



IED ANNUAL REPORT 2020



OUR NEW HEAD OFFICE
INSTITUTE OF EUROPEAN DEMOCRATS
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**EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT**

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FOREWORD

The Institute of European Democrats (IED), a European political foundation formally affiliated to the European Democratic Party (EDP), was founded with the aim to promote a better understanding of the core aspects of the European integration process, to bridge the gap between citizens and EU institutions and to play an active role in strengthening the confidence of European citizens in the European project.

To carry out its mission, the IED focuses on two key pillars: the organization of conferences and seminars and the coordination of research activities. In particular, the IED organizes international conferences, seminars and webinars where politicians, experts, EU and national officials, academics and civil society representatives share ideas and discuss concrete problems affecting citizens. Such events are mainly organised in the EU Member States, but also virtually, in order to discuss concrete issues closer to EU citizens and member organisations and to contribute to the national discussion with a European perspective ensured by

the international dimension of the events. At the same time, the Institute carries out research activities and publishes political documents and studies produced by associated researchers and external projects. The IED promotes also a discussion on the situation of democracy in Europe, through its Podcast “the European Democracy Lab Podcast” launched in 2020.

The IED works in close collaboration with both European and national institutions, universities, research centers and international foundations. Through a broad range of activities, the IED aims to play an active role in restoring and strengthening citizens' confidence in the European Union, and beyond this, in promoting a united and sovereign Europe.

Through this report, the IED wishes to share the topics and findings of these activities conducted in 2020.

We wish you a good reading!



REMARKS ON EXECUTION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES 2020

When drafting the Programme of activities 2020, the IED went through an internal consultation process, as usual. It was designed according to the priorities of the new EU Commission whilst taking into account the concrete thematical proposals suggested by the IED member organisations. When submitting this programme on 30 September 2019 to the European Parliament, the IED did foresee some changes in the more concrete implementation of activities due to the change of Presidency at the head of the Institute expected to be finalized by the end of 2019. In order to allow the new Presidency to put its own accent on the IED activities in 2020, the IED decided exceptionally not to submit a further detailed agenda. However, six thematic priorities were settled and the intent was to have them translated mainly into Conferences and Studies, with titles that could be found under the sections “key focus”.

Priorities 2020

1. Climate change and its consequences for Europe
2. The social consequences of globalization and digitalization
3. Culture and promotion of the European cultural Heritage
4. Democracy and Demography:
5. Economic and social democracy:
2020- a new decade, a new approach
6. Youth and Education: key to Europe's future

Unfortunately, this was not the only cause that shaped the main part of the IED activity in 2020. After a beginning of the year marked by the intent of the Presidency to give a fresh imprint to all the activities in the medium and long term, the IED had to face the upheaval that progressively ran over all the EU countries. The Covid-19 pandemic obliged the organisation to readapt its activity starting from the organization of the work itself based on the contact between people in remote. However, it has been a strong impulse to reconsider with greater attention the tools that technology offers to keep contributing to the European political debate and being close to its citizens.

In addition to the range of initiatives that even so were achieved, the IED complied with the meetings of the ruling bodies scheduled, ensuring the effectiveness of the control on the programme.

INITIATIVES CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE CARRY-OVER

As the Institute of European Democrats was allowed to use the unspent funding awarded for the financial year 2020 and integrated by the own resources carrying it to the first quarter of 2021, it has been employed to implement the online activity that continues being crucial in the widespread and enduring lockdown. That is:

A first webinar was organized on 12 February 2021 on the query: “*Are Turkish aspirations aligned with European interests?*”. It was live streamed in Greek and English, gathering high level panelist. It emerged that the behavior of Ankara poses serious challenges to the soft power of the EU, to EU solidarity among members states, and to the policies of Brussels affecting non-members in its neighborhood. The webinar was streamed in Greek and English and gained a large audience especially among Cyprus and Greek listeners.

A second one (24 March 2021) on the issue of “*One Humanity: an opportunity for Europe in the New Multilateralism*”, that was realized combining the presence at the Deusto University in Bilbao of the speakers and a wide virtual attendance, made up mainly of students. The webinar was introduced by Maria Luz Suarez Castiñeira, Director of Dept. of International Relations, Deusto University. The discussion between Juan Antonio March, Ambassador, President ONUART Foundation, and Mikel Burzako, CEO of IED, was moderated by Prof. Steffen Bay Rasmussen. The first session explored the new global architecture and the role of the EU, whilst the second session explored the role of artificial intelligence in the transformation of our societies. The Webinar streamed in Spanish and English.

