidable, and that representative democracy with active involvement of citizenry is rather a distinguishing feature of small states not supranational organisations stretching over the continent. There is an element of truth in these statements. The EU is indeed challenged bicultural, geopolitical, economic, social and other differences between the member states. However, we sincerely believe that we could improve the situation by introducing a number of initiatives.

The Single European Act of 1986, the Maastricht, Amsterdam, Nice, and Lisbon Treaties have made a great step towards forming the democratic shape of the EU by extending powers and functions of the European Parliament – the only directly elected body of the EU. The Treaty of Lisbon, in particularly, was a big step towards democratisation of the functioning of the Union. It has reinforced the stance of national parliaments on the supranational level. And what is more, the last treaty provided EU citizens with an opportunity to affect the EU policies directly by means of the European Citizens' Initiative tool. However, the latter change requires a sober glance.

Recent studies published at the Economist (2016) show that since the 1970s European states have been increasingly reliant on referenda. Direct participation of citizens in political discussions is an indispensable element of a modern democracy. Indeed, it seems that referenda provide citizens with a greater leverage over political decisions. However, this method of political discussion has a number of drawbacks that turn it into quite a controversial instrument. The Swiss referendum of 2014, which imposed barriers on immigration and thus undermined accords of the Schengen agreement, is a prime example of how outcomes of plebiscites could contradict the opinion of majority (Castro, C. Q 2014). Despite their being an efficient instrument to mobilise citizenry for active participation in political life of a country, there is much skepticism about referenda as a truly democratic political tool.

There is a gap between EU policymakers and ordinary people on the street. In order to bridge this gap we need an initiative that would motivate both sides of the breach to step forward. Institutional changes alone could bring to mid-term and short-term outcomes. Hence, alone they would not manage to solve the problem. In order to reconnect EU citizens with its institutions and, at the same time, develop and promulgate the European ideas, values and identity more efficiently, a more complicated set of measures must be initiated. A set of measures that will stimulate both sides of the breach.

Therefore, first of all, the European People's Party proposes to support development of civic society organisations that operate on a transnational basis. These organisations are full of young and ambitious activists who are carefully following politics and policies of the EU. It is hard to underestimate the input they could make into the future of the Union. And what is more, they are an important chain connecting ordinary citizens with policymakers. In other words, those civic organisations can be considered as a bridge over the chasm dividing people and the EU institutions. We have to promote and strengthen them.

Secondly, it is important to think progressively. Committed to this attitude, we would like to suggest that more attention be paid to the information platforms that have gained strong impetus on people's everyday life. In the era of new technologies, they turned into a platform for discussion and exchange of information. There is no doubt that most international civic organisations in the EU are actively exploiting social networks in order to enhance their reach. Promotion and development of them will also lead to an increased accountability of EU policymakers to citizens of the Union.

Thirdly, we propose that the European Commission, as the main initiator of the legislative process in the EU cooperates with civic platforms on a formal basis. To be more specific, we propose that each year the Commissioners shall consider a fixed amount of proposals from civic organisations and forward the most adequate of them to the European Parliament as a legislative initiative. This will allow the Union to be more efficient in addressing European citizens' concerns. Moreover, if people see that their voice could have an impact on the decisions of EU policymakers, it will create a strong impetus for them to actively participate in shaping EU policies.

Last but not least, a national parliamentary forum should be established. Rather than duplicate the legislative work of the European parliament, it should ask questions about, and write reports on, aspects of EU and eurozone governance that involve unanimous decision-making. The forum could monitor the European Council and challenge decisions on foreign and defence policy, or policing and counter-terrorism.

To sum up, in the list of commitments of the European People's Party it is clearly stated: 'It is our task to adapt the European Union to the realities and needs of the 21st century by setting the right priorities and by bringing the European Union closer to the citizens.' We sincerely believe that the upper mentioned suggestions will make a great contribution to realisation of the given goal.

S&D

This document aims to define the position of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in regard to the issue of democratisation of the European Union. We, the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, consider that the democratisation of the European Union is based on the two pivotal elements: institutional and social. These key factors exist in the functional interdependence and, thus, should be addressed simultaneously as a part of the democratisation debate in the EU.

