



EUROPEAN
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ROUNDTABLE WORKS - EXTENDED

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INTRODUCTION

BY CECILIA MEZZANOTTE

In the following pages, you will be presented with the work of the four Roundtables of this third edition of the EYD. Firstly, you will see how the Roundtable approached the discussion, and which was the spirit that accompanied the two days of debate. Then, you will be introduced to the results of these discussions, with a thorough description of the solutions and considerations that the different groups found and elaborated for each theme.

This document is meant to give you a precise, though synthetic, idea of what the EYD has been for the participants, and what it has produced.

But before moving on, let me spend a few words on the event itself. The founding idea of this event dates back to 2015, when the first edition of the EYD was held during the Milan EXPO. We have come a long way since then, and our enthusiasm and drive have not yet extinguished.

Our association, European Generation, gathers very different people from all over Europe and beyond: not only in terms of nationality, language or ethnicity, but in terms of visions, beliefs and ideas of what the European Union is or what it should be.

We have spent months discussing and debating, which lead us to recognize that everyone has a point, that problems are better analyzed when shared and that, in the end, everyone of us has some contribution to give. With this realization, we have approached the organization of the EYD 2018, trying to offer to other students like us, the same chance to discuss, to be bold and ambitious in trying to find solutions to fundamental problems of the Union.

Thus, we dove, with all the participants, in the event and its discussions keeping in mind a provocation launched by Federico, the curator of the EYD: "Ceci n'est pas l'Europe" he stated in his speech; but what was Europe for every and each of us in that room?

Furthering your reading, you will see what the 4 groups have thought and envisaged for the EU and our collective future.



ROUNDTABLE WORKS

COMMON DEFENCE AND ANTI TERRORISM

AN OVERVIEW

The works of the Common Defence and Anti-Terrorism Roundtable took place in a constructive and friendly way, allowing for a proper environment to define the interesting final proposals.

Notwithstanding the complexity of the subject under discussion, and the differing points of view of the participants, the group was able to define common principles and ideals from which the proposals stemmed.

Thus, during the course of the first day, they agreed on such starting points, through a brainstorming of ideas concerning the European Common Defence. Then, the issues that were considered as the most relevant one, were fixed for discussion for the following day. At the beginning of the second day, it was established to follow the approach: the issues recognized the previous day were divided between short and long-term ones.

Then, the two blocks were tackled separately, in order to give greater linearity and appropriate framing to the different subjects. The last few points in particular, given both the broad spectrum they covered and the time constraints to which the schedule was unfortunately subject, were discussed by the participants divided in different groups, which elaborated their own proposals and then presented them to the rest of the Roundtable for further discussion and elaboration.



ROUNDTABLE WORKS

COMMON DEFENCE AND ANTI TERRORISM

OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION

The Common Defence and Anti-Terrorism roundtable begun the discussion defining some shared starting points. Firstly, they all agreed that the worrisome trends in the global scenario should be acknowledge by the European Union, in order to further properly its development and adapt its policies. Moreover, they stressed the difference between hard and soft power, recalling that the former should only be used to guarantee the impact of the latter, while avoiding to over-militarize the Union. Lastly, the group proposed to build on the progresses achieved in R&D to further the defence industry consolidations, through the development of strategic instruments (shared culture, continental security doctrine, etc.).

The proposals then elaborated on Common Defence were differentiated between short-term and long-term oriented.

Considering the short-term perspective first, the table started from the consideration of the recent development of PESCO, seen as an opportunity in multiple ways: to help standardizing equipment across member countries and exploit economies of scale on R&D, procurement and maintenance; to strengthen the position of EU Member States in NATO, through coordination of PESCO members' strategic aims; and to overcome the East-West divisions within the Union. Furthermore, the group suggested to enhance the structured cooperation by providing larger powers to the European Defence Agency.