A third webinar (29 March 2021) on “*Big Data in Europe: are Privacy and Freedom under threat?*” was focused on the challenges raised by Big Data for society in general and for democracy and politics in particular. In recent years, the term “Big Data” has started to be used extensively in relation to the digital future of Europe. The discussion examined the balance between the great value it could create in sectors like healthcare or smart cities, and the downsides of disinformation that could undermine democracy. Panelists, Quentin Jardon, author of the investigation “Belgian Big Brother,” Ioan-Cosmin Mihai, Cybercrime Training Officer at European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Training and Hubert Marcueyz, Business Analyst with Orion Health France gathered online to discuss these issues with the moderator Jennifer Baker. It was streamed in French and English.

Moreover, a new series of podcasts have been produced, to further deepen and spread pivotal issues such as Gender inequality on the labor market during the Covid-19, the Green Deal and Hydrogen perspective and the role of local and cooperative Banks in European recovery, these last two subjects already addressed by the IED at the end of 2020.

A German translation of the Research Study on the banks and European recovery delivered in 2020 has been provided, to allow a major diffusion of its results.

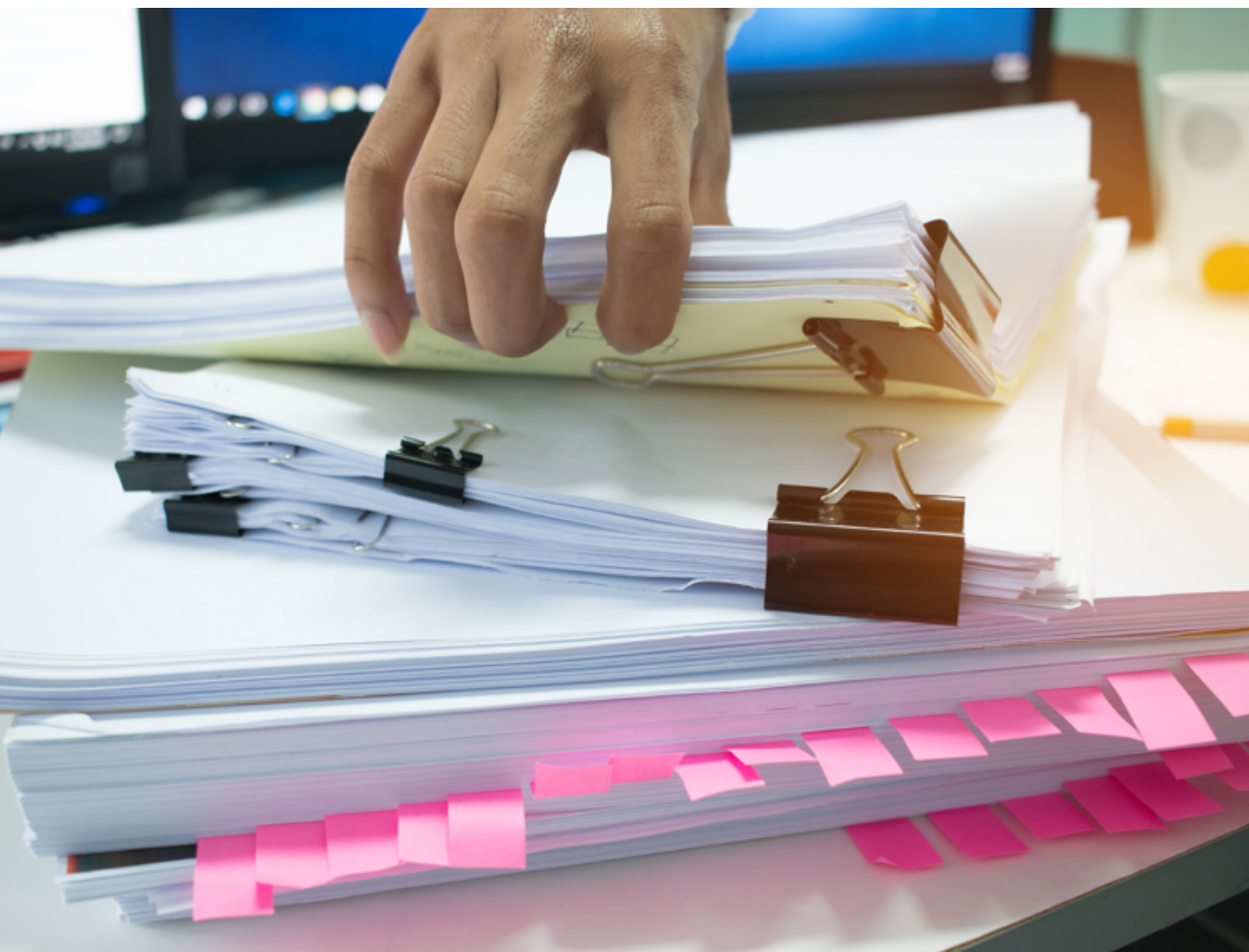
Finally, two new Research Studies were published:

