

Professor Danuta Hübner

“More consolidated, ever closer Union will gain the trust of citizens”

Event for the presentation of the Proposal of a Manifesto for a Federal Europe

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We, Europeans live in transformative times in all areas of our human activity, with existential shocks, often with asymmetric effects, still touching upon the foundation of the way we run Europe.

When Ventotene Manifesto was written, integrated Europe was nothing but a dream.

The aim was to prevent wars.

Today the aggressive invasion in our neighbourhood makes it legitimate to look anew at Europe’s existence, its unity and its future.

Over decades of its history, Europe has never been perfect, and it will never be perfect. And those who care about Europe know its weaknesses and what it lacks.

But we also know that there is no alternative to integrated Europe, even if those who pursue European goals sometimes travel different roads.

Today, to give new meaning to what European integration is, seems legitimate.

But political will and new impulses are needed.

A lot has been achieved in-between the two Manifestos.

When I talk to other Europeans, I see hope and courage engendered by Europe, I see Europe for citizens and by citizens, I see the sense of keeping European doors open for those who reject non democratic systems.

The world has accelerated. To cope with it we need values, courage and ever closer and collective Europe.

We need to make Europe move forward, become different but always faithful to its values which inspired authors of the Manifestos.

Our Manifesto, though rooted in the historical and political burdens we carry, calls for a better Europe, and is about the future.

It is about closer Union, about citizens, trust, cohesion, solidarity. And I hope we share the view that it is also about the importance of a competitive Europe.

A serious effort is needed to remove all stumbling blocks blurring the vision of a more communitarian Europe of the future.

We all agree that respect of fundamental values and rule of law is not on the political market for trading for one or another veto.

And fortunately, a more consolidated, ever closer Union gradually gains citizens' legitimacy.

Europe does not exist in a vacuum, there is a global world around it. The world and its problems will not go away. And it is also clear that member states cannot individually on their own cope effectively with the issues of global scale.

Challenges have stopped respecting national borders long ago.

The need to respond collectively is unquestionable. It is not too late to embark on this path.

Prevailing intergovernmentalism implies a permanent search of compromise between often conflicting national interests.

This also petrifies nationalist approaches to the rule of law pushing common European values toward meaninglessness.

We need a strong move toward what we used to call European public goods. We have a good list of these in the Manifesto.

We have to use the renewed Manifesto to go beyond the historical, emotional sources of European federalism to mobilize large stratas of the European society of today.

To get the Union on the path toward European public goods and European fiscal capacities, we should do whatever it takes to engage not only the well established European movements but reach out more boldly to recently mobilized movements of young climate activists, citizens engaged in the COFE, women.

Hope implies courage. Between now and elections there is time to build a broad coalition for this pragmatic path and make it viable electorally.

It is not going to be just a walk in the park. Public opinion is saturated by the nationalist discourse in many member states. There are many tradeoffs and risks pushing us toward increasingly fragmented Europe.

The investment needs are huge and the question from where the money could come is legitimate. That implies fiscal stability risks.

After having transferred billions of euros to national budgets under recently launched programmes, transferring new funds to economies through the temporary state aid framework will lead to the fragmentation of the single market. The depth of the fiscal pockets of individual member states is strongly differentiated. There is plenty evidence of this. And we all know that single market is the EU best asset and is fundamental to achieve sustainable competitiveness of our economy. We must not undermine it.

For me, pragmatic implementation of Manifesto starts with making it a living document, uniting us around joint long term responses to the identified inefficiencies.

The main task is to build the solutions deeply rooted in the mechanisms of the single market and avoid its fragmentation.

To sum up, for me being pragmatic in the implementation of the Manifesto means focus on European public goods, combining both solidarity and competitiveness, on added value coming from a common response, on assessing the needs for joint investment and common funding. This is how the federal Europe can happen

Pragmatic approach to Manifesto means strategic, policy oriented decisions that identify European public goods and necessary funding.

This is how the federal Union can happen.

I think we should prepare a declaration, a junior Manifesto about Europe of public goods.