However, PESCO was not the only notable turning point for the future of the EU recognized by the group. Indeed, Brexit was also considered as one, due to the fact that it will significantly weaken EU defence capabilities. On this basis, the group expressed their hope that current levels of cooperation won't be dramatically reduced in light of Brexit. Thus, they encouraged efforts to pool resources and knowhow, and a British involvement in future EU Defence Projects. Another point of attention due to Brexit, was the repercussions on the current balance of powers within NATO: the group envisaged a redefinition of France and Germany's roles within the Alliance in accordance with the EU Agenda and interests.

The last two points into consideration for the short-term perspective of the Common Defence discussion, were the further development of the Military Exchange Programme and a shift in the command over EU policing and military training to the decentralized regional headquarters given the issues in coordination for field operations. For the former point, it was required to the EU Military Committee to establish a Panel of Experts, that would research options of closer cooperation in military training and capacity building.

ROUNDTABLE WORKS

COMMON DEFENCE AND ANTI TERRORISM

OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION - cont.

Then, the table moved to the discussion concerning the long-term perspective for the Common Defence of the Union. The main topic of the debate was the eventuality of the development of a European Army. The group agreed that such subject required further analysis, before any conclusion could be reached. For this reason, they demanded greater elaboration on the matter, through the drafting by the Political and Security Committee of a concrete proposal that should clarify the following elements on the possible development of a European Army:

- i. Distinction between offensive and defensive approach;
- ii. Supranational or intergovernmental capacities;
- iii. Voluntary or compulsory participation of Member States;
- iv. Building on the preceding point, different speeds of integrations should be considered;
- v. All aforementioned elements should be considered in compliance with the best practices of transparency and accountability.

In conclusion, the group demanded alternative proposals to the European Army, in terms of increased cooperation between national armed forces, beyond the framework of PESCO.

A further long-term point that was elaborated upon, was the use of defensive forces as a practice, which could be subject to exceptions only when addressing an international crisis, under Article 7 of the Charter of the United Nations, and agreed upon unanimously at the European Council. Also, they recognized that an EU defensive force could also be deployed in the framework of bilateral and multilateral agreements/relationships with non-EU Member States and International Organisations.

Lastly, the table stressed the existing gap in the field of sustainable peacebuilding, which requires to strengthen the conflict transformation, prevention and peacebuilding capacities within the EU itself. For this reason, they called for the creation of a specific PESCO initiative focused on peacebuilding and Infrastructure for Peace (I4P).

In conclusion, the group reflected on the theme of Anti-terrorism. Three points for consideration emerged from the discussion:

1. "Passenger name record" tools (PNR), should be exploited more efficiently by European authorities to face terrorism, paying however due regard to data protection;
2. Though aware of the current constraints set by the Lisbon Treaty, the groups foresaw an extension of the powers of the European Attorney, towards transnational policy areas concerned by terrorist threats, other than the financial sector;
3. Social integration practices as pre-emptive measures should be strengthened by Members States, through soft policies as awareness campaigns, as well as more structured interventions.

ROUNDTABLE WORKS

DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET

OVERVIEW

The work of the roundtable occurred in a friendly and informal way, always bearing in mind the importance of the issues discussed and the fundamental value of listening to the diverse opinions.

In the first day, the participants to the Digital Single Market (DSM) roundtable acquainted themselves with each other and expressed their initial thoughts on the European DSM Strategy.

Thereafter, they agreed to focus their attention on three issues regarding the DSM: digital inclusion, geo-blocking and cybersecurity.

The former was discussed during the first session, whereas the latter two issues during the second day.

The debate for each one of these topics was carried out as follows: the participants divided themselves into four groups of discussion, in order to brainstorm some ideas and write down their proposals, afterwards they would share the findings of each group in a plenary assembly and revise all together the proposals.



ROUNDTABLE WORKS

DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET

OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION

The discussion in the roundtable related to the Digital Single Market (DSM) roundtable started from the assumption that eliminating the barriers for the free movement of information via internet represents an opportunity for the EU institutions to gain trust from its citizens, as well as enhancing economic growth, however there are challenges that need to be addressed on this path, such as digital inclusion, geo-blocking and cybersecurity.