February 2021:

“Emerging stronger from the Covid-19 crisis? A critical appraisal of the EU’s legal capacity to tackle corruption”, by Mihai Corman
<https://www.iedonline.eu/publications/2021/eu-anti-corruption-legal-capacity.php>

March 2021:

“For a renewed EU leadership in its neighborhood. Bring a new life to the Eastern Partnership and the Balkans”, was delivered by Mihai Sebe, member of the Scientific Committee.
<https://www.iedonline.eu/publications/2021/eu-neighborhood.php>





MEETINGS OF GOVERNING BODIES

1. A meeting of the Board of Directors on the 23 February 2020, in Brussels, aimed at the approval of the new activities 2020 and the presentation of the “IED Strategic Plan 2020-2024” by the new Presidency. The new dates for the next meetings of the Board and the General Assembly were foreseen.
2. A meeting of the Board of Directors on the 26 May 2020 by electronic means (exchange of emails) aimed at the adoption of the 2019 financial statements prepared by BPO Accountancy and E&Y Company Auditors. The meeting decided the 2020 membership fees and fixed the date of the following General Assembly.
3. A meeting of the General Assembly held by video-conference on the 28 May 2020, aimed at the approval of the 2019 financial documents provided by BPO accountants and E&Y auditors to be forwarded to the DG Finance of the EP for the closing of the accounts for the financial year 2019. It stated the termination of the director’s mandate of the Slovak member, Mr. Roman Brecely, as the organization he represented ceased the activity. A discussion on the priorities for the activities 2020 and their implementation was carried out.
4. A meeting of the Board of Directors on the 25 June 2020 by electronic means (exchange of emails) to adopt the 2019 IFRS Financial Statements prepared by E&Y Company Auditors.
5. A meeting of the Board of Directors on the 4 December 2020 by electronic means (exchange of emails) to formally establish the change of address and the new headquarters of the IED in rue Montoyer 25. The next date of the General Assembly also was established.
6. A meeting of the General Assembly held by video-conference on the 15 December 2020 aimed at reporting on the 2020 activity and budget. The presentation of the priorities for 2021 and their implementation followed by a round table discussion took place. A reduced format of the IED logo was also adopted, to accompany the official one.

Therefore, the IED complied with the meetings of the ruling bodies scheduled, ensuring the effectiveness of all activities in contributing to the political debate being close to the European citizens:

1st Semester 2020

- Three meetings of the Board of Directors
- A meeting of the General Assembly

2nd Semester 2020

- A meeting of the Board of Directors
- A meeting of the General Assembly



SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES

FOLLOWING THE PANDEMIC EVENT THAT STARTED EARLY 2020, ONLY TWO EVENTS PLANNED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR WERE REALIZED, AS WELL AS A FOLLOWING ONE, SCHEDULED AT THE END OF SUMMER IN VENICE, IN A PERIOD OF DESCENT OF INFECTIONS FROM COVID-19 AND WITH ALL THE NECESSARY SANITARY MEASURES.

2.1 PROTEST AND UPHEAVALS IN THE GLOBAL ERA OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CRISES

WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE XII BILBAO DIALOGUES: EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA"

IED INTERNAL SEMINAR, BILBAO, BASQUE COUNTRY, 31 JANUARY 2020



Experts analysed political and social transformations in Europe and Latin America. The conference, organised by the Institute of European Democrats, was attended by leading political representatives from Chile, Mexico and the European Parliament.

