The Progressive Post

DATA SCIENCE
vs DEMOCRACY

Featuring
contributions from :

Laurent Alexandre

Jean-Yves Camus

Jayati Ghosh

Eva Illouz

Paul Magnette

Paul Mason

Vincent Mosco

Anne Muxel

Frans Timmermans

Oliviero Toscani

Shoshana Zubo

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SPECIAL COVERAGE
European Elections

NEXT DEMOCRACY
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Health and
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NEXT ECONOMY
Competitiveness without
Wage Moderation

NEXT ENVIRONMENT
EU Organic
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The Progressive Post

Europeans share a common history and future, but their ideas and ideals still need a public space.

The Progressive Post

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that gathers world-renowned experts,
to offer a platform informing the public
about the issues facing Europe today.

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European Parliament

Manufacturing Dissent?
Fake News, Micro-targeting & Democracy

by Maria Joao Rodrigues, FEPS President

For this edition of the Progressive Post, we decided to focus on digital democracy. The European elections are nearing, and as a politician, I am looking forward to them. Elections are the hallmark of our democracy and a moment of optimism. But I am also vigilant, because it seems that our democracy is vulnerable to online manipulation, and that our capacity to take democratic decisions is under pressure from big technology firms.

In her book Surveillance Capitalism, Professor Shoshana Zuboff traces a rapidly spreading business model that revolves around the harvesting of personal data to predict, manipulate and control what people do. This mutation of capitalism, together with the sheer concentration of power in the digital economy, is undermining our individual autonomy, and hence the fundament of our democracy. I am very pleased Professor Zuboff found time for an interview to discuss these issues.

To counter this trend, we need new rules and changes on different fronts, but I think the way we do politics is a good place to start. We should not succumb to a race to the bottom, in which we gather ever more personal data, to better target and manipulate individual voters. I want to convince citizens with my ideas, and an initial one would be to enforce more transparency for online political adverts.

Of course, the digital age poses more challenges for our democracy. There are groups that deliberately set up disinformation campaigns. There is a real risk that public opinion will be manipulated ahead of the elections, and we should counter that decisively. It is also dispiriting to see the vitriol people feel licensed to spout online. This spoils our public debate and is a far cry from the democratic promise of the early internet.

But I am wary of the political energy that is now being spent on combating 'fake news'. The 'internet'-based public debate needs to give voice to quality media but also to people who were not heard before, and we should cherish that. We should find ways to turn this cacophony of voices into a symphony, not turn off the sound altogether.

I am not naïve though. I see that the result is often ugly. When ugliness turns into criminality, we have the penal code, and it should be enforced. To do so, we need to work with platforms. But I think that mandating social media to take down content is a lazy man's solution. Even with safeguards, this will lead to biased interventions and will cement big platforms' influence over our communications. Most importantly, it will not solve problems; we just no longer see them.

Instead, I am convinced we should undertake the difficult, but crucial, work of engaging all citizens to create a better democracy. We need new models of communication that foster dialogue and that do not appeal to our basest instincts in order to maximise profits. In times of instantaneous communication, we should also reflect whether it is still appropriate that people's political participation is limited to a single vote. In short, we need to rethink our democracy, to ensure it remains the best model to live together and prosper.

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European Elections

A NEW START?
WHY NOT!

by Alain Bloëdt

And if a major, symbolical election was needed? An election that brings the Socialist and Social Democrat parties back to historical left-wing values: social justice, solidarity, internationalism and a sustainable development. Those centre-left parties, which, from one Member State to another, have been greatly dispersed during these last years in the meandering of power and coalitions, to the extent of sometimes losing their identity and sometimes even their followers.

At the risk of going against the flow, this European election could, for three reasons, become the moment when Social Democracy and its electorate meet, but also its rivals who would be all too happy to bury a contender in a weak position.

First and foremost, there must be a starting point and a point of convergence in this large, and sometimes complex, progressive family: Europe. There isn't a single national Social Democrat leader who would dare to question that the challenges of climate change, terrorism, taxation, security,

migration, could be solved at a national level. This is what should give the European election the most exceptional nature every five years. However, 40 years after its first vote in 1979, it remains an unjustly downgraded election, downgraded by this decryed elites, still reluctant towards the idea of transferring a part of their power from a national to a supranational level.

Then there is the context. This election will take place against the background of the resurgence of populist movements, which we thought to be confined to the history books, in various elections in Europe. And of course, that all the candidates of the European Socialist Party, all over Europe, should be inspired by their Spitzenkandidat, Frans Timmermans, and address these disillusioned, lost people! They need to speak to the millennials, this disabused or cynical generation – even both at times! – that desperately seeks leaders they can talk to! They need to defend women, whose aspiration to be equal to men isn't still but a promise, but worse, could become a regression with leaders such as Viktor Orbán, determined to send them back to the household

to repopulate the old European civilization! And what can we say about the culture and the artistic environment which no longer dare to join together when they were just as boisterous before.

There is finally an opportunity, because as we divide ourselves in backward rhetorics, the populists of all sorts, allied to right-wing parties that are as conservative as ever, provide the Progressives with an enormous space to offer a new vision of European society, adapted to the 21st century. It is up to them to seize this opportunity and to have an influence on the debates.

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| The essence of Social Democratic politics is bridging differences and fighting for the whole of society.

Many people feel they don't have an equal part in society and are alone in paying the costs for the transition to a more sustainable economy, environment and social model. It is time for Social-Democrats to make social sustainability a reality, because social sustainability will get the largest possible group of people on board for environmental and economic sustainability. This must be a priority for Europe after the elections to the European Parliament in May.

Our society has become one in which many people feel insecure, and where it is much too easy to incite hatred. We need to realise that freedom of speech is a considerable asset. But we must also realise that the origins of terror and violence are words that are then transformed into deeds. Therefore, we need to choose our words carefully. Because words do have an effect.

Across the entire continent of Europe and in our European Union I see how easy it is to incite division. I want to stress this, because if there's one thing that really threatens our society, it's politics that's based on excluding others. Saying, 'my opponent is no longer my opponent, but my enemy'. But when a

#IstanbulConvention Equality between men and women is only possible when physical power is not used to oppress women. Perpetrators must be severely punished - by **@TimmermansEU, @PES_PSE**

SOCIAL DEMOCRATS WILL LEAVE NOBODY BEHIND IN THE TRANSITION TO A MORE SUSTAINABLE WORLD

by Frans Timmermans

> *We Social Democrats know that a society as diverse as ours can only make progress if we're prepared to make compromises.*

political opponent becomes an enemy, comprise is seen as defeat.

As Social Democrats, we know that a society as diverse as ours can only make progress if we're prepared to make compromises. Finding solutions by taking the other's needs into consideration. This is not a sign of defeat, but rather of victory.

Everywhere we're witnessing the rise of similar movements. Whether it's the governing parties in Poland, in Hungary, one of the ruling parties in Italy, possibly both, or some other movements, the opposition is always seen as 'the enemy', with whom they can't collaborate, and whom they need to exclude.

The nationalists are particularly good at destroying things. Just like an unhinged toddler destroys toys. What they're unable to do is to create something and to actually build something. Sooner or later, people will see this. And then, what will be their approach? Then, they say that it's not their fault: they blame Brussels, or Muslims, or Jews, or homosexuals. They always manage to find someone to blame.

But I am optimistic about the opportunities to convince people. We reject this form of politics, but we will never reject the people who think they can realise their goals through this form of politics. These people are still our people, even though they don't

vote for us at present. I hope that we will be able to convince them with policies that will bring them back to us.

Unity to master the challenges

The essence of Social Democratic politics is bridging differences and fighting for the whole of society. Making sure no-one falls overboard and ensuring that, even on a European scale, we still consider everyone.

If we look at the challenges facing us like climate change; an American President who, for the first time in post-war history, genuinely appears to believe that a divided and weak Europe is better for the United States than a strong Europe; a Russian President with the same agenda; China, continuously trying to gain the upper hand in global affairs; the migration challenge, then, there is only one thing we can do as Europeans: we need to work together with other Europeans to come up with a positive response to all these challenges. This is the only way forward.

The attraction of many of these nationalist parties in Europe is that people are disappointed with us. They are disappointed with a political system that has resulted in people feeling they don't have an equal part in society . And then the nationalist's proposition is: 'We will take you back to a glorious past.' What they don't always tell you explicitly is that it's a past in which the white male was the boss, the woman was in the kitchen, and the whole world danced to the tune of a small number of European empires. This world has little to offer from the perspective of our Social Democratic tradition.

> " *A 16-year-old pizza delivery boy is not an entrepreneur. And if he falls, he should be treated as a normal employee, entitled to protection.* "

A fair share for everyone

We are one of the oldest political movements in the Western world. A 150-year-old movement. But we should not forget the essence of Social Democracy: progress. To quote Jean Jaurès: "It is in flowing to the sea that a river remains true to its source." And this is the essence of Social Democracy. We need to shape the future, not live in the past!

But we will only be given the mandate to shape this future if everyone is able to see a fair share for themselves in it. This is also how I see sustainability and the climate issue. I do not believe that people reject the idea that the transformation is necessary. People are well aware that there is no other option. But in a lot of countries, people are rejecting change because they feel that the burden they have to carry is unfair. And as long as polluters and businesses are not being taxed as well, and citizens think that they are alone in paying for the transition, then they will reject it.

If you look at sustainability more broadly, as Social Democrats we need to put social sustainability at the top of the list. Because social sustainability will enable us to get the largest possible group of people on board when it comes to all the other sustainability issues.

And what do I mean by 'social sustainability'? I mean that – for once and for all in Europe – we will stipulate that a 16-year-old pizza delivery boy, with a rucksack on his back, is not an entrepreneur when he's simply delivering pizza to someone's home. And that, if he falls he should be treated as a normal employee and he's also entitled to protection. And I want better minimum wages in Europe.

Further progress on women's rights

As I said, the nationalists want to take us back to the past. And who are the greatest victims in this scenario? The first victims are women. Maybe they will be allowed to keep the vote, but that's all. They will lose many other rights. I hope that we will finally realise across Europe that the first and most important victims of this neo-conservative belief system will be women. We must keep making progress on women's rights, not turn back

And this is why we urgently need to get rid of the gender pay gap, which is 16%, and the pension gap which is 40%. This is unacceptable and unfair. And I still want us to go further on work-life balance. If there's one thing I've seen and heard from young fathers and young men, it is that they welcome the idea of being able to be more of a dad than was possible in the past. And that's good for men, good for women, and good for the children.

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| Inspired by the well-known TV programme, the Millennial Dialogue on Europe edition of THE VOICE, powered by FEPS engaged at the end of January, in Brussels, a panel of 5 Millennial reviewers who interacted with Frans Timmermans

I also want an urgent action plan to combat the incredible levels of violence against women. Some countries in Europe use all kinds of false arguments to justify not ratifying the Istanbul Convention, which is intended to eradicate violence against women. This is unacceptable. Violence against women, be it sexual violence or just physical violence, is based on exercising power. It is a weapon based on power and this power must be broken.

Equality between men and women is only possible when physical power is not used to oppress women. Perpetrators must be severely punished.

Bet on the future, bet on millennials!

I'd like to say to every one of my age: you need to realise that these are the first elections in which people will be entitled to vote who were born in this millennium. And for those who were born in this millennium: you should realise that if you fail to take the opportunity to vote, then it will be people who were born in the last millennium who will in fact determine what will happen. You should realise what's at risk: your future!

And we, as a movement, with our tradition and background, must realise that what we are talking about now is the future for our children and our grandchildren, and that when it comes to sustainability, international security, social equality, justice, the rights of minorities, we're doing this because we want to leave behind a society that is better than the current one. And we're doing this together with those who will be the owners of this society.

This text is adapted from a speech delivered by Frans Timmermans at the Election Congress of Dutch Labour Party (PvdA) in 's-Hertogenbosch.

> AUTHOR
Frans Timmermans is First Vice President of European Commission.

I still don't listen to people over thirty!

*Interview with **Oliviero Toscani** by Alain Bloëdt*

Oliviero Toscani

is an Italian photographer. He has made a name for himself in particular through his shock campaigns for the Benetton textile company. Provocation characterises a large part of his work, which has been exhibited in all the major museums and awarded four Golden Lions at the Cannes International Creativity Festival. One of his latest artistic, cultural and anthropological projects, called "Razza Umana" (The Human Race), has led him to do more than 70,000 portraits all over the world, particularly in Liège, where he exhibited in the Cité miroir cultural centre. A selection of these photos are on the cover of the book presenting the results of the FEPS Millennial dialogue.

Progressive Post: *In your career and as an artist, you've dared to highlight subjects that are not much in the public eye, like HIV, homosexuality, sex, illness… Would you say that we're witnessing a regression and that a taboo is back on certain subjects?*

Oliviero Toscani: No. It's a mistake to think it was better before. Those who say that, don't understand anything. An artist's work is to highlight problems, not to seek consensus. It's about testifying to the human condition. All art that counts is always an image of the human condition. If it is only a question of aesthetics, composition or colour, we remain in the mediocre. The beauty of human tragedy is missing. Michelangelo's Pietà represents a mother holding her dead son in her arms: that's the worst thing a human being can live!

PP: *As you constantly travel the world, what do you think the new generation is?*

OT: The new generation is nice and kind, well-mannered, a little soft, they never get angry… At that age, I was a rebel!

PP: *In your opinion, why don't they get angry?*

OT: Because young people have no real reason to revolt.

PP: *Because they already have everything?*

OT: They don't have everything, but they have enough to be nice and to be docile. When I was twenty years old, I only listened to people who were under thirty. At thirty, I thought we were already old.

PP: *You seem suspicious of old age. And yet you were born in 1942?*

OT: Yes, but I still don't listen to people over thirty! I listen to people who are under thirty and who have woken up. Because there are some!

PP: *But there aren't many of them.*

OT: It doesn't matter, it's not the number that counts. Quality doesn't need quantity. They're very interesting people, and this time they're not nice and kind.

PP: *What makes them interesting to you?*

OT: They're not sure of themselves, but they want something. This doubt is important. We're constantly looking for security in all areas. But you can

| Photograph taken by Olivero Toscani for Benetton advertising campaigns

only be sure of one thing: of dying. Security kills. It takes away the strength, it sinks in. There is no creativity with security. To be creative, you mustn't be afraid of being afraid!

PP: *If these young people of the new generation are too nice and kind, where will the change come from, and from whom?*

OT: I hope it will come in a vertical collapse of art. It is the economy that is killing us. We work for money and under the supervision of people who have money. If the world were run by dancers, musicians, philosophers, we would live much better. We're in the hands of bankers and economists, who have no sense of art, beauty, good living... The rule says that at the top, we are all equal. But that's extremely wrong! In fact, we're still very primitive. But there are people, like you and me, who think we can be a little less so.

PP: *Today, with social media, young and old alike are very much into appearances.*

OT: Yes, but appearing is to comply, to seek consensus. That's what I hate: if someone tells me they think like me, on principle I start thinking I'm wrong!

PP: *How do you get these sleepyheads to wake up?*

OT: It would require an alien invasion, with green men firing in all directions. Then we would all become friends, all brothers, to defend ourselves! I think like an artist, you have to imagine. Or the appearance of a being that can no longer be controlled, and that would make individuals lose their importance.

PP: *Could it be artificial intelligence?*

OT: Yes, there won't be any need to take to the streets like the French do. It will no longer be necessary: the algorithm will have decided, and better than politicians, that's for sure.

PP: *The algorithm will be more intelligent, no one will be able to compete with it.*

OT: I think it's the model of life: a handful of people control people of no importance.

> " *We don't devote enough time to imagination!* "

#Millennials advocacy - for a youth that is not afraid to be afraid, **@OToscani**

| Photograph taken by Olivero Toscani for Benetton advertising campaigns

PP: *Wasn't that already the model in ancient Greece?*

OT: Yes, and that's still the case today. We talk about democracy, but it's a scam.

PP: *No salvation by young people?*

OT: Let's be patient. In music, for example, they were tired of rock'n roll and created rap.

PP: *A musical style that most people look at the wrong way...*

OT: Yet it's the only music that has a little soul right now. People who write rap are revolted, they're the only ones who are interesting. These are not people crying over their fate.

PP: *What are the others missing?*

OT: Imagination! Thanks to imagination, we can have anything we want. What's more, before, when we made things happen, we used to say: "imagination in the driving seat"!

PP: *Is imagination creation?*

OT: No, imagining is being in love. What is love? Imagination. There's nothing tangible about it. Thanks to technology, we can know everything from prehistory to the present day in two minutes. But to know the future, we can only turn off our machines and imagine.
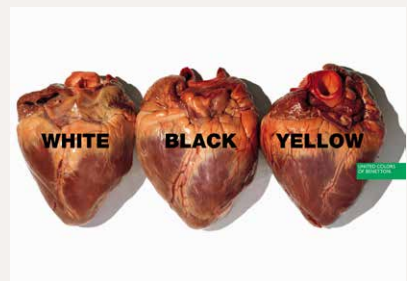
FEPS EUROPEAN SURVEY:
MILLENNIALS WANT MORE SOCIAL PROTECTION

Millennials want the European Union to do much more to **support social welfare** policies like the minimum wage, according to a survey by FEPS and ThinkYoung major new Millennial Dialogue study published on 27th November 2018.

With few months left until the 2019 European Parliament elections, the Millennial Dialogue survey shows that young people favour policies that provide a strong social safety net in uncertain times.

THE RESEARCH

Survey

10 EU countries

France | Germany | Poland | Portugal | Greece
Spain | Italy | Hungary | Sweden | Belgium

1,000+ Millennials aged **18-35** per country

10,000+ answers total

Focus Groups

8 focus groups in **4** EU countries:

Berlin, Germany | Warsaw, Poland | Madrid, Spain | Stockholm, Sweden

MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

DO YOU KNOW…
85% of millennials want the EU to involve and empower more young people in decision-making

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MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

DO YOU KNOW…
58% of millennials believe more countries are likely to leave the EU in the future

MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

DO YOU KNOW…
47% of millennials believe that reducing gender gaps in salaries and pensions is one of the best ways to tackle gender inequalities in Europe

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MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

83%

of millennials believe that the EU should
ensure a minimum wage for all workers

MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

DO YOU KNOW...

55%

of millennials believe that EU
countries should merge their
armies into a single European
army

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MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

52%

of millennials believe that tackling
poverty and reducing social and
economic inequalities should be
among the EU's top priorities

MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

DO YOU KNOW...

81%

of millennials want more
EU financial aid for
children

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MILLENNIAL DIALOGUE ON EUROPE

77%

of millennials want to do more
to fight climate change

*Millennials value the EU, support
an EU army, and want progressive
policies like minimum wages
and unemployment benefits*

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

To empower
Millennials to build and shape Europe's future.

To ensure Millennial voices are heard and respected,
and to showcase four distinct 'windows' into the
views and beliefs of the Millennial generation:

1. Window on democracy
2. Window on integration
3. Window on society
4. Window on the world

WINDOWS INTO EUROPE'S BIGGEST CHALLENGES

1. Window on democracy

Despite believing in the European project,
Millennials agree that EU institutions do not
sufficiently engage and encourage young
people in decision-making.
On economic policy, they strongly see the
need for citizens to exert more influence. An
overwhelming majority showed support for
granting EU institutions stronger powers to
challenge Member States that defy EU law.

80%
hold favourable views
towards the EU

85%
want the EU to involve and
empower more young people
in decision-making

82%
want more say on how
the EU handles the
economy

66%
want to empower the EU
to challenge law-breaking
Member States

2. Window on integration

Millennials believe that more countries may
leave the EU, and are split on whether the
EU is heading in the right or wrong direction.
They call for more coherent and effective
action on key priorities such as reducing
inequality and supporting entrepreneurship.
They want less regulation and better
enforcement.

58%
believe more countries
are likely to leave the
EU in the future

52%
believe tackling poverty
and reducing social and
economic inequalities
should be Europe's
top priority

Only 10%
called for no further integration

WINDOWS INTO EUROPE'S BIGGEST CHALLENGES

3. Window on society

Millennials overwhelmingly support greater EU involvement on issues of social welfare. A large majority support a minimum wage and unemployment benefits for all workers in the Union. Clear consensus emerged to provide greater financial aid for children.

83% support a minimum wage and income for all workers

47% want to improve gender equity by reducing gender gaps in salaries and pensions

81% want more EU financial aid for children

62% in Hungary want to expand Erasmus with vocational training for young workers

VS

59% in Greece who want to keep the focus on students and those in training

4. Window on the world

Millennials believe the EU should have stronger powers to represent Europe with a single voice on the world stage. On climate change specifically, they want Europe to take stronger action globally. Almost two-thirds want Europe to do more to protect its borders from non-Europeans.

1 in 10 in Poland and Hungary want the EU to make it easier for refugees to come to Europe, compared to

to over 50% in Spain and Portugal

60% want the EU to do more to tackle the refugee crisis and protect borders

77% want the EU to do more to fight climate change

55% favour merging the EU's armed forces

WHY MILLENNIALS AREN'T VOTING ANYMORE, AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR PROGRESSIVES

by David Harley

Progressives have been tormented by the West's political paroxysms of the past few years, and when casting around for who to blame, they sometimes point the finger at millennials. These are our youngest voters –broadly defined as those born between the mid-1980s and the early 2000s – and they have been accused of lacking political commitments. Even worse, the few that do vote are seen as being easily swayed by the populist right. But is this the case?

> AUTHOR
David Harley is the former Deputy Secretary-General of the European Parliament and Secretary-General of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament. Currently, he is a senior advisor at Burson Cohn & Wolfe.

Read the full article online
www.progressivepost.eu

Once they become engaged with politics, young people are more demanding than their elders

*Interview with **Anne Muxel** by Alain Bloëdt*

Anne Muxel
is a French sociologist specialising in the socialisation of political opinions and electoral behaviour. She is Research Director at Cevipof, the Political Research Centre at the French SciencesPo, appointed by the CNRS, the French National Center for Scientific Research. She is also a member of the board of Jean Jaurès. Her latest book, "Politiquement jeune" on the voting behaviour of the youth was published with the Jean-Jaurès Foundation.

How to increase youth turnout at the upcoming European elections #EP2019?
By @AnneMuxel @CEVIPOF

Anne Muxel discusses how the Left might win back the youth vote in the campaign for the European elections, but warns about what makes this demographic different.

Progressive Post: *We tend to assume that young people will vote for left-wing candidates. The figures, however, show that this is no longer the case.*

Anne Muxel: Yes, although young people are still more left-leaning than right-wing, there has been a shift away from the Left compared with the 1960s to 1980s. It must be said that more and more young people reject the premise of the right-left divide. Young people today feel detached from the political system, and believe that the real questions should be analysed differently. For example, the European question is no longer a matter of left and right wing politics.

PP: *In a poll published by FEPS, of 10,000 millennials across 10 EU Member States, 80% said they were in favour of Europe. So the answer was quite clear. Could a pro-European stance impact the upcoming elections?*

AM: The problem is that young people are not interested in the European elections. This is a paradox because, although they naturally feel European, they do not get involved in the political side of Europe. Because young people are familiar with Europe, both culturally and geographically, Europe does not inspire any specific engagement, and is not really an issue that they feel they need to tackle as such.

PP: *So if young people are detached from the political system but have a new approach to politics, how would you explain the fact that they don't feel like European citizens?*

AM: All the studies show that when young people are asked about where they feel they belong geo-graphically, they choose their local area, town or region. In second place is a more universal affinity for the human race and the planet. Third is the nation, and Europe comes in last.

PP: *How can we get young people interested?*

AM: What we need are clear and accessible lead-ers, who have the ability to show how national, as well as local and global issues, are tackled by the European political institutions, and how European

© image by VOICE FEPS

politics can make an impact in these spheres. There really is a deficit in terms of communication. This is a long-standing issue. But the European institutions have not yet found their way in terms of engaging with citizens, young and not so young, to get them interested, or better still, involved. This will only be possible if clear and committed leaders emerge. Engagement might also be facilitated by creating truly transnational lists for the European elections, for instance.

PP: *Will that be sufficient?*

AM: Not necessarily, because, aside from the European question, young Europeans are clearly looking to try out different models. The work of Yascha Mounk in "The People vs. Democracy" and the large-scale study by Fondapol, published in "Où va la démocratie", authored by Dominique Reynié, show that the new generation is shifting towards "democratic deconsolidation". Compared with older generations, young people show less affinity with the virtues of the democratic model, and are somewhat more open to other political models, which naturally paves the way for authoritarian, populist, autocratic and other regimes. The risk is real and European democracies should be aware of the importance of

> ❝
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> *Young people today respond to reprobation, anger, and a sense of urgency.*
>
> ❞

building political trust among the younger generations, our future European citizens.

PP: *Aside from youth policy, what other solutions should candidates in the upcoming European elections offer?*

AM: They could focus on the environmental question. Young people have a growing global political conscience and the parties should use that angle. What is difficult is that young people want things to move fast, they want concrete answers and effectiveness in

politics. Once they become engaged with politics, young people are more exacting than their elders.

PP: *Take Macron, who rates poorly with young people, on the one hand and Sanders and Corbyn on the other: youth is no guarantee of popularity among young people. What qualities do leaders need to develop to get young people on board?*

AM: Leaders must demonstrate their commitment, be clear about what they stand for and their stance on key issues. Young people today respond to reprobation, anger, and a sense of urgency. Populist leaders who understand this have achieved a certain level of popularity with them. What matters is not the age of the leader, but new messages and the ability to persuade. Not forgetting that now, more than ever, political action must have meaning.

| We need to prepare young people for a world that will be of permanent change.

A PROGRESSIVE AGENDA
TO REGAIN MILLENNIALS

by João Duarte Albuquerque

In early 2017, in a town hall meeting at New York University, Nancy Pelosi, the Democract Congress Woman, was confronted by a student about a recent Harvard University study that showed that 51% of people between the ages of 17 and 29 did not support capitalism. To many, her swift "We are capitalists" answer was disappointing. But is Nancy Pelosi right in being so upfront about her support to capitalism?

The answer can be found in a more recent study, released by Oxfam this January, which confirmed the unequal distribution of wealth in the world - something that we have suspected for a long time: the 26 richest men in the world possess as much wealth as the poorest half of the planet's population. When confronted with these numbers, how can one remain indifferent to the injustice that lies beneath them?