Since the founding treaties of the EU aim to establish a free market while fostering social progress and fighting exclusion, the same principle needs to be applied in the DSM strategy. In this sense the DSM at the same time needs citizens who are able to take advantage of the opportunities it offers in order to be effective and can be a tool to further promote social inclusion.

During the discussion, several categories of people that could benefit from this strategy were identified and further proposals were elaborated to target these groups. Therefore, the roundtable proposed the implementation of showcasing projects to show the benefits of technology and digitalization dedicated to the elderly and delivered via regional and national television stations and local workshops, funded through the European Social Fund.

In addition, in face of the ongoing digitalization of banking services, the roundtable proposed the creation of harmonized user interface templates adapted to the needs of the elderly, that may be voluntarily implemented by institutions to serve this group in the best possible way. The DSM framework could also benefit the unemployed, facilitating their access to the labour market and their employability, in this regard the newly founded European Labour Authority (ELA) could play a pivotal role.

Furthermore, the enhancement of employability also concerns refugees and immigrants, therefore the roundtable concluded that digital skills courses could be organized by the Member States with EU funds and following EU guidelines as well as information sessions could be provided to facilitate the entrance in the labour market, for instance by teaching how to write a CV and a cover letter and how to use online platforms to search jobs.

In the end, since there are innumerable categories that would require particular attention, it would be reasonable to aim for an individualized approach to tackle digital inclusion, by creating instruments to meet the needs of each person.

ROUNDTABLE WORKS

DIGITAL SINGLE MARKET

OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION- cont.

Concerning the issue of geo-blocking, the discussion started from the assumption that it represents a discriminatory practice and its elimination would foster economic growth due to the enlargement of markets. However, taking into account the cultural disparities both among the EU Member States and the other countries and the nature itself of some industries such as movie production and distribution and the music industry, the roundtable reached an agreement on gradual solutions.

In particular, taking into account that the business model of the movie industry is based on territoriality and windowing, the roundtable proposed the prohibition of geo-blocking for movies in the EU after a period of two years from the distribution following which most of the revenue has been generated by tickets sales and pay TV licenses.

In addition, since one of the goals of the EU is increasing the cultural understanding of the people of its Member States, a limited prohibition of geo-blocking for nationally produced European content and give all Europeans access to content produced in the EU could be implemented.

In conclusion, since the second pillar of the DSM strategy focuses on the rights concerning digital nets and services, it could be beneficial to unify the Member States' legal frameworks into one system, as it happens in the Single Market. Nevertheless, the European Commission, in particular the Directorate-General for Competition, should focus its attention on the differences between physical stores and online stores and digital streaming services, since undercutting this discrepancy could entail negative consequences on Member States' markets.

Finally, the last issue addressed in the DSM roundtable was related to cybersecurity. The proposals elaborated by the roundtable were articulated in two main points: the creation of a European unique personal identification system connected to a common authentication system available for all public institutions and businesses and the empowerment of the Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA).

The former will lead to a trilateral interaction by governments, businesses and citizens and will foster a more secure environment inside the EU and shorten reaction spans to vulnerabilities.

As for the latter, the funding and competences of the ENISA should be vastly enlarged, in order to allow it to coordinate a coherent approach to cybersecurity among the EU Member States by accessing confidential information of all protection systems, as well as monitoring threats on a European level and the upholding and development of secure cryptography standards.

ROUNDTABLE WORKS

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND NEIGHBOURING POLICY

OVERVIEW

The proposals summarized in the final EYD document are the results of two days of fruitful and enriching discussion among twenty-four students of many different EU nationalities.