At the opening of the conference, Juan M^a Atutxa president of Sabino Arana Fundazioa, said that "the world has changed radically in these last years" and that we are running out of "reference models, in politics, in the economy, in too many areas of life. And all of this makes us feel orphaned, insecure, uncaring, at the mercy of the law of the jungle and the power of the strongest. Some of the mobilizations and revolts that dot the world are a reflection of this reality. The Conference was opened by an address by the president of the IED, Francesco Rutelli, through a video intervention.

The Conference was organised with the aim of diagnosing and analysing the dizzying political and social changes that we are experiencing in both Europe and Latin America, and which are of concern to our societies. It was attended by Chilean and Mexican politicians, MEPs, professors, etc.

Among them, Fuad Chain, president of the Christian Democratic Party of Chile (PDC); Gabriel Ascencio, deputy, former president of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile and former ambassador; Mariana Gómez del Campo, senator of PAN-Mexico and vice-president of the Christian Democratic Organization of America (ODCA); Ander Gurrutxaga, Professor of Sociology at the UPV/EHU; Guillermo Herrera, Carmen Frei's Chief of Staff and head of the PDC's thematic committees; Javier López, MEP and co-president of the Europe-Latin America Parliamentary Assembly. MEP Izaskun Bilbao was responsible for leading the conference and moderating the debates.

Mikel Burzako, general administrator of the Institute of European Democrats (IED); and Carmen Beatriz Fernández, consultant and professor at the University of Navarra, closed the conference, highlighting that the conference was "very stimulating, a battle between optimists and pessimists, although there was a consensus that the solutions that will put an end to the crisis of democracy must come from politics".

It has also become clear that "the individual is the epicentre of politics and that democracy must be renewed if this approach is to be realised". It has also been called for "the political centre not to be swept to extremes, since polarisation is a distinctive element of these times that we are living in".

2.2 IED SOCIAL MEDIA WORKSHOP

IED SEMINAR, BRUSSELS, 6-7 MARCH 2020



Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn have become vital tools for doing business and public affairs. But do stakeholders know how to make the most of these platforms to contribute to the European debate? In order to better reach out to its members and get them involved in the European Debate, the IED organized a training on 6-7 March 2020 in Brussels, addressed to the Social media officers of its Member organisations.

The training helped the IED and its members to better fulfill their mission to contribute to the European debate by promoting policy proposals rooted in the democratic values.

The 2 days training was given by Jon Worth, a social media specialist who has worked with EU institutions to help them improve their social media strategies, writing for the web, and policy advocacy online. He is best known for his blog – one of the longest running blogs about EU affairs.

14 participants took part in the training, coming from political parties and foundations who are members of IED and are based throughout Europe (well established political parties, in France, Germany, Basque Country – and more marginal or new movements in the rest of Europe).

The workshop helped the participants to identify where discussions important to one's organization or to IED, are taking place online, develop a social media campaign strategy and understand the pros and cons of using different platforms to drive one's message home.

The participants learnt how social media can help their organisation meet its goals in the policy-making environment; social media success stories (and failures) to learn from; finding and reaching one's audience online; creating appropriate content on the right channels at the right time; analysing and improving one's online campaign tactics; engaging one's audience and getting them to take action.

The workshop helped the participants to develop a communication strategy, across different teams, cultures and at different levels (European party, national parties, MEPs' assistants)

Participants gave a very positive feedback to the training:

"I very much enjoyed the training with Jon and the exchange with all the other participants."

"I wanted to thank IED for the high-quality workshop you offered us and for your welcome. The speaker was fascinating. His analysis of the political uses of social networks allowed me to gain some insight into our own work. To be able to understand the communication choices of other fellow democratic parties is essential to help us evolve in some of our practices but also to find solutions to problems that are often common."

2.3 CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE: POTENTIAL DISRUPTION AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS. THE ROLE OF EUROPE

IED INTERNAL CONFERENCE, FONDAZIONE CINI, VENICE, ITALY, 31 AUGUST 2020



Global warming is the "climate pandemic" that has been underway for at least three decades. On the invitation of the IED, Experts debated on the issue of sea level rise in Venice, a city symbolising the wounds of climate change.