The main question is: why are millennials not participating and engaging as much in politics as older generations used to? Millennials have been quite distant from traditional forms of political participation and that has affected mainstream political parties – hence the left as well. Against this backdrop, has the left really been able to answer this generation's aspirations?

#EP2019 Why are #Millennials not participating and engaging as much in politics as previous generations used to? Answer by @jdalbuquerque

"

The 26 richest men in the world possess as much wealth as the poorest half of the planet's population. When confronted with these numbers, how can Millennials remain indifferent to the injustice that lies beneath them.

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For far too long now, the traditional left and centre-left parties have become elitist organisations, distanced from the real issues that affect the daily life of their constituencies. Aspiring to secure a stable and paid job seems like an objective which is difficult to attain for most of the millennial generation.

For many others, reality is so that these more qualified jobs are never accessible to them. Underpaid and underqualified jobs are the only option for many who don't have higher education or who didn't have the opportunity to attend more exclusive and prestigious universities. The European Union's report on education for 2017 shows that inequality continues to be the main problem of all of the EU educational systems. This means that if you are born poor, you have a higher chance of remaining poor, showing that education has failed to achieve one of its main goals: promoting upward social mobility.

This shows how rigged the system is for the majority of the younger generations, and we need to confront ourselves as politicians, especially from the left, on how we can best respond to these issues. Making minor changes to the education system will not be enough. I believe it is high time to actually change it. We need to prepare young people for a world that will be of permanent change. The digital revolution is an endless process and there is seemingly no end in sight. To equip our younger generations with the skills to grab the opportunities brought about by the digital revolutions, the left needs to lead the fight for education and training throughout our lives.

Another key priority for our generation is to ensure the change in attitude towards our planet. Sustainability must be the keyword for all our policies if we actually want to have

a future as humanity. We can't put economic interests ahead of our environment nor can we allow the irresponsible consumption of our resources.

An additional concern relates to the economy. This system makes us believe that it is through hard work that we are able to gain access to the world's wealth and resources, thus increasing our quality of life and opportunities. However, in reality this doesn't work. Therefore, we must change the economic system in order to eliminate the existing inequalities under which we are born and that promotes a far better distribution of resources and wealth, regardless of where we come from.

Confronted with this reality, being a millennial myself, and having faced many of the difficulties that my generation feels every day, the simplistic answer of "we are capitalists" is not compelling. We want a more just, fair and comprehensive system, one that is based on more equality, solidarity and justice. This is what we, as part of the left movement, need to be saying to our younger generation. This is the way to gain not only their support, but also their respect. And we will manage to give them what they currently seem to lack: a better vision for their future.

FEMINIS

> **AUTHOR**

João Duarte Albuquerque is the President of YES (Young European Socialists). He majored in Political Science and International Relations and Mastered in History, Defence and International Relations, with a thesis on "Humanitarian Intervention Law - The Genocide in Bosnia and Rwanda".

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| Recent evidence reveals that the gender gap in voting for the 'Populist Radical Right' is narrowing in some European countries, while results of the March 2018 Italian parliamentary election showed that women voted for Lega Nord even more than men (17.6% of women compared to 17.1% of men).

Since the 1990s, the gender gap in voting behaviour have been realigning in advanced industrial societies with women being more left-wing than men owing to structural and cultural trends. In the context of the recent surge of populism, this finding has been consistently reconfirmed with men more likely than women to vote for the Populist Radical Right (PRR).

Different determinants of such a behaviour have been explored in the emerging literature on gender and populism, but no consistent cross-country pattern has emerged yet. In addition, recent evidence reveals that the gender gap in voting for the PRR is narrowing in some European countries, while results of the March 2018 Italian parliamentary election showed that women voted for Lega Nord even more than men (17.6% of women compared to 17.1% of men).

Against the background of growing electoral support for populist parties in the European Union, the role of women's voting behaviour

The challenge for Progressive forces to regain their constituencies calls for a reinvigorated focus on social issues in order to counteract socioeconomic inequalities. Bear in mind that most citizens are women!

#Progressives: gain the women back, gain the voters back - **@fabribotti, @LabSapienzia** & **@zoezacchia**

will be crucial in the upcoming European Parliament elections. That is why, in the framework of the "Minerva Project", carried out by FEPS and Associazione "Economia Civile", we have investigated the role of several key determinants of populist support (namely nativism, Euroscepticism and anti-austerity attitudes) in explaining the

evolving voting behaviour of European citizens (female as well as male).

According to Eurobarometer data, the opposition to migration is the main issue associated to voting for the PRR in Europe. European public opinion data do not reveal any gender pattern here, while the opposition to migration (captured in terms of statements of negative feelings about migration from EU and extra EU countries, disagreement about immigrant contribution to the country of origin, and dissent about improved help to refugees) rather seems to be mostly fuelled by low educational attainment and unemployment.

However, for both women and men, nativism is an essential reason for populist support and a European progressive policy response

MIND THE GAP:
POPULISM AND GENDER

by Fabrizio Botti, Marcella Corsi and Giulia Zacchia

should try to affect the media agenda on migration concentrating on potential benefits of migration flows (e.g., the improved tax base and subsequent welfare expenditure) on which women seems to be more responsive.

The opposition to the European integration process has served as a major driver of assembling previously marginal populist political forces. Combining the different attitudes of mistrust towards the EU collected in Eurobarometer (mistrust towards major EU institutions, the negative image of the EU, disagreement on the EU's capacity to create jobs, and dissatisfaction on the way democracy works in the EU), we find consistent greater intensity of Euroscepticism amongst those belonging to the working class, with men more likely than women to manifest opposition to the European integration across all social classes.

Euroscepticism is often combined with a revival of economic nationalism in PRR policy platforms. A definite identification of

> " *The combination of leftist economic policy and nativist ideology is a winning formula for the Populist Radical Right.* "

populist economic policy is still controversial mostly due to their gradual shift from neoliberalism to welfare chauvinism. In this context anti-austerity positions are crucial. Data show that European voters with self-defined left-wing political views are more likely to endorse anti-austerity positions. However, the combination of leftist economic policy and nativist ideology is a winning formula for PRR parties, increasing their capacity to attract voters from the lower to middle level of education.

Thus, the challenge for progressive forces of regaining their constituency calls for a reinvigorated focus on social issues in order to counteract socioeconomic inequalities and target all those European citizens affected by contemporary social insecurity, such as job insecurity,, low or unequal pay, lack of care facilities, and unaffordable housing. Bearing in mind that most of these citizens are women.

> AUTHOR
Fabrizio Botti is a Research Fellow at the Department of Economic and Business Science of "Guglielmo Marconi" University in Rome. His research interests are: poverty, social and financial inclusion - with a special focus on microfinance - and discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation.

> AUTHOR
Marcella Corsi is Professor of Economics at Sapienza University of Rome. Her research focuses on issues related to social inclusion, social protection and income distribution (often in a gender perspective).

> AUTHOR
Giulia Zacchia is a Research Fellow at Sapienza University of Rome. Her research interests extend to social and financial inclusion in a gender perspective, women's empowerment, financial literacy and microfinance, but also cover gender gaps in academia, in particular in economics.

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YOUNG WOMEN TO SWEEP SOCIAL DEMOCRATS BACK IN FORCE

by Alazne Irigoien

| Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (29) was elected as youngest woman ever to the US Congress. She is a self-described 'Democratic Socialist' - but says her vision is close to the social model of Northern European countries.

Standing up for young women could make a difference in the upcoming elections. Putting women and gender equality at the centre of EU politics, adopting social policies with a strong gender perspective and implementing gender balance systematically would help to achieve the objective of "a Europe of gender equality and empowered women", the first resolution of the Party of European Socialists. It would also be a smart and forward-looking move.

In the last European Parliament elections in 2014, only 28% of the people between 18 and 24 cast their vote. The turnout of young people was similar in previous elections. The post-election analyses don't offer disaggregated data regarding gender and age at the same time. Do young women and men have the same voting patterns and opinions about the European Union? What do they think and want? Results suggest that women are less interested in and satisfied with the EU than men. The average turnout of women is also lower than men's, although there are great disparities among Member States. What these results highlight is the necessity to thoroughly think about how to engage with all citizens, and that includes focusing on women and specifically young women. Taking a stand for young women is not only a smart long-term investment, but it also constitutes a strategic move with regards to the upcoming elections.

It's young women! How a focus on young women could boost #Progressives: read @iAlazne from @YoungFeministEU

Women and gender equality at the centre of EU politics

One would be surprised to see the lack of role models for young women in EU

politics, including within Socialist parties. The recently elected congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in the USA is being celebrated by young people and especially young women. Her new ways of campaigning and communicating with citizens have increased the support for the Democrats. In Europe, even though politics happen differently, it is difficult to come across an example of this kind. The question that has to be asked is whether European socialist parties are sufficiently empowering female candidates. There are many great young women and men out there doing politics. The low turnout of young people in elections doesn't mean that they're not politically active: young people are very engaged in feminist and environmental movements, as well as in the defence of social welfare. New waves of support for Socialists could emerge by putting women at the centre and by embracing with no hesitation the feminist principles of gender equality. This would mean to lead by example and become the key political actors empowering women candidates and championing gender equality.

Social policies with gender perspective

At the same time, to keep developing and strengthening progressist socio-economic policies is fundamental in the current European political context. The 2008 crisis hit young people particularly, and very heavily in some Member States. Still today, the precarious working contracts young people are offered (including the abuse of internship contracts) and the expensive housing rates in cities make living in Europe difficult for many young people. But young women are even more severely impacted by many of these issues. A study by the European Parliament revealed that young women face worse employment conditions than young men: they're more likely to hold part-time and/or temporary jobs and to earn lower wages than young men. Even though young European women are born with the same

formal rights as their male counterparts, they realise that gender inequalities persist in practice in all fields of their lives (economically, in politics, socially...). This creates frustration and a feeling of being left apart. Developing social policies with a strong gender perspective is therefore important to

> " *When developing new policies, Progressives should think of the consequences on different age and gender groups and foster equality when in practice there is none.* "

reach all citizens. Much has been discussed about the principle of gender mainstreaming, but so far, its implementation has been inefficient. When developing new policies, one should think of the consequences that it may have on different age and gender groups and foster equality when in practice there is none.

Implementing gender balance systematically

Finally, one of the actions to be further developed is to systematically implement

gender balance: in candidates' lists, in government composition, in high-positions, in teams and staff, and in all sectors and fields. For example, when a Socialist government delegation meets to discuss energy issues and the delegation is composed by only (or mainly) men, it means that gender balance has not been given the deserved attention. An example of successful gender balance implementation would be to present both female and male candidates for the presidency of the European Commission. As the gender perspective is not integrated into everyone's minds, adopting parity measures, such as legislative parity requirements, are important to keep the coherence between what it is preached and what it is practiced. Both gender balance and putting women at the top constitute two of the best examples to empower women and advance gender equality that Progressive parties can provide young women and society with.

> **AUTHOR**

Alazne Irigoien is pursuing a PhD on feminist and gender studies at the University of the Basque Country. She is the Editor-in-chief and board member of Young Feminist Europe. She worked for the Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women of the United Nations (CEDAW). She has authored the report "European Elections 2019: towards parity democracy in Europe" with Gender Five Plus (G5+).

13 FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW
ABOUT GENDER INEQUALITY
IN THE EU

women earn
16%
LESS THAN MEN
on average

Gender
pension gap
39%

ONE out of THREE women experienced at least one form of sexist or sexual violence in the past twelve months

Persisting gaps in time use for housework, caring, and social activities
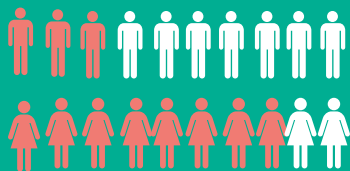
time spent in daily cooking and housework

constitute OVER HALF of our population

VS

more likely than to participate in sporting, cultural leisure activities outside of home

56%
total proportion of women victim of street harassment at least once in their life

85%
of mayors are men

80% of workers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) are men

VS

75% of workers in education, health and welfare are women

Precarious work & women

overrepresented in precarious jobs

majority of involuntarily underemployed

maternity leave is a challenge as contracts may be shorter than leave

women live longer but in poorer health

almost **200** more male than female Members of the European Parliament in current legislature

47%
of millennials believe reducing gender gaps in salaries and pensions is one of the best ways to tackle gender inequalities

+16 BILLION € GDP
if more women were to enter digital jobs, this would the annual boost for the European economy (according to the European Commission)

GENDER PARITY
BEYOND NUMBERS

by Agnès Hubert

Having an equal number of women and men in decision making positions is necessary but not sufficient to ensure the equal right of women to leadership. We also have to consider parity democracy as a condition for democracy and not a consequence.

No one in the progressive political parties would nowadays contest the need to have a gender balanced parliament after the next elections. Some sort of gender quotas or zip lists are mandatory or customary in most Member States and parity in political bodies and political lists has been practiced for the last 30 years.

Still, the overall proportion of women in the European Parliament (37;3%) is nowhere like full parity, due to the lower representation of women in the right wing (EPP 30.9, ECR 25.7) and extreme right parties (ENL 32.5, EFDD 38.1). Only in the far left 50% parity is reached (with 45% or less for S&D, ALDE and the Greens).

While numbers are improving, however, de facto gender equality is stagnant or regressing and women's rights are threatened by the "anti-gender ideology" of populist parties as illustrated again by the recent demand of VOX in Andalusia to cut the budget for victims of domestic violence. Long gone are the days when the "transformative potential" of parity democracy was promising a better future.

As parties are making up their lists for the European elections, we (G5+, the first European feminist think tank) drew up a document reviving the "transformative nature of parity democracy", which underpins the "Athens declaration". This declaration was signed and supported in 1992 by prominent female personalities like Simone Veil, Mary Robinson, Rita Süssmuth, Gro Harlem Brundtland, Hannah Suchocka.

The idea was to reinterest disenchanted citizens in voting for assemblies which are more representative of society. It was also agreed that "A balanced representation of women and men in decision making would produce different ideas, values and styles of behavior, suited to a fairer and more balanced world for all". This was confirmed by in-depth research conducted at local level.... but did it happen at higher level ?

Women's rights committees and the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) of the European Parliament have certainly contributed to put new issues like work-life balance, gender based violence, employment segregation, working women's poverty and many more on the political agenda, but they remain "minor" committees, not part of the high politics agenda and register little political results.

The new work-life balance directive is an example of a missed opportunity by the Member States to give the sharing of parental responsibilities (and women's employment) a real chance... - the transformative option for parental leave was deemed too costly!

As we revived the concept of parity democracy in recent meetings on the future of

> *To stand up for women's rights to real leadership, we also need feminist men says Agnès Hubert*

"Athens declaration" : This declaration was signed and supported in 1992 by prominent female personalities like Simone Veil, Mary Robinson, Rita Süssmuth, Gro Harlem Brundtland, Hannah Suchocka.

> *Women's rights are threatened by the "anti-gender ideology" of populist parties as the recent demand of VOX in Andalusia to cut the budget for victims of domestic violence.*

Europe with a majority of women, we were met with the paradox of a strong belief in the potential of the EU for gender equality but also a bitter rejection of the austerity policy, felt to be "decided by men with no consideration on the consequences on women's lives".

Some of the fears of ordinary women for the security of their families or their children's future were also expressed in a rhetoric which dangerously resembled the mantras of populist parties on the evils of migrants, the rewards of "motherhood" or the male (and female!) backlash against the #metoo movement.

While the EU is still recognised as a progressive force for gender equality, it is time to reconsider the reality of parity democracy, beyond numbers. According to Eliane Vogel-Polsky, one of the most insightful legal experts, "If Parity representation is recognised to be a condition for democracy rather than a consequence, then the rules of the game and social norms have to change. This could radically transform society and allow for real gender equal relations".

To engage this transformation we need 50% women and also... - feminist men in leadership positions in the future European institutions.

> **AUTHOR**
>
> ***Agnès Hubert*** is the president of the European Feminist Think tank G5+. She is an an associate researcher with PRESAGE (the Programme de Recherche et d'Enseignement des Savoirs sur le Genre; Science Po) and visiting professor at the College of Europe. During a decade in the EU Commission's internal think tank she worked on gender and social issues. Agnes is the author of two books on gender and social policy and multiple major reports. Member of the FEPS Scientific council

WANTED: A PROGRAMME FOR THE LEFT

by Eva Illouz

| Material and symbolic devaluation fuels the perception that "no one cares" and hence resentment directed at the groups which are defended by the Left.

The political Left finds its source in two struggles: one against the exploitation of human labour, the other for the emancipation of disenfranchised groups and individuals. The first is identified as the socialist left, the second as the liberal left. The first emphasises economic policies of redistribution and the regulation of labour. The second struggles to enforce individual rights.

The recent wave of populist, xenophobic, conservative and authoritarian regimes has compelled many to wonder whether it is still possible to hold both projects of the Left together, with many calling for discarding identity politics and returning to socialism.

But is the Left really condemned to be a Hydra or can it unite its two heads into a plausible overall vision of the struggles to come?

Capitalism itself should be in the focus of analysis because it has created the very

schism of the two Lefts, and (neoliberal) policies adopted by various left and liberal leaders – Blair, Mitterrand, Clinton and recently Macron— have contributed.

Over the last two decades, urban centres have experienced an economic and cultural renaissance, becoming key engines of wealth. Suburbs, countryside and small-size towns, however, have considerably degraded (Trumpism, Brexit or Gilets Jaunes are all expressions of the economic dwindling of non-central and sub-urban zones). The degradation experienced in these zones affects

all spheres of daily life, from marriage prospects to family stability, social mobility and mostly, the sense of trust in the future.

Urban centres (or proximate suburbs) have increasingly become home to what Richard Florida has called the 'creative classes' which constitute the bulk of today's liberal, left-wing voters: people working from within the belly of capitalist cultural industries.

The creative classes increasingly identify with the politics of identity of the post 1960s' Left. They can see their values aligned with

> " *One important objective of the Left must be to address the systematic neglect and devaluation of working-class lives* "

LGBTQ-issues as well as ethnic, racial, gender and religious minorities. Their main ethos is what we may call individual and sexual expressivity, tolerance for all forms of life, cultural relativism and cosmopolitanism.

The construction of new family forms, in the challenging of gender roles and identities, and in a questioning of the Christian and white identity of the West, are part of this worldview. In contrast, for the working and lower middle classes, the traditional family has remained a key value and source of social solidarity and mutual help (see La Manif Pour Tous in France).

To be sure, the struggles for women and LGBTQ have been crucial for the democratisation of our societies and for the emancipation of genuinely oppressed groups. But we can only observe that this has created an abyssal cultural and ideological chasm between the creative classes and the working and lower middle classes. The Left must reckon with the fact that for many members of the working classes, transgender bathrooms or norms of gender-neutral speech do not constitute any significant improvement of their lives.

In parallel, the creative classes became increasingly perceived as illegitimate elites because they have enjoyed a (very moderate) accumulation of material wealth and the symbolic power of creative industries.

These classes attracted far more attention than the Wall Street and corporate oligarchs who were quietly amassing unprecedented levels of wealth.

In an important study of German and French voters for the extreme right, the researchers suggest that voters of the extreme right have not necessarily adopted right-wing narratives but rather explain their political allegiance in terms of their sentiment of devaluation. Material and symbolic devaluation fuels the perception that "no one cares" and hence resentment directed at the groups which are defended by the Left.

Consequently, one important objective of the Left must be to address the systematic neglect and devaluation of working-class lives. To do so, the Left should address the causes and pathological expressions of the malaise that affects the working classes with the cold scalpel of the surgeon and with the empathy of the nurse.

This also means being able to engage with bigotry or racism. Blanket condemnations of racism cannot substitute for an understanding of what racism stands for. In particular, the Left should separate what in xenophobia and racism expresses an abhorrent hierarchical view of human beings, and what in it contains an aspiration for pride. However abhorrent racism is, it is often a way of organising in-group boundaries and restoring pride of one's own group.

As in the 19th century, capitalism should remain the main focus of the Left. During the 19th century, it was easy to identify capitalism in the inhumane treatment of workers as Engels described it in Manchester. Today however, it is far more difficult to directly connect the unease, insecurity and tensions that plague the lives of many to the consequences of capitalism. Therefore, the right – liberal free-marketers conservatives and extreme right-wingers – can have their cake and eat it at the same time: the liberal free-marketers promote ruthless economic policies which disempower the working-classes and the

deep social malaise that follows can be harvested by the extreme right-wing.

We may thus wonder if left-wing populism is not the antidote to right-wing populism. Populism should not be a goal, but it can be a short-term response to the current crisis of democracy. By left-wing populism, I mean not hesitating to expose and designate the true enemies of the people: corporate powers that have disempowered democratic forms of participation. I also mean the use of intelligence rather than morality in politics and preferring to understand what motivates popular revolts, resentment, and even hatred, rather than addressing them with moral disgust. It is incumbent on the Left to overcome the moral tribalism that increasingly constitutes the core of contemporary politics.

> *Two strands of the Left (against exploitation + for emancipation) have grown apart – putting capitalism at the centre of attention could bring them back together - Eva Illiouz @EHESS_fr*

> **AUTHOR**

Eva Illouz holds the Rose Isaac Chair in Sociology at Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a PSL Chair of Excellence at the School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences (EHESS) in Paris.

THE WAY FORWARD:
A POPULAR FRONT

by Paul Mason

To fight the resurgent right effectively, we need to understand what is driving it. For me it is not about economic performance but the narrative incoherence of the economic model.

Before 2008 the neoliberal doctrine said: there is no alternative to the market; things will be like this forever only slightly better year on year. After 2008 it said: "things will be like this forever, only slightly worse". The central banks have kept the global economy on life support for more than ten years. But you cannot keep an ideology on life support. The human brain demands coherence – and a free market that works only for banks, property speculators and tech monopolies lacks narrative coherence.

In my upcoming book, Clear Bright Future: A radical defence of the human being, I argue that the locus of this crisis is neither politics, nor economics, but the self.

Neoliberalism is, for me and my co-thinkers, not a doctrine but an objective system: its key feature was the introduction of market norms of behaviour into all aspects of human life. Since the mid-2000s it has had to become more and more coercive – overriding the democratically expressed wishes of people in mature democracies to reverse austerity, privatisation and the growth of inequality.

The strategic mistake of European Social Democracy was not just – as with Tony

According to the author, getting inspiration of the 1930's, the left will maximise the electoral impact of progressive vote by forming a red-red-green alliance around a common but limited agenda

The biggest challenge for #Progressives: forming red-red-green alliance of Social Democrats, Greens and the far left - writes @paulmasonnews

Blair – to accept the permanence of neoliberalism's effects. It was our decision to enshrine neoliberal economics into the Lisbon Treaty.

Since 2008, as the geopolitical order has begun to fragment, we are seeing rival economic superpowers pursue their sovereign interest: China with its currency manipulation and projection of soft power via the Belt & Road; Russia via annexations and hybrid warfare to undermine democracies; the USA with its isolationist turn during the Syrian civil war, and its turn to trade warfare under Donald Trump.

Europe, a gigantic economic bloc with 500 million highly educated citizens, cannot

respond to the emergence of Great Power politics – and not just because its institutions exist alongside strong, traditional national institutions.

The Lisbon treaty embodied a vision of Europe as an open market not just for Europe but for the world. It has become the playground of state-backed economic forces, from the Huawei tech monopoly to Google and Facebook, to the pervasive hot money generated by Russian-aligned organised crime.

When people ask, "how did Jeremy Corbyn buck the trend?", building a party of half a million people and triggering an electoral surge from 25% to 40% in a single month in 2017, my answer is: because in his brain he does not have a copy of the Lisbon Treaty.

Whatever you think of Brexit, and I have opposed it, Britain's semi-detached relationship to the project of ever closer union turned out to be an advantage for our Social Democracy.

So if the left is to outline a common agenda, it needs to be radical. To put it bluntly, we need to scrap the Lisbon Treaty that sits inside our heads, and in the case of German social

| If you look at the British Labour party it is, in truth, something of a "Popular Front", between an old syndicalist left, a new networked left.

democracy, to scrap the Bad Godesberg principle of "market where possible, state where necessary". We live in a global economy, but every other major force has adopted a "beggar thy neighbour" strategy: each major player is gaming the system to dump the stresses within it onto the weakest player.

Unfortunately, the weakest player is Europe because its fundamental Treaties forbid us to protect our industries, promote state-aid and ownership, and exercise technological sovereignty. Instead, elites of powerful European countries play the same game of stress dumping, using the mechanism of the Eurozone and the Maastricht criteria. How else do you explain 4% unemployment in Germany and 25% unemployment in Greece (other than by gross national stereotypes)?

In April 1934 the French working class famously overcame "from below" the sectarianism of their Social-Democratic and Communist party leaders and insisted on a united fight against fascism. The Comintern's Popular Front strategy was the outcome. Today we have no Comintern, and neither the Socialist International nor the PES have leadership functions that can act strategically.

So the unity, as in the early 1930s, will have to be built from below.

> "
> *The Lisbon treaty embodied a vision of Europe as an open market, not just for Europe but for the world.*
> "

If you look at the British Labour party it is, in truth, something of a "Popular Front", between an old syndicalist left, a new networked left influenced by environmentalism and autonomism, and a strong but disoriented centre left. When I sit in my local branch, I see people from every wing of Labour making practical compromises to keep this unsteady vehicle moving.

What persuades them to do it is evidence that such unity works. Unity around a prudent and prioritised programme that, if enacted, would end the neoliberal era in Britain, attack inequality and reverse climate change.

That should be the platform around which the European Social Democracy, the radical left and the left of the Greens unite. State-led growth, technological sovereignty, the creation of a massive non-profit sector and the eradication of carbon use.

> AUTHOR
Paul Mason is a writer and broadcaster on economics and social justice.

SOCIAL DEMOCRACY:
DARING TO BE MORE RADICAL
by Fabien Escalona

| In the 1930s, while some defended the strategy of united proletarian fronts, others promoted popular fronts extended to include bourgeois and democratic forces.

