



ERSTE Stiftung



Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen
Institute for Human Sciences

EUROPE'S FUTURES

Workshop III: Addressing Europe's Challenges

12 and 13 December 2017, Berlin

Main Venue: Robert Bosch Stiftung, Französische Straße 32

The Institute for Human Sciences (IWM), supported by ERSTE Foundation, is preparing a three-year project on "Europe's Futures". Its aim is to identify concrete goals in key areas where change is possible and where a project could make a concrete contribution to a better Europe within the near future. The goal is impact on major policy debates and policy decisions.

In two workshops in Vienna we have moved from the wider context to some concrete issues where we see a potential to have an impact:

Internal challenges (Europe & its institutions): the undermining of democratic structures and basic human rights in some member states; democratic deficits; the weakness of mechanisms to enforce basic red lines across the EU; a widening gap in trust and understanding among EU members.

External challenges (Europe & the world): the EU policy on borders, migration and asylum; the EU policy towards stability and development in South East Europe and the future of EU enlargement.

Visionary challenges (Europe & its promises): inequality; lacking cohesion; clashing values and identities (East-West divide); the lack of credibility of some current "grand European narrative".

Against the background of this set of challenges, we have so far identified a few concrete goals that are achievable within the framework of the Europe's Futures project:

- change the policy debate – with a focus also on central Europe – on **European asylum policy**;
- make proposals and change the European debate on the role and dangers of the **proliferation of national referenda** and the impact on democracy and EU decision making;
- change the current inadequate debate and policy tools to **deliver reforms in South East Europe**.

We also discussed the goal of "a socially more equal EU", but so far did not come up with concrete and achievable goals.

Drawing on your rich and diverse experiences, in this workshop we want to revisit initially identified challenges and potential goals, develop them further or identify others.

Agenda

Tuesday, 12 December

20:00 Opening Dinner
Hotel John F Arcotel, Werderscher Markt 11

Wednesday, 13 November

9:00 – 9:20 Introduction
By Ivan Vejvoda

9:20 – 11:00 External Challenges: Europe & the World
*Chaired by Ivan Vejvoda. Opening remarks from Thomas Kleine-Brockhoff
(The German Marshall Fund of the United States, Germany).*

Europe faces war in the Middle East, a bullying Russia, a rising China, a growing Africa; and all this against the background of a United States led by Donald Trump. The refugee crisis has shown the EU's weakness in dealing with external challenges. Even EU enlargement, for long the EU's biggest foreign policy success, has lost much of its appeal and transformative power. To the solution of which important external challenges can the "Europe's Futures" project make concrete contributions?

11.00 – 11.15 Break

11:15 – 13:00 Internal Challenges: Europe & its Institutions
*Chaired by Ivan Vejvoda. Opening remarks from Peter Kreko (Political
Capital Institute, Hungary).*

For the first time in the EU's history basic democratic principles are under threat inside EU member states. Basic human rights like press freedom cannot be taken for granted. The EU struggles to find an adequate response. Many citizens in other member states think they have no political voice. A call for more "direct democracy" is increasingly heard from populist forces and poses – in the form of a proliferation of national referenda – a serious threat to the EU. A comprehensive list of "internal" challenges would be long. On which issues might concrete policy ideas make a real difference?

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch
Catered, on site

14:00 – 15:45 Visionary Challenges: Europe & its Promises

Chaired by Ivan Vejvoda. Opening remarks Vessela Tcherneva (European Council on Foreign Relations, Bulgaria).

What does it mean to be European? What is the EU about? How do we see the EU in 20 years? There is no convincing “grand European narrative”. Clashes of values and identities have become more apparent than ever since the big enlargement of 2004. Meanwhile, inequality between member states is only slowly receding, and inside member states it has been growing for the last 30 years. Are there concrete opportunities for change that can be addressed within the three-year frame of the “Europe’s Futures” project?

15:45 – 16:00 Break

16:00 – 16:30 Closing remarks

By Ivan Vejvoda.

Panels held under the Chatham House Rule, sound recorded for minute-taking. The working language is English. Information: Dino Pasalic, +43 699 1820 7764.