At the heart of the discussion was the fight against climate change and rising sea levels. "It is a time when everyone in the world thinks they are going it alone, but the pandemic has shown us that we need more collaboration to solve global problems. The climate emergency is the most important problem. Some people were under the illusion that stopping the planes, the traffic, the big ships during the lockdown would save the environment. Unfortunately, this is not the case," Francesco Rutelli, President of IED. "The impacts of the unregulated climate, due to man's faults, do not stop for this small lockdown. The great experts are meeting here in Venice because it is a city that symbolises the wounds of climate change".

Antonio Navarra, president of CMCC (Euro-Mediterranean Center on Climate Change), stressed the importance of arriving prepared for a future that risks overwhelming us.



“We are meeting the challenge [of rising Mediterranean Sea levels] with the deployment of sophisticated observation systems, the development of climate models and dynamic forecasting systems capable of anticipating extreme events 2-3 days in advance, giving time for countermeasures and appropriate actions. This is feasible science, but if we do not want to fall into an ambush of the future, we cannot simply focus on implementing solutions, we must further support the development of models that will allow us to expand our understanding, turn information into knowledge, knowledge into decisions and decisions into operational actions”.

Erasmus D'Angelis, secretary general of the Central Apennine Basin District Authority, spoke of a real “climate pandemic”. “28 years after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, 5 years after the Paris Agreement, after 26 UN summits and hundreds of weather and climate disasters with damage, victims and environmental refugees, the world has still not understood that global warming is the “climate pandemic” that has been going on for at least three decades. Venice shows that for Italy too it is the worst risk we face, catastrophic for the future. However, this perception is missing, even though it has been revived by rigorous scientific studies and the mobilisation of the younger generations”.

Connections, in the fight against climate change, are at least as vital as information, in the dual guise of Big Data and Long Data. Alessandro Codello, a theoretical physicist and researcher at the European Center for Living Technology at Ca' Foscari University in Venice and the Universidad de la Republica in Uruguay, underlined their centrality. “Big Data refers to a set of techniques and methods used in the analysis of large databases such as those that have become available since the advent of the internet, social media, etc.” Long Data refers to the study, through these techniques, of databases that have a particular depth in time and are therefore of historical

relevance. Long Data is the intangible record of our past that complements the tangible reality of our monuments, museums and cities. Italy is rich in Long Data!’. Long Data’, explains the researcher, “offers lessons from the past that are relevant to our decisions on topics such as climate change, pandemics and climate change. In the case of Venice, techniques based on Long Data can be used to reconstruct the temporal distribution of extraordinary high-water events directly from historical sources, and then correlate them with other exceptional climate events such as cold winters and exceptional storms”.

Pierpaolo Campostrini, director of CORILA, the Consortium for the Coordination of Research on the Venice Lagoon System, explains why. “Climate changes are already present, but we have an immediate perception of some of them (which occur on short time scales), while we do not have the same perception of others, especially because they occur on longer time scales. With respect to the rise of the average sea level, Venice has always been affected, since its foundation, when the sea level was at least 1.5 meters lower than the (local) ground level [...]. The current safeguarding strategy aims at a “medium term”, the end of the 21st century, leaving options open for the following centuries, but also wishes to maintain the status of the island Venice as a city, avoiding its transformation into a Disneyland or an archaeological park. How to put these elements together (environmental, cultural and social defence), in the face of climate change, is a question that calls for non-trivial answers”.

Paolo Gentiloni, the European Commissioner for the Economy, sent a video message to the participants of the IED Conference. He welcomed this conference as an important initiative : “No one knows what the world will be like after the pandemic, but we will certainly experience the need to increase cooperation between nations on health, on security, on research”.



DIGITAL CONFERENCES

IN THE SECOND PART OF THE YEAR, WHILE WAITING AND HOPING AN EASING OF PRESSURE OF THE PANDEMIC IN ORDER TO REALIZE EVENTS IN THE PRESENCE, THE IED HAD TO ADMIT THAT ONLY ONLINE EVENTS WERE FEASIBLE. THE MAIN EFFORT WAS THEREFORE TO CREATE A DEDICATED FORMAT OF WEBINAR IDENTIFYING THE BELONGING OF THIS NEW MEANS TO THE IED INITIATIVES.

3.1 WHY THE EU SHOULD BECOME A FEDERAL STATE

IED WEBINAR, 26 OCTOBER 2020



A debate on the opportunity for the EU to become a federal state and not a confederation. What are the pros and cons for becoming a federation?