Social Democracy, as a family of political parties, is in the midst of an existential crisis. Its unity, its long-term future and the status of its members on the political scene are under threat. It must find a way to reconcile its policies, social base, organisational structure and choice of alliances. To remain true to the cause that saw them emerge in response to the industrial capitalism of the first globalisation, Social Democratic parties will have to break with a series of choices that limited them to the role of mere managers of contemporary globalisation.

With its persistence, in spite of all the upheavals during its over hundred years of existence , and on account of its resilience, stronger than that of its communist and christian democrat rivals, Social Democracy has always appeared to be more or less in a state of crisis. Its political choices were mostly the outcome of internal party battles, rather than of some unfathomable Social-Democratic essence.

Social Democracy had no coherent response to the Great Depression and the rise of fascism in the 1930s. Policies of orthodox economic liberalism were implemented, before new concepts were put in place and became dominant during the years of strong post-war growth. While some defended the strategy of united proletarian fronts, others promoted popular fronts including bourgeois and democratic forces. Some, like the neo-socialists in France, united around a national rallying

#EP2019 - the risk of becoming obsolete once again looms large for #SocialDemocrats. How to counter the challenge? By @fab_escalona

call — seen, by some, as a prelude to collaborating with the Nazi occupier.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Social Democracy was faced with a less challenging environment, but one that rendered its post-war model ineffective (declining growth rates, depletion of Keynesian revenues, the end of the bipolar world, increasingly diversified societies, etc.). Again, there was no unanimous move towards the idea of "Social Market Democracy", followed by Blair and Schröder on the eve of the 21st century. Certain left-wing fringes argued for a Socialist radicalisation of the Social Democratic project, but were decisively defeated.

Today, the very real risk of becoming obsolete once again looms large for Social Democrats. They have offered no new alternative to the austerity and "structural reform" measures that are hurting so many of their traditional supporters, and are struggling to come up with new ideas to deal with threats to rights and freedoms. Formidable opponents have appeared, in the shape of emerging pro-European centre-right movements and a more attractive, alternative Left. Nationalist right-wing forces have taken advantage of the migrant crisis to introduce issues of national identity, always a problematic subject for the Left, into the political debate. The result has been widespread electoral decline from which almost no branch of the Social Democratic family has been spared and which is gathering pace (the chance of record low election results has rocketed in recent years).

In my opinion, the future of Social Democracy is still open and will probably be different depending on the country. If it is to stay faithful to its central promise to defend the underprivileged, it must break away from the doctrinal and institutional status quo, which is currently biased in favour of neoliberal and climate-killing policies.

New sources of inspiration are available: Labour in the UK, for example, has incorporated ideas of political economy that propose to redistribute not only wealth and "opportunities", but also decision-making powers in companies. This is an interesting prospect, as is an alliance with movements advocating a ban on carbon-based energy sources and seeking to restrict the investments by multinationals.

> *Grassroot activists should fight for organisational innovations that enable more competition for internal party roles and election candidates.*

More generally, the late sociologist Erik Olin Wright suggested a mixed strategy for social transformation that would meet the ecological and social challenges of our time. On the one hand, Wright called for legal provisions to restore the conditions of "positive class compromise" for ordinary citizens. On the other hand, he proposed encouraging non-capitalist

spaces and activities (cooperatives, employee stock ownership plans, solidarity financing, etc.).

It is clear that such a project would lead to a confrontation with the dominant players and existing rules of the European Union. What's more, it is far from attractive to the many Social Democratic elites that have become part of the decision-making circles of the European and international institutions, or been co-opted by business. To combat this, grassroot activists should fight for organisational innovations that enable more competition for internal party roles and election candidates. Moreover, elected Social Democratic representatives who choose this path, and appear to their comrades to be "heretics", will have to assume the responsibility of making their disagreements public at a European level, as Paul Magnette of Belgium did during the negotiations for the free trade agreement between the EU and Canada (CETA).

> **AUTHOR**
Fabien Escalona is a doctor of political science, a journalist at Mediapart and the author of La reconversion partisane de la social-démocratie européenne ('The Partisan Conversion of European Social Democracy'), published in 2018.

In 2018, at the initiative of the S&D Group in the European Parliament and its president Udo Bullmann, I helped to analyse the group's language and suggested more effective ways of communicating.

If you define the operators in the stock exchanges as "speculators", the people will be almost unanimously favourable to the State intervention in the economy. If instead of choosing the word "speculators" you refer to those same stock market professionals as representatives of "the free market", then the reaction, again almost unanimous, will be against State intervention. That is why conservatives flee from the word "speculation" and prefer to talk about "the markets."

Language does not define reality, it constructs it

The willingness to pay taxes is much greater among the population when you mention that the aim is to have more teachers, more doctors, more police, or more scientists. People are however reluctant to pay more taxes to have more "officials", although most public officials are precisely scientists, police officers, doctors or teachers.

The battle on language is intrinsic to politics. The "raw material" of politics is wording, and the contrast of the things said by one or the other determines concrete political results.

Behavioural psychology shows that people form most of their opinions and make most of their decisions based on quick, intuitive and emotional thinking, and through frameworks generated by that almost immediate thought. Thus, when a citizen hears "speculation", a sensation (of fear and rejection) is immediately created in her/his brain, very different from the impression (of inevitability), which occurs if "free market" is used instead." That is why, in the first case, we tend to favour the need for State intervention, and in the second, we don't.

Those ideas lodged in our brain that are generated when we say "official", or "speculation" or, alternatively, "doctor" or "free market", are called frames. And their activation is fast and intuitive. It is through these frameworks that most citizens form their political ideas and, therefore, decide how to take part in public life, including, of course, how they vote in elections.

Differences between conservatives and Progressives

According to the Moral Foundations Theory, all human beings have five innate moral foundations (see box). Depending on the predominance of each of them, we maintain positions that are more towards the left - more progressive - or more towards the right - more conservative.

HOW TO STRENGTHEN
THE PROGRESSIVE LANGUAGE
IN EUROPE

by Luis Arroyo

Progressives are somewhat more sensitive to Protection and Fairness, and as we move on the scale that goes from "very progressive" to "very conservative", sensitivity to both progressively decreases. The differences, however, being statistically significant, are not as great as we might think. To put it bluntly, conservatives are not soulless individuals who go around the world hurting others or who do not trust solidarity at all. They are simply somewhat less sensitive than we are to these two moral foundations.

The most notable differences between conservatives and Progressives are in their sensitivity towards the other three elements of the Moral Foundations Theory: Authority, Identity and Purity. The more conservative an individual is, the harder he defends respect

Language matters, words matter – framing debates matters if #Progressives want to win political debates. And voters. By @LuisArroyoM

> " *The challenge for Progressives is to proclaim and defend their genuine moral foundations - Protection and Fairness - without abandoning those other three which, to a greater or lesser extent, most human beings also defend: Authority, Identity and Purity.* "

for authority, and the unity of the group in contrast to other groups and the more he appeals to God or to the pagan equivalents, such as tradition, customs or the natural order of things. In short, and simply, conservatives are as they are because they have to be harder, more patriotic and more devoted than their progressive counterparts.

Progressives are very comfortable when they appeal to the principles related to Protection and Fairness. Therefore, they should always be able to explicitly appeal to them. But it is crucial that in their language they clearly identify who they want to protect through their proposals and what injustice they want to solve and who are those traitors promoting or admitting these injustices against the good of the many.

Words are powerful tools

The most important challenge for progressive communication is to not allow conservatives (and populists) to dominate the debate with their concepts of Authority, Identity and Purity. Even the most progressive citizens believe that there are sources of authority that must be respected, identities

that distinguish and organise human groups, or transcendent values that must be maintained.

The challenge for Progressives is to proclaim and defend their genuine moral foundations - Protection and Fairness - without abandoning those other three which, to a greater or lesser extent, most human beings also defend: Authority, Identity and Purity.

For instance, in defending policies that are more tolerant on migration, Social Democrats can emphasise that they want to protect those who come to Europe fleeing from war and hunger, and also that they want those who stay to fulfil their obligations: with Social Security, with the Treasury, with the rules of the host country. The emphasis should not only be on care and rights of those who arrive, but also on their obligations, reconciling us with the foundation of

Authority. Naturally, the same thing happens when we talk about an orderly reception of migrants. While the words "welcome", "refugee", "humanitarian", "human rights"… identify us with the typically progressive narrative, the words "regularisation", "duties", "integration", "order" reconcile us a more conservative frame.

Support for equality in marriage (which we often erroneously call "homosexual marriage") is another good example as it increases significantly when Social Democrats appeal not only to "equal rights" (typically progressive argument), but also when they point out that same-sex couples are composed of compatriots who contribute like others to the economy and society in which they live – the argument closest to the conservative logic, insofar as it matches with the foundations of Identity and Authority.

There are five innate and universal moral foundations:

PROTECTION:

We all feel able to seek care and avoid harming the rest of humanity and other living beings.

FAIRNESS:

All humans have a certain idea of social justice. For example, we must help those who need it most and who deserve it more because of their personal need or situation. We must distribute the resources that we generate as a community among the community.

AUTHORITY:

Human beings accept that we must obey some kind of authority. The authority of a mother or father over their children, the authority of those who legitimately hold power.

IDENTITY - BELONGING:

We feel part of a broad social group, beyond the family. That group can be, and is often, a nation. But it can also be another smaller or bigger one. It can be Europe, or the community of believers in a religion, or even a sports team…

PURITY- SANCTITY:

Human beings tend to think that there is an order of things that is above us. For eight out of ten Europeans (although the figure changes from one country to another), it is God or something similar to God. But even those who declare themselves atheists share an idea of the pure and the impure, of order and disorder, of ugliness and beauty, which somehow transcends our own existence.

> **AUTHOR**

Luis Arroyo is an international political communication consultant, working for governments, candidates and institutions in Europe and Latin America, including the World Bank. Luis was the chief of staff for the former Spanish Défense Minister Carme Chacón (2004-2008). He is also a Sociologist, author and President of ACOP (Asociación de Comunicación Política).

European Elections: Different approaches

Four main dimensions for Europe

*Interview with **Paul Magnette** by Alain Bloëdt*

Paul Magnette is a former Minister-President of Wallonia, current Mayor of Charleroi, and Professor of Political Science at the Université libre de Bruxelles.

Paul Magnette outlines his four main areas of campaign: the fight against global warming, the fight against tax fraud, European migration policy, and the renewal of democracy. Four paths to follow for the European elections, exclusively for the Progressive Post.

Progressive Post: *Why do you get involved in a European campaign when your daily life is at the local level and you are a seasoned politician at the national level in Belgium?*

Paul Magnette: First of all, because I have always been passionate about European issues. I have the feeling that every European election is an important moment, but that the 2019 election is even more important because we are really in a crucial political configuration for the future of Europe. Our disenchantment with Europe is deeper than ever. We are witnessing the rise of various populisms and the left no longer knows very well where it stands... In addition, from my local level, I can measure the extremely positive impact of the cohesion funds, of which my city is a big beneficiary, and which allow us to invest tens of millions of euros in the renovation of buildings intended for training, education, innovation and research.

*#EP2019 : migration is a complicated campaign issue, but #Progressives won't ever win by avoiding the fundamental issues - former Waloon PM **@PaulMagnette***

PP: *You have made no secret of the fact that you will remain only mayor of Charleroi even if you are elected to the European Parliament. Do think that Social Democracy must be rebuilt at the local level to influence the national and European level?*

PM: I believe that Social Democracy must be rebuilt at all levels, but the local level and the European level are today the most decisive.

Taxation

PP: *What will be your main lines of campaign, not only for talking to your citizens, but also for influencing the general debate?*

PM: I think that four themes are particularly fundamental and meet the expectations of citizens, starting with the fight against global warming and the fight against tax fraud, which is linked to the first. Europe is, and has been, the world champion in this fight.

> " *We cannot be credible on the international scene by claiming to fight tax havens and major tax fraud, if competition and tax evasion remain possible even within the EU.* "

It is Europe that brought all the momentum that led to the Paris Agreement in 2015. But today, it is clear that actions are not following, that the governments are not up to the commitments that have been made. Yet the population has high expectations. I see this in Belgium in particular, where more than 70,000 people demonstrate every Sunday, now picked up on Thursdays by secondary school students.

PP: *What's the link with tax fraud?*

PM: If we want to finance the ecological transition, studies show that we need at least a thousand billion euros. It is not a huge amount: it is what we lose every year because of tax fraud and evasion. Large multinational groups transfer profits from one country to another in order to achieve tax optimisation and pay as little tax as possible, including within the European Union. This practice must be stopped by ensuring that there is an effective rate of at least 20% to 25% on corporate profits. The amount raised would be used to finance the climate transition.

PP: *As well in the media as in the political discourse, social fraud is judged and treated in a much harsher way than tax fraud. How do you explain this?*

PM: I believe that citizens are not really aware that the big tax fraud and tax evasion, organised by multinationals, and by means that are unfortunately legal, cost the public authorities hundreds of billions of euros every year and prevent them from financing this climate transition, which would nevertheless have a fundamental social dimension. If tomorrow, we could massively finance the insulation of public buildings and housing and grant interest-free loans for private buildings, we would greatly reduce the energy bill of households and provide a great service in terms of purchasing power. This would be a major step towards greater social and fiscal equity. The energy transition contains an important social dimension that needs to be given much more prominence.

PP: *Is the European Parliament currently in a position to go against Member States that block this tax issue?*

PM: No, but we must indeed continue to put pressure on them. I am prepared to go as far as a tax Article 7 (Editor's note: Article 7 of the Treaty on European Union gives the EU the possibility of sanctioning a Member State that does not respect its founding values) which would provide that countries which do not play the game, that try to attract the profits of large multinationals by taxing them at very low rates, be sanctioned by forbidding them access to cohesion funds or to agricultural policy aid. We cannot think only of our own country's interests on the one hand and call for European solidarity on the other.

PP: *Could we imagine a Schengen area of taxation?*

PM: We should start with a small number of countries, as was the case with the Treaty on Stability, Coordination and Governance. We cannot be credible at international level by claiming to fight tax havens and major tax fraud, if competition and tax evasion remain possible within the European Union itself, to the detriment of the public interest.

PP: *How do you see the rise of populism in Europe and its influence on the next campaign?*

PM: I believe that stigmatising populism is useless. It is even counterproductive. It also means exonerating oneself from one's own responsibilities. If a large proportion of citizens now support populist movements, we need to understand the causes of this. These citizens say they have the feeling that the elite lives cut-off from the rest of the population, and that they promote their interests and those of the major multinational and financial groups. There are fundamental

truths here: even if it is less blunt than in the United States, it is true that today in Europe there is a seizure of power by a number of very large and very well protected interests and that there is still excessive and unacceptable lobbying when it prevents, for example, stopping the use of the dangerous herbicide glyphosate. This rebellion of the citizens is therefore ultimately just and healthy. The problem lies in the path it is taking. If it only leads to accusations against the foreigner, the other, the one who does not share the dominant religious convictions, it only pits citizens against each other. On the other hand, if this criticism of a new oligarchy becomes a lever for advancing tax and social reforms, I think that the left has every interest in understanding what message lies behind this populist temptation.

PP: *Migration policy is also one of your campaign areas. Has anyone tried to discourage you from taking up this theme?*

PM: It's a very complicated subject, but I think it's never a good idea to avoid the fundamental issues. Today, contrary to what is often said, there is no 'migration crisis',

Climat
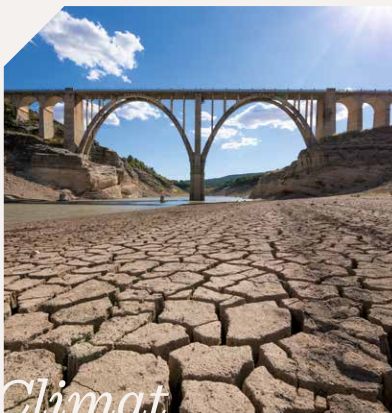
even if some countries are more exposed than others, but there is a political crisis around the issue of migration. Europe is a continent of immigration and emigration par excellence. The Italian or Greek diaspora in the world is larger than the population of Greece or Italy today. Europe has therefore made a significant contribution to the migratory movement throughout the world while welcoming at the same time populations from North Africa, sub-Saharan Africa and other regions that are now an integral part of the European people. This fact must be reaffirmed with serenity to all the fantasies around these questions. To pretend that the

debate does not exist, not to dare to face it, is to let fantasies spread, to the detriment of our own values and commitments.

PP: *What is your fourth campaign area?*

PM: The in-depth renewal of our democratic forms. Abstention, protest movements, spontaneous demonstrations - all these movements reflect a form of exhaustion of the forms of representative democracy, particularly on the European level. The low turnout in the European elections also shows a lack of interest on the part of citizens in this level of power, although it will profoundly determine the policies of the EU for the next five years and sometimes for much longer. There is therefore a real need to fundamentally renew the way we do politics, how we involve as many citizens as possible in decision-making. We must think about increasing controls on lobbying at European level. All other forms of participation must also be boosted. We created the Citizens' Initiative, which is a very beautiful institution, but which is governed by a set of rules that prevent it from operating in practice.

Watch also: Interview with Paul Magnette,

Mayor of Charleroi, former Minister-President of Wallonia

Paul Magnette , Bourgmestre de Charleroi, ancien Ministre–Président de la Wallonie

THE EUROPE THAT WE WANT,
THE EUROPE THAT WE CONVEY

by Iratxe Garcia-Perez

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| A large part of the campaign will take place on
 social networks, nowadays a key tool in our democratic system.

Europe must become an inspiring idea once more, synonymous with progress and improving living conditions, the Social Europe for which we work. We face the challenge of encouraging citizens to participate in this idea, through proximity communication, sectorial actions, the involvement of our leaders and the use of social networks.

> *We want to implement a strategy on gender equality that can accelerate the pace towards a truly egalitarian society.*

Europe is now, more than ever, mainly a good idea. An idea that is essential and valid. The challenge for us is to communicate this and to ensure that it becomes once again inspirational, synonymous with progress, protection and a real improvement in living conditions. Therefore, we are working on a reinvigorated project, on a social Europe, on a fair and egalitarian Europe that gives concrete and tangible social rights. With the Gothenburg declaration of November 2017, we achieved the commitment of all European institutions through this Pillar of Social Rights. But this is only the starting point. Now we must translate this commitment into practical measures, and that is the idea we need to convey, we must use it to face the disaffection of citizens and the threat of populism and the extreme right.

A whole generation faces a life worse than their parents'. We'll keep fighting this -
by @IratxeGarper

The campaign for the European elections will be the opportunity, firstly, to be accountable to the citizens that gave us their support five years ago and, secondly, to present proposals for the future. As Spanish socialists we want to be very close to the people, with a message that reflects this and includes the mobilisation of activists and campaigners, and the strong involvement of our party's candidates and leaders. We will not only be organising rallies in the traditional style, but also small activities that allow better interaction and promote the exchange of ideas. These types of meeting are ideal for dealing with more complicated and technical questions aimed at specific audiences such as unions, feminist, agricultural, ecology and youth organisations, and representatives from the energy sector, among others.

We are aware that a large part of the campaign will take place on social networks, which are already established as a key tool in our democratic system. Spanish Socialists are present, attentive and very active in all the networks, with our individual profiles, as members of the European Parliament, as well as a party. Audio-visual content has proven ideal for spreading messages and bringing the work of our political leadership closer to the public. That is why we will increase their presence on our networks, as we have been doing in recent months.

Our main message will revolve around the European Pillar of Social Rights, our great hope for a more just society. We will campaign on feminist issues, as has been our policy in the past. The Mediation Directive that we have recently negotiated gives us encouragement to move forward. But we want to go beyond that: we want to implement a strategy on gender equality with the relevant regulations that can accelerate the pace towards a truly egalitarian society.

We will talk about our fight against job insecurity. We want to explain our work on the Directive on Transparent and Predictable Working Conditions, recently passed by the European Parliament, a hope for millions of workers.

Young people will play a leading role. After the crisis, a whole generation has accepted the idea that they will have a worse life than their parents. But we will not resign ourselves to this and we must show that it is in our hands to change this.

The fight against child poverty and the commitment to renewable energy will also have a central place on our agenda. We want to promote a new, positive focus on the phenomenon of migration, centred on regulating and organising the movement of people, in facilitating legal immigration, in helping to end conflicts and in cooperating with developing countries.

This is the social and inspirational Europe we want to convey, in which the citizens can see an answer to their problems, a more just Europe, that can protect us and make us better. True, it is not an easy challenge. But the policies we are creating are up to the challenge.

> **AUTHOR**
Iratxe Garcia-Perez is a Member of the European Parliament for the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE). In the EP, she is the President of the Spanish Socialist Delegation, spokesperson for the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and a member of the Committee on Regional Development.

SHARING THE
CAKE EQUALLY

by Andreas Schieder

Like almost everywhere in Europe, nationalism and right-wing populism are also on the rise in Austria. Since December 2017, a coalition of the conservative ÖVP and the right-wing populist FPÖ have been ruling the country. Enmity towards the EU is a core of the FPÖ. From time to time the FPÖ flirts with 'Austrexit' and undifferentiated criticism of the EU is its everyday business. The conservative ÖVP has shifted under chancellor Sebastian Kurz's chairmanship from supporting the EU to showing its right-wing populist face and undermining the European thought.

In order to counter populism - in its conservative as well as in its pure form - Social Democracy relies on a progressive strategy consisting essentially of two strands: on the one hand, we uphold progressive values and show how the European idea is linked to them. The focus here is the defence of European ideas against the nationalist power games and destructive attempts. At the same time, we demand a union that improves people's daily lives: a social European Union. Hereby we focus on concrete proposals against tax avoidance, tax fraud, social dumping or privatisation and liberalisation of public services.

The decisive point for a progressive policy is to bring the two strands together. Without a social policy strategy, the European idea becomes superficial. The simple appeal to European values can quickly deteriorate into empty catchwords if you ignore the everyday problems of people. Many of those problems are social problems: stagnant wages, rising rents, working pressure, etc. And those problems are real. We should not make the mistake of glorifying the European Union while ignoring what matters to the people. Europe made the cake bigger – it is time to fight for sharing it equally.

We should not underestimate how much the right-wing populists - and recently more and more conservatives too - want to change the European culture at its heart. The incitement against refugees and migrants is not the

> **"** *The fragmented Europe of the right-wing populists cannot oppose tax evasion and social dumping because the big corporations are way too strong for single countries.* **"**

© Sebastian Philipp

> | In November 2018, Pamela Rendi-Wagner was elected chairwoman of the Social Democratic Party of Austria

> *Europe made the cake bigger - it is time to fight to share it equally*

#Progressive values and building a social #EU: the 2 strands of @SPOE_at's #EP2019 campaign – by Andreas @SCHIEDER

height of their policy, but only the beginning. They want to turn back achievements of the last decades and they dream of a world in which women's rights are again curtailed, the European states again become rivals and the pressure on the free press is enormous. To understand how the right-wing- conservative alliance attacks European values under the pretext of fighting migration must be an essential component of progressive politics.

A progressive strategy must tie the two strands together and show that a strong EU is important to citizens. The fragmented Europe of the right-wing populists cannot oppose tax evasion and social dumping because the big corporations are way too strong for single countries. And at the same time, over and over again, we must show that defending the European idea is the defence of an open society.

> **> AUTEUR**
> **Andreas Schieder**, between 2008 and 2013, he was State Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and served as parliamentary leader of the Social Democratic Party in the National Council, the lower house of Parliament, from 2013 to 2018.

The Social Democrats are leading in the Finnish polls and aiming to increase the number of centre-left MEP's from the EU's northernmost country. Ambitious policy production and renewal of the political programmes have been key factors in regaining the political initiative.

The era of social media has simplified political messages to a minimum. Slogans, programmes and goals have to be communicated in tweets, infographics and videos that last only seconds. Political parties pay small fortunes for consultants to tell them how the average attention span of a modern voter is less than 3 seconds.

Simultaneously the social democratic and socialist parties all over Europe are struggling with declining support. Our messages just don't seem to get through any more.

Having suffered from a lack of new initiatives and an outdated public image for a long time, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) in Finland has chosen not to follow the trend of oversimplification of political solutions. Instead of relying on just twitter-proof slogans, they have done exactly the opposite. The party has spent the past years organising hundreds of regular party members in policy production committees. The committees are preparing ambitious but realistic policy proposals to change Finland and Europe to meet the vision that the SDP has for 2030.

For @Progressives to gain back voters' trust – don't go the way of oversimplification, be bold & realistic! by @tuuliap

The committee recognises the UN Sustainable Development Goals as the basis for its work and aims to create sustainable solutions for big challenges such as the technological development and change of working life, the effect of humans on the globe, the future of democracy, the redistribution of global powers, economics and the unequal distribution of wealth as well as urbanisation.

WINNING BACK CITIZENS'
TRUST WITH AMBITIOUS MESSAGES
by Tuulia Pitkänen

The work has resulted in several high-quality programmes bringing SDP extensive positive media attention such as a tax reform proposal and a parental system renewal programme including radically equal elements, such as allocating 50% of the highly-paid leave to the father. Also, the SDP's ambitious climate plan has made the news. Finnish Social Democrats are proud to announce that they want a carbon neutral Finland by 2035 and have outlined very concrete measures for achieving this goal.

Paradoxically, the slow and in-depth committee-work, producing long documents with realistic but ambitious solutions for the challenges of the future, have resulted in a huge change in the public image of the party. For the first time in decades, the Finnish Social Democrats are viewed as the most visionary future-oriented party. The Social Democrats are also finally taking the initiative in the public discussion.

The most efficient - and honest - way to communicate about a progressive Europe to the national audience is to find the ways to take the initiative, to frame the discussions in a Social Democratic way and to set the agenda of the discussion. This can only be done if the party has a lot to say about various topics and if the political agenda is coherent. It is especially important in the European Elections, which are overshadowed by the rise of the populist,

> **"** *Communication can never be the most important element of political campaigning - vision is!* **"**

nationalist and xenophobic political forces. The Social Democratic and Socialist parties have often fallen into the trap of trying to explain complicated things in a simplified way. Clear communication is important, but in a complex world the long-standing political initiative can only be held by the parties who understand nuances and side effects of complicated issues.

The Finnish Social Democrats aim to convince their audience with a combination of youthful and modern social media campaigning, personal meetings of voters coordinated through a smartphone

application as well as the well prepared European political content and vision described above.