It is important to stress that the European Union has made a significant progress in both areas, as the political integration between the member states has advanced. In particular, we have jointly cooperated to enhance the media freedom and diversity by fighting the right-wing governments who try to limit it; we committed ourselves to defending all other fundamental human rights to provide our citizens with unconstrained ability to exercise their political will; and we took a strong position for the transparency of the EU – both in all negotiations and in access to information .

We consider that the EU institutions should continue building a more democratic intercourse with the European citizens. This may be obtained by constructing stronger partnerships with national governments, parliaments, and civil society. Most importantly, institutions should be capable of engaging citizens and be responsive to their needs. The Subsidiarity Control Mechanism and the European Citizens' Initiative introduced with the Treaty of Lisbon in 2007 are the most pertinent examples of such steps. First, the Subsidiarity Control Mechanism ensured the dialogue between the domestic parliaments and the European Union institutions. Under the principle of subsidiarity, it provided an additional guarantee for the constant checks and verifications of the EU actions and their justification on the regional, national levels. Second, the European Citizens' Initiative provided individuals with the opportunity to exercise the direct democratic practices within the EU legislation. Thus, thirty six projects have already been initiated by the EU citizens, out of which ten received the required amount of signatories. Undoubtedly, these elements of the European Union`s modus operandi reveal certain elements of democratisation on both institutional and social level.

However, the EU institutional operation has still proved to be structurally limited in particular areas. Thus, the mentioned Subsidiarity Control Mechanism cannot be regarded as fully efficient yet. The very definition of subsidiarity principle is too broad to ensure a coherent and transparent cooperation between the domestic parliaments and the European Commission. Subsequently, it may not only raise a number of legal questions, but also provide a space for manipulations – the practice which should be restrained in this area of cooperation. Moreover, the European Citizens' Initiative tool has proved to be more of a symbolic character so far. Despite the fact that ten initiatives brought up by the EU citizens received the required amount of signatories, none of them was sufficiently considered by the European Commission and, thus, none has directly influenced the law-making process in the EU.

Apart from this, our apprehension is even greater in regard to the social sector. Lack of political engagement suggests that Europeans have not formed a sufficient understanding of the European Union's institutions yet. Moreover, they do not perceive the mechanisms utilised by these institutions as projecting the needs of the society. In the light of the present challenges on the international arena, our concern resides in the acknowledgement that these shortcomings may potentially grow into a real crisis of Europeanisation. The right-wing national parties are strengthening their positions all over the Europe, while the populist and extremist groups are taking advantage of the present instability and offer false immediate solutions through the anti-European rhetoric. Our task is to prevent such ideas from spreading and ensure citizen's understanding that only through cooperation and joint action can the EU member states overcome the current crises.

Therefore, we emphasise that the two following issues should be brought up within the EU democratisation debate: 1) lack of transparency and coherence of the EU institutions and 2) lack of responsive society. The solutions to these issues should not only combat the outlined problems but also enhance the reciprocity between the institutional and social areas of the EU.

First, a number of procedural and legal reforms should be proposed to strengthen the role of national parliaments. They may include

- creating more specific working definition of subsidiarity, which wold minimise the potential loopholes
- enhancing more active and efficient interparliamentary cooperation
- making structure of the 'yellow' and 'orange cards' practice more transparent.

Second, we believe that social policies still carry the paramount importance for enhancing democratisation in the European Union. In particular, we would like to concentrate on the policies which will foster the citizen`s political engagement as well as form a sufficient civil society. We believe that the change in the people`s perception of the European identity will trigger the institutional change in the EU. Therefore, the formation of the conscious European citizens` generation should be our primary goal. From this perspective, we propose that the solutions to the issue of the EU democratisation should be organised within the following action areas:

- Presenting universal changes into the educational systems of the member states. In particular, introducing subjects about the EU history, values, and institutions into the school programs
- Financing tours for students from all around the EU to Brussels with the purpose of educating them about the EU parliament and the mechanisms it utilises. Encouraging students` understanding of their rights and freedoms in the European Union and the way they can exercise and protect these rights under the EU law
- Promoting traineeships quotas for the European students and young specialists in the EU institutions
- Proposing to hold summits on major issues within the EU borders and abroad to promote unity and cooperation not only between the EU member states but also those countries which are embraced by the EU Neighbourhood policy. Making emphasis on the identity-building element of such a practice
- Using modern technology and the Internet to foster youth's interest and activity in the field of the EU functioning

We, the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats, consider that the EU citizens should be fully aware of their rights and freedoms, and, thus, know how to exercise them under the EU law. The democratisation of the EU is not possible without solid and determined civil society, for these are people – demos – who should construct the democratic order and ensure the proper functioning of the EU institutions on the lowest level. We believe that with the strong European identity and society, the European Union will achieve even greater success in the future!