The Webinar opened with a welcome video by Mr Mikel Burzako, the Executive Director of IED. He underlined the difficulty of conducting activities during the Pandemic, but acknowledge the work of the IED Institute, which intensified contacts with Academics and research and is reaching more and more out to young people. He also welcomed the use of the new media, like Podcasts and Webinars, which should improve the digital participation to IED activities.

The debate was moderated by George Efsthathiou, from the Citizen's Alliance Cyprus. The two keynote speakers, Dr. George Kentas (Associate Professor of International Politics and Governance at the University of Nicosia) and Dr. George Pamporidis (Former Minister of Health of the Republic of Cyprus) were invited to share their analysis on the question whether the European Union should or can evolve into a federation of states, and what such a development would imply.

Both of the keynote speakers underlined that, although the federalization of Europe can be considered as quite difficult at this stage and time, it could remain a goal for the future.

In the midst of the current Covid 19 Pandemic, Europe is at a crossroads and Europeans must, more than ever, act as one for the common good. For the European common good, which comprises the health and well-being of all European citizens above all else.

The debate was concluded by sharing the hope that the upcoming Conference on the Future of Europe will be successful. It was scheduled to start in 2019 and last for 2

whole years (postponed due to covid-19 and rescheduled for 2021). Dr. George Kentas and Dr. George Pamporidis shared the view that this Conference would be an adequate forum where the idea of a more federal Europe could be discussed. This discussion should have a bottom up approach and involve all stakeholders.

The first Webinar organised by IED was followed by 3.500 people all over Europe and through all connected platforms.

3.1 GREEN NO DEAL? THE CARBON BORDER ADJUSTMENT MECHANISM: HOW TO MAKE IT WORK

IED WEBINAR, 10 DECEMBER 2020



The IED Webinar gathered high level panelists and was attended by 50 participants through the B2match platform and viewed by 480 participants through the other platforms (see statistic report).

Throughout the panelists' contributions, there was consensus that the EU and its trade partners are on critical paths to carbon neutrality & contribute towards the green deal. Progressively increasing CO₂ prices are bound to increase if the world is to move towards a decarbonized economy.

An interesting debate emerged around carbon leakage. The European Commission defined carbon leakage as a cornerstone of this proposal, with the necessity to tackle climate change by creating a level-playing field across jurisdictions as a main rationale for CBAM. Indeed, all panelists agreed that CBAM is not aimed at giving a competitive edge to European producers ("competitive greenwashing"). While this was recognized by all panelists, the exact magnitude of carbon leakage was debated.

Read more ...

A second debate came up around the usefulness of CBAM to incentivize non-EU producers to switch to cleaner alternatives. Enlightening perspectives from both the US and South Korea made clear that the EU's closest trade partners are on an equally ambitious decarbonization path – with clear decarbonization plans for most polluting sectors, emission trading systems, bans on ICEs and deployment of renewable resources. In that respect, panelists took a mixed view on the usefulness of the CBAM. Some warned against the concept of climate clubs that would be incompatible with WTO law and fragment the broad climate alliance achieved with the Paris Agreement.

In that respect, there was unanimous agreement among panelists on the need to ensure WTO compatibility of CBAM. In addition, they highlighted that CBAM must:

1. observe the principle of non-discrimination against foreign producers;
2. aim to agree on carbon content assessment methodology at multilateral level;
3. avoid any doubt on whether it would be used as a trade barrier.

Collaboration, dialogue and transparency are key for the EU to avoid being confrontational towards trading partners and stoking retaliation.

To mitigate these risks, a full alignment of CBAM on the EU Emission Trading System (ETS) will be necessary. The ETS would allow an equal treatment and defining a benchmark for foreign manufacturers. It would also somehow define the sectors included in the CBAM – chiefly steel, cement and chemicals.

The potential downsides of CBAM also come to light in the discussions. Most prominently, speakers pointed out the risk of trade deviation and economic downsides for both European consumers and key industries, e.g. the solar or car manufacturing industries.

A range of alternatives were emphasized. Some mentioned strengthening instruments within EU jurisdiction – e.g. indirect cost compensation, green public procurement, or other soft measures. In addition, the continuously declining cost of renewables are expected to improve the economics of low-carbon activity across industrial sectors. Introducing CO₂ consumption levy was mentioned as another alternative.