Communication methods are tools that are more important than ever. But they can never be the most important element of political campaigning - vision is.

> **AUTHOR**
Tuulia Pitkänen is the Secretary General of the Young European Socialists. Her background is in the field of social policy and feminist work.

PHOTO
contest
My social city, 2018

The 2018 photo competition has been organised by the PES Group in the European Committe of the Regions, in order to raise awareness on social inequalities to which towns and cities in Europe are being confronted, such as access to health, education, housing or employment. Participants were invited to show how their cities were social and what could be done to make them more inclusive.

Towns and cities - whether in urban or in rural areas - are being confronted more and more with acute social inequalities. To restore citizens' trust in the European project, we need European policies that foster equality of opportunity, protect social rights, address job insecurity, and ensure access to quality public services. In order to mitigate the consequences of the social challenges at hand, the EU has been investing for decades in people and their skills through its cohesion policy and in particular, the European Social Fund, as well as through key measures laid down in the European Pillar of Social Rights.

It is unacceptable that, the European Regional and Development Fund and the Cohesion Fund should, on the basis of the European Commission's proposal, be reduced by 11.17% and the European Social Fund by 6.78%

How can we ensure that everybody feels like they are part of the city in which they live? How 'social' is your city and what could be done to make it a more inclusive place? The aim of this competition was to encourage amateur and professional photographers to depict social projects and/or social relationships in their towns and cities. Access to health, education, housing, employment, working conditions, or the integration of disadvantaged people into society can offer inspiration for such a photo.

This is a photo of Angelina, aged 102 dancing with her grandson Rocco, aged 26, during a bloc party organised each year in Milan. With this image, I wanted to show that life is a never ending social experience and it's never too late to enjoy it.

- Stefano Scagliarini -

Milan, Italy
Winner of
the photo competition

An ordinary block of twenty apartments in a small Polish town. Nothing remarkable when you look at it from the outside. But when you look beyond the windows, you will see twenty familiies, with different opinions, memories. You'll see different ethnic origins, religions, ages, and sexual orientations. Twenty different worlds... that's remarkable enough to me!

- Krzysztof Story -

Krakow, Poland
Winner of
the photo competition

The text on the caravan means "moving books". This is a new initiative of books distribution in the framework of a public utility and equal opportunity programme set-up to ensure the availability of quality and affordable books to everyone.

- Edina Klein -

Budapest, Hungary
Winner of
the photo competition

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NO REASON FOR AI AND GAFAM TO ESCAPE DEMOCRATIC OVERSIGHT

by Paul Nemitz

The triad of human rights, democracy and the rule of law are the core elements of western, liberal constitutions. These principles are the supreme law of the land—all actions of government, legislators and indeed societal reality are measured against them. Given the foreseeable pervasiveness of artificial intelligence (AI) in modern societies, it is legitimate and necessary to ask the question of how this new technology must be shaped to support the maintenance and strengthening of the constitutional 'Trinitarian formula' rather than weakening it.

The principle of rule of law, democracy and human rights in treating big tech and AI is necessary because on the one hand the capabilities of AI, based on big data and combined with the pervasiveness of devices and sensors of the internet of things, will eventually govern core functions of society, from education via health, science and business right into the sphere of law, security, political discourse and democratic decision making.

On the other hand, it is also high time to bind new technology to the basic constitutional principles. The absence of such framing has already led to a widespread culture of disregard of the law and put democracy in danger – the Facebook Cambridge Analytics scandal was only the latest wake-up call in that respect.

It would be naive to ignore that for most in our societies today, the reality of how they use the internet and what the internet delivers to them is shaped by a few mega corporations, as it would be naive to ignore that the development of AI is dominated exactly by these mega corporations and their dependent ecosystems.

Five companies dominate the field

No reason for #AI and #BigTech to escape democratic oversight - by @PaulNemitz

In particular, the activities of the 'frightful five' are shaping our experience with the internet and digital technologies like AI: Google, Facebook, Microsoft, Apple and Amazon. These corporations, together with a few others, shape not only the delivery of internet-based services to individuals. They are extremely profitable, leading to rises in stock market valuations, and therefore wield economic power which does not only guarantee disproportionate access to legislators and governments, but also allows them to hand out freely direct or indirect financial or in kind support in all areas of society relevant to opinion building in democracy: governments, legislators, civil society, political parties, schools and education, journalism and journalism education and—most importantly—science and research.

Today, the frightful five are present in all these fields, to gain knowledge and learn for their own purposes, but also, to put it in diplomatic terms, to gain sympathy and understanding for their concerns and interests.

Four sources of power

The accumulation of digital power, which shapes the development and deployment of AI as well as the debate on its regulation, is based on four sources of power.

First, deep pockets, money being the classic tool of influence on politics and markets. Not only can the digital mega players afford to invest heavily in political and societal influence as already mentioned, but they can also afford to buy up new ideas and start-ups in the area of AI or indeed any other area of interest to their business model—and they are doing just that.

Second, these corporations increasingly control the infrastructures of public discourse and the digital environment decisive for elections. No candidate in democratic

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> *The internet giants have managed to stay largely unregulated, to dominate markets, to command influence on public opinions and politics and at the same time stay largely popular.*
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process today can afford not to rely on their services. And their internet services increasingly become the only or main source of political information for citizens, especially the younger generation, to the detriment of the Fourth Estate, classic journalist publications, with the ambition to control power, so important to democracy.

Third, these mega corporations are in the business of collecting personal data for profit and of profiling any one of us based on our behaviour, online and offline. They know

> *The absence of constitutional framing has already led to a widespread culture of disregard of the law and has put democracy in danger – the Facebook Cambridge Analytics scandal was only the latest wake-up call in that respect.*

more about us than ourselves or our friends — and they are using and making available this information for profit, surveillance and security and election campaigns. They are benefitting from the claim to empower people, even though they are centralising power on an unprecedented scale.

Fourth, these corporations are dominating development and systems integration into usable AI services. While their basic AI research may, in part, be publicly accessible, the much more resource intensive work on systems integration and AI applications for commercial use is taking place in a black box with resources surpassing the public investments in similar research in many countries.

Resisting rules & regulation

At the same time, the internet giants are the single group of corporations in history which have managed to keep their output largely unregulated, to dominate markets and be most profitable at the top of the stock exchange, to command important influence on public opinions and politics, and at the same time stay largely popular with the general public. It is this context of a unique concentration of power, the experience with the absence of regulation for software and internet-based services and the history of technology regulation by law, which must inform the present debate about ethics and law for AI, together with the potential capabilities and impacts of this new technology.

Famously, in his 'Declaration of the Independence of Cyberspace', John Perry

Barlow rejected the idea that any law might suit the internet, claiming that traditional forms of government, those which we would argue can only be based on the rule of law, 'have no sovereignty where we (the actors of cyberspace) gather'. It is no coincidence that this declaration was presented in 1996 at the World Economic Forum.

The teaching of disruptive innovation, widespread in business schools, eventually legitimised even the disruption of the law. The heroes of the disruptive internet did not just speak out against governments and parliamentary law, break intellectual property rights and transport law, but it also became a fashion to trick the system of tax collection based on national jurisdiction, making necessary decisions by the European Commission as that on Apple having to pay 13 billion Euros of previously unpaid taxes in Ireland, or to disrupt regulators by not telling the truth, as it happened in the Facebook/WhatsApp merger case, which led the European Commission to impose a fine of 110 million Euro on Facebook.

Avoiding the law or intentionally breaking it, telling half-truths to legislators or trying to ridicule them, as we recently saw in the Cambridge Analytica hearings by Mark Zuckerberg of Facebook, became a sport on both sides of the Atlantic in which digital corporations, digital activists and digital engineers and programmers rubbed shoulders.

Their explicit or implicit claim that parliamentarians and governments do not understand the internet and new technology

such as AI, and thus have no legitimacy to put rules for these in place, is not matched with a self-reflection on how little technologists actually understand democracy and the functioning of the rule of law as well as the need to protect fundamental rights in a world in which technology increasingly tends to undermine all these three pillars of constitutional democracy.

Popping The Bubble

by Umberto Boschi & Federico Sarchi

How to explore dissent and controversiality about the upcoming elections or why and how we should build a glass house for Facebook. Facebook Tracking Exposed is among the projects that provide tools to test your own filter bubble, to compare how the same topic has been perceived differently by others and ultimately to pop the bubble.

Read the full article on line
www.progressivepost.eu

and go also to
https://facebook.
tracking.exposed/

> **AUTHOR**
Paul Nemitz is the principal advisor at the European Commission's Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers. He is a visiting Professor of Law at the College of Europe and holds a Master of Comparative Law from George Washington University, Washington, D.C. Member of the FEPS Scientific council.

> **AUTHOR**
Umberto Boschi is a data journalist working on the project 'Facebook Tracking Exposed'. He is a graduate in philosophy at the University of Milan (thesis on 'Biopolitics and urban networks'), as well as in Journalism at the London School of Journalism.

> **AUTHOR**
Federico Sarchi is an Italian researcher and freelance developer living in Barcelona. After graduating in Philosophy in Pisa, he obtained a Master degree in Media Studies in Utrecht (NL).
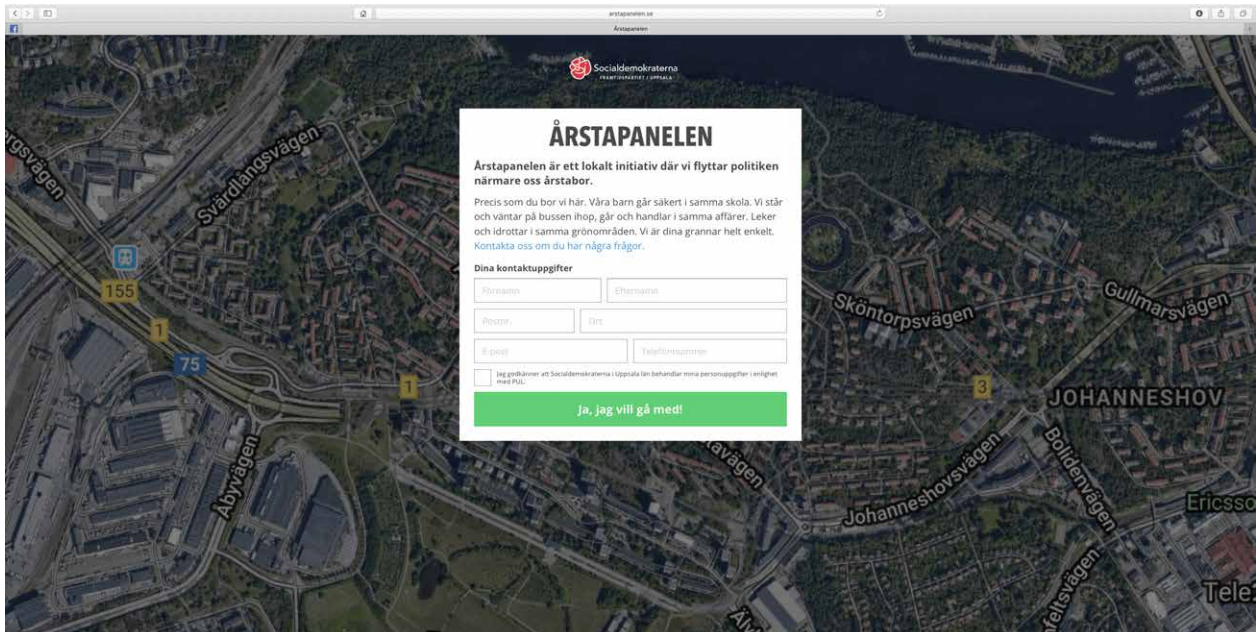
| In Sweden, the Uppsala chapter of Socialdemokraterna has created a digital panel of voters linked to a specific constituency within the city. This is an example of essential method development that more organisations should explore.

HOW TO KNOCK ON VIRTUAL DOORS THE ART OF DIGITAL CANVASSING

by Joakim Johansson

The Social Democratic party of Sweden, Socialdemokraterna, is the country's leading organisation when it comes to canvassing — in the physical space, at least. On the internet, however, the story is another one entirely. The alt-right party the "Sweden Democrats" has gone from guerilla warfare to an all-out dominance on social media, and the same trend is mirrored throughout Europe. How can progressives go about building the same dominance in the digital political space as they have in the physical? How can we become the best at knocking on virtual doors?

> **AUTHOR**
Joakim Johansson is Vice President Corporate Development at BMC Software.

Firstly, most alt-right parties and other parties of the extreme right are relatively young. They form and organise online, and only after having built up a digital base do they materialise in the physical world. The political parties and unions of the worker's movement do the opposite: They already have a substantial physical presence, but struggle in the process of turning it into an online movement. We progressives have a gap to close. Secondly, there are certain factors that are more important than others when it comes down to succeeding in the digital world of canvassing.

#DigitalRevolution: #Progressives can occupy the digital political space - here's how, Joakim Johansson #EP2019

#1 *Local First*

The expression "digital first" has evolved from a challenging idea to a concept that is mostly given. One could argue that the practice is so widespread that the term has become watered down. Also, campaign strategy should never be limited to one platform. The strength of Socialdemokraternas canvassing efforts is that its strategy is centralised while its tactics are local. It lets local leaders and volunteers organise themselves, while the central organisation provides support. Online, on the other hand, local organisations and volunteers are not as present. One way to walk door-to-door in the virtual space is through dialogue, through bringing local questions into digital spaces. In Sweden, the Uppsala chapter of Socialdemokraterna has created a digital panel of voters linked to a specific constituency within the city. This is an example of essential method development that more organisations should explore.

#2 *Initiated Base*

Scott Goodstein, digital strategist of the Bernie Sanders campaign, once said that "If you don't have an inspired, initiated base of voters that is willing to step up and work for you, as well as to share your message in their personal social media feeds, then you won't reach the majority." Parties and organisations that are organised in a traditional sense still work with talking points and strict internal instructions approved by central leadership. For members and volunteers, this means that saying the right thing is more important than speaking freely. Alt-right parties, which have their natural bases online, think differently. Their fans are encouraged to produce content on their own: Their philosophy is that spreading content is more important than whether or not said content includes the right soundbite or logotype. Forgiving leadership lowers the threshold for regular people to interpret and adapt content to their own liking. It is this behaviour and this philosophy that turns parties like the Sweden Democrats into successful digital movements. Progressives need to start viewing their fans as co-creators of content that is expected to convince voters both online and offline.

#3 *Integrated Technology*

We have come a long way since Karl Rove modernised American campaigning by integrating digital tools in the 1990s. In Sweden, Socialdemokraterna are using several tools built by us at Great Beyond. Among them "Sappen", a phone app which helps to organise canvassing efforts, as well as "Ringverktyget", a telemarketing tool that several Swedish unions are using as well. Other commercially available tools include those specialised in email advertising, a vast number of CRM-tools and several third-party tools for advertising on Facebook and Google. But there is a negligible amount of organisations that have actually developed methods for integrating these different tools with each other, or who have built their organisations to be able to transverse the spectrum of digital possibilities. It is essentially of little importance how advanced your systems are or how adept your communications team is in the field of digital communication. Integrating apps and APIs with horizontal work groups drawing their competence from several different fields of expertise, such as IT, communications and HR, is where the true strength lies.

> " *Progressives need to start viewing their fans as co-creators of the content that is expected to convince voters both online and offline.* "

Rome was not built in a day, and knocking on digital doors requires more than an engaging campaign, or funnelling all resources into currently popular trends. Rather, it demands leadership which is willing to invest in never-ending strategical method development where volunteers are organised and allowed to share content on their own terms. Only on these grounds can we build a successful progressive movement for tomorrow – both online and offline.

POPULISTS
ARE SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY

by Jean-Yves Camus

#DigitalRevolution - Social media is still a safe haven for hate speech and online Populists - regulation is needed, writes @jeanYvesCamus1

As they try to target younger voters and bypass traditional mainstream media that are seen as hostile, populists use social media to create the impression that they are the truly modern parties, while their opponents, who were not able to catch up, still rely on old-style politics.

Did you know that the French National Front was the first political party to launch a website in 1996? That Marine Le Pen has 2.16 million followers on Twitter, while the French conservative leader Laurent Wauquiez has only 313,000 and the French Socialist Party even less? Sad news, but predictable for several reasons.

First, as the far-right Populists have set a priority on targeting the youth, they have consequently adopted their mode of communication, which is, mainly, using Facebook and Twitter.

Second, the far-right is often depicted by its opponents as backwards and opposed to change, but is has nimbly responded by becoming an expert in the use of social media, and it has also invested a great deal of energy in producing high-quality videos such as the one on "Being a European", produced by the New Right "Institut Iliade",

which amassed 1 million views on YouTube.

Thirdly, social media very much fits the short-worded, aggressive, forthright kind of discourse the far-right Populists use in order to make believe that complex issues can be answered in simple "Yes or No"-dichotomies. This is probably the main issue for the Progressives, who will have to adapt their messages and communication into the Twitter format if they want to be better heard.

In the meantime, Populists have an edge, because their unsubstantiated claims or outright disinformation can find a wide audience on social media, whose younger addicts rely less and less on the established printed, TV or radio media, with the consequence that they tend to believe what they read on propaganda accounts or websites where the accuracy of information is not guaranteed by the same ethical standards as in the traditional media. The growing

> *Populists have an edge, because their unsubstantiated claims or outright disinformation can find a wide audience on social media.*

distrust in mainstream media is the reason why so many supporters of the far-right, and also many uncommitted voters, are in search of "alternative news" – this ends up being a great boost to the Populists. The far-right are trying to tell citizens that the mainstream media is not trustworthy because it is in the hands of "financial powers" whose hidden agenda is to promote globalisation and multiculturalism at any cost, but not to provide a fair coverage of the news.

Far-right Populists also like to portray themselves as outcasts whose point of view is censored by the "liberal" media, while in fact they often get far bigger press coverage than they deserve according to their electoral strength. That is why they train their militants to use social media as a propaganda tool. And their propaganda on the social networks is not only about relying party slogans and events: it also means knowing how to discredit political opponents on social media through "trolling" on Twitter, for example, and even through intimidation and threats posted on social media.

Far-right Populists are not the only people at the extreme end of the political spectrum to be adept in using social media. A number of activists, extreme-right movements, have gained a high-profile visibility by staging actions which are "broadcast" live on Facebook, YouTube, Instagram or Twitter: Génération Identitaire, the French paragon for the whole trans-European "Identity" movement, has become well-known through its aptitude to create an online buzz as well as anti-immigrant and anti-Muslim street actions.

As Populists and hardcore racists have become technology savvy, the major challenge for the Progressives is to promote a European agenda of regulating social media so that it is no longer a "safe haven" for hate speech.

> **AUTHOR**
Jean-Yves Camus is the director of the Observatoire des radicalités politiques (Observatory of political radicalism) of the Jean Jaurès Foundation. He is also a researcher attached to IRIS (Institute of International and Strategic Relations)

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Manufacturing Dissent. Fake News, Micro-targeting and Democracy

ELECTIONS UNDER ATTACK:
RUSSIA'S ATTEMPTS
AND HOW TO COUNTER THEM

by Max Bergmann

Today, US and European elections occur in a period of increased geopolitical competition but also against the backdrop of an increasingly volatile political and communications environment. The upcoming European elections are no exception: the threat of Russian interference is real.

> AUTHOR

Max Bergmann is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, where he focuses on European security and US-Russia policy. Before, he served in the US Department of State in different positions. Max received his master's degree from the London School of Economics in comparative politics and his bachelor's degree from Bates College in Lewiston, Maine.

Every election in the US and Europe since 2016 has come with a sense of foreboding. Political parties and security services fret about whether and how Russia will seek to interfere, worried that they can impact the outcome of the vote and even trigger a democratic crisis. These concerns are fully justified. The upcoming European elections are a tantalising target for Russian interference. Russia has the motive, means, and opportunity to aggressively seek to influence the outcome.

A prosperous and democratic European Union poses a distinct threat to the Kremlin, as it represents an alternative model strong enough to pull countries like Ukraine out of Russia's orbit. As more is learned about Russian involvement in Brexit and as Russian backing of Marie Le Pen's 2017 campaign shows, Russia seeks to bolster the forces of European disintegration.

The upcoming European elections therefore present a tremendous opportunity for Russia. With a surging far-right bloc and voters driven by disparate national and sub-national issues, there is ample opportunity for them to put their thumb on the scale.

Russia also retains a robust capability to impact electoral events. Their most powerful, direct tool is utilising their intelligence services to hack and steal damaging information on the political opponents of the Kremlin's preferred candidate. The public release of stolen information before an election, as was successfully done in the 2016 US election and less successfully so in the 2017 French election, shows the willingness and ability of Russia to intervene.

For campaigns, the major lesson from these events is to take cyber security extremely seriously. Campaigns should assume they will be breached and should have a plan ready. For example, by planting fake documents on their server, the Macron campaign prevented the press from being able to assume all the documents were authentic

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> *The #EP2019 elections are a prime target for Russian interference. Here's what political campaigns should do by @MaxBergmann*

and in effect froze the press from reporting on the stolen content. Furthermore, US and European publics are now very much aware.

Campaigns should also take steps to protect campaign data and analytics that could be a valuable resource for their opponents. For example, during the 2016 election, Russians stole sensitive analytics of the committee of the US Democrats, which would have had immense value to the Trump campaign.

The most visible, and in some ways the most unnerving, concern is the ability of Russia and foreign actors to sway public opinion using social media. While the political impact of these efforts has often been overblown, Russia has often been able to impact the public narrative on controversial topics. The German Marshall Fund's Hamilton 68 project, has exposed Russian efforts to amplify divisive issues such as migrant caravans and police violence against the black community. For Russia, driving anti-migrant sentiment in Europe will be of particular appeal.

The best path forward is for campaigns to be ready to take on divisive issues, such as migration. The ability of foreign actors to amplify and drive news cycles may make it difficult to hide or downplay controversial topics. Additionally, campaigns should "work the refs" and engage with the press early and often about the potential for foreign actors to elevate divisive issues.

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> *The most visible and unnerving concern is the ability of Russia and foreign actors to sway public opinion using social media.*
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> **"**

Lastly, if campaigns see something, they should say something. Greater public awareness of foreign interference has built up a degree of resilience among the public and the press. In the 2018 US midterms, this vigilance may have deterred or at least mitigated the impact of Russian interference.

While the online domain has received the most attention – in part because it has been the most publicly visible line of effort from hostile foreign actors – the opacity of campaign financing and traditional forms of espionage also present key challenges for campaigns, law enforcement and intelligence services.

The weak response to foreign interference on the part of the United States and Europe has meant there is little to deter malign actors from interfering in future elections. This has created an unfortunate new normal that progressive and anti-far right campaigns must be ready to address. The future of Europe may depend on their ability to do so.

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There are several topics that overlap and point at a widening of agendas beyond politics and the use of internet technologies in society. We feel that we can no longer keep these spaces separated, or leave them surrounded by ambiguities and grey areas, or appropriated by alt-right groups, populism or regressive politics. We think it's time to bridge this gap, create new forms, restore alliances between tech and progressive politics, and ask the right questions.

BRIDGING THE GAP
BETWEEN TECHNOLOGY AND PROGRESSIVE POLITICS **IN EUROPE**

by Donatella Della Ratta and Geert Lovink

We feel there is a growing tension between the global, immaterial level of social media and the concrete sphere of local grassroots level and related political action. Funnily enough, digital technologies are becoming smaller, more invisible and even further integrated into our messy, always-connected everyday life. But this is not bringing neither tech policies, nor the use of tech by political parties and movements, down to earth

We notice that it is becoming harder and harder for techies and activists to talk to their local counterparts. They seem to have taken refuge in the far more familiar and comfortable zone of global, cosmopolitan, like-minded crowds. Think, just as an example, of the Tahrir activists who, once having liberated the country, were kicked out of the square and of their own movement, becoming completely alienated from local politics and then replaced by a grassroots party, which has now been suffocated in its turn by a more repressive mix of local authoritarianism and global interests.

> *Facebook is perceived as the number one enemy, yet everyone keeps using it*

Social media offers a device for collective fantasy that some call 'direct democracy'. This political culture has been generated by images that long ago abandoned their representative function. Images that no longer inhabit the domain of representation. We are witnessing the birth of a new, enhanced reality that no longer refers to politics as a classic realm. While politics still uses the written form, even in the social media world of Facebook and Twitter, we can expect that soon politics will, inevitably, take a visual shape. What is such an image-politics going to look like?

Others have occupied these spaces: Italy's Five Star Movement started off as an individual blog. They like to call themselves 'the people of the networks' in critique of the classic political party model. Politics as a profession has always been their main target. The movement presents itself as a pro-active, everchanging entity which borrows the dynamics of the Web 2.0 using terms such as participatory democracy, horizontality, P2P, equal access. In contrast with this vocabulary, the actual organisation of the movement was built around a personal blog (Beppe Grillo's). Only an internal group of elite members was involved in the decision-making process (using the platform called Rousseau). At the same time Grillo travelled across the country and invested a lot of time and energy building up a grassroots structure, an activist base to support the movement. The secret of its success can be read as a combination of web-based networks and local grassroots support.

> #*Progressives have lost the connection to techies as well as local activists - how to bridge that gap again - @glovink, @donatelladr*

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> *Can we undermine the social media business model by 'hacking' the platforms or by producing the least amount of data?*
> "

Facebook is perceived as the number one enemy, yet everyone keeps using it. The question is not whether to find a way out of Facebook as there's also Instagram, WhatsApp and the like (not to mention Google). It is not an option for many of us to delete Facebook, as this leads to social isolation and cuts off short-term possibilities for events and campaigns to mobilise and inform the potential public. We need a post-colonial alternative as large parts of the world's population rely heavily on Facebook due to a lack of physical spaces as alternatives for where to meet up and discuss/conspire. To leave dominant social media platforms is therefore a white-men elitist choice. How can we develop alternatives for organisational purposes in the shadow of the platforms and then bring the outcomes there, using them exclusively for 'broadcast' purposes - as the critical mass of people is there? Can we undermine the social media business model by 'hacking' the platforms and exploiting or squatting them by producing the least amount of data?

