



The European Union faced with crises **Notre Europe's 2012 Work Programme**

Throughout 2012, *Notre Europe* will extend its past efforts by focusing on subjects related to European decision deadlines for the coming quarters and current or emerging political discussions. Much of this work is concerned with the tensions and crises the European Union is dealing with, and aims to clarify the founding ideas, better understand the logic of national and European actors and recommend directions and make proposals to consolidate and deepen European construction. *Notre Europe's* publications, events and other activities will cover three complementary areas: "The European Union and its Citizens", "Competition, Cooperation and Solidarity" and "European External Actions", which are explained in more detail below.

The European Union and its Citizens

In 2012, *Notre Europe's* work will be especially focused on four key political, institutional and citizen-oriented themes.

1.1. New Treaty/ies, New Union?

At a time when a new governmental treaty, not concerning the entire EU27, is underway, *Notre Europe's* first priority is to clarify the idea of a "**Federation of Nation States**", a concept developed by Jacques Delors which is at the heart of current debates on European integration. Its work will also aim to broaden the debate on the **community method** and on finding the optimal political balance between **European institutions**, while at the same time continuing analytical work on the functioning of such institutions (Commission, European Council, ECB).

1.2. European Democracy

The management of the "sovereign debt" crisis and the development of a new treaty have set off new debates on the democratic dimension of the EU. As such, *Notre Europe* will continue its efforts by focusing mainly on the role of **national parliaments** after the Treaty of Lisbon and in this time of crisis, as well as on the role of the **European political parties** and their foundations in a new emerging European sphere. *Notre Europe* will also carry forward with "**citizen dialogues**" involving a wide public. These dialogues deal with civil society, social actors, the teaching community and youth.

1.3 European Identities

Notre Europe will pursue its analytical work on European identities in a period marked by significant misunderstandings between Member States. This work will chiefly consist in producing a series of "**country analyses**" relating to how the EU is perceived by its different Member States and citizens in order to better understand their specific characteristics, ways of thinking and interests, while also fighting stereotypes that may persist. *Notre Europe* will also continue its **anthropological work** by attempting to identify how the debt crisis and the necessary European intervention have altered views of the EU. Lastly, further work will be carried out to monitor **public opinion**, both in terms of recent developments and over the longer term.

1.4 Mobility, Free Movement and the “Schengen Area”

Notre Europe also deals with issues relating to the free movement area by focusing on how such matters affect European citizens, in a time when tensions between European countries are also running high. In 2012, *Notre Europe* will strive to participate in discussions relating to the **Schengen area**, particularly those concerning solidarity measures implemented within this area and attempts to harmonise asylum policies. *Notre Europe* will also make a point to publish analyses on **citizens exercising their right to free movement**, including such subjects as youth mobility, access to social rights in other EU countries and accounts by European migrants.

Competition, Cooperation, Solidarity

The major economic and social crisis now affecting European countries has also led *Notre Europe* to concentrate on four fundamental issues pertaining to European construction.

2.1 “A Test for European Solidarity”

Given the current intense economic and social crises, *Notre Europe* will further its work on **measures of European solidarity**, especially by participating in the debate on the emergency solidarity established within the EMU, on shifts in the “cohesion policy”, on the application of the solidarity clause in energy matters and on the solidarity established for migrants. *Notre Europe* will also continue its work related to a **social Europe based on a wider approach**: beyond the social impact of the internal market (*see below*), it will examine the impact of “economic governance” of the EMU on social cohesion, as well as the sustainability of social protection systems, action by the EU for employment and the role given to social actors.

2.2 The Euro, Economic Governance and the Financial System

As it has since the start of the debt crisis, *Notre Europe* will still separate short-term issues (bailouts, growth forecasts) from mid-term issues (EMU reform, the creation of new EU intervention tools, such as “Eurobonds”). *Notre Europe* will carry on the work of the **“Tommaso Padoa-Schioppa” group**, which is under the parrainage of Jacques Delors and Helmut Schmidt. The objective is to reconcile a rigorous economic analysis with a technical and political feasibility analysis of the planned solutions and provide a roadmap for national and European decision-makers. *Notre Europe* will also strive to examine the **political implications of economic governance reforms** (new treaty, Euro Plus Pact, etc.), to analyse the **solidarity-responsibility debate within the EMU** and to explore the possibilities of a **growth stimulus** through additional EU intervention in investment and commercial integration.

2.3 The Single Market, 20 Years On

Twenty years after the “1992 objective” and despite considerable progress since then, the growth and employment potential tied to the Single Market is still not fully exploited, as some mistrust remains in some public opinion. *Notre Europe’s* work in this area will take a three-fold approach: a **review of the Single Market, particularly from a social viewpoint** (creation and destruction of jobs, purchasing power gains, impacts on salaries and social rights, etc.); a thematic standpoint, especially concerning **fiscal coordination** within the Single Market; and a sectoral point of view, particularly centred on the **internal energy market** as an extension of the “European Energy Community” policy proposal by Jacques Delors.

2.4 “How to Spend Better Together” – The European Financial Framework Post-2013

As negotiations for the 2014-2020 financial framework come to a close this year, *Notre Europe* will continue its **series of publications within the project “how to spend better together”** by exploring how to improve public spending through a possible “Europeanisation” or better coordination of national and European expenditures. The first objective is to draw up analyses and proposals which aim to improve the structure, composition and functioning of the European budget. The second objective is to contribute to the debate on the **reform of key policies financed by the community budget** (reforms to the CAP and cohesion policies in particular), while also proposing fresh ideas for the EU’s transition towards a green economy.

European External Actions

The geopolitical developments witnessed in recent years lead *Notre Europe* to carry forward with its work concerning the EU’s insertion in the international arena, by concentrating on three principal themes.

3.1 “Think Global - Act European”

Notre Europe contributes to discussions to ensure **consistency of the bodies responsible for European external action**: the European Council and Council of the European Union, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the European Union External Action Service and the European Commission and European Parliament. *Notre Europe* brings together a network of 15 European think tanks with the objective of drafting pan-European analyses and recommendations focused on the **EU’s principal external challenges** and the strategic coordination needs for external policy instruments: trade policy; external dimension of the internal market; migration; external energy policy; financial and economic regulation; neighbourhood policy; and the CSDP.

3.2. The EU and Its Neighbours

The Arab Spring and its after-effects must lead to the strengthening of one of the “pillars” of the missing EU external policy, the “neighbourhood policy”. Based on the reflections developed by its Board of Directors, *Notre Europe* will create analyses and proposals that aim to promote a strategic vision of the EU’s relationships with all its neighbouring countries centred on the following issues: **global strategic concerns** (differentiation, South/East balance, etc.); **commercial and economic integration**, particularly with regards to agricultural matters; **movement of people and migration**; and **energy cooperation**.

3.3 Energy Security

International competition for fossil energy resources is also a concern in Europe, where Member States’ vulnerability and increasing dependence give rise to intra-European competition that may jeopardise the principle of solidarity at the heart of European construction, as shown by the repeated gas crises between Russia and the Ukraine. Within this context, *Notre Europe* will strive to analyse the political scope and application of the **solidarity principle** in energy matters that are covered by European treaties and to think about the **external impacts of the European energy policy**, in keeping with its proposal for a European Energy Community.