3.3 GEOPOLITICS & VALUES: WHAT IS THE REAL POWER OF THE EU?

**IED WINTER ACADEMY 2020, WEBINAR,
19 DECEMBER 2020**



On Saturday 19 December 2020, the IED held its annual Winter Academy with the Young Democrats for Europe (YDE). It aims to prepare young people from all of Europe to better understand the European political context as well as taking an active role in the democratic process. The Winter Academy also highlights the work achieved with the IED call for papers. The 2020 theme was: **Geopolitics & Values: what is the real power of the EU?**

The 2020 Winter Academy gathered 34 participants from 12 different countries and regions (Basque Country, Balears, Canaries, France, Italy, San Marino, Romania, Cyprus, Greece, Germany, Croatia, Slovakia). Because of the pandemic, the meeting was held on Zoom.

To make it as collaborative as we can, we have used different tools such as Padlet (for icebreaker and brainstorming), Sli.do for interactivity and the breakout rooms of Zoom in order to allow small groups to work together.

On the content, numerous speakers were invited by the IED. After receiving welcome words from both the President of the YDE, Asier Areito and the President of the IED, Francesco Rutelli, Professor Nye, internationally recognised for his work on soft and hard power, gave an introductory speech to the participants.

Following that speech, two young experts that took part in the IED call for papers gave a keynote conference on the topic. Jacopo Giraudo, Adjunct Lecturer in History of International Relations at the Department of Cultures, Politics and Society of the University of Turin, talked about multilateralism and identity. And Sara S. Velasco, a double major in Law and political sciences at Universidad Carlos III, lectured the participants about the privacy issues especially regarding the contact tracing app used during the pandemic.

For Jacopo Giraudo, Europeans have a lot in common in terms of cultural ties and shared values. And that can be used by the EU to spread our soft power. We are not, however, close to our own continent. For instance, we also have a lot of similarities with North America both in terms of cultural links as well as human flow (students, workers). He emphasised that with the new US administration, Europe can become an equal partner of the US. But in order to achieve that, the EU will have to also improve its hard power that is desperately needed.

Sara S. Velasco criticised the fact that some EU countries made it mandatory to download their contact-tracing app which is against the EU laws. She also highlighted a very common paradox in where people fight for their privacy but they are constantly giving out data. She defined digital relations as a mediated one: everything that people say can be used against or for them. In this way, the GDPR made the EU at the vanguard and strengthened our soft power as we are the only place to do so. Nevertheless, she mentioned that this vanguard role can only be a model for countries with liberal democracies as authoritarian states will increasingly use these data to control their population.

For Mihai Sebe, we are in the digital age where everything moved online. The progress is not linear anymore, we are living in the very intense revolution period. He called for a new framework for the digital and asked the state to enforce it. He also argued that we are not equal regarding access to information. Most of the contributions are written in English. And if people are creating social movements online, the State is also investing in the digital space to make sure they don't. He finally warned against digital ignorance: social media acts as an echo chamber, people will only see what they like and this is reinforcing their own beliefs. He thus called for free access to Wi-Fi to people as well as a secure environment (not being controlled by a third party) and the use of digital to boost citizen participation. Only that will increase digital skills and allow people to engage even more both in their life and in the democratic process.

As well as for the previous years, through the abovementioned activities achieved in 2020, the Institute of European Democrats has underpinned and complemented the objectives of the European Democratic Party to which the IED is affiliated. Through many of its initiatives, the IED has given a solid and cultural basis to EDP activity.



EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY LAB PODCAST

The Climate Crisis, Covid-19, and the economic and financial challenges it represents for Europe require global and democratic solutions. How can democratic institutions and a democratic consensus help Europe to answer these new global challenges? The IED has launched in July 2020 its podcast channel in French and English to help citizens in Europe to learn more about European and International Affairs. The episodes are produced monthly.

Six month after the launch of this podcast, statistics show that the main countries of origin of the audience are France, Italy, Germany, Spain, The Netherlands. The main platforms used by the audience are Ausha, Apple Podcast and Spotify.

1. NEW PRIORITIES FOR THE DEMOCRATS AFTER THE COVID-19 CRISIS, 10 JULY 2020

What lessons should Europe learn from the COVID crisis? In this first episode of the 'European Democracy Lab Podcast' series, Francesco Rutelli, President of IED, believes that the EU must engage in the Green deal, review its geopolitical position by promoting the values of democracy and freedom, and promote a new generation of Democratic leaders.