ECR

To begin, we would like to make clear in this response our view that the EU is a highly undemocratic institution. Structurally, as a 'Supranational Union of States', the EU it seems cannot plausibly be democratic (at least in the traditional sense of the word). As the German Constitutional Court argued for instance, there is a 'structural democratic deficit' in the construction of the EU, as that the principles of equality of state and equality of citizens cannot be reconciled in a Staatenverbund (Supranational Union). Similarly, a 2014 report by the British Electoral Reform Society wrote that 'This unique institutional structure makes it difficult to apply the usual democratic standards without significant changes of emphasis. The EU is a political regime that is, in one sense at least, entirely made up of minorities'. This response will now demonstrate key areas in which this democratic deficit manifests itself most plainly in the EU, before suggesting some areas for reform.

Areas in which the democratic deficit is most clear and pronounced:

- Sharing sovereignty. Being a member state in the EU means that many decisions affecting your nation are no longer made by your government. Now, whilst many of the decisions which the EU makes are on matters that the average European citizen simply doesn't care about (e.g consumer contracts, fisheries policy etc), the fact remains that the EU does decide on crucial matters which affect all of us, without any viable, direct means for most European citizens to have a say. We find that the EU has failed to efficiently address key issues in the manner which Europeans would like such as in Immigration, Terrorism and Unemployment policies. Furthermore, it has visibly forced austerity measures on member states, causing unemployment and inflation rates in countries such as Greece, Spain and Portugal to skyrocket (Of note is that austerity is a political choice, not a necessity). Such detrimental decisions have led to staunch criticism from both scholars and politicians. For instance, the former Greek Finance Minister Yanis Varoufakis has written a very compelling book called 'And the Weak Suffer. What they Must?' – In which he criticises the EU's short-sighted austerity measures and rising authoritarianism in the Troika + how these factors stonewalled his efforts to resolve the Greek economic crisis. When were there national referenda on this expansion of EU power? The traditional right to determine a state's budget, which is one of the most essential rights of any democratically elected parliament, has disappeared in Europe.

- Unelected Leaders. Some may have seen the footage of Nigel Farage MEP standing up in the EU parliament upon the announcement of the new presidency of 'Herman van Rompuy', and asking 'Who are you? I've never heard of you – nobody in Europe has ever heard of you…who elected you?'. He rightfully pointed out that one of the most powerful men in the free world was unelected by those he claims to represent! And yet, the EU actually regularly appoints highly controversial figures into positions of power without consulting the European people. Sergei Stanischev, the former Prime Minister of Bulgaria who presided over one of the most corrupt regimes in the EU's history, was made the head of an umbrella party uniting social democratic parties from across the continent. Why? Because the European Commission is incapable of creating binding policy without the support of all EU member states, and must therefore frequently overlook the disgraced track records of the appointees who may be capable of promoting a policy consensus (over issues which the EU commission perceives to be important). Anyone must agree that we should have an element of control over who is elected to such supreme positions in the EU + what issues are debated.
- Lack of scope for change and EU forcing its 'status quo' on member states. It's a naïve view to imagine that any single state can reform the democratic deficit in the EU, primarily because every single
"Country" in the EU is a minority. A single state has a minimal chance of getting all of the 27 others to agree on its ideas for reform direction. (Incidentally, this is why the supranational state is so notoriously inefficient at tackling cross-border issues such as immigration, energy policy and Russia quickly enough!). Furthermore, it has been shown that when the EU leadership wants to, it will push its policies through despite the objections of national states. The 2007 Lisbon Treaty is a prime example! The Irish were the only country that refused to cave in to political pressure from Brussels and insisted on holding a referendum (all 28 MS need to ratify to effect a new treaty into law). They held the referendum, the people of Ireland voted against the Lisbon Treaty. Then famously, President Barrosso was recorded as saying 'they've given the "wrong" answer'. Despicable. Then what happens? They exert even more pressure onto Ireland to have ANOTHER referendum only 9 months later, and the second time they voted yes. Astonishing. They should call EU referendums 'neverendums' because clearly they won't stop until the country gives them the right answer.
- Such concerns over the democratic legitimacy of the EU and its leaders are particularly pertinent today, given that average voter turnout in EU elections across continent have been declining year on year without exception – to a low of 42.54% in 2014. Matej AuBeji (Director of the Law Institute in Ljubljana in Sweden) has cited this declining turnout as the social component of the democratic deficit.
Now in terms of what we believe could be done to resolve this situation and enhance EU democracy… We don't mean to sound too pessimistic, however it seems that as mentioned, it is the very structure of the contemporary EU which renders it inherently undemocratic, and that reforms will therefore be both highly unlikely to occur in the first place and ineffective should they do so.