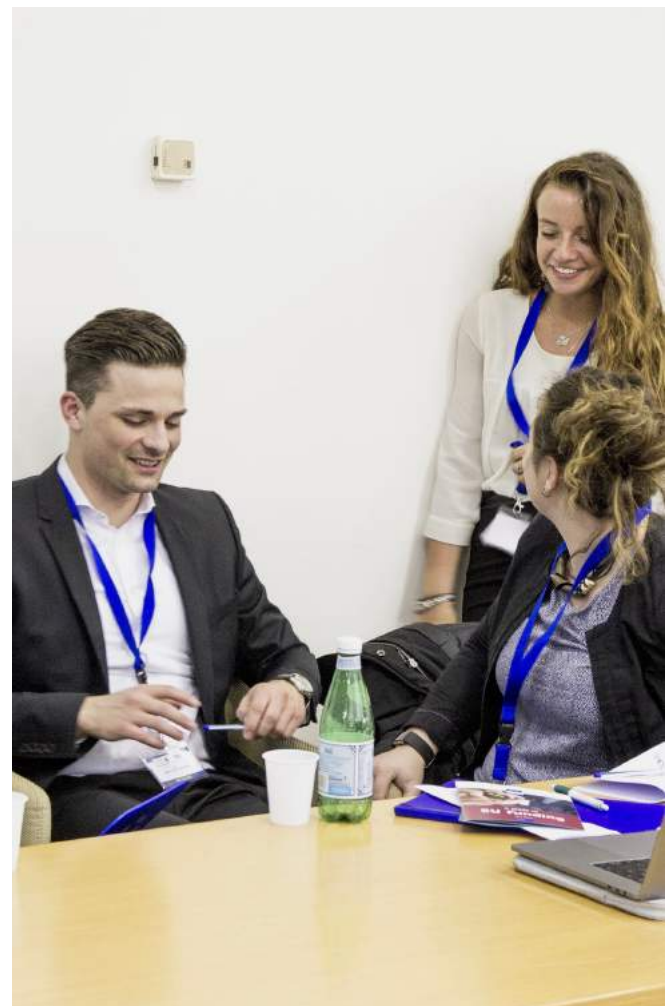
During the first day, the discussion about the EU Trust Fund started with a brainstorming. This appeared indeed to be the best way of collecting various inputs on the issue.

The emerging ideas were then linked to each other through an open discussion that led to the specification of different subtopics. The participants were then divided in six groups with the task of formalizing a series of proposals on each subtopic. Day 2 began with a plenary review of the proposals about the first topic.

The debate then proceeded with a collection of opinions about the spread of European values among its neighbour countries. This proved to be a good way of gathering ideas in an even more comprehensive manner. As for the day before, all the inputs were then organized and formalized into a list of declarations.

The remaining time was dedicated to changes and corrections of the document, both in terms of form and content.

The general atmosphere during the work was respectful and productive.



ROUNDTABLE WORKS

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND NEIGHBOURING POLICY

OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION

The discussion about the EU Trust Fund for Africa started with a definition of its main aims and scope. It was clarified that it should be dedicated exclusively to emergencies and short term initiatives, while long-term projects should be reassigned to different specialized funds.

A series of concrete short and long term interventions follows this background introduction. For what concerns the short-term ones, the first proposals prescribe the increase of funding for the development of legal migration routes and the establishment of registration centres in transit countries outside the EU for asylum seekers and refugees.

A strong emphasis was then put on the necessity to strengthen border control, in particular in hotspots like Southern Italy and Greece, and to simplify legal bureaucracy for those who wish to enter the EU due to climate change crisis or on-going conflicts in their respective countries. Along with that, the creation of a fund to improve the quality of life in emergency areas was appointed as fundamental. This has to include a guarantee for the unity of the families, improvements of living conditions in refugee camps as well as provisions of medical and psychological care and language courses.

The delineation of long term interventions followed three main directions, i.e. migrant management, education and economics.

The first one was presumed to include multilateral measures to combat climate change and its effects and interventions in support of political stability, democracy and peace. Further effort should then be put into slowing down the process of integration with communities' activities, improving cooperation between Member States in the protection of individuals' rights and guaranteeing free education for children.

With regards to the last aspects it was proposed the setting of a minimum quota (i.e. 2% of the Fund) to be dedicated to education and culture, in particular the protection of oppressed and marginalized minority groups and the expansion of educational resources in developing countries. The spread of primary education for all ages and social classes via literacy programs and the provision of scientific exchange programs between European and African universities were then underlined as crucial. All these interventions presume investments in the creation of the necessary infrastructure, in training of local experts and in the enhancement of the already existing humanitarian cluster systems.

