

Energising European Democracy: Time for Transnational Lists

Open Letter

Britain's decision to leave the European Union is both a drastic wake-up call and a unique opportunity to reinvigorate democracy in Europe.

If Britain leaves, they will be giving up 73 seats in the European Parliament, thus providing us with a unique, historical opportunity to take a big leap forward by building a truly European democracy that unites people across borders.

Our proposal to energise European democracy is to give some of the seats left over from Britain's departure to set up, for the first time ever, "transnational lists". Transnational lists would push all European political forces to present comprehensive programmes that take into account the needs of all European citizens instead of running with contradictory proposals that are split across different countries or regions.

This would revive democratic debates inside the political groupings and help to build a truly European public space. At last, people in Europe could vote for whoever they thought would best represent them, rather than having to choose between existing national or regional parties. Citizens who have more in common with their peers across borders than their fellow nationals would finally be more connected and better represented.

Even starting with a limited number of seats, this has the potential to change politics dramatically, until eventually all citizens across Europe would have the possibility to hold all elected European politicians to account for the decisions they take in Brussels.

This is not a new proposal, and in fact, the European Parliament already voted in favour of this idea back in 2015, when reforming the European electoral law. Since then, the pulse of Europe is beating stronger and the number of supporting governments in the Council has been growing.

This Wednesday 7th February the European Parliament in Strasbourg will once again vote on transnational lists, with the difference that now there is a tangible opportunity to actually implement them in practice. This is why it is more important than ever that MEPs deliver something transformative, something that lets citizens know that the European Parliament is listening, and something that harnesses the power of the people by giving them the ability to truly speak up and to shape a pan-European debate.

Signed by:

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