

# European Citizen Platform

## We, Europeans of Brussels, are calling for a more citizen-based Europe!

Our Europe, when it is not rejected outright, is subject to interrogations.

Citizens feel that Europe does not respond in a satisfactory manner to the problems affecting them: long-term unemployment, education which does not adequately prepare people for adult life, a lack of solidarity, slow growth, a sluggish shift towards a sustainable economy, security challenges... The citizen debate appears to be broken.

The experience of the last century – two European civil wars turned global – pushed humanity to the verge of collapse, but this is beginning to fade from memory. The rise of nationalism, in Europe and elsewhere, has felled nations. It has generated a sense of fear: fear of the other, fear of the future and fear of falling. This feeling leads to egotism and violence. And yet, history has proven that reinforced cooperation and mutual aid can unite the people and help them to move towards a common future.

It is in this spirit that Europe has been built. It wanted to follow another path; that of cooperation, solidarity, economic growth, democracy and Rule of Law, and in order to do this it focused on common institutions. However, this goal has been only partially met. Now, its actions are contested at every level, and the reasons for which it was created have been forgotten.

But we, citizens of Europe, citizens of Brussels, we have not forgotten. We will not allow certain authoritarian regimes in Europe to destroy what we took the time to build. We do not want these authoritarian regimes, ‘post-democracies’ which are establishing or

threatening to establish themselves in several European countries, to question the fundamental values of democracy and of European integration. We want this integration to take a front seat and preserve its capacity to respond to common challenges. We believe that European citizens are stronger when united in their diversity; stronger together than divided. We believe that we are a people under construction.

In 2017 we will be celebrating the anniversary of the launch of our collective venture: the signing of the Treaty of Rome. To mark this occasion, institutions will launch a debate on the future of the Union. We wish to participate in this to affirm the values we hold dear, to collectively reflect upon a democratically chosen common path.

Our future cannot be defined without us and on our behalf, and we must participate in its shaping. This path is one of solidarity, innovation, cohesion, environment and democracy; the only realistic way of overcoming the current stalemate.

We want to discuss this together. It can be only with the involvement of European citizens – of ‘Eurocitizens’ – that the European debate can find fresh momentum.

That is why we are inviting citizens of Brussels, citizens of Europe, as well as their organisations, to an initial discussion on 16 December 2016.

# We are Europe!