From an economic point of view, they prescribed the provision of trade benefits and incentives for democratic enforcement and human rights promotion and investments in long term sustainable economic growth through the creation of quality job opportunities and a greater collaboration with International partners like China. A series of infrastructures such as roads and railways should also be developed in countries which meet a fairly democratic standard.

ROUNDTABLE WORKS

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND NEIGHBOURING POLICY

OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION - cont.

They then proposed the setting up of a supervisory body that provides best practices on the reduction of corruption and economic measures through advising programs. It was finally highlighted as of extreme importance on one hand to sensitize the European citizens via social campaigns in order to fight nationalist feelings and promote the European identity, and on the other to make refugees aware of the core European Values, i.e. respect for human dignity and human rights, peace, freedom, democracy, equality and the rule of law.

In the second part of the debate about EU Neighbouring Policy, the post-soviet bloc was first of all chosen as focus-area. In the frame of the EU Eastern Partnership, it was thus stressed how Europe should strongly reaffirm its support for these countries and increase its diplomatic relations with Russia in order to enhance peace-building and stability through non-military means. In this context, the principle of conditionality and of “more for more” were prioritized as the main tools of incentivizing partner states’ cooperation. In terms of practical reforms, much attention was dedicated to border controls, education and cultural sharing.

They proposed an easing of bilateral visa restrictions and free visa travel for academics and scientific researchers, aimed at creating a network of knowledge, research and expertise across the region. They then suggested the EU to start collaborating with national governments on the implementation of educational reforms and scientific research as well as the creation an online public job platform for academics to facilitate medium term job experience opportunities across the EU and transition countries.

In order to support the independence of the area, enhancing the sense of belonging and national differentiation, while spreading EU values, a Committee should be created to promote cultural exchanges for sport, music and the arts as well as sharing of expertise. At the same time, they proposed the creation of open-door mediation committees, consisting of both local and EU representatives, to provide dialog between the parts.

Finally, cooperation with the UN was stressed as fundamental. That is in fact aimed at increasing the level of pressure on the conflicting parties through the imposition of sanctions and discontinue economic interactions and the establishment of an alliance to promote informal education about human rights.

ROUNDTABLE WORKS

EDUCATION

OVERVIEW

The proposals that will be further discussed in the next pages, were the result of the two days' session of discussion held during the European Youth Debate 2018.

During the first day, the issue of education was approached through brainstorming: members exposed very briefly the first concept that they linked to the word education.

Thanks to the variegated composition of the group with respect to both field of study and nationality, perspective on education were quite different. This consistently enriched the debate.

In the second day, the previously expressed ideas were aggregated into problems and solutions.

Finally, during the last day, problems and potential solutions were linked into propositions, resulting in the suggestions exposed in this section of the document.

Brainstorming was the chosen discussion method so to incentivise creative participation from all group members.



ROUNDTABLE WORKS

EDUCATION

OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION - cont.

Each of the six points highlighted in the previous section was translated into multiple concrete policy proposals. This paragraph illustrates in further detail these possible actions. Addressing inequality, three specific recommendations were elaborated.

First, the lack of flexibility which currently characterises Member States' education systems, particularly during primary and secondary stages, constitutes a problem for students. In fact, the present situation does not allow them to customise their educational path according to their preferences and needs. For this reason, EU institutions should take action in order to encourage its Members to make their educational system more flexible and suitable to everyone's necessities and wills.

Second, the European Union is still affected by cross country inequality with respect to basic skills learning and orientation. In order to tackle this issue, the Union should incentivise Member States to guarantee that every student is provided with the same indispensable set of tools. Furthermore, the figure of the Career Ambassador should be institutionalised and promoted in every national education system.

Third, within countries inequality is equally growing. The Union should contribute through the institution of bursaries to close the gap between rich and poor or boys and girls with respect to access to education.

Concerning scarce political participation and awareness at the Union level, three proposals were developed.

First, the EU should take action in order to fight against scarce knowledge of very basic political concepts. In order to do this, courses of European Civic Education should be introduced already in primary schools. Children should learn about how the institutions in which they are embedded work, starting from the very local to EU bodies.