The structure of the body is so that the three main considerations of democracy, efficiency and transparency cannot be reconciled effectively. In terms of enhancing efficiency, the Lisbon treaty did set up a more comprehensible voting system on EU laws, facilitated the passing of legislation (by increasing the number of laws that are decided by majority vote and making it harder to form minority blocks), strengthened the EU's international presence by creating a single European foreign minister and European diplomatic service. However, these reforms arguably came at the expense of democracy. Under the treaty, national governments would not be able to amend European legislation, nor would they gain powers to block it. This is despite the fact that the average European identifies much more with their national representatives than with their EU delegates. (Hence why so many rising stars in the EU parliament often turn their backs on EU politics in favour of national opinion tides).

Similarly, it appears that we cannot effectively reform any one of these three criteria (democracy, efficiency, transparency) in order to achieve more democracy in the EU without also simultaneously addressing the others. For example, if we introduced more transparency to the EU, then its efficiency in negotiating deals and agreements with external nations would be severely undermined. Much of the effectiveness of the EU relies on its lack of transparency; because if all legislative proposals coming from the EU bureaucracy were played out in domestic politics, it is clear that there would be delays and much less would be achieved.

It therefore seems clear that the EU, as a structure of a 'supranational union of sovereign states', is inherently undemocratic. Its powers have grown exponentially and silently, from being an economic trade agreement to an arrogant supranational body which dictates over national sovereignty, without reference to popular mandates in any European countries. National sovereignty cannot be shared in this way and the system remain democratic.

If there were possible steps towards achieving more democracy in the EU, they would need to address the three main criteria simultaneously. However some ideas we have are to introduce European referenda for all citizens to input on the major decisions (immigration, terrorism, unemployment policies) that we have noted. A further idea aimed at reducing the influence of unelected senior EU figures over legislation is to grant more powers to MEPs over this legislation, or to introduce democratic, free and fair elections for ALL senior figures within the EU. Nigel Farage's statement question to Herman van Rompuy 'Who are you?!' raised a serious issue with the current system of electing our leaders.

- They are all equally important. Simultaneously enhancing democracy, transparency and efficiency will require a holistic vision, rather than focusing on any one single area to reform. Electing our leaders and holding actual direct democracy referenda on key policy areas are obvious steps towards our goals.

- The democratic deficit in the EU is so large as we have pointed out, and so impossible to reform without further sacrificing efficiency and transparency, that we fear no reforms will be enough to address it and we should instead revert the EU back to what it was meant to originally be: a purely economic trade agreement between countries. At this stage it was a force for good, and also helped to keep multinational corporations from exerting undue influence.

ALDE

IV.1 Which is the opinion your Parliamentary Group has on the reforms needed to allow the EU institutions to be more democratic and better address the needs of European citizens?

The common challenges facing the EU require common solutions. But decisions should not be taken over the heads of a population unable to influence them. Liberals' basic belief is that EU policies should be passed and subject to controls by the elected members of the European Parliaments. Both the EU Parliament and the national Parliaments should enter into a division of responsibilities where the EU Parliament will primarily hold the Commission on a short leash and be colegislator, while the main task of the national Parliaments is to keep a close check on their national governments when they make decisions in Brussels. The EU Parliaments and the national Parliaments are thus each other's close cooperation partners and should therefore be provided with better opportunities for cooperation and exchange of information.