In the previous decade, the left has lost a connection to both vital elements. It neither understood the organisational dimension of the internet, nor did it find ways to reinvent the relation to the local. What lessons are to be learned from the 'unconventional' way in which right-wing populism in Europe has gained visibility and influence? Can the web element, the global and virtual one, and the very concrete grassroots level be combined for progressive politics? Or is the 'glocal' mix only serving conservative agendas? How can social movements re-invent their relation to local interests? Has the left of today become an elitist group that only relies on its global, immaterial ties?

Recent analyses of the online self have produced two divergent readings. The first one concluded that the celebration of the self in social media resulted in a culture of isolated individualism, disorganised precarity, ultimately leading to mental stress, burn-out and depression: organised sadness. The other interpretation holds on to the older promise of the liberation of the self as a progressive value. Empowerment and self-determination should lead to more creativity, more diversity and new forms of socio-economic innovation. In both analyses, the focus is still on the individual.

> **AUTHOR**
Donatella Della Ratta is an Italian media theorist and writer specialising in contemporary Arab cultures and is co-editor of Arab Media Moguls (2015). In 2018, Pluto Press published her book Shooting a Revolution-Visual Media and Warfare in Syria.

Right-wing movements portray Europe as a bureaucratic monster that only claims more power and financial resources. A part of the Progressive left regards it as a club of the few representing global industrial interests of banks and financial giants. How do we find a way to redefine Europe in other terms rather than within this limiting opposition? How do we reconcile the local element that we celebrate here, with transnational forms of solidarity? How do we bridge the macro with the micro, preventing the macro becoming the distant, immaterial dimension, while the micro degenerates into boring and selfish provincialism?

Without movements, without winning elections, not much will happen. How can the boredom, projected onto the national level, be overcome? What does it mean that we are donating the organs of the nation state to right wing populists, and will we be doing so for a long time to come?

Setting up the internet for the common good

by Geert-Jan Bogaerts

A coalition in the Netherlands of about 20 parties, reaching about 5 to 7 million people, has joined forces to combat Silicon Valley capitalism and Chinese collectivism, in order to fix the internet and make it work for the common good. It is now expanding its network to a European level.

Read the full article online
www.progressivepost.eu

> AUTHOR
Geert Lovink is a Dutch media theorist, internet critic, Director of the Institute of Network Cultures and author of Social Media Abyss (2016), Organization after Social Media (2018, together with Ned Rossiter) and Sad by Design (2019).

> AUTHOR
Geert-Jan Bogaerts is the initiator of the Dutch PublicSpaces coalition, aiming to strengthen the public domain on the internet. He heads the department of Innovation and Digital Media of the Dutch broadcaster VPRO, where he is responsible for digital development, innovation and distribution strategy.

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TIGHTENING THE KNOT:
MICROTARGETING AND AI IN THE TIME OF ELECTIONS

by Tom Dobber, Judith Möller and Frederik Zuiderveen Borgesius

| Microtargeting is an inherently opaque technique, a form of direct communication between the political campaign and the individual voter.

Is artificial intelligence killing democracy? The short answer is no. Artificial intelligence, or AI, is not killing democracy. However, AI does affect core principles of democratic societies.

Let us take a look at one fundamental pillar of democracies: elections. Elections are preceded by a campaign period in which voters find themselves on a marketplace of political ideas. Political parties aim to reach voters through mass media and personal contact and try to win their votes. In an ideal democracy this leads to an informed citizenship that votes for their favourite parties and a voting decision that reflects the will of the people.

Enter AI. The revelations around Cambridge Analytica demonstrated that, using artificial intelligence, political parties can target each citizen with tailor-made information. Such political online microtargeting, or microtargeting for short, involves monitoring people's online behaviour, and using the collected data, sometimes enriched with other data, to show them targeted political advertisements. Microtargeting does not necessarily threaten the electoral process. In fact, microtargeting brings both promises and threats for democracy, as we mapped out with colleagues at the University of Amsterdam. Here we summarise some of the main points.

For citizens, microtargeting could lead to more relevant advertising. Microtargeted ads are tailored to specific voters, which increases the odds that the receiver actually cares about the issue. A nurse, for example, may be interested to learn that politics is not only about inflation, budgetary discipline, or international trade, but also about organ donation, the power of health insurers, and relieving work pressure in the sector. This information may be more useful for nurses to make an informed choice at the ballot.

#AI is not killing democracy – yet!
@TomDobber, @judith_moeller &
@fborgesius

For political parties, microtargeting helps to advertise more efficiently. Parties used to waste time and resources on reaching out to voters who were either never going to vote, or never going to vote for them. Data analytics allows parties to get a better map of the electorate and, consequently, spend their time and resources more efficiently by reaching out to only the potential voters, and with a more effective message.

In addition, microtargeting techniques can diversify the public debate. Traditional, mass-communicating, political campaigns were usually limited to only a few big issues. Microtargeting enables parties to inform the electorate on a more diverse range of issues, like, for instance, work pressure in the health sector.

However, microtargeting also raises serious concerns. For instance, microtargeting threatens privacy. The promise of microtargeting may push companies and political parties to collect voter data on a massive scale, thereby threatening not only the secret ballot but also creating datasets that contain information about the preferences and attitudes of each and every citizen.

Moreover, microtargeting is an inherently opaque technique. Microtargeting is a form of direct communication between the political campaign and the individual voter. As a result, targeted ads are only seen by a few voters. In the extreme case every citizen could get unique customised information that nobody else can see or even know about. This opens the door for voter manipulation and deception. For example, to a student, a party could promise investments in education and cuts in state pensions to pay for it, but then promise a pensioner the exact opposite. The student and the pensioner do not see what ads the other person receives. Political parties could also use data analytics to infer a person's fears and exploit those fears in targeted personalised ads.

Another risk is that microtargeting can exacerbate an unequal playing field between well-funded parties and not so well-funded parties. Richer parties can buy more data, hire better data analysts, better designers, and outbid poorer parties at the auction for a spot on the Instagram feed of possible voters.

Finally, a concern is the fragmentation of the public sphere, when the public receives more and more messages about the few issues that are personally relevant, sent only by the parties matching their political preferences. In sum, the risks are serious, and if they materialise, they threaten the democratic process.

At the same time, we should not exaggerate the impact of microtargeting. Katherine Haenschen and Jay Jennings recently published a study on 'Mobilizing Millennial Voters with Targeted Internet Advertisements', showing that online ads do mobilise, especially young voters in competitive districts, yet with a small impact (less than 2% of voters are affected).

However, sometimes, a political party only needs a small margin to win an election: Donald Trump won the state of Michigan with a margin of 0.3 percentage points

> *As technology develops, microtargeting will be better able to exploit vulnerabilities of citizens, for example by making use of a voter's specific preferences and fears.*

(10,704 votes), Clinton won the state of New Hampshire with the same margin (2,736 votes).

Moreover, as technology develops, microtargeting will be better able to exploit vulnerabilities of citizens, for example by making use of a voter's specific preferences and fears. Artificial intelligence might also be used to create a customised persuasive narrative. The nurse might first receive a series of inconspicuous articles about burnouts in the medical field before she is targeted with customised information about a political party that aims to relieve work pressure for nurses. In other words, microtargeting could produce exactly the ad that will convince a specific person at a specific point in time to vote – invisible to everyone else. From that perspective, we have to nuance the answer we gave earlier. AI is indeed not killing democracy – yet.

> **AUTHOR**
Tom Dobber is a PhD candidate at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research (ASCoR), University of Amsterdam.

> **AUTHOR**
Judith Möller is an Assistant Professor of Political Communication at the Amsterdam School of Communication Research (ASCoR), University of Amsterdam and a researcher at IViR Institute for Information Law, University of Amsterdam.

> **AUTHOR**
Frederik Zuiderveen Borgesius is Professor of Law at the Institute for Computing and Information Sciences, Radboud University Nijmegen, and a researcher at IViR Institute for Information Law, University of Amsterdam.

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SOCIAL DEMOCRACY IN THE TIME OF CYBERDEMOCRACY

by Christophe Rouillon

How to bridge the gap between technology and Progressives? In favour of training progressive elected representatives and activists, Christophe Rouillon encourages social democrats to join democracy 2.0. A challenge for the next European elections.

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> *Is it a coincidence that the weakening of Social Democracy began with the arrival of the internet and accelerated with the rise of social networks?*
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The cyberspace is a new space of public expression that politicians can no longer ignore. This is a step forward in that the public debate is broad and participatory. But it is also a risk because of a perpetual questioning of the democratic value of the delegation of power through elections, of the inequality of access to digital technology, a source of social inequality, of the priority given to polemics and the present moment, rather than to reflection and long-term politics.

Social Democracy in government at both local and national levels integrates the idea of compromise, step-by-step progress, constructive confrontation of ideas within the framework of representative democracy and moderation. Is it a coincidence that the weakening of Social Democracy began with the arrival of the internet and accelerated with the rise of social networks?

The digital society pushes for the radicalisation of opinions, disruptive provocation and the culture of post-truth. The exacerbation of fears, hatred of elites, rejection of constraints and political simplism discredit our model of political legitimacy based on the conquest of knowledge, academic success or popular education.

Social Democrats rely on reflection, analysis, Cartesian reasoning, the fruit of experience, the long time of explanation. As Jean Jaurès said in his speech to young people in Albi in 1903: "Courage is to seek the truth and to tell it; it is not to be subjected to the law of triumphant lies that passes, and not to echo stupid applause and fanatical boos from our soul, our mouth and our hands."

Social media gives favors emotions, the irrational, the image rather than the written word, the instrumentalisation of hate. The big winners of this new game are the likes of Beppe Grillo, Matteo Salvini, Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, Rodrigo Duterte and Jair Bolsonaro. The wave that is submerging Social Democracy comes from all sides. In Italy, it is the Lega and the Cinque Stelle. In Germany, it is the AfD. In France, it is La France Insoumise ('Untamed France') or the Front National. Of course, Social Democrats are active on social networks. But have we taken the measure of the revolution on the way? I don't think so.

Faced with the dictatorship of emotion, derision, slander, hatred, we will never win on the register of truth alone and rationality. We must articulate reason and emotion, the brain and the heart, the heart and the guts. The media success of the Yellow Vests should make us think about the power of the

> " *Faced with the dictatorship of emotion, derision, slander and hatred, we will never win on the register of truth alone and rationality. We must articulate reason and emotion, the brain and the heart, the heart and the guts.* "

image, of the testimony in the living room or in the lorry, the power of video in less than a minute.

Social Democrats remain attached to the model of big speeches and section meetings, while political expression has shifted to B2B, to the streets, roundabouts, squares in our cities and villages. Political communication is also a geostrategic weapon, the continuation of the war by other means. We were naive in the face of Brexit and the Cambridge Analytica manipulations. Are we more lucid in the face of Steve Bannon, the troll factories in St. Petersburg, RT (Russia Today) or Sputnik? We must take into account the external interference of Demokratur supporters who perceive the Social Democrats as an obstacle to the destruction of the liberal and democratic European model.

Social Democrats must move up a gear by using democracy 2.0 specialists, by training activists, campaigners and elected representatives in the culture of posting, tweeting and video expressing. In the run-up to the European elections, the training of its mayors, regional presidents and local representatives in the use of social networks will be the priority of the Socialist Group of the European Committee of the Regions.

In politics, nothing is a given, the last presidential election in France made this totally clear. The Tarpeian Rock remains close to the Capitol. Social Democracy is vital for Europe's future and cohesion. Left-wing populism is only the antechamber of right-wing populism. Social Democracy can still provide a credible and sustainable alternative to ultra-liberalism. Without denying our values, let us change gears and strengthen our digital communication. Let's articulate rationality with emotions. Let's still make people dream, even if we must always combine the desire for change with a culture of government. Let us be popular without being populist or "coarse" in Cicero's words in the face of the conspirator Catiline!

> AUTHOR
Christophe Rouillon is the Socialist Mayor of Coulaines in the Pays de la Loire region in north-western France and 2nd Vice-President of Le Mans Métropole. He is also a Member of the European Committee of the Regions

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Manufacturing Dissent. Fake News, Micro-targeting and Democracy

Resisting surveillance

*Interview with **Shoshana Zuboff** by Olaf Bruns*

Shoshana Zuboff is a Professor Emerita at Harvard Business School. Ever since the publication of 'In the Age of the Smart Machine' in 1988 her career has been devoted to the study of the digital, its individual and social consequences, and its relationship to the future of capitalism. Her new book 'The Age of Surveillance Capitalism: The Fight for a Human Future at the New Frontier of Power' came out in January 2019.
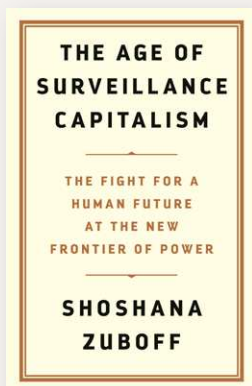
Shoshana Zuboff's new book 'Surveillance Capitalism' explores a new step in the history of capitalism, where big tech, and increasingly other branches of the economy, are making profits with data, extracted from citizens without their consent, and transformed into raw material for behaviour predictions - with destructive effects on the economy, democracy and individual lives.

Progressive Post: *Your new book is called 'Surveillance capitalism' what precisely do you understand by this concept?*

Shoshana Zuboff: The way capitalism evolves is by taking things that live outside of the marketplace and bringing them into the market dynamic, in order to be sold and purchased. And in this respect, surveillance capitalism emulates this traditional pattern of capitalist history. But it does so with a dark twist. Surveillance capitalism unilaterally claims private experience and brings it into the marketplace, rendering it as behavioural data, as raw material for computational processes, where predictive patterns are discerned. And these new 'prediction products' are then sold into a new kind of marketplace that trade exclusively in these future bets on human behaviour.

PP: *How did it come about?*

SZ: Surveillance capitalism was invented at Google in 2001 as a reaction to a financial emergency. It was invented to quickly monetise the online search services. And it became so successful that it migrated to Facebook and then within the next few years became the default option for most of the tech sector start-ups: applications and so forth. But we can no longer say that surveillance capitalism is confined to the tech-sector because now we see it spreading across the entire economy: it's in the insurance sector, the automobile sector, it's in the finance, health, education and now in virtually every product you encounter that has the word 'smart' in front of it. And every service that has the word 'personalised' in its name is participating in these ecosystems that define surveillance capitalism supply chains.

#SurveillanceCapitalism: disentangling our lives, recovering freedom - and interview with @shoshanazuboff

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| Nest is a thermostat that can be connected to other devices at home. It collects data from all aspects of the occupant's behaviour at home.

> ❝
>
> *Surveillance capitalists understand that the more people know about these kinds of practices, the more they want to protect themselves. If BigTech wants to collect data from us, they have to do it secretly.*
>
> ❞

PP: *Let me be naïve: they are not after my online banking details, neither are they judging or blackmailing somebody who watches porn online or even reads subversive political ideas. Why should we really fear this?*

SZ: The unilateral claiming of private human experience is the essence of the surveillance relationship. There's no one coming to you and say: 'here's what we want to do – do you allow us to do this?' Surveillance capitalists understand that the more people know about these kinds of practices, the more they protest and want ways to protect themselves. If these new entities are going to collect data in order to predict our future behaviour, they have to do it secretly. This is the fundamental social relationship of surveillance capitalism: it's a one-way mirror.

And it has a variety of implications. At the societal level, with surveillance capitalism and its secret ways of universally collecting every kind of depth and breadth of information about us, we have created private institutions that exist outside of constitutional governance - certainly in the United States, even if it is somewhat different in Europe. So until now, they have largely existed outside the rule of law, outside of democratic oversight and values and they produce tremendous asymmetries of knowledge: that they know everything about us. But we know almost nothing about them. They use their knowledge for other's commercial purposes.

PP: *We haven't named them yet, but it's about the big ones: Facebook, Google and so on. Google still claims: 'don't be evil' – but aren't they?l*

SZ: This is not about people being evil, which is extremely important when it comes to issues of law and regulation. And it's not even about bad people versus good people. This is about a new economic logic, with specific economic imperatives. These are companies that are now bound to these economic imperatives if they want to be successful.

PP: *Karl Marx once wrote that if you have a hand mill, you get a society with a feudal lord and if you have a steam mill, you get a society with an industrial capitalist. Is there a determinism in technology here too? If you manage to lock people up in zillions of tiny, isolated and virtual treadmills, you get surveillance capitalism?*

SZ: I think this is a fundamental category error: the conflation of technology with surveillance capitalism. I want to make very clear that surveillance capitalism is not the same as the digital.

Let me give you an example: back in 2000s, before the invention of surveillance capitalism, a very elite group of designers, data scientists and engineers at Georgia Tech University had the idea of what they called the 'aware home' – very similar to what we call the 'smart home' today. But it had a single, closed loop: all the information went directly to the occupant of the home. And they were very explicit: because these data are so intimate and personal, only the occupants could decide what to do with them.

Fast forward to 2017: The University of London has analysed one single 'smart home' device: the 'Nest thermostat' - owned by Google. 'Nest' is an eco-system with a thermostat and other devices in your home that can be connected to that thermostat. And it's collecting a lot of data from all kinds of aspects of your behaviour in your home. The researchers found out that when installing one Nest thermostat, a conscientious consumer would need to review a minimum of one thousand privacy contracts. Because all these behavioural data are now streaming through 'Nest' to third parties.

So here we have the same technologies, but each one inhabited by a fundamentally different economic logic. And it's the economic logic here, as Max Weber warned us so long ago, that is the determinant of how these technologies are brought into our lives, of their uses and their consequences.

PP: *The question in the run-up to the European elections is how these means of surveillance capitalism interfere with democracy?*

SZ: Here, the second category error comes into play: we can't reduce surveillance capitalism to any single company. Right now, there's a lot of focus on Facebook because most of what has disfigured our election processes in Europe and in America came through the channels of social media. But I think it's important to bear in mind that the methods that have been used in the Cambridge Analytica case to hijack our election processes are the same methods that surveillance capitalists use every day to shape our behaviour towards their commercial ends.

We have a set of means of behavioural modification that we know now pivot to

> *In the 20th century, we found a way for markets and democracies to create an equilibrium - because we created the laws and the regulations that bound the excesses of capitalism, limited them and tethered them to the needs of a democratic society.*

political outcomes. And in the most visceral way: the political discourse and information come to us as if it were constructed by the Fourth Estate, by journalists, who have specific standards and criteria of truthfulness and a professionalism. But is has been corrupted intentionally to trick us as, to shape our behaviour in secret ways toward others ends. This obviously is a major challenge to democracy.

PP: *Are there other challenges to democracy?*

SZ: And there are more subtle challenges as well: our democratic society is also eroded from the inside by these methodologies. Because life is more and more defined by stimulus response and by subliminal rewards and punishments that

saturate our environments in this new digital media age. And this slowly erodes our capacity for moral autonomy.

And we have seen this intervention in our autonomy being experimented with literally at population level. In 2012, Facebook launched its massive online 'contagion' experiment, to see if they could use subliminal cues and awareness-shaping mechanisms to change our voting behaviour in the real world. A year later there was another contagion experiment, also with subliminal cues, to see if they could change our emotional valence to make us sadder or happier. Both experiments were successful. And when they wrote these up in scholarly journals, they bragged about the fact that these methodologies were successfully evading user awareness.

PP: *But if these companies are already so deep under our skins, or rather inside our heads, is there still room to even think of resistance?*

SZ: I don't think that resistance is going to be the problem. Today, it's impossible for us to know exactly what aspect of our experience is being rendered, where those data are going and who is using them to what end. So, the first thing is that we must name these things because we know that when people find out about these kinds of activities, they do feel resistance. They do want to say no. So, the first thing is to open the curtains, shine light on all of this and then resistance will come as a very natural response.

It will produce a sea change in public opinion and that will bring demands for action. It will bring demands to our elected officials to become more rigorous in developing the next generation of law and regulation that will protect us from these kinds of activities.

Obviously, the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has already taken us much further ahead than we've been during the last 20 years. Now we have the possibility of standing on the shoulders of the GDPR in order to develop the kinds of regulatory regimes that are specifically targeted at these mechanisms.

We talk about data ownership as a solution for privacy. But when we understand the voraciousness of surveillance capitalism and how it takes, without asking, from every aspect of our experience, is data ownership really enough? Do we really want to be arguing about owning data that should not exist in the first place? I liken this to arguing about how many hours a 7-year-old should work in a factory when in fact we should be arguing about the fact that there should be no child labour at all.

We have to ask the questions of principles here: Is it legitimate for our experience to be taken without any form of meaningful consent of our part? Is it legitimate, for our experience to be rendered as behavioural data, as raw material for predictions? Is it legitimate for those predictions to be sold into secondary markets to business customers who have a stake in predicting our future behaviour? And for those operations to be inaccessible to us so that our futures are being auctioned off to others for their profit for their commercial aims and we have no say or oversight or protection from those activities?

PP: *Beyond the public outrage that may come when people understand how their reality is being shaped around them and even inside them, what is your message to policy makers?*

SZ: The first message for our lawmakers is that we have to understand that as

> *How long will it take for people to fight off #SurveillanceCapitalism? By @shoshanazuboff in the #EP2019*

important as it may be to regulate a specific company, as important as it may be to apply our antitrust laws and our privacy laws, we have to go further: we have to understand that surveillance capitalism is now pervading our economy. We have to understand its specific mechanisms and we have to have a public conversation as to whether or not these mechanisms are consonant with individual sovereignty and with democratic sovereignty and then we have to understand what are the ways in which we can specifically interrupt and outlaw these mechanisms.

PP: *But how to do that, in your view?*

SZ: My view is that surveillance capitalism is a rogue mutation of capitalism. In the 20th century, we found a way for markets and democracies to create an equilibrium. But that was only because we had created the laws and the regulations that bound the excesses of capitalism and limited them and tethered them to the needs of a democratic society and to the well-being of individuals, both the social and the economic well-being of individuals. This is where we are now in history.

We're in a world now where we can't be effective in our daily lives without marching through these channels that are also surveillance capitalism's supply chains, giving

them our experience for behavioural data for these secondary operations that we have no knowledge of or control over. Hence, we must to create alternatives for that. And as soon as those alternatives exist, we are all going to move to that side of the ship.

PP: *There are already some alternatives: Telegram instead of WhatsApp or alternative search engines like DuckDuckGo instead of Google. But these things haven't really taken off yet.*

SZ: These things require scale. We do have a search engine like DuckDuckGo that conserves our privacy and that's terribly important. People may say that Google has a better search engine, but what they don't understand is that Google might have a better search engine just because of the very practices we've been describing and that improvement in its search ability comes at a cost that is invisible to most of us. We need to be aware of the real costs you buy into Google and its search and its practices that take us all the way down the road where eventually we find Cambridge Analytica.

We have two tremendously different alternatives here. And when those two alternatives are confronted, they have to be confronted in their fullness with full knowledge and transparency of what each one entails. And as I said in the beginning: when people do have that full knowledge and transparency, they reject these practices.

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Manufacturing Dissent. Fake News, Micro-targeting and Democracy

Citizens need to organise themselves against the current social media regime

*Interview with **Vincent Mosco** by Justin Nogarede*

Vincent Mosco
is Professor Emeritus at Queen's University, Canada where he held the Canada Research Chair in Communication and Society and was Professor of Sociology.

Big Tech and governments are creating a powerful system of surveillance capitalism. But Vincent Mosco sees alternatives: citizens' mobilisation, applying anti-monopoly legislation and breaking the likes of Google and Facebook and European alternatives are amongst them..

Progressive Post: *In your book 'Becoming Digital', you analyse the convergence of different technologies (Internet of things, Cloud computing, Big Data) into the development of the 'the Next Internet'; which are the power relations and interests this brings about?*

Vincent Mosco: The Next Internet massively expands the Internet by bringing together powerful technologies and systems. The Internet of Things embeds miniature sensors and monitoring devices in everyday objects, and even in people. This generates significantly more data, which is increasingly stored in the Cloud or the data-centres that manage and process them. Big data analytics uses data to chart the behaviour of objects and people to make predictions and set decision rules known as algorithms that increasingly govern our lives. Commercial interests led by Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Google, and Microsoft are primarily responsible for promoting the Next Internet as a means to sell hardware, software,

products and services, as well as the data gathered on people and things. Governments, particularly in the US and China, have supported their activities because they benefit from opportunities to control their citizens through unending surveillance, to extend military power (think weaponised drones), and because they see these companies as vital to economic growth. Together big tech and its supporters in government have formed a powerful system of surveillance capitalism.

PP: *Given this convergence of interests between big tech and the State, what can citizens do?*

VM: Citizens need to understand the history of corporate power in the communication industry. In the US, and to varying degrees elsewhere, every new media technology from the telegraph through to the telephone and broadcasting, suffered from corporate concentration, commercialism, and dependence on the military-intelligence arms of government. In each case citizens mobilised and won victories including the break-up of monopoly

GDPR

Data Protection Officer (DPO) · Compliance · 25 May 2018 · Data Breaches · Personal Data

firms, the regulation of prices and services, the development of public alternatives to commercial systems, and limitations on the militarisation of communication resources.

The rise of neo-liberalism rolled back many of these citizen initiatives with policies promoting deregulation, privatisation, and the practical elimination of anti-monopoly enforcement. As they have done time and again, citizens need to organise against the current social media regime and , strictly regulate the industry in the public interest, and create citizen-controlled public alternatives to commercial firms. As in the past, citizens also need to mobilise to restrict military and intelligence agencies from violating human rights by limiting government surveillance and sharply reducing the use of artificial intelligence systems to carry out warfare against civilian populations.

PP: *You mention 'cultural myths' underpinning these new technologies, allowing people to make sense of them and ease their fears. Digital technology is often equated with 'innovation' and 'the inevitable march of progress', which makes it difficult to criticise.*

VM: We make myths whenever we make technologies. These go beyond the meaning of a falsehood to indicate the stories we tell ourselves and each other to help us deal with life's challenges. With support from big business, digital technologies have been given a set of mythic superpowers including the power to disrupt, to accelerate progress, and to create social transformation each of which contributes to broader myths about the end of history, the end of geography, and the end of politics.

