

Europa erneuern! - Renewing Europe!

A Realistic Vision for the 21st Century

Europa erneuern! - Renewing Europe! A Realistic Vision for the 21st Century - presents a comprehensive roadmap for revitalizing the European Union by innovating its democratic structures. The central thesis posits that the EU must evolve into a transnational democracy to effectively address the root causes of the multifaceted challenges of the 21st century, including economic disparities, social inequalities, and the pressures of globalization.

My five key arguments and proposals:

1. Democratic Deficit and Technocratic Governance:

The EU's current structure exhibits especially in times of crises a democratic deficit, where decision-making is often dominated by technocratic institutions lacking sufficient democratic oversight. This has led to a disconnect between EU policies and the citizens they affect, undermining trust and engagement.

2. Transnational Democracy:

I am advocating for a shift from intergovernmental supranationalism towards a transnational democratic model. This involves enhancing the role of the European and national parliaments but complemented by transnational political parties and mechanisms that allow for greater citizen and civil society participation between elections across national borders.

3. Eurozone Parliament:

To address economic governance issues, the book proposes the establishment of a Eurozone Parliament. This body would comprise representatives from national parliaments and the European Parliament, jointly overseeing fiscal and economic policies to ensure they align with democratic principles and public interests.

4. Combating 'Facade Democracy':

The concept of 'facade democracy' describes a system where democratic institutions exist but lack genuine power or responsiveness. I argue for an upgrade of European democracy that goes beyond

superficial changes, aiming to empower citizens from bottom up and ensure that democratic processes are transparent, inclusive, accountable and meaningful for those affected.

5. Narratives for European Integration:

Recognizing the importance of public perception, the book emphasizes the need for compelling narratives that articulate the benefits of democratising European integration. Such narratives should resonate with citizens' experiences and aspirations, countering euroscepticism and fostering a shared European identity.

In summary, *Europa erneuern!* calls for a reinvigoration of the EU's democratic foundations through structural reforms, enhanced citizen participation, and the cultivation of a European political culture of transnational participation, deliberation and cooperation. By doing so, the EU will better navigate contemporary challenges and strengthen its legitimacy and cohesion.