

Call on the occasion of the European Elections in May 2014

Towards a Europe of values and solidarity

Almost 30 000 young people from all over Europe, including 2 600 from Ukraine, gathered at the turn of the year in Strasbourg for the ecumenical European meeting of Taizé. The participants formulated clear expectations regarding the sense of a Europe which has been passed on to us by the preceding generations. The young do not content themselves with a Europe in peace. They expect Europe to be more ambitious, more audacious, more welcoming, with stronger solidarity: they imagine Europe as a place which remains faithful to the spirit that inspired the European founding fathers.

We – Christian lay people united for more than 10 years in the Initiative of Christians for Europe (IXE) – hear this justified and profound call of the youth. It is our wish to live up to this call and to pass it on to our fellow European citizens.

The forthcoming European elections – which will take place between the 22nd and the 25th of May in the 28 EU member states in order to elect 751 members of the European Parliament – offer us the opportunity to call for a new European impetus, a new European vigour.

The European Parliament is the citizens' direct representation. The EP's competences will henceforth cover the full range of EU policies. This is why the Parliament has to become the voice of a common European conscience. For the first time the Parliament will also elect the head of the European Commission.

The debt crisis and economic crisis has lead the EU to the edge of an existential crisis. Step by step the EU is recovering, though we still suffer from the repercussions such as an increasing social divergence and numerous jobless young people who are afraid of their future. More than ever we observe a historical rise in populist and anti-European parties and movements.

In 2014 we commemorate the outbreak of the First World War in 1914, the outbreak of the Second World War in 1945 and the fall of the Iron Curtain and the Berlin Wall in 1989 – historic events which have profoundly marked Europe' shape and people.

Whereas at the EU's borders – for instance in the Ukraine or in the Mediterranean – people risk their life for freedom and civil rights – values which we enjoy to the full – it would be a moral shortcoming not to vote.

Let us take part in the elections to give voice to a Europe which promotes an ecology of human dignity and which is worthy of its values and political culture.

Making our political choice let us be mindful of the following and say:

- YES to a real European dimension of electoral manifestos! NO to electoral lists abusing Europe for national purposes!
- YES to a real debate on the shortcomings of the EU! NO to the temptations of populism!
- YES to a new understanding of the national interest! Yes to a European identity which cherishes national and regional identities!
- YES to a Europe which is close to its citizens! NO to abusively complicated rules understandable only to experts!
- YES to the importance of entrepreneurship! YES to the responsibility of the EU imaging another model of economic growth! NO to a simple consumerism, to a « Every man for himself » attitude!
- YES to the dimension of fraternity! NO to measures which do not respect the requirements of justice and the needs of the poor and weak!
- YES to the international dimension of the EU! NO to a Europe which is indifferent to the suffering and the aspirations of the world!
- YES to solidarity with migrants! NO to the unbiased rejection of foreigners! NO to egoistic attitudes which refuse our joint responsibility for the admission of foreigners in our countries!
- YES to the protection of our creation! NO to the exploitation of the natural resources of our planet!

**Do not leave Europe to those who want to destroy it!
Give Europe a soul – give Europe your voice!**

Initiative of Christians for Europe (IXE)

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