However, cultures always give rise to counter narratives that transgress the dominant view. In the case of digital, I would identify three such visions starting with democracy or the fullest possible public participation in the decisions that affect our lives. There is also social justice which animates a belief that people, and the entire natural world are owed the right to exist and flourish as fully as possible. In particular, people have the right to build a self-identity that provides protection against surveillance capitalism, including the colonisation and quantification of the self. Finally, there is the myth of universality, which imagines using digital to promote equality and to create a widely shared vision of the world as the common responsibility of humanity. Each of these exists alongside the dominant mythology but

> " *Digital technologies have been given a set of mythic superpowers including the power to disrupt and to create social transformation, which contributes to broader myths about the end of history, the end of geography, and the end of politics.* "

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#BigTech and governments are building #SurveillanceCapitalism infrastructures - #European counter-models could be the alternative - by **@Vmosco**

each requires expanding support to replace the major myths, the dominant imaginaries of the ruling cultural apparatus.

PP: *You say that communications infrastructure has been conceived in the past as a public utility, and that this should also be the case today. What could this mean in practice?*

VM: It would start by declaring digital communication essential to social life with specific minimum levels of service and connectivity available to all. This might involve the creation of a public alternative alongside, or in place of, dominant commercial social media firms. Regulations would guarantee universal access to the means of communication and to public information, the right to control data about oneself and move it to the system of one's choice, including citizen-controlled data trusts. A public utility would impose strict controls over commercial and government surveillance. It would also insure full transparency in the construction and application of algorithms.

PP: *In Europe, there is the idea that the EU has 'missed the boat', and some say that the EU should regain digital sovereignty, and possibly create its own digital giants. Regardless of whether this is possible, we rather feel the EU should strive to develop a new model, in contradistinction to the US (venture capital-driven, monopolistic, military co-opted) and Chinese (state-led surveillance and control) models – what's your take?*

VM: I agree that the world would benefit from the growth of a European digital technology industry, but not just because it would compete economically with firms from the US and China. The economic success of big tech in the US has come at the expense of American society and politics, whose core values and institutions are crumbling in part because of the unbridled power of technology companies. The primary reason to create a European version of big tech is to provide EU citizens and the world with an alternative to the US and Chinese models. The one positive value of the US system worth emulating is the nation's historically strong commitment to higher education and research. Admittedly, some of this is the result of military priorities, but not nearly as much as one might think.
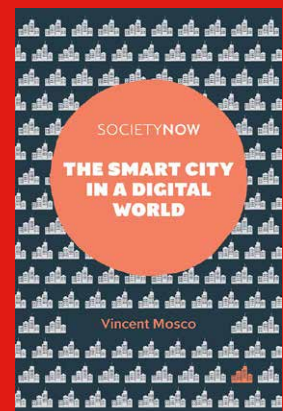
> " *The primary reason to create a European version of big tech is to provide EU citizens and the world with an alternative to the US and Chinese models.* "

The Smart City in a Digital World

Vincent Mosco's new book Smart City in a Digital World will be published in June. It takes on the question of what makes a city smart by describing, challenging, and offering democratic alternatives to the view that the answer begins and ends with technology.

VM: "In the wake of the 2008 global financial meltdown, corporations converged on cities around the world to sell technology, harvest valuable data, and deepen the private governance of urban life. They have partnered with governments to promote what on the surface look like significant benefits to city dwellers: safer streets, cleaner air, more efficient transportation, instant communication for all, and algorithms that take governance out of the hands of flawed human beings."

"But there is another story that lies beneath that surface: technology-driven smart cities deepen surveillance, shift urban governance to unelected corporate executives with their Business Improvement Districts and public-private partnerships. They also shrink democracy, create a hacker's paradise, and hasten the coming of catastrophic climate change. The Smart City insists that human governance still matters, that it is people who make cities smart, and that genuinely intelligent cities start with a vibrant democracy, support for public space, and a commitment to citizen control over technology. To make this happen, it is essential to understand the technologies, the organisations, and the mythologies that power the global smart cities movement. It also means assessing the growing resistance to a technology-driven city, evidenced in some European cities, including Barcelona, Amsterdam, and Oslo. Drawing on case studies from around the world that document the redevelopment of old cities and the creation of entirely new ones, The Smart City offers a guide to the future of urban life in a digital world."

In fact, the US has had a history of funding advanced education and research with military appropriations that have nothing to do with military applications.

An alternative model that starts with significant expansion in education and research should also commit to full citizen participation in planning and policy formation, such as the city of Barcelona has implemented. Any new system must be universally accessible, committed to protect privacy, and engineered to block surveillance capitalism. It should use open-source software, give citizens the right to control their own data and move it to networks of their own choice. In fact, it would be wise in my view to consider a public utility model which values information the same way as water and energy: as an essential resource. These starting points would require strong state intervention, including regulation of EU and non-EU companies. The EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) marked an important step in the right direction but much more needs to be done to counter the power of both the American and Chinese models.

COGNITIVE CAPITALISM
AND THE ASSAULT
ON DEMOCRACY

by Laurent Alexandre

Artificial Intelligence is a cluster bomb for liberal democracy. From our idea of a human being to every aspect of society – everything will have to be re-thought. Saving us and our society won't happen without a profound questioning of democracy's current ways of functioning, and leaders who understand the challenges of the technological tsunami.

#AI threatens to kill democracy - how can we save it? By @dr_l_alexandre

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is swiftly organising an overwhelming civilization shift which will allow the decryption of our brains, DNA sequencing and genetic modifications, as well as selective implantation and therefore "babies à la carte": something that staggers consciousness, shocks beliefs and shatters the traditional political divide.

It transforms the world of media and authorises new radical ways of voter manipulation: both the political game and its balance are in trouble.

It grants permission to digital giants, their clients and the intelligence agencies, to understand, influence and manipulate our minds. This questions the very notions of free will, liberty, autonomy and identity, and opens the doors to a neurotechnological totalitarian state.

It accelerates history, generating a deafening display of technological fireworks: the slow, archaic and tiresome production mechanisms of the political consensus and Law are incapable of following and regulating all of these simultaneous blows.

It challenges each and every traditional reference and anchorage: overtaken by these violent and rapid changes, the working class has become more willing to participate in all sorts of political adventures, even the most outlandish ones.
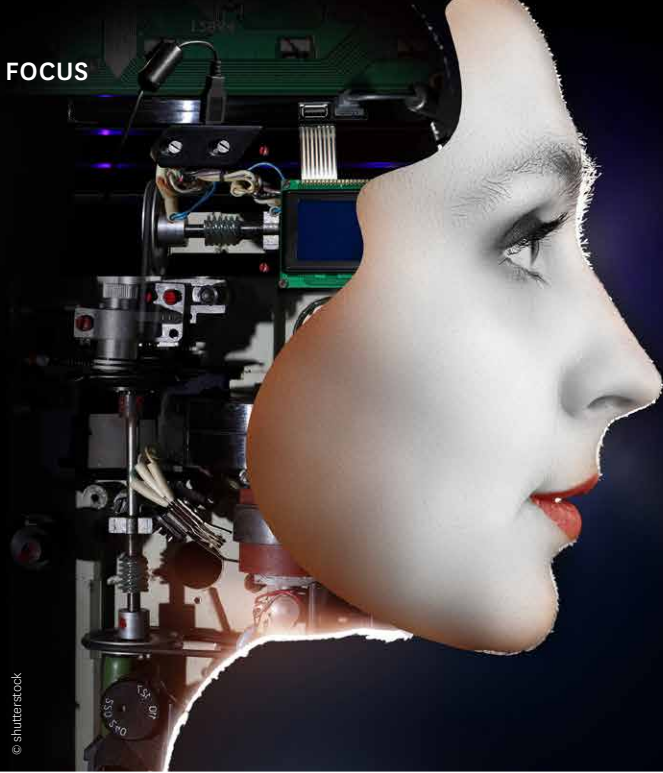
DIGITAL

DEMOCRACY

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It bestows to its proprietors – the digital giant patrons – an increasing political power. This produces an invisible and rampant coup d'état.

It becomes subject to a merciless technological war. The hierarchy between individuals, companies, metropolis and countries shift at a maddening pace, which in the end creates but a few champions and a great multitude of losers.

It provides a tremendous advantage to individuals endowed with a strong conceptual intelligence to manage this complex world it is building. This feeds anti-elite sentiments, conspiracy theorists and the protests of experts.

It mechanically generates increasing inequalities and monopolies which concentrate the wealth around these digital giants. This in turn leads to populism.

It is not understood by the educational systems which thrust children towards the most endangered professions, through its own rising development, ensuring us a good amount of yellow vests.

It is built on the first privatised territory – cyberspace – which is owned by the digital giants. This reduces the democratic states' sovereignty.

It is manufactured almost exclusively from personal behavioural data: the digital giants are favoured, but even more so the Orwellian Chinese regime of social surveillance, which has become its most fertile soil.

It provides, for the first time in modern history, an economic and organisational advantage to authoritarian regimes. This undermines the exemplary nature of the Occidental model of liberal democracy.

It could only be regulated by brilliant politicians, but the adjoining populist wave leads the general opinion to demand quite the contrary: lower wages for Ministers and senior government officials. The digital giants can therefore engage the best talents, and the defence of democracy grows thinner.

In a world remodeled by Artificial Intelligence, technology and democracy have become contradictory terms, devoid of a political class adapted to the issue at hand.

> **"**
> *Artificial Intelligence bestows to its proprietors – the digital giant patrons – an increasing political power. This produces an invisible and rampant coup d'état.*
> **"**

AI

We are in a speed race to save a democracy that has already been hacked by technology.

Saving democracy implies changing the political elite

Capitalism must be reinvented. Traditional mechanisms for economic regulation – taxation, competition laws, patent laws… – no longer work in the era of cognitive capitalism.

The Chinese technological and political engineering is a brilliant success. The long-term vision of their dictocracies which become techtatorships will be far superior to the model of political liberalism and social market economy which is in a deep crisis. Our elite must recapture their sense of the long term.

The political class pretends to believe that schools and professional training will be able to put their population at the same level as AI. We will find education to be greatly disappointing: it has never demonstrated its ability of increasing intellectual capacities. The political class should admit that it is necessary to invest just as much in the research of teaching methods as in the fight against cancer, in order to reduce intellectual inequalities.

It will take decades of work to save democracy, and it will not happen without a profound questioning of its current ways of functioning and the emergence of an elite which understands the technological tsunami.

> **AUTHOR**
Laurent Alexandre is an expert in technological developments and the challenges they create. He is a surgeon, a neurobiologist and founder of the website Doctissimo and other high-tech companies. His latest book is L'IA va-t-elle aussi tuer la démocratie? (Will AI also kill Democracy? - not translated).

Watch also: interview with Gustavo Cardoso,

Professor of Communication Science - ISCTE-IUL Lisbon
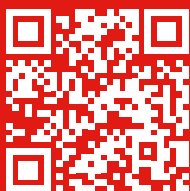
NEXT ECONOMY | *Competitiveness without Wage Moderation*

| Europe's best bid: a jobs-centred recovery strategy could also redress the current account imbalances within the eurozone.

Europe's problems seem almost impossible to solve within the existing legal arrangements, given the growing political tendencies that are affected by angry and nationalistic responses on all sides. Is there any way out of this mess without a disorderly exit of one or more of its members and even a possible collapse of the EU? While the odds are shrinking, that is mainly because alternative strategies that are still viable do not have the required political traction.

Consider the basic source of the problem: the current account imbalances between eurozone countries that became unsustainable when private finance reacted by withholding capital flows. The truth is that so-called "peripheral" economies were not in trouble because of fiscal imbalances, but because capital inflows in the previous decade were associated with the rapid build-up of current account imbalances generated by the private sector. Private capital flows led to divergences in real exchange rates and trade balances. Within Europe, Germany and other capital-exporting countries did what

China did vis-à-vis the US: provide capital flows that enable the continued expansion of their own exports.

This process was misinterpreted as "overspending" by profligate governments and households in the countries that received the capital inflows. Wrong diagnosis meant that the wrong medicine was prescribed. In the absence of any possibility of exchange rate devaluation for countries in the eurozone, they were made to undergo major "internal devaluations" through falling wages and consumption, thereby severely contracting their economies. Everywhere, the emphasis was

on reduced spending rather than economic growth as the means out of the crisis.

The countries in deficit had to generate export surpluses through internal wage compression and suppression of domestic consumption. But since the surplus countries in the eurozone, especially Germany, were equally intent

Stop austerity, create jobs and increase wages to save the #Eurozone - by @Jayati1609

END AUSTERITY -
INCREASE WAGES TO SAVE THE EUROZONE!

by Jayati Ghosh

on preserving their own model of generating export surpluses by suppressing domestic consumption, this was a recipe for Europe-wide recession. The only way out was to make the EU as a whole run export surpluses, but this continued only for a limited time and contributed to more internal inequality. As the global economy shows greater fragility and demand slows in previously dynamic regions, export demand simply cannot prevent a European slowdown.

Therefore, a prolonged labour market recession is in the making in Europe, which (unless it is arrested by proactive policies) will prevent a return to any kind of stability and growth in the medium term, and can lead to political upheavals that threaten the very existence of the EU. The obsession with fiscal austerity has not only been counterproductive in itself; it has also sidelined the much-needed reform of the financial system, which was the epicentre of the crisis and will continue to plague these economies unless stricter regulations are effectively implemented.

But all this is not inevitable – it indicates a huge failure of imagination on the part of the European leadership. It is still possible to conceive of a jobs-centred recovery strategy that will also redress the current account imbalances within the eurozone. Rather than cutting wages, the focus should now be on increasing them. In surplus countries, a rise in wages in line with productivity growth is important to provide a source of demand and encourage rebalancing. In deficit countries,

> *A jobs-centred recovery based on fiscal expansion and taxation of the rich and big companies is the only way out of the EU's persisting problems.*

most of the relative increase in unit labour costs since the introduction of the Euro were reversed from 2008, through wage cuts and labour productivity improvements. These however, have now gone too far to be helpful, and should be reversed to wage increases that would stimulate domestic demand. Recovery and future growth necessarily requires expansion in public spending, especially on employment-intensive activities with high multiplier effects like care activities. This could even be fiscally neutral through measures like broadening of the tax base on property or certain types of financial transactions. Obviously, this must be accompanied by measures to control finance and move towards some sort of banking union.

Clearly, a jobs pact is absolutely vital for the stability of the eurozone as a common currency area. This also requires greater coordination between countries, which also clearly involves more trust and co-operation than is currently evident. It may be argued that the political conditions for this to happen are absent in Europe just now – but then it is the dissemination of reasoned arguments like these and social mobilisation around them which can help to shift the political balance. And of course, if such ideas could also spread beyond Europe, then the outlook for the world economy would also be that much brighter.

> **AUTHOR**

Jayati Ghosh is a development economist and Professor of Economics at the Centre for Economic Studies and Planning, School of Social Sciences, at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Her specialisations include globalisation, international finance, employment patterns in developing countries, macroeconomic policy, and issues related to gender and development.

RELAUNCHING COMPETITIVENESS:
AN ALTERNATIVE TO CUTTING WAGES
by Marta Pilati

Trying to regain export competitiveness through a reduction of production costs, i.e. wages, is socially painful and potentially ineffective. Alternatives should be explored for a long-term competitiveness strategy in the global market.

Relaunching competitiveness has been the keyword for reforms to favour growth in many eurozone countries struggling after the latest economic crisis. Usually, competitiveness can be quickly gained through a depreciation of the exchange rate, resulting in cheaper relative export prices and consequently better export performance and growth. In a monetary union, however, exchange rate adjustments are out of the picture. The alternative is internal devaluation, i.e. the reduction of nominal prices, which was indeed implemented by many eurozone countries in the aftermath of the crisis as a way to gain export competitiveness. The adjustment of internal prices is obtained through reductions in unit labour cost (the preferred measure of competitiveness). In practice this means freezes and cuts in wages and social security. These policies were largely implemented in Spain, Ireland, Portugal and Greece, where the population had to bear the costs of adjustment.

In some cases, internal devaluation can be a desirable approach to restoring competitiveness. For example, the Baltic states preferred internal devaluation to breaking their

> *There are limitations to the effectiveness of adjustments as a means to regain competitiveness*

currency peg in the aftermath of the financial crisis. However, there are some limitations to the effectiveness of wage adjustments as a means to regain competitiveness.

First, lower production costs are not necessarily passed through final prices, as they could be reflected in higher profit margins. When wage adjustments are imposed, the margins of firms should be controlled.

Additionally, if prices fall less than wages do, domestic demand, and thus growth, can be negatively impacted.

Second, lower internal prices do not necessarily improve export performance. There is mixed evidence of the association between cost-competitiveness and higher exports. For example, the impact on exports may be minimal if most of the price adjustments are confined in non-tradable sectors.

Third, even if there is an increase in competitiveness, the social and political cost of internal devaluation may offset its benefits. The burden of adjustment falls on the population, who can see its (perceived) purchasing power and economic status deteriorate, especially if social benefits and high wages have been present for a long time.

Fourth, one should not forget that in a currency union the burden of adjustment should be symmetric. If some inflation was allowed in surplus countries, the resulting loss in competitiveness would bring higher gains from exports in deficit countries. The loss of some export volume in surplus countries would be offset by stronger the domestic

| Demonstration in Portugal in March 2018 against precarious work. "Spain, Ireland, Portugal and Greece have largely used this type of policy, and it is the people who have paid the heavy price".

demand deriving from higher wages, a win-win solution.

Beside the fact that even currency devaluation is a questionable policy to gain long-term competitiveness, internal devaluation cannot become 'normality' for countries in a monetary union. When assessing competitiveness, looking only at price factors, i.e. wages and final prices, can be misleading. A long-term strategy in eurozone countries should focus on the non-price factors of competitiveness.

Western countries are high-cost economies (e.g. labour and energy costs), and thus are vulnerable to the competition of low-cost emerging countries. Competitive advantage should thus be found in markets where low-cost competitors are not present. Export performance surely depends on the price of products but also, and significantly, on other factors such as product quality and preferences. Rather than cutting prices, eurozone countries trying to gain competitiveness should move towards more complex, higher added-value product markets. Upgrading the export basket implies moving towards high-quality and high technology and

knowledge-intensity. Products with these characteristics are less price sensitive and can shelter the country's exports from price competition.

Such long-term restructuring of the economy should come together with investment in human and technological capital, which is necessary for improving the quality of exports. Similarly, public policy should support the shift from an intermediate position in global value chains to an upper-end one, where the most added value is generated.

Wage adjustments are a socially-painful, potentially ineffective way of gaining competitiveness. Although improving cost-competitiveness can be useful, it

Wage adjustments are a socially-painful, potentially ineffective way of gaining competitiveness - read @Marta_Pilati22 from @epc_eu

cannot be a sustainable, long-term strategy in a global market where fierce competition from low-cost economies has become the norm. Eurozone countries looking for better export performance should engage in a long-term restructuring of the economy and upgrading of the export basket, gaining competitiveness from quality rather than prices.

> AUTHOR
Marta Pilati is a Junior Policy Analyst at the European Policy Centre (EPC), focussing on EU economic policy and regional policy.

Overview of salaries in Europe

Real wage growth has slowed markedly all over the globe since the economic crisis of 2008. Wages have stopped decreasing since 2010, but there are no real signs of recovery.

Wage differences between Member States are the main cause of inequality in the European Union. The hourly cost of labour in Bulgaria, for example, was €4.90 in 2017, compared to €36 in France. This is double what it was 10 years ago, having risen from €2.60 in 2008 to €4.90 in 2017.

Public sector wages in Central and Eastern European countries (CEE) are as under-valued as those of the manufacturing sector and contribute significantly to the increasing wage gap.

Of the 28 member states, 22 have legislation that guarantees a minimum wage. The six one without a minimum wage, Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Italy and Sweden are set by sector or negotiated by social partners.
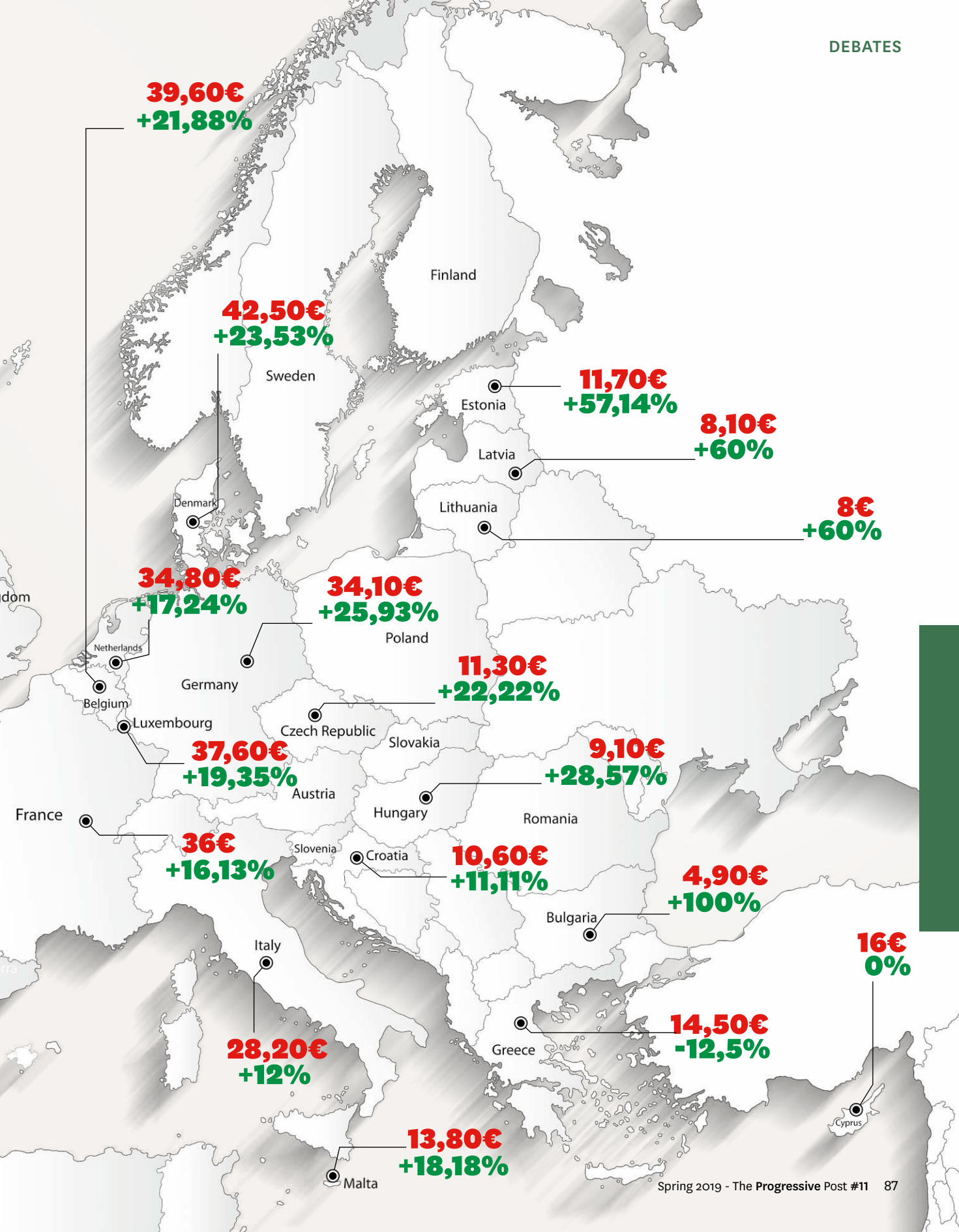
Legend: Cost of labour

● Hourly cost in 2017

● Difference in percentage between 2008 and 2017

Ireland
31€
+10,71%

United King

21,20€
+10,53%

Portugal
Spain
Ando

39,60€
+21,88%

42,50€
+23,53%

Finland

Sweden

11,70€
+57,14%

Estonia

8,10€
+60%

Latvia

Lithuania

8€
+60%

Denmark

34,80€
+17,24%

34,10€
+25,93%

Poland

Netherlands

Germany

Belgium

11,30€
+22,22%

Luxembourg

37,60€
+19,35%

Czech Republic

Slovakia

9,10€
+28,57%

Austria

Hungary

Romania

France

36€
+16,13%

Slovenia

Croatia

10,60€
+11,11%

4,90€
+100%

Bulgaria

16€
0%

Italy

14,50€
-12,5%

Greece

28,20€
+12%

Cyprus

13,80€
+18,18%

Malta

THE FUTURE OF HEALTH IN EUROPE: REDUCING INEQUALITIES IN THE EU

by Vytenis Andriukaitis

In a world with so much wealth, how is it possible that so many people have little or no access to healthcare? Or that different socioeconomic backgrounds, genders, or nationalities, mean poorer health for some? As a doctor, Social Democrat and Commissioner for Health and Food Safety, I find this unacceptable.

> *Most chronic diseases are due to preventable lifestyle risk factors, which affect disadvantaged groups the most. So why do OECD countries spend only 3% of their health budgets on prevention?*

Undoubtedly, there has been movement in the EU and worldwide to address the issue of access to healthcare. Back in 2015, the UN adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, agreeing to "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages". On signing the European Pillar of Social Rights a year later, with health at the core, we in the EU made a commitment to address inequalities.

However, the picture remains mixed, as our 'Health at a Glance: Europe 2018' report shows. On the one hand, the number of Europeans reporting care needs unmet for financial reasons has decreased. On the other hand, people with lower education levels live six years less than those with higher education levels. So what can we concretely do to make health more equitable? Where does this action need to take place?

Universal access to healthcare and medicines – Utopia?

These two issues are undeniably the cornerstone. Good health should not depend on the price you can pay, and access to medicines should not be dictated by your country of residence. These must be our overarching goals in EU healthcare, and I believe they are achievable with enough impetus in the right direction.

Although the responsibility for access to medicines remains with Member States, a European approach means that innovations are accessible and affordable to all citizens. And investing in EU-wide health-related

Health and inequalities

research means that we can pool our knowledge and make even more innovations. Take for example rare diseases: a fragmented approach means that each country alone has a small pool of data and expertise. Through the European Reference Networks (ERNs), we grow our database and create an ecosystem for collaborative research, enabling us to treat these diseases equally across the EU.

A stronger focus on health in the EU

Clearly, all of this depends on cross-border cooperation. As we saw above, a European approach allows us to benefit from the wealth of knowledge across the Union, which is particularly important for smaller countries, who may not otherwise have these resources at their disposal.

