



CHARTER OF PRINCIPLES FOR THE 2009 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

More than a half-century after its foundation, European integration leading to the creation of the European Union remains a creation that is a developing polity and that we intend to develop further. However Europeans of all ages often feel more indifference than enthusiasm, which reflects the fact that Europe remains insufficiently rooted in the hearts and minds of the people.

This lack of enthusiasm for Europe should and can be tackled through a better understanding of the positive influences of European policies on the Europeans' everyday lives. European integration has offered the young generation the chance to travel, study, work and interact more freely across Member States more than at any other time in the past.

Concerns about the so-called “democratic deficit” of the EU, combined with the perception that European governance is opaque and inaccessible, has made many young Europeans disillusioned with the integration process.



That's why it is necessary to implement structures and processes that replicate at the European level the habits of governmental control and parliamentary accountability that are common in the Member States.

The last European election in 2004 resulted in the lowest turnout since 1979. We, the members of the Youth of the largest political group in the European Parliament are determined to do everything possible to change this trend. Therefore, we the political youth leaders of the YEPP organisations believe it is essential for the European elections in 2009 to have a joint effort and common guidelines in order to bring the campaign and the EU institutions closer to the Europeans – and most particularly to the Youth.



PRINCIPLES

THE LISBON TREATY

The Lisbon Treaty should be regarded as a good opportunity to revive the “European Spirit” as it introduces important new amendments to the Treaties that will strengthen the accountability of the European institutions. In this context, the new role of the national parliaments in the decision-making process and the strengthening of the link between the President of the European Commission and the parliamentary elections should be seen as positive steps towards a more democratic EU. The youth leadership of the YEPP organisations strongly supports the ratification and the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty and the structural changes that it will bring.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

“The environment is not something we inherit from our parents; it’s something we borrow from our children.” In this sense development should be approached with the understanding that the same technology that increases our well being and human productivity should be used to obtain environmentally friendly solutions for mankind’s demand for



energy.

YEPP believes it should not be a political priority to enquire about the factors that started or boosted global warming, it is time to acknowledge the problem and look for a global solution within the framework of the initiative begun with the Kyoto Protocol.

YEPP endorses the conclusions of the IPCC concerning climate change and states that Europe has to play a leading role to limit global warming by maximum 2 degrees by 2050. This challenge must be considered as an opportunity to increase well being, health, independence and socio-economic development.

INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE

Over time we have come to acknowledge the necessity to ensure equal participation in terms of gender as well as a balanced participation of those of different creeds and ethnic groups. As a youth organisation, YEPP also realizes the necessity of having different age groups actively contributing to society. In many situations experience and maturity are fundamental, others where the contribution of new and irreverent ideas



are vital. If the new generation can call upon itself the task of innovating and making a difference, the older generation cannot abstain from the responsibility of educating the new generation and share acquired knowledge. One without the other would result in an incoherent community.

The justice and solidarity that exists within our European societies should also exist across different generations. With an ageing population and a de-greening of European societies, the current models of intergenerational solidarity are under a lot of pressure. The Youth of the European People's Party calls upon European leaders to maintain a certain budgetary discipline in order to ensure a lifetime of justice and welfare both for the younger generations and the generations to come.

EUROPEAN VALUES

The public debate on the future of the EU is frequently polarized either around the specific functioning of the EU and its efficiency and/or democracy, or around the older debate: “state sovereignty versus federalism”. It is high time to bring the focus back to the fact that the EU is a unique project, *a sui generis*; one that is built on very specific



values. The EU was created in order to defend and protect a way-of-life set on a bedrock of ideals – principle among them freedom, solidarity, democracy, humanism, Christian heritage and the rule of law. YEPP acknowledges that the EU should be clear when stating its values and strict in defending them. In this regard it is a priority that all the members of the European Union develop a policy to respect the European Youth Pact as per the White Paper already signed in 2005

In order to implement these principles and to combat Euroscepticism and EU alienation that grows amongst the younger generation, YEPP strongly believes that all EPP mother parties in each EPP member country should give at least one young person a realistic chance of gaining a seat in the European Parliament. Such a young European parliamentarian would be an active voice for the youth perspective on policies, but also, importantly, will attract interest among the younger generation and therefore mobilize this demographic in the upcoming European elections.

It is our duty to provide young citizens with someone whom they can relate to. Young people should be given the opportunity to influence politics at all levels – especially the European level. In our view, the European Parliament,



the highest legislative body in the European Union, can, and should, benefit from the knowledge, experiences and vigor of young women and men.

YEPP believes that this is the right moment to reconnect the European Union with its citizens. The implementation of the Lisbon Reform Treaty and the participation of young people in next year's European elections are two ways to meet this objective. Europe cannot afford to miss another opportunity.

On the 24th of May of 2008, in preparation for the European Parliament elections of 2009, the youth leaders of the YEPP organisations, gathered in Vila Nova de Gaia (Portugal), at the YEPP Chairmen Conference, clearly state these as the guiding principles for their campaigns and fundamental ideas for the future of the European Union.

We the The Undersigned do hereby Endorse this Charter

Ioannis Smyrlis (Chairman of YEPP)

Pedro Rodrigues (JSD, Portugal)

Silvia Fuhrmann, MP (JOVP, Austria)

Alexandr Shumkevich (YCSU, Belarus)

Rodolphe Sagehomme (Jeunes cdH, Belgium)

Miroslav Mihov (MSDP, Bulgaria)

Mislav Banek (MHDZ, Croatia)

Christoforos Fokaides (NE.DI.SY, Cyprus)

Petr Jurcik (MKD, Czech Republic)

Simon Bjerre (KDU, Denmark)

Giorgos Papanikolaou (ONNED, Greece)

Barry Walsh (YFG, Ireland)

Francesco Pasquali (FIG, Italy)

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Peter Markovic, MP (NG, Slovakia)

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Rok Ravnikar (NG SLS, Slovenia)

Simon Oberbeck (JCVP, Switzerland)

On behalf of YEPP Organisations:

JONG cd&v Belgium

KNL Finland

Jeunes UMP France

SAQDA Georgia

JU Germany

UDEUR Italy

JSD, Luxemburg

CDJA, The Netherlands

KRFU, Norway

ODSS, Serbia

NNGG Spain

Democratic Alliance, Ukraine

Young Rukh, Ukraine

Malady Front, Belarus

YCSU, Belarus