

The European federalists must intensify their actions

A lot has been said and written on the results of the European elections. However, the election campaigns appear to have offered no real explanation to citizens on the important European issues. With a few exceptions, there was little or no clarity on the positions of the main political parties concerning the choices in Europe.

The proportion of abstentions was dramatically high. It seems to be increasing constantly, election after election. This must challenge all believers in democracy. An article by Jacques Delors has said, "The European question has always been limited to restricted circles. Europe is a project built on insufficient information for its citizens. The European Union is not a market place! The political debate is possible only in the national framework, where there would be much to say on the development of democracy and citizenship". The European project can become the engine for meaningful membership of the Europeans, only if it becomes much more visible and understandable. The responsibility lies mainly with the institutions and bodies in the Member States, which have a monopoly of the information on Europe, e.g. the media, the parties, the government, etc. It has to be said that the communication policy of the European Commission has not produced the expected results! Furthermore, it is disturbing to witness increasing influence of populist and anti-European parties, which do not appear to have any cohesion and consistency within the new group to the European Parliament.

On a positive note, some political parties have chosen to rely on strengthening of the European framework and to work towards building a federal Europe, as a solution for overcoming the economic and social crises, and as a viable way to resolve certain major issues like the climate, employment, reforming the financial sector, etc. The electorate has rewarded such parties, perhaps to a limited degree. Nonetheless, this is an encouraging and valuable outcome.

Finally, it should be noted that the campaign by the Union of European Federalists did try to raise awareness on the issue of the presidency of the Commission, which was meant to create a link between the vote and the choice of European executive. It did not achieve its objective whereby each European political party should have to provide a candidate for the presidency of the Commission, defending a specific programme. However, this was predictable and the campaign did contribute towards politicizing of the debate to a limited degree. The campaign also resulted in drawing attention of the European Parliament and putting pressure on the issue of plans for the future presidency of the Commission. The democratic debate has just begun and the federalists will have to enhance efforts and initiatives in favour of a European government. For this to happen, it is necessary that the federalists interact with the European Parliament, through a joint group of federalists that could be formed during the first plenary session in Strasbourg

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