 AUDIENCE SCORE: 266 LISTENERS

2. DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL MEDIA, 21 JULY 2020

Social networks today are a major place for the political debate. But why do populist political parties dominate the digital public space? For this second episode, the European democracy lab Podcast talks to Jon Worth, political blogger, journalist, editor, and expert on EU affairs on the Internet and to Sabrina Schmidt, press officer of Freie Wähler at the Bavarian Parliament.

 AUDIENCE SCORE: 228 LISTENERS

3. CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE. CAN VENICE BE SAVED? 8 OCTOBER 2020

In a world disrupted by climate change, the rise of sea levels represents a crucial challenge for the future of cities, communities and, more generally, of our ecosystems and our cultural heritage. Venice is a perfect example. This podcast explores possible solutions with various experts and illustrates the necessity for EU member States to mobilize and coordinate their efforts to protect our world heritage.

 AUDIENCE SCORE: 250 LISTENERS

4. RULE OF LAW AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION IN EUROPE: FOCUS ON BULGARIA, 18 NOVEMBER 2020

Corruption in Bulgaria is not a new phenomenon. The country, which is ranked 74th in the world by the NGO Transparency International, has the worst record in the European Union for the seventh consecutive year. Is the EU acting effectively to combat these abuses? Our podcast investigates current protests in Bulgaria and the political stalemate at the EU level. Testimony by Hristo Ivanov, President of the "Da Bulgaria" Party, and analysis by Mihai Corman, a researcher in European law at the University of Ghent.

AUDIENCE SCORE: 294 LISTENERS

5. THE DIGITAL DIVIDE, 15 DECEMBER 2020

Will the digital revolution tear apart our societies? The gap between those who understand the technology and those who do not have become generational and it's a crucial challenge for Democracy. All over Europe, governments seem to rely ever more on digital devices and the web to inform their populations. But can they reach everybody? Gerrit-Jan van Otterloo, President of the Jan Nagel Foundation, is also a member of the Dutch Parliament. He shares his pledge for a more inclusive digitalization.

 AUDIENCE SCORE: 230 LISTENERS

6. YOUTH & POLITICS: LOWERING THE LEGAL VOTING AGE? 17 DECEMBER 2020

There is a revival of political activism across the Old Continent. In the last years, young Europeans have been calling on governments to defend democratic values, tackle climate change, better manage the integration of migrants in our society. Oftentimes, these young people are younger than the legal voting age and cannot cast a vote at the ballot box. Should the voting age be changed? A discussion with Gabi Schmidt Freie Wähler MP at the Bavarian Parliament, and Matthias Fack, the President of the Bavarian Youth Council (BJR).

 AUDIENCE SCORE: 254 LISTENERS

7. EUROPEAN DEMOCRATS LOOK BACK AT 2020, 22 DECEMBER 2020

The COVID19 virus which appeared in our lives at the beginning of 2020 unraveled European politics. From the Basque country to Bavaria, passing through Cyprus, the Netherlands, and France, the elected members of the IED have been, each in their own distinctive ways and at different levels, at the forefront of the crisis. They had to change their habits as well as their ways of doing politics. In this special end-of-the-year podcast, we will listen to their vibrant testimonies and their expectations for 2021.

 AUDIENCE SCORE: 519 LISTENERS



SEA
LEVEL
RISE

5.

SPECIAL REPORT: SEA LEVEL RISE

A CRUCIAL CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE OF CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES, ECOSYSTEMS AND THE HERITAGE,
IN OUR WORLD UPSET BY THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

The IED is following for many years the issue of Climate change and its multi-faceted impact on humanity and the environment. Sea level rise represents one of its strategic impacts.

The Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC), recently released by the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), expects global sea levels to most likely rise between 0.29 m and 1.1 m by the end of this century.

In November 2019, the iconic and fragile city of Venice was hit by an exceptional *Acqua alta*, with serious consequences for the city's life and economy and for a cultural heritage that belongs to Humanity.

Even a small increase in sea levels can have devastating impacts on coastal habitats, it can cause destructive erosion, wetland flooding, aquifer and agricultural soil contamination with salt, and lost habitat for fish, birds, and plants. Flooding in low-