Let us never forget that the EU was founded on the values of solidarity and equality. During the current period of change and unrest, we must remember these values and not turn our back on them. Because as a Union, we are responsible for the health

Equality is a core value of the #EU, but why do so many inequalities in #health persist? And how can we get rid of them? @V_Andriukaitis

of every EU citizen, regardless of their nationality.

Shift the focus from fighting disease to 'health in all policies'

Another hugely important area is that of chronic diseases, because they are by far the leading cause of mortality in the EU. Frustratingly, most chronic diseases are due to preventable lifestyle risk factors, which affect disadvantaged groups the most. So why do OECD countries spend only 3% of their health budgets on prevention? I have asked every Minister and National Parliament

this question over the past four years. We are never going to make gains in healthcare with an ageing population and rising multi-morbidity without making this paradigm shift.

Let us not fool ourselves: Health Ministers cannot make the shift I am talking about alone. Health must be embedded in policies across all sectors, because only this holistic approach can tackle health determinants at the root. Education, for instance, is a key social determinant of health. The success of all public health interventions (including prevention policies) depends entirely on it, because how can we expect people to change their behaviours if they do not understand their implications?

Misinformation in health

Education is intrinsically linked with misinformation, which has far-reaching effects in health, as shown by recent measles outbreaks caused by vaccine hesitancy due to false information. People with lower education levels are the most vulnerable to misinformation. Clearly, in parallel with the European Commission's fight against

disinformation, we need to empower people, giving them accurate information by putting health at the centre of education policies.

And finally, achieving these goals is of course impossible without investment. We often forget that health is an asset. It is valuable for the individual but also means a healthy workforce, productivity, and economic benefits. By investing in this asset, we create a healthier society all round.

This list is in no way exhaustive, but it gives an idea of what we must do to achieve equitable healthcare. Social standards in the EU are among the highest, but we cannot become complacent. I am proud to say that health is at the heart of the European Pillar of Social Rights, and on signing it we made a collective commitment at European level to address inequalities.

Now, let us make good on that commitment. Because health is a right. Not a privilege.

> AUTHOR
Vytenis Andriukaitis is the EU Commissioner for Health and Food Safety. Before, he was a Minister for Health in the Lithuanian Government. He is a trained heart surgeon, and a co-signatory to the 1990 Act of the Re-Establishment of the State of Lithuania. Vytenis was also one of the co-authors of the Lithuanian Constitution and one of the founders of the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party.

Watch three statements about Health Inequalities

Richard Wilkinson, *Professor Emeritus of Social Epidemiology, author of "The Spirit Level" (2008) and "The Inner Level" (2018). Watch online short and long version.*

Timon Forster, PhD candidate of the Berlin Graduate School for Transnational Studies, Freie Universität Berlin.

Alexander Kentikelenis is Assistant Professor of Sociology and Political Economy, Bocconi University.

NEXT DEMOCRACY | *Who owns Europe?*

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GIVE PEOPLE
OWNERSHIP!

by Sean Kippin

Recent elections and the rise of populism show that the centre-left is losing ground. A 'politics of ownership', which gives power to citizens by involving them in the economy and in the affairs of the state may provide a means of answering this difficult set of challenges.

| A new agenda is needed to arrest this decline and to benefit those who have not prospered in this new world which centres on democracy, ownership, and participation.

European Social Democracy is in precipitous decline. While many Progressives had optimistically hoped that the financial crisis would usher in an era of Social Democratic hegemony, what instead has occurred is that centre-left parties have found themselves squeezed from the left and the right, with centre-right parties better able to speak to the cultural anxieties that 20-30 years of social and economic change have created. Meanwhile, populist and far right parties have offered simple and articulate answers to these problems and have gained support amongst many of Europe's traditional centre-left supporters.

Meanwhile, contemporary Social Democracy labours under a rigid set of political assumptions which no longer hold. Shorn of the powerful trade union movements and economic structures that have sustained them, they flounder. Politics, instead, is aligning on a communitarian vs. cosmopolitan, rather than a right vs. left axis. This divide emerges from who has 'won' and who has 'lost' from globalisation. A new agenda is needed to arrest this decline and to benefit those who have not prospered in this new world which centres on democracy, ownership, and participation.

This can be seen across numerous European nations. Brexit in the UK, the progress made by the AfD in Germany, the

#Democracy - Give people ownership! But what might these institutions look like?
@se_kip

newfound influence in government of the Lega in Italy, and the rise of a number of far-right parties in Scandinavia shows the increasing currency of ideas linked to reaction and to the continent's dark, lamentable past. Meanwhile, the centre-left declines, and in doing so, it reduces the prospect for the kind of changes that may address the material concerns which often find their voice in cultural grievances.

A serious engagement with the politics of ownership and the building of institutions that facilitate this agenda may help the left to renew in a way that meets the challenge of the time. The centre-left has an opportunity, through seeking to widen ownership, to offer citizens not only a meaningful say, but a stake in the economy and the affairs of the state. Crucially, if carried out correctly, a focus on ownership could allow Progressives to provide constructive solutions which address the pervasive sense of powerlessness that three decades of centre-left managerialism has insufficiently challenged.

What might these institutions look like? There is potential across a range of areas, and the state-backed growth of the mutual and cooperative sector, particularly in finance, could help to embed finance in local communities, deter risk-taking behaviour, and help to avoid a repeat of the events leading up to the crises of the late 2000s. A focus on land ownership, to avoid the 'land grabbing' phenomenon which is

currently blighting post-communist states, could help to provide ownership and therefore power to the disenfranchised.

There is also great potential in creating genuine public and member ownership of utilities. Social Democratic parties should

> *Social Democratic parties should ride the wave of remunicipalisation.*

ride the wave of remunicipalisation, which has seen water supply shifting back to the municipal level against a backdrop of the failure and underperformance of private water providers. The commodification of this most essential utility should sit uneasily with Progressive parties who have traditionally made it their aim to ensure that the necessities of life are provided for. The Right2Water protests showed that water is a profoundly political issue and one which provides an opportunity for Progressives to show that their sympathies lay with the broadly defined public interest and the public sphere, rather than sectoral private interests.

Progressives could harness this by seeking to build genuine public ownership of water

supplies and to empower a representative membership board to make crucial decisions about water supply, quality, and conservation. The same insights can be made about energy more broadly, with public energy supplies organised in such a way as to ensure the public voice is heard and that ownership is distributed more widely and that this is mirrored in the governance arrangements of these institutions. A further dimension is Renewable Energy Cooperatives, which have the potential to not only green the continent's energy supply, but also empower energy consumers.

Ultimately, institutional change across a range of areas is needed if the centre-left is to recover. A real and perceived imbalance of power lies behind much of the recent centre-left malaise, and an agenda centred on ownership has the potential to arrest this decline.

> **AUTHOR**
Sean Kippin is a Lecturer in Politics at the University of Stirling. He is also a Doctoral Candidate at the University of the West of Scotland, and a Research Associate of the LSE Public Policy Group.

BUILD A USER-FRIENDLY,
OPEN ACCESS DATABASE
ON "WHO OWNS EUROPE"

by Judith Clifton

Whether a government or private enterprise should directly own and control an activity is at the heart of politics – that's why the question 'who owns Europe' is an incredibly important one. But a lack of consistent, long-term data on public and private ownership makes it virtually impossible for citizens to understand who actually holds the ownership. European Authorities should promote a user-friendly, open access database with clear data on who owns the continent.

The question "who owns Europe" could be interpreted in many ways. Who owns what, in Europe? One avenue of inquiry, in this globalised and increasingly financialised world, is: who owns the entities that produce and deliver goods and services to European citizens on a daily basis? Who owns the hospitals, schools, highways, transport systems, prisons, supermarkets, food suppliers, banks, and cultural media that we consume and depend upon? Some claim ownership does not matter – regulation ensures citizen interests are well protected. But surely ownership does matter. Ownership is ultimately connected to control and accountability, and the question of who controls an activity and who is accountable are clearly important ones, especially when the goods and services produced and delivered are essential to the quality of citizens' lives.

It used to be quite easy to answer this question in Europe: central and local governments owned and ran public services and some industries, whilst the private sector owned and ran "commercially valid"

goods and services. Today, the short answer is, it is very hard to know who owns these entities. There are many reasons for this.

> **"**
>
> *Whether a government or private enterprise should directly own and control an activity is at the heart of politics.*
>
> **"**

First, as is well known, a privatisation "wave" occurred from the 1980s onwards, first in the UK but later spreading across continental Europe – encouraged by the

European Commission Liberalisation Directives – and many services considered public – telecommunications, energy, financial – were sold and transferred to the private sector, under government regulation (Clifton, Comín and Díaz-Fuentes, 2006).

Second, more subtle forms of privatisation occurred; not a wholesale transfer to the private sector, rather, partial movements, as seen in Public Private Partnerships Contracting out (or outsourcing), or Corporatisation (where a government uses a company to deliver services), for instance.

Third, privatisation was found not to be a one-way-street – instances increased of "reverse privatisation" as Hefez and Warner have called it, which could be seen in outright re-nationalisation or more subtle forms of contracting back in (insourcing, previously outsourced activities in-house).

Fourth, as a response to the 2008 financial crisis, a number of governments in Europe

| European assets (originally public or private) were sold to foreign investors (public or private, meaning governments). Governments of China, Russia or Sweden were effectively buying critical assets in Europe.

renewed their efforts to further privatisation, giving rise to a new wave of sales.

Privatisation was literally imposed by the so-called Troika most notably in the Hellenic Republic. Changes also occurred in the private sector. Globalisation and financialisation increased foreign ownership of European assets. Foreign ownership was not always necessarily private. This could lead to situations where European assets (originally public or private) were sold to foreign investors (public or private, meaning governments). Governments of China, Russia or Sweden were effectively buying critical assets in Europe.

Complexity and change therefore characterises the ongoing question of who owns Europe. A large public sector remains, and the public-private balance is organised differently across countries and sectors. There are, of course, some attempts to answer this question, all of which are partial and incomplete. The OECD and EUROSTAT provide some data on ownership of select sectors, whilst ORBIS provides data on ownership of

private sectors and public assets which have been corporatised. However, it is a daunting task to combine these datasets for an overall picture. A recent initiative by the European Commission has attempted to do just this – unfortunately, the focus was only on public assets, ignoring the equally important question of who owns private assets.

Who owns the EU? Ownership means control and accountability, writes @JudithClifton6

Given this complexity and the importance of the issue, the call is to work towards a user-friendly, open access database which would allow citizens to view and comprehend who owns the different providers of goods and services upon which the

quality of their life so clearly depends. The European Commission recently commissioned a study on the public side of this question – this call asks for this work to be extended to the private side so citizens have a clear view of who owns Europe.

> **AUTHOR**
Judith Clifton is Professor and Jean Monnet Chair at the Faculty of Business and Economic Sciences, University of Cantabria. She is Editor-in-Chief of Journal of Economic Policy Reform and holds a DPhil in Political Economy from the University of Oxford.

A EUROPEAN UNION
THAT BELONGS TO ALL ITS CITIZENS

by Pierre Bauby

Bringing all forces of society together - individuals as well as groups - is the best way to deal with those who want to create a battleground between economic and financial interests or between ideologies of closure and exclusion.

Who owns Europe ? The first question we must ask ourselves is: which European Union are we talking about? Evidently, it's a European Union that has been built gradually over the past 70 years. Therefore, one could deduce a simple answer to the initial question: Europe belongs to no one, or rather to all. It is the common heritage of all Europeans...

But let's explore the question further: the European Union as we know it today is neither a nation-state, like each of its Member States, nor a mere international organisation, like the United Nations or the Council of Europe. It is a hybrid entity that is based on different principles, which have converged successfully: states that sign treaties and intergovernmental institutions. But the EU is also the result of institutions and initiatives based on a shared willingness to act together in areas where national interests converge and it is more effective to work together than alone. It has a strict principle of subsidiarity, which prevents the Union's ambitions from going beyond this shared interest, which is evolving as globalisation changes, as well as the aspirations of the 500 million Europeans.

As such, Europe is only "possessed" by this community interest - the only one to establish its legitimacy - a complex and tense relationship between unity (the common interest and what we do together) and the diverse history, traditions, institutions, needs, aspirations and cultures.

However, this makes it fragile. This is evident with every crisis: from the oil crises of the 1970s and their multiple effects, to the financial, economic and social crises of 2008-2018, and from the upheavals that marked the end of authoritarian regimes - in Greece, Spain and Portugal - or a totalitarian one throughout Central and Eastern Europe, to the environmental, climate and biodiversity crises. The common interest is constantly being redefined, clarified or supplemented, while refusing to allow itself to be appropriated by a particular party.

> " *The European Union would have failed had it been founded on principles relating to markets and competition, as they inevitably lead to economic, financial, social, generational and environmental polarisations, which cause implosions in our societies.* "

The European Union is a hybrid entity that is based on different principles, which have converged successfully: states that sign treaties and intergovernmental institutions.

Europe is not just a cooperative juxtaposition of Member States and citizens. There are also economic actors, communities, "lobbies", who have their own interests, expectations and aspirations to influence the common interest.

It is these hegemonic tendencies, these attempts by parties with specific interests to appropriate the European Union, that must be hindered. Instead, we must promote the needs of public interest, interactions between diversity and unity and between inter-state and democratic logic, and the European Parliament - through its election by universal suffrage - could play a large part in this.

The European Union would have failed had it been founded on principles relating to markets and competition, as they inevitably lead to economic, financial, social, generational and environmental polarisations, which cause implosions in our societies. We must continue to develop - together with the private sector - a public economy based on principles of public interest supported by public institutions. Alongside this we must also build a social and cooperative economy based on civil society initiatives and the participation of public services, as both are necessary to uphold the values of equality, solidarity, cohesion, non-discrimination, cooperation and openness to others and the

world that characterise European civilisation and set it apart from other histories in the world.

We cannot allow the European Union to be hijacked or appropriated by those who want to reduce it to a battleground, between economic and financial interests or between ideologies of closure and exclusion. We must continue to unite and bring together all the forces of society that support our common values.

The only way to make sure the European Union really belongs to its citizens is to systematically give a voice to their needs and wishes so that they (re)define the core elements of the EU: its missions and policies, its organisation and functioning as well as its evaluation and control. Only by multiplying the various forms of democratic participation and implementing effective public policies will the European Union truly belong to its citizens.

How do we boost #democracy? Give citizens a voice! - Pierre Bauby

> **AUTHOR**
Pierre Bauby is an expert in public politics and public services in France and Europe. He is the President of RAP (Reconstruire l'Action Publique), Director of the Observatoire de l'action publique (Observatory of public action) of the Jean-Jaurès Foundation and a member of the International Centre of Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy (CIREC). He holds a PhD in Political Science.

Towards 100% organic agriculture

Interview with **Florent Guhl** *by Karine Jehelmann*

Florent Guhl
is the Director of Agence BIO (the French Agency for the Development and Promotion of Organic Agriculture).

A new European regulation on organic production and labelling of organic products was adopted in May 2018, after four years of negotiations. Its objective is to encourage the development of organic farming by harmonising European practices. Florent Guhl of Agence BIO, the French Agency for the Development of Organic Agriculture, explains what this regulation comprises.

Progressive Post: *Is this new regulation more demanding for Member States?*

Florent Guhl: The new regulation is more restrictive on several points, the two main ones, in my opinion, being: the link to the soil (stopping derogations on tank farming) and the end of derogations on non-organic ingredients, including seeds.

Today, for example, we still have derogations for hops. We still make organic beer in which the hops are not organic, due to a lack of organic raw material. Now, as soon as possible, that is to say in a few months' time, we will stop the derogations. And so a beer that is called 'organic' will be produced with organic hops.

All sectors must develop in such a way that we continue to increase the quantity of products that are "as organic as possible".

#OrganicFarming: the #EU goes ambitious - @FlorentGuhl of @agriculturebio explaines how

PP: *Isn't there a risk of two-speed measures depending on the Member States?*

FG: No, on the contrary, the more European regulations are harmonised, the less this risk exists. That is the main purpose of this European regulation. With this regulation, we have a harmonisation of agricultural methods. We have the same specifications all over Europe.

But it was a very long debate. France was very tough on this, at least the French producers. For them, organic farming is done in the soil, that is the rule. In Northern Europe however, they cultivate mainly soilless or in greenhouses. For them, it is either soilless production or they would have to import organic produce. With the organic market developing considerably, importing would be an enormous disadvantage to them. So there have been very long and very interesting debates on the diversity of climatic conditions and soils across Europe.

| Pasturing of cows near Bourg-Madame in the French departement Pyrénées-Orientales

PP: *Doesn't this risk demotivating farmers to even start?*

FG: That's the whole debate. That is why the negotiation lasted four and a half years. In principle, everyone agreed to be more demanding. The problem is that in the real world, it doesn't work like that. For example, on the subject of animal welfare: the fact of completely stopping the attachment of animals in organic farming. For French breeders in mountain areas, in winter, not tying up the animals isn't very convenient. Because if you don't, your livestock is in danger of disappearing. And yet, it seemed that this was what citizens were asking for.

So, there are practices in certain Member States that are not adaptable in all areas. Accompanying measures are therefore needed, particularly for farms that will have to change proceedings, and where there is no derogation.

PP: *What about the concrete monitoring of this regulation?*

FG: There was a whole debate about the inspection aspect, both their frequency and the automatic classification according to thresholds. This was the longest and most difficult debate. It resulted in a compromise: to remain on a systematic annual inspection. Annual inspections are a basic principle; an

exception is only possible when a farmer has been inspected without infringement for three times in a row, then the next inspection can be in 24 months.

PP: *Before the first inspections, is there a time limit for farmers to adapt to the standards?*

FG: It depends on the type of anomalies found. Some people are immediately stripped of their organic farming label. For example, a farmer who has changed to organic farming and continues to use plant protection products from his former activity will have his organic certificate immediately withdrawn. If it is an error of knowledge and there are no significant consequences, the inspection will have a more pedagogical role.

PP: *What impact(s) do you hope these new rules will have on the environment?*

FG: The impact on the environment will ultimately be mainly linked to the development of organic surfaces in Europe and the world.

The new EU regulation on organic farming

Objective:

to develop organic farming in Europe, particularly because it meets environmental protection challenges. It is a strong lever in Europe's agro-ecological transition, but above all it is necessary to respond to consumer demand for European quality products in complete transparency.

New features:

¶ The labelling of organic products will be more precise regarding the origin of the products, with the possibility for the region of origin to be indicated.

¶ Inspections will be carried out annually. In addition, in the case of repeated irregularities, risk analyses are carried out to determine the procedures and frequency of inspections.

¶ The new regulation also allows for the reinforcement of precautionary measures to avoid environmental contamination from substances not used in organic farming, and the need for imported products to comply with the European regulation.

¶ The new European regulation will allow organic farmers to benefit from better access to adapted seeds.

NEXT ENVIRONMENT

EU Organic Food Revolution

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE:
DELIVERING ENVIRONMENTAL PUBLIC GOODS

by Nicola Love, Dora Mészáros, Miguel de Porras

| Two Research Institutes found that that if half of the EU's agriculture went organic by 2030, agricultural greenhouse gas emissions would go down by 12-14%.

There is solid scientific evidence to support the positive effects of organic farming on the environment, including enhancing biodiversity, mitigating climate change and improving water quality. Europeans are some of the biggest consumers of organic produce, and Europe has been a global leader in developing many regulations and policies which affect the organic farming sector. Organic farming has already been recognised as a set of practices which has a higher potential to deliver environmental public goods.

Organic agriculture is a system that relies on positive interactions with the landscape, farm diversification, mixed farming, crop rotation, closed nutrient and organic matter cycles, as well as on nitrogen-fixating plants. Contrary to some commonly-held perceptions, there is solid scientific evidence to support the positive effects organic farming has on the environment, including enhancing biodiversity, mitigating climate change and improving water quality. The organic agricultural sector is experiencing a boom in the EU; achieving coverage of 12.1 million hectares and a market of 30.7 billion euros in 2016. This amount represents over 36% of the global organic market.

Europeans are some of the biggest consumers of organic produce, and serve as a driving force behind the development of the sector.

Europe has been a global leader in developing many regulations and policies which affect the organic farming sector. In 2018, the European Union published the new organic farming regulation. Entering into force in 2021, this regulation will have diverse implications for organic farmers, retailers, traders, and inspection bodies. While there are still many open questions on how it will be implemented, the final agreement on this complex regulation is already a sign of the importance of organic agriculture to the European national governments.

Besides the organic regulation, there are many other regulations, directives, decisions, recommendations and policies that impact the development of the organic sector. The most prominent is the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), which is currently being negotiated. These new discussions represent an excellent opportunity to design instruments and incentives for farmers that deliver environmental public goods as part of national strategic plans. These plans are envisioned to include the newly-proposed "eco schemes", which would provide for payments to be made across both pillars of the CAP, direct

payments and rural development, where farmers voluntary adopt practices that have a positive environmental impact.

Organic farming has already been recognised as a set of practices which provide these environmental public goods, such as enhance biodiversity, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, reducing pollutions levels, etc. Research has found that organic farming increases species richness by 30%, and that the abundance of both insects and weeds is higher in organic fields than on conventional farms, with positive spillover effects on bird populations. In the soils, where earthworms and microbial diversity play an important role for both yields and physical stability, organic by far outperforms conventional management. Evidence also shows that this underground biodiversity can have significant effects on the water-infiltration rate on permanent grassland with at least 10 years of organic management, and that this higher infiltration at catchment level can reduce peak flooding in susceptible countries by 30%.

There are also many studies which highlight the potential contribution of organic farming to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. Research conducted by the

> *The organic agricultural sector is experiencing a boom in the EU; achieving coverage of 12.1 million hectares and a market of 30.7 billion euros in 2016.*

Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM-EU) found that a 50% organic farming scenario in 2030 would see a potential 12-14% reduction in GHG emissions in the EU agricultural sector, due to an increase in soil organic matter and a reduction in the use of mineral fertilisers. Another study found that organic fields sequestered 450kg more atmospheric

carbon per hectare than conventional fields, and the social and ecological management strategies used on organic farms have been found to contribute to the development of "adaptive capacity" in light of increasingly extreme climatic events.

Furthermore, there is broad scientific consensus that organic farming leads to improved water quality and lower water pollution levels. As no mineral fertilisers are used in organic farming, there is a low risk of nutrient leaching – a major environmental hazard in conventional agriculture.

Scientific research on organic agriculture is becoming increasingly relevant, and many of the results and technologies developed by the organic sector have also been adopted by many conventional farmers. For instance, FiBL and IFOAM-EU have recently published a paper on using sustainability assessment methodologies to incentivise the delivery of public goods for all farmers, including both organic and conventional, under the CAP.

It is clear that organic agriculture can play a valuable role in delivering positive environmental public goods to national governments and their citizens.

> **AUTHOR**
Miguel de Porras is the co-director of the EU representation of the Swiss Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (Forschungsinstitut für biologischen Landbau: FiBL). He represents the national FiBL offices in Brussels with a special focus on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and organic regulation.

> **AUTHOR**
Dora Mészáros is co-director of FiBL Europe, she represents national FiBL offices at European level with a special focus on sustainability assessment.

> **AUTHOR**
Nicola Love is a scientific assistant at FiBL Europe, she supports the implementation of European level projects.

NEXT ENVIRONMENT | *EU Organic Food Revolution*

FUTURE CHALLENGES FOR **EUROPEAN ORGANIC AGRICULTURE**

by Isobel Tomlinson

Organic agriculture in Europe is an economic success story. Organic farming offers a real response to the catastrophic decline in wildlife resulting from intensive industrial farming practices. However, challenges remain and innovation is needed. The European organic movement with the support of the EU needs to rise to the challenge and make certified organic agriculture the agroecological farming system of the future.

Organic food is grown or produced without the routine use of pesticides, manufactured fertilisers or antibiotics, with high animal welfare standards, and is GM free. Organic agriculture in Europe is an economic success story, with the area of organic certified land growing 25% between 2012 and 2017, and the sale of organic produce reaching 33.5 billion euros. A comprehensive, recently updated EU regulatory regime for all farmers, processors and producers who wish to sell 'organic' and benefit from the premium this attracts, offers a guarantee to European consumers that their food is produced to a clearly defined set of standards.

The environmental and biodiversity benefits of organic agriculture have long been reported in scientific literature. Organic farming offers a real response to the continuing catastrophic decline in wildlife in the European countryside resulting from intensive industrial farming practices, particularly the use of pesticides. These chemicals are now also linked to negative effects on human health.

Glyphosate is the most heavily applied herbicide in the world, yet in 2015 the World Health Organization ruled that it is 'probably carcinogenic to humans'. In a landmark case in the US in 2018, a jury ruled that Monsanto's top brand glyphosate weed killer 'Round-Up' caused the cancer suffered by groundkeeper Dewayne Johnson. These decisions have

Moving towards 100% #OrganicAgriculture, a possible necessity - by #IsobelTomlison

started to shift political opinion. The use of glyphosate herbicide has been renewed for another five years in the EU, but many think that a ban is inevitable. In France, President Macron has taken unilateral action to phase out glyphosate in the next few years.

Increasing public awareness of the health and environmental risks associated with the use of pesticides in non-organic agriculture should be an opportunity for organic farming in Europe. However, three key challenges remain: the organic price premium, supermarket food systems, and climate change.

Organic food has long had the reputation of a choice for wealthy consumers. Data from the US suggests the premium on organic food compared to non-organic can range from 7% for spinach to 82% for eggs. This reflects higher production costs but in an era of growing social discontent in Europe about the cost of living, like the 'Gillets Jaunes' movement in France, the European organic farming movement needs to address the social and economic aspects of the wider food system. At their core, nutritionally poor diets and obesity are caused by poverty. But 'cheap' food with lower safety and environmental standards is not an acceptable answer. New ways need to be found to increase access to fresh fruit, vegetables and unprocessed food for Europe's poorest communities.

Discount supermarkets have seen an opportunity and now stock a range of cheaper organic products. But this can only go so far. Small-scale organic producers find it difficult to produce to supermarket specifications and quantity but organic producers that industrialise to meet supermarket demands end up sharing in many of the problems of the supermarket system, including food waste and plastic pollution.