IV.2 Within this topic, which is the most urgent issue you think is needed to be discussed?

The political systems must deliver far more concrete solutions to the problems facing the population and the challenges facing the EU.

The main route to a strengthening of the anchoring of the people in the EU is, therefore, to ensure a better, more effective EU which is able to deliver the right solutions. Female quotas, school fruit plan, and a ban on the sale of loose snuff are all examples of EU policies which don't really have any European added value. These breaches of the EU's principle of subsidiarity only serve to irritate and distract attention from the main priority of the EU – getting Europe through the crisis. The EU's principle of subsidiarity must be strengthened with an annual subsidiarity check so that the European Parliament and its Ministers can make an annual evaluation to ensure that the Commissions coming programme is, as a whole, in line with the subsidiarity principle. Today, the subsidiarity check does not work as a real judicial brake as cases are evaluated individually and not from an overall political prioritisation of where the EU should put in the most effort. To strengthen the work concerning the subsidiarity principle a "Subsidiarity Commissioner" who can enter into close dialogue with, not least, national parliaments, should be appointed. Today the Commission provides only abrupt replies in answer to questions concerning proposed legislation which may go against the subsidiarity principle. A Subsidiarity Commissioner should also have translateral responsibilities to ensure that new EU legislation is in line with the subsidiarity principle.

Effective administration, improved money management and uniform regulations

Confidence in the EU is weakened when stories appear stating that there is frequently poor control over the EU's money and administration. The same is true when companies experience that competitors in a neighbouring country have an unfair competitive advantage through not observing EU regulations. ALDE will work towards modernising the Commission and ensuring improved efficiency in its administration. The European Parliament must commit the new Commission to carrying out a thorough reform of its administration. Clear goals and specific demands for European added value must

permeate the work of the Commission, not least in the EU's many funds, where projects only see the light of day because they can receive financial support and not because they solve a specific problem. No legislation may be proposed unless the Commission has carried out a systematic competitiveness check.
ALDE'S SOLUTIONS The new Commission must be more strategic in relating to the fact that the EU is losing popular support when companies and citizens feel that some countries cheat and thereby do not act on a level playing field. ALDE will work towards the setting up of a new claims court for private companies and ensuring that a failure to observe regulations governing agricultural policies is given a more significant status.

IV.3 Which solution you propose and which kind of Proposal the Parliament should adopt on this issue?

The common challenges facing the EU require common solutions. But decisions should not be taken over the heads of a population unable to influence them. ALDE's basic belief is that EU policies should be passed and subject to controls by the elected members of the European Parliaments. Both the EU Parliament and the national Parliaments should enter into a division of responsibilities where the EU Parliament will primarly hold the Commission on a short leash and be colegislator, while the main task of the national Parliaments is to keep a close check on their national governments when they make decisions in Brussels. The EU Parliaments and the national Parliaments are thus each other's close cooperation partners and should therefore be provided with better opportunities for cooperation and exchange of information. ALDE's rule of thumb is that increased competencies awarded to the Commission must go hand in hand with an increased strengthening of the European Parliament's control options. In the case of the setting up of a banking union and a general strengthening of the EU's economic cooperation, ALDE will work for the right of the European Parliament to oversee the Commission and the joint banking supervision. Unlike Denmark, far from all national parliaments check on their national governments when their ministers legislate in Brussels. For ALDE, it is crucial that all national Parliaments are systematically included when the Commission and a Government discuss how a country should observe the more stringent regulations dealing with economic cooperation. The European term (the first 6 months of each year) should therefore be matched with a national term (6 months each year) so that the economic policies are anchored in the national Parliaments. The national parliaments should jointly have the same opportunity to challenge the Commission to publish proposed legislation as the case for the European Parliament.
This suggestion should be included in the annual subsidiarity check. The European Parliament has its natural home in Brussels and the moves to Strasbourg are an enormous waste of resources. ALDE will continue to put pressure on heads of states and governments to secure one single home for the European Parliament.
The last decades have been the "treaties' decades" the EU has either just concluded a treaty or is working on a new one. ALDE is always willing to look at the shared toolbox which is the basis of the EU treaties, especially against the background of the financial crisis. But, basically, ALDE believes that it is not a lack of implements in the treaties which are blocking the way for the "Europe of Solutions" but more a lack of political will. ALDE therefore sees its main task as securing a Europe achieving success in global influence and not long, drawn out discussions about the EU treaty base.