Second, in order to close intergenerational cleavages, the Union should promote the creation of suitable social media channels, allowing people of different ages and backgrounds to communicate easily.

Third, political participation should be strongly encouraged through the creation of a unique European platform gathering information about ongoing and future projects in Europe. This would raise both participation and awareness.

Addressing increasing job market fluidity and rate of innovation, four suggestions were elaborated.

First, the Union should incentivise Member States to implement result-oriented processes of education through cooperation with labour market actors.

Second, the appearance of totally new fields of competence and expertise should be acknowledged.

ROUNDTABLE WORKS

EDUCATION

OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION - cont.

Second, the appearance of totally new fields of competence and expertise should be acknowledged. The list of professional qualifications should be constantly updated and made attainable via education systems.

Third, the sharing of best practices should be eased across Member States through the creation of accessible online platforms. Fourth, in order to promote cross country labour mobility, a suitable platform for internships and traineeships should be created.

Concerning unemployment and scarce labour mobility, three proposals were developed.

First, European languages learning should be strongly encouraged. This would increase employability of students beyond national borders.

Second, the harmonisation of certificates of competence and skills should be completed and constantly updated. This would improve the connection between employers and students.

Third, CV building online courses should be provided freely across the EU. In fact, the capability of presenting yourself is as important as being actually skilled in order to be employed.

Addressing the issue of educational inclusion, four suggestions were elaborated.

First, EU funding to charity organisations which provide education for minority groups should be increased.

Second, in order to truly accomplish the re-educational scope of jails, educational paths for prisoners should be strongly promoted across Member States.

Third, in the same way, and for the same scope, cross country traineeship opportunities should be made available to prisoners.

Fourth, in order to increase civic education and language learning in the refugee population, an exchange programme for primary teachers should be created. This would enhance their mobility towards those countries where more refugees are welcomed. In turn, this will raise awareness and understanding of the current refugee situation across the EU.

Concerning the issue of NEETs, five proposals were developed.

First, targeted data collection of the phenomenon should be launched. This would result into knowledge sharing and a better understanding of the subject.

ROUNDTABLE WORKS

EDUCATION

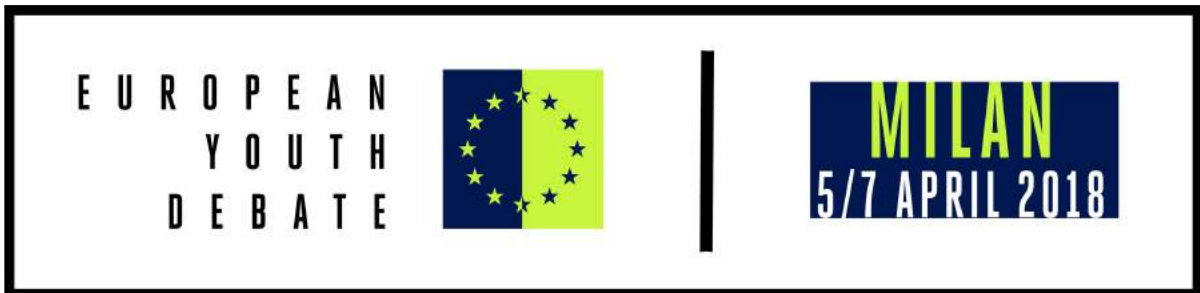
OUTCOMES OF THE DISCUSSION - cont.

Second, in order to create work reinsertion opportunities, the database mentioned above should be used to create a platform connecting NEETs with job opportunities suitable to their profiles.

Third, since NEETs are usually affected by scarce motivation, as an ex ante solution, European Tournaments for each specific field of study – with particular attention to professional ones – should be created and promoted.

Fourth, NEETs are usually affected by severe financial constraints. In order to tackle this issue, the EU should allocate funds – via specific programmes – to its neediest Member States.

Fifth, NEETs equally suffer from social relations impoverishment. Conversely, the EU should launch and promote social events aiming at reconciling NEETs with the rest of society. This would increase knowledge and awareness of the issue on both sides.



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