Food waste in the EU is estimated to have been worth 143 billion euros in 2015. Supermarkets reject large quantities of fruit and vegetables that do not meet 'perfect' standards, while 'buy-one-get-one-free' offers contribute substantially to food waste post-purchase. Supermarkets say that plastic packaging is essential to maintain freshness and reduce food waste, but plastic pollution has become the subject of increasing public concern in recent years. Supermarket organic food comes plastic wrapped, just the same as other non-organic produce.

Other economic models for supplying organic produce are evolving. Community-supported agriculture schemes (CSAs) involve local people providing long-term economic support to a local farm through subscriptions, committing to buy a share of the harvest, or assisting with farm work. CSAs reduce the need for packaging as produce is transported over much shorter distances. The popularity of CSAs is increasing, but CSA members are typically women, white, highly educated, and affluent. More needs to be done to ensure that the positive impact on diets that CSAs can have is felt by low income households.

Industrial food and farming systems make a very large contribution to climate change. Currently about 17% of EU household greenhouse gas footprints are associated with food consumption. How should the organic movement respond? It is clear that organic farming systems can provide a way for farmers to increase organic matter in soils and play

> " *Organic agriculture in Europe is an economic success story, with the area of organic certified land growing 25% between 2012 and 2017, and the sale of organic produce reaching 33.5 billion euros.* "

an important role in sequestering soil carbon. Livestock fed on certified organic feed avoids emissions from land use change because forests are not permitted to be cut down or pasture ploughed-up to produce organic feed. But livestock products are resource intensive and cause pollution.

Diets need to change, and not just for the significant health benefits it would bring. A recent study published in The Lancet found that meat consumption would have to fall

by 77% in Europe to avoid runaway climate change and other environmental problems. Organic farming systems in Northern Europe have traditionally relied on grass-fed grazing animals as an integral part of a mixed system, to provide nutrients in the form of manure. But the organic movement is starting to recognise that innovation is needed. Agroecology has been taken up by many advocating new approaches such as agroforestry, vegan farming and forest gardening. The European organic movement, with the support of the European Union, needs to rise to the challenge and make certified organic agriculture the agroecological farming system of the future.

> **AUTHOR**

Isobel Tomlinson has written on organic agriculture as a policy researcher at the Soil Association as well as a lecturer at the University of London. She is now setting up The Practical Ecologies Project on a smallholding in Normandy.

A PROGRESSIVE AND EUROPEAN FOREIGN POLICY
IN A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT

by Rosa Balfour

In a brittle world without enduringly strong international alliances, the debate on Europe's 'strategic autonomy' has gained new resonance, but it should not shadow nor securitise the EU's unique key international assets in the global economy and multilateral order. Working with global networks to promote norms and public goods is a key area of action to push back on nationalism, the rise of geopolitics, and transactionalism.

What #security and defence policies for the #EU's strategic autonomy? Towards a Progressive and European foreign policy @RosaBalfour

'Strategic autonomy' and 'complementarity with NATO' usually appear in the same sentence in the European debate – the latest doctrinal iteration to be found in the EU Global Strategy of June 2016. The ensemble reflects Europe's need to rely on its transatlantic relationship for security and territorial defence, empowering it to carry out foreign policy too. The EU's greatest foreign policy achievement of enlarging to Central Europe after the Cold War, pursued in tandem with NATO expansion, is testimony to this pairing.

Since the end of 2016, the US President's international preferences undermine directly or indirectly Europe's security. Whether it is the insistence on greater burden-sharing, US action in the Middle East, or trade disputes with China, current US policies put Europe's security - already challenged by Russian action in Eastern Europe and the Middle East - at risk.

European leaders have started to question whether the transatlantic relationship needs to be preserved no matter what, or whether Europe should emancipate from it. The debate on 'strategic autonomy' is animating recent efforts in the field of security and defence. It refers to the ability to make and carry out decisions on defence, to conduct military operations autonomously, and to have the industrial capabilities to do so. Even if this level of strategic autonomy were agreed upon, it would take a generation for Europe to affect the world stage.

The focus on strategic autonomy speaks to present insecurities in European societies, but not to the EU's international legitimacy where, possibly, the European Union has better opportunities to develop means of political autonomy which befit its history and international identity. The emerging debate on economic sovereignty is addressing for the first time the degree to which the EU can make political use of some of its economic and financial tools, such as the Euro as an international currency. After all, the EU and its Member States remain the world's largest trade bloc and donor.

On the multilateral stage, Europe faces an increasingly hostile environment but remains the best hope to pursue universal principles, such as human rights and the

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> ## " If Europe wants to engage with the world and simultaneously strengthen its strategic identity it needs to square some circles "

rule of law, which underpin the resilience of that multilateral system. How to partner with other countries and actors around the globe to push back on attacks to international order is no longer a second order priority.

If the way ahead appears clear, achieving it is a tall order. The rationale for collective action for the EU seems obvious – the 'politics of scale', or to be stronger together rather than weaker apart – but historically difficult to achieve. The multiple threats and risks on Europe's doorsteps have only minimally bridged the strategic divergence that continues to beset the continent, and the rise of the populist radical right is beginning to undermine existing European external policies, not to speak of a higher level of ambition.

Looking at global politics from a non-European perspective, how Europe's friends and partners around the world will welcome a bid for greater autonomy – politically, economically, and strategically – still needs to be seen. The EU's worldview that it has acted as a 'force for good' is not uncritically accepted. After all, that ethical stand was also possible thanks to the EU's belonging to a stable and hegemonic West.

If Europe wants to engage with the world and simultaneously strengthen its strategic

identity it needs to square some circles. Without giving into the facile critique that realism and geopolitics render multilateral principles obsolete and warrant hard-nosed politics, Europe should leverage its assets, which are irrevocably embedded in multilateralism and cooperation. Climate change, conflict prevention and mediation, and an open and fairer international trade system are among the assets that the EU can concretely work towards globally.
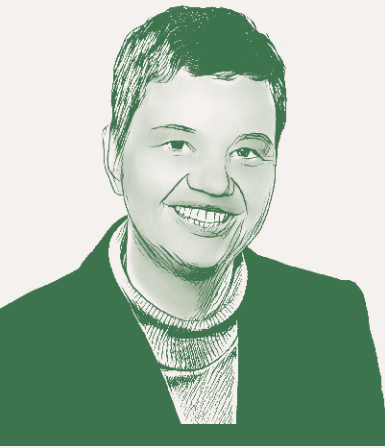
To do so it needs to engage flexibly with global actors, focusing more on multilevel networks including civil society rather than on the traditional partnerships between governments, some of which are no longer benign or useful. Both will require a dose of humility in listening to non-European world views and of pragmatism in seeking appropriate strategies and paths forward.

Last but not least, if Europe wants to imagine its own history of prosperity, democracy and peace as still relevant to the debates taking place in the rest of the world, it also needs to think about the global future sustainability of welfare, taking progressive politics outside national boundaries and engaging in a more global and open debate about public common goods.

> **AUTHOR**
Rosa Balfour is a senior transatlantic Fellow at The German Marshall Fund of the United States and a member of the Steering Committee of WIIS-Brussels (Women In International Security). Her fields of expertise include European politics, institutions, foreign and security policy, and international relations. She holds a PhD in international relations from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

NEXT GLOBAL — *European Strategic Autonomy*

Brexit and Trump – involuntary boosts for a common EU defence?

*Interview with **Ronja Kempin** by Alain Bloëdt*

Ronja Kempin
is a Senior Fellow in the EU/Europe Division of Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), the German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

Appearing as an integral element of the EU Global Strategy and given added impetus by the challenges posed by Brexit and Trump, 'strategic autonomy' is a concept that has resurfaced in various policy debates in Europe. Whats does this rise in significance mean for the EU and what direction can the concept give for the Union in the coming years, especially in relation to the security and defence agenda?

Has #EU "strategic autonomy" opened a path to a EU army? by @ronjakempin from @SWP_Europa

The Progressive Post: *The concept of "European strategic autonomy" has gained importance lately. Is there a causal connection with the election of President Trump, or would it have been important anyway?*

Ronja Kempin: Several elements made the term 'European strategic autonomy' so important. Firstly, it figured in the European Global Strategy (EUGS) which was published in June 2016. Coincidentally, the EUGS was published just two days after the Brexit referendum and for many Member States, security and defence policy became an area where right after this referendum one could demonstrate that the European Union is an actor and that is still able to not only respond to the security and protection needs of its citizens, but also that the EU27 would be able to keep the European Union moving ahead in terms of integration.

PP: *As an expert on the subject, do you really believe in the concept?*

RK: I do. Brexit was a trigger for a greater push towards increased integration. Security and defence policy were an easy choice for Member States looking for examples of successful integration as previously there was no integration whatsoever in this area.

PP: *What does it mean in terms of EU security and defence?*

RK: That is a difficult question, as each Member State has a different definition. I would define strategic autonomy in the area of security and defence policy as containing three elements. The first is political autonomy, meaning a Member State is able to take security and defence policy decisions autonomously. The second is operational autonomy. In other words, being able, within the framework of the European Union, to rapidly and efficiently deploy military and civilian capabilities. The last element is industrial autonomy, which involves being less dependent on having to 'buy American' and thus being less dependent on their technology but also on Washington's willingness to let Member States use their military technology.

PP: *Is there a chance that the concept of strategic autonomy might be used during the next election campaigns, and if so, would it be used by the right, the left, or even the extreme right or extreme left?*

RK: Usually, security and defence policy aren't good campaign subjects as national electorates tend to vote based on different issues. If it was used as a campaign issue, it may well come from both the left and right, but for very different reasons. The political right in Central and Eastern Europe may use the concept to say 'look, the European Union is stupid, it wants to get rid of the United States and NATO, but we're not going to let them, as our security and survival is secured by the USA'. The political left, on the other hand, could make a valid case for increased strategic autonomy in the EU simply because it has always claimed that the EU is a different type of international actor.

PP: *Do you think that the issue of autonomy could reignite the debate about a European army?*

RK: Strategic autonomy could be defined in a much broader way. It must also have economic and monetary dimensions if you want to be truly autonomous. In today's multipolar world, if the EU wants to be one of the poles that shapes the future of international relations, then strategic autonomy has to deal with much broader issues than just security and defence policy. We must also become more autonomous economically and financially. We should strive to make the Euro the world's leading currency and then use our economic strength as an asset in negotiations with the USA.

PP: *Is the idea of a European army a viable path for more strategic autonomy?*

RK: I have often been confronted with Eastern European countries who say it's not a viable idea at all and that they don't want a European army because it would distance them from the USA. The picture is different if you look at the public debate, after Brexit, in France and Germany, the EU's strongest military forces. There is more of an inclination towards better cooperation, coordination and integration for security and defence policy.

PP: *Major achievements in integration have come about through moments of great political will and the courage to achieve what was deemed impossible before. With Trump externally, and Brexit internally, is this the moment to create an EU army?*

RK: I don't believe we have yet reached a point where a Member State would be willing to give up its national army, but I think it is not too far-fetched to imagine the creation of a European force that would coexist with the 27 Member States' national armies but which would specialise in the key area of EU security and defence policy, which is crisis management. If we keep developing such an army for crisis management, which is not only civilian and which does not only deal with low-end military tasks, then I believe Member States that are reluctant to have the European Union to be a security provider may gain more confidence and gradually move towards more security and defence policy integration.

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> *If the EU wants to be one of the poles that shapes the future of international relations, then strategic autonomy has to deal with much broader issues than just security defence policy.*
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TO WATCH

FOOD EVOLUTION
by Scott Hamilton Kennedy

What precisely are GMOs - genetically modified organisms? For some, there is no compromise on their harmfulness. GMOs are our enemies. But what if we were wrong? This film challenges many preconceived ideas and raises questions about the alarmist discourse linked to the perceived dangerousness of GMOs.

After 30 years of study, the film suggests, the effects on health are not yet visible. Rather, GMOs reduce famine and allow healthier crops. The scientific consensus presented indicates that GMOs are safe for consumption as well as the environment.

Scott Hamilton Kennedy's latest film goes against many preconceived ideas. Told by astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, it demonstrates the importance of using scientific methods to ground the debate. The director explores our society's mistrust of GMOs on our plates.

Whether or not one agrees with its conclusions, this film is a reminder to remain vigilant about the positive or negative effects of GMOs over time and to learn about their impacts on our lives.

SANTIAGO, ITALIA
by Nanni Moretti

The great Italian film director and actor Nanni Moretti, author of masterpieces like 'The Mass Is Ended' (1985), Caro diario (1993) and Habemus Papam (2011), has filmed a historical, yet topical documentary on Chilean refugees in the Italian Embassy in Santiago, more than 45 years ago.

On 11 September 1973, the Chilean army, under the leadership of general Augusto Pinochet, overthrew the democratically elected government of President Salvador Allende.

The brutal repression that followed pushed many sympathisers of the previous government to flee their country, others sought refuge in Foreign Embassies in Santiago - the Italian embassy was one those. Chileans became refugees in their own country.

Through various testimonies, Moretti brings a period back to live where many refugees were saved thanks to the help of a few Italian diplomats - at a time where the current Italian government closes its ports to refugees.

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TO READ
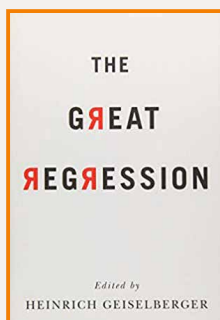
The Great Regression

Edited by Heinrich Geiselberger

Under the stewardship of Heinrich Geiselberger, 15 left-wing intellectuals give a realistic view of the current political situation in Europe, and all over the world. The situation is alarming: the fall of communism in 1989 led to the victory of neo-liberalism, which led to a hyper-individualisation of citizens and, in turn, an apparently irrepressible rise in populism, xenophobia and various types of religious and nationalist extremism. The thinking explored here argues that only left-wing radicalism can reverse this process of global regression. The rise of these different types of populisms should push left-wing thinkers to reinvent it in order to rebalance the relationship between citizenship and state.
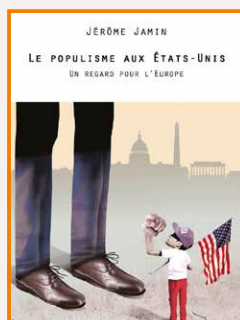
Le populisme aux Etats-Unis Un regard pour l'Europe
("Populism in the United States" – *not translated*)

By Jérôme Jamin

The Belgian political scientist Jérôme Jamin dissects how deeply populism is rooted in American politics. His essay explains that Trump is part of an American tradition of candidates, like the since forgotten Pat Buchanan or Ross Perot. It also recalls that if the Democrats and populists fight for votes by using the idea of a homogeneous and hard-working majority, it's the populist rhetoric that brands the elite an 'illegitimate minority' and that constantly strives to discredit this elite and to make it responsible for all the ills of society.
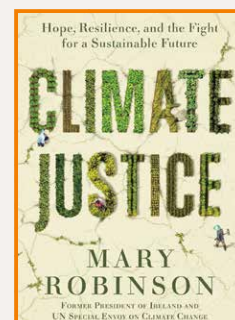
Climate Justice:
Hope resilience and the fight for a sustainable future

By Mary Robinson

Robinson, a former Irish president and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, tells the stories of people from around the world who are on the frontline of fighting climate injustice. She highlights communities that suffer the worst effects, but who are, more often than not, least responsible for the emissions causing that are causing climate change.

One example are drought-stricken farmers in Uganda, who have endured extreme weather recently (longer rainy seasons followed by intense periods of drought) that has damaged their crops. However, she offers tales of hope and courage in times of difficulty and demonstrates how people adapt and become stronger because of what they are experiencing.

The stories are all memorable and contribute to the book's success in highlighting the humanistic side to the debate that we can all relate to and learn from in the urgent fight for climate justice.

TO READ
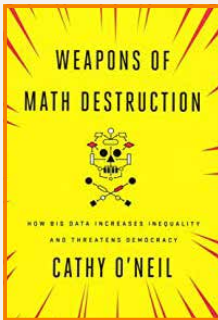
### Weapons of Math Destruction

By Cathy O'Neil

Cathy O'Neil has coined the term Weapons of Math Destruction (WMD) which she uses to refer to harmful statistical models. A former analyst, Cathy O'Neil points out the impact WMD have on our daily lives: getting to university, borrowing money, rating a professor and, most importantly, the need to constantly monitor the relevance and clarity of the development of the algorithms used. WMD are the mathematical applications that feed data economics and O'Neil argues that they are responsible for spectacular progress, but also for oppressing the most disadvantaged while making the rich richer. The issue with these applications is that they are based on choices made by fallible people and on parameters that do not take into account exceptions, unforeseen events or the human element. The author is leading a crusade against the misuse of this data.

Les enfants du vide
("The children of the emptiness" - *not translated*)

By Raphaël Glucksmann

Individualism has triumphed, the collective is weakened. But how to make society work under these conditions? Faced with this question, the French journalist and film director Raphaël Glucksmann calls for the awakening of citizens by questioning a vision of society the Left has surrendered to in recent decades. The book is a critique of a model of Social Democracy that is quite new in France. For him, the Left has failed in the face of ultraliberal thinking. It describes a richer world but a more isolated population. He points to the growing gap between financial, cultural and political elites and the rest of the population. A gap that shakes the democratic consensus. A new social contract is needed, concludes the author, citing the example of the city of Kingersheim in the French region Alsace, which uses participatory democracy. Glucksmann advocates a real strengthening of citizens' control over representative institutions and public authorities. A book resolutely in tune with the zeitgeist.
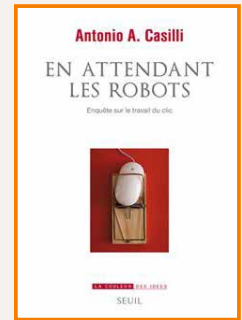
En attendant les robots
("Waiting for the Robots" - *not translated*)

By Antonio Casilli

Who, or what, is hiding behind "clicks"? At a time when the disappearance of work seems irreversible, it would be fair to assume artificial intelligence. Not so, according to the author. All over the world, whether in India, Madagascar, Kenya or the Philippines, "click workers" number in their millions. Their job is simple: to create clicks. They click on images, create standard profiles, identify, chew through and digest information for large companies, to increase their visibility. In the digital revolution, there will not be a major replacement of workers, but a greater precariousness of work. This book analyses and deconstructs an omnipresent anxiety-provoking approach to the disappearance of work. "Digital Labour" workers in click farms scattered around the world and producers of information flows are recruited online and are outside any jurisdiction due to their invisibility. An interesting examination of the ins and outs of work automation.

Find all publications online at www.progressivepost.eu

TO READ

L'entreprise comme commun
("Making Business a common Asset"
 - *not translated*)

By Swann Bommier and Cécile Renouard

The authors put forward the idea of making business a common asset. Has the implementation in recent years of the concept of corporate social responsibility been effective? The failure of the OECD Multilateral Agreement on Investment in 1998, the subprime crisis and the rise of social movements and local initiatives have called into question corporate accountability. By also highlighting the importance of business in the democratic process, the authors suggest a shift in the role of business in society, politics, finance, social issues and the environment. Business is indeed a common asset that must improve citizens' living conditions.
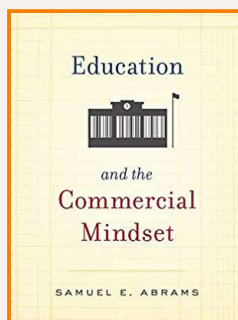
Education and
the Commercial Mindset

By Samuel E. Abrams

Sam Abrams' book has become essential to understanding the new challenges facing American politics, with the future of the education system being a central issue. The Democrats' victory in the 2018 midterm election demonstrated that the ability of Progressives to bring together voters was based less on criticising the President and more on defending public services. While social security remained at the heart of the debate, education had become a major issue in several of the congressional candidates' campaigns. Soon after, the new year began with the Los Angeles teachers' strike.

Sam Abrams not only offers a historical overview of the education system crisis under the Reagan administration, but also a reminder of the failure of privatisation attempts in the 1990s. In addition, he introduces European readers to the ongoing experiment of Charter schools. Being non-profit schools and therefore free of charge for parents, these state-funded private schools are simultaneously free from administrative constraints, but in danger of closure if they fail.
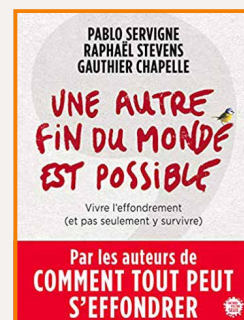
Une autre fin du monde est possible
("Another End of the World is possible"
 - *not translated*)

By Pablo Servigne,
Raphaël Stevens & Gauthier Chapelle

Can we survive the end of our world? How could we deal with it? The book's three authors explain the popular notion of "collapsology", the study of the collapse of our industrial civilisation and what could succeed it. By defining its objective (learning to live with bad news and sudden and progressive changes in the environment), they propose a change in attitude and awareness of society in the face of the rapid destruction of fauna and flora, a snowball effect that could lead to the end of humanity. The book is an instruction manual that aims to be more realistic than alarmist. Far from cliché, it positions itself as an encouragement to recreate social cohesion. Is unity the key to surviving the end of our civilization?

TO READ
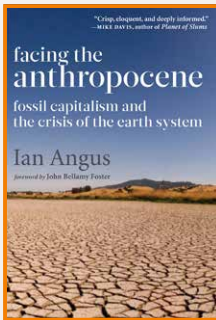
Facing the Anthropocene
Fossil Capitalism and the Crisis of the Earth System

By Ian Angus

According to the author, we are facing a radical transformation of our physical environment. This transformation is not limited to increased pollution or rising temperatures, but is part of a global crisis caused by human activity. For humanity to survive, radical social change and the replacement of fossil capitalism by an ecological civilization, eco-socialism, are necessary. Angus calls on 21st century Socialists to make the preservation of the Anthropocene their priority. The environmental crisis is the biggest crisis of our time and a global mobilisation is needed to preserve the Age of Man.
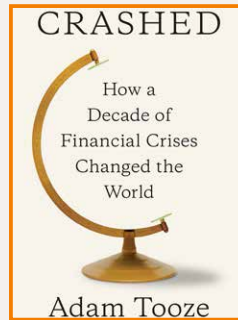
Crashed:
How a Decade of Financial Crises Changed the World

By Adam Tooze - Columbia University

From a prizewinning economic historian, an eye-opening analysis of the financial meltdown and economic downturn affecting the global economy over the last decade.

Tooze offers a clear explanation of the mechanisms that produced the crisis and an account of the tentative responses to it. The book shows how the the European and American financial systems are deeply intertwined and explains how the path of economic development and debt are erratic.
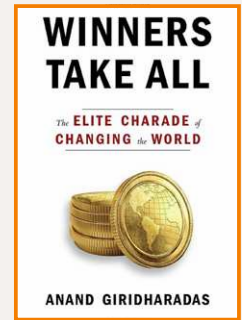
### *Winners Take All:*
The Elite Charade of Changing the World

By Anand Giridharadas

An insider's investigation of how the global elite's efforts to "change the world" not only don't do that – but preserve the status quo and obscure their role in causing the problems in the first place, which they later seek to solve.

The former New York Times columnist takes us into a world where the rich and powerful fight for equality and justice any way they can–except ways that threaten the social order and their position atop it.

Why, the author asks, should our gravest problems be solved by the unelected upper crust instead of the public institutions these very people erode by lobbying and dodging taxes? His answer: Rather than rely on scraps from the winners, we must take on the gruelling democratic work of building more robust, egalitarian institutions and truly changing the world.

TO THINK
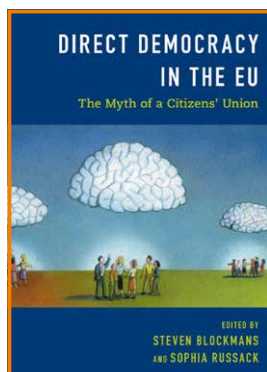
### Engaged by being disempowered: Italians experience direct democracy

By Eleonora Poli

Italians are among the most active participants of European Citizens Initiatives (ECIs). Yet when it comes to national referendums or petitions there are fluctuating levels of involvement because these instruments are often perceived to be ineffective. And not without reason. Citizens' legislative initiatives have rarely been converted into national laws and, according to the Italian Constitution, Italy's obligations under international and EU treaties cannot be changed by public consultation anyway. Unlike the ECIs, which are thought to be an effective direct democratic instrument, the poor success rates of national direct democratic instruments have resulted in the latter being used more to protest against the government and the status quo than to influence the legislative process.

Challenges and opportunities of the mainstream left in Europe

By Sonja Lokar

Due to the changed geostrategic balances, the weakening of the industrial working class and nation states within the most developed countries in Europe, the mainstream left has no other choice than to open up to learn how to organise and unite a patchwork of bottom-up social movements for equality and sustainable development nationally, in the EU and globally, or it will be politically marginalised and pushed from the mainstream political stage.
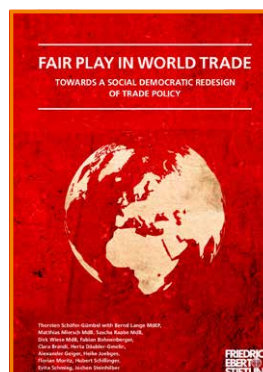
Fair Play in world trade: Towards a Social Democratic redesign of trade policy

By Thorsten Schäfer-Gümbel, Bernd Lange MEP et al.

Trade policy has an impact on the everyday lives of many people in Europe, Germany and the world over. Trade policy is not an end in itself but has to serve broader objectives. The social-democratic approach differs fundamentally from that of market liberals in its belief that trade must be based on sustainability and politically-defined fair rules. Therefore a new trade policy is needed which strengthens trust, democracy and justice.

Europe and genocides: the French case

By David Nguyen, Iannis Roder

What is the level of knowledge of the genocide of Jews among people aged between 18 and 24? How do we explain the deficit of knowledge that has been measured? What consequences does this gap have for the perception of the Jewish population today? The investigation of the Foundation Jean-Jaurès Foundation, the Global Jewish Advocacy AJC Paris, the FEPS and the French government's agency to fight racism, anti-Semitism and anti-LGBT hatred (DILCRAH), and the Ifop polling institute, provides some answers.

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