

REINVENTING EUROPE
Allianz Summer Academy Manifesto
July 2004

I. Fostering a European identity

Why is it important to foster a European identity? European democracy remains fragile without a common basic feeling of identity. Today, there is no real relationship between the institutions of the European Union and its citizens. European integration based on economic interests has reached its limits.

At the basis of European identity, we find cultural diversity and shared civilian values: peace, liberty, democracy, the rule of law, human rights, social solidarity, non-discrimination, good governance, and sustainable development. European identity is also forged through sharing the experience of common problems. It complements rather than excludes other existing layers of identity.

European identity must be further promoted on two levels – internal and external. Within the boundaries of the European Union, citizens must feel that they belong to a common body politic. Europe also needs to define its identity vis-à-vis the international community.

A European identity must be promoted from the bottom up as well as from the top down. Civil society must be involved in this process of identity-building. Identity is a component of active citizenship. Thus, by enhancing a European identity, the role of the Europeans as active citizens can be strengthened.

In sum, our hope is that the EU progresses from an elitist project to a democratically legitimate undertaking.

II. Policy guidelines

1) Defining final EU boundaries

In 2007, Romania and Bulgaria are going to enter the EU. Before this date, the European Commission and the Member States should

- officially recognize the need to establish final boundaries and clarify the relationships between the EU and its neighbors; and
- launch a broad debate about EU final boundaries so as to determine which other countries will join the EU

2) Promotion of multilingualism

In promoting multilingualism, officials on European, national and regional level should cooperate and involve individuals by means of educational institutions at all levels, NGOs and media, etc. The aim is to:

- increase the funding of programs devoted to the exchange of students, teachers, trainees, and professionals (and perhaps make these programs a compulsory part of education)
- encourage lifelong learning initiatives

- start foreign language instruction at primary school level
- create a network of European language schools (supported from the EU budget)
- use modern information and communication technologies, and
- stimulate tourism within Europe

All these suggestions should be implemented as soon as the new financial perspective for the years 2007-2013 is negotiated. From all these efforts, we expect not only a positive impulse for identity building, but also an impact on mobility labor productivity and economic growth more generally. Thus, the funding available for the Lisbon process could be used to implement these recommendations. We acknowledge the need for a common European working language.

3) *European Media Network*

The European dimension of mass media and public opinion should be enhanced by a European production company. Yet the main problem is how to promote people's interests. The company should produce reports, documentaries, films, etc. about everyday life and shared interests as well as problems. These should deliver a European perspective, which is not the same as educational programs on the EU. The company should also prepare the ground for the creation of an EU-wide television channel. Hopefully, this will create a public awareness and demand for further EU-wide policies to tackle these problems.

4) *EU and Europe courses for primary and secondary schools*

In order to enhance European and Union-wide solidarity, we recommend two compulsory uniform education courses. These would be taught across EU schools, in addition to the rest of the national curriculum. There would be no interference with the existing national curriculum. The two courses would be about: the EU- its history, activities and institutions; and Europe in general – its history, culture, languages, foods etc.

The courses would be taught at primary and secondary level, which would significantly contribute to a sense of affiliation and interest in Europe from an early age. Teaching should be interactive and innovative. In addition, we recommend a teacher support program, which could be held at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, when it is empty. We also recommend making European internships a part of teachers' education and, on a voluntary basis, an opportunity for teachers already employed as part of their continuing education.

5) *Promotion of European civil actors*

The EU should support the activities of civil society networks. For example, the EU should promote instruments to enhance participation such as 'Future conferences' that involve citizens from different regions to develop agendas of common concern. Since national governments are playing for themselves it is up to civil society (NGOs, foundations, local associations, etc.) to counterbalance national governments. Civil society should have a corrective and a watchdog function.