GUE/NGL

1 Which is the opinion your Parliamentary Group has on the reforms needed to allow the EU institutions to be more democratic and better address the needs of European citizens?

The federal state, as explained in Hamilton's The Federalist, extends the orbit of democratic government in a Union of States, through the creation of a federal government . The confusion stems from the fact that the European Union is an institution that includes federal agencies, such as the European Parliament, the Court of Justice, the European Commission, the Central Bank, and intergovernmental bodies such as the Council of Ministers and the Council European. When decisions on policies are taken unanimously in the Council , as often happens , the European Parliament and the Commission are in fact excluded from the decision-making process. This is the institutional node that generates an image of a little transparent European governance, undemocratic and even hegemonic, such as when a State becomes the decision-maker of last resort , as Germany did during the crisis

2 Within this topic, which is the most urgent issue you think is needed to be discussed?

Europe must not only tackle the problem of the European federal government, but also that of the various local governments who demand greater fiscal autonomy (such as Catalonia, Scotland, Flanders, etc.). What government - regional, national, European - should decide the common monetary policy? In some phases of the economic cycle the government may want a more accommodative policy, in other phases a more restrictive policy. The ECB has to follow its own monetary policy that takes into account not only the domestic needs but also the international framework. You can not expect monetary policy that is not its competence: as already mentioned, is not optimal monetary area without a fiscal union. Second, the fiscal policy of each Union government must be independent (and not adversely affect) than other governments. In a federation we have to introduce rules of hard budget constraints. This means that every government must be accountable to their constituents regarding both the tax revenue and the outputs. It is unacceptable that a local government to create unsustainable budget deficits and then invoke the manna of the National or the European government. In the market the poorly managed fail. Similarly, the failure (or a severe punishment) must be provided for political inept or irresponsible. Europe has approved the so-called fiscal compact, much criticised, but already improved by the European Parliament with the Six Pack and Pack Two. In the new legislature could perhaps do more. The third characteristic concerns the creation of a limited union of transfers, the so-called bottom-saving states (ESM). This fund has required a considerable financial effort on the part of all euro area countries and is managed with the intergovernmental method. It offers conditional aid to financially distressed governments. The fund, which lends at interest rates lower than they would face the country at risk in the financial market, so far has not suffered losses, but may suffer in the event of serious default. In addition, its size is not sufficient to deal with important cases of bailout as could happen for countries like Italy. This is also a case of asymmetry of European federal system.

3 Which solution you propose and which kind of Proposal the Parliament should adopt on this issue?

- In this gray landscape has made light an important initiative: the "Spinelli Group", made up of about 200 members of the major pro-European parties, has promoted a draft Fundamental Law, which is being submitted to the electoral debate so that the MEPs of the next term be able to complete their work on the basis of indications from citizens and public opinion. The Fundamental Law provides for the transformation of the Commission into a European government, accountable to Parliament and to the Council. The President of the Commission may appoint its commissioners (Ministers) and between them a Treasury minister, in charge of finance and economy. The European Parliament may vote no confidence to the European government, and if there is no majority Alternatively, Parliament is dissolved. It introduces a single European college, to stimulate debate on the electoral candidates and European projects. It will radically reform the financial system, to allow the creation of a fiscal union and the issue of European public loans. It creates a new category of associate countries (Britain might choose this solution). Finally, the ratification of the Fundamental Law can happen in most states or European referendum. It is useless to enter here into the details of this project. It should be only noted that there is a real opportunity to transform the next European election in the initial phase of a constituent process that could lead in the coming years to the creation of the European Federation. However, this will only happen if the candidates to the European Parliament will fight to support the establishment of a federal government. These candidates must be able to explain to the citizens that the national political renewal is impossible without a federal Europe. It is true that there is a democratic deficit in Europe. But even more serious is the national democratic deficit, where governments are besieged by debts, minorities populist, neo-nationalist and secessionist. The fate of democracy in Europe now depends heavily on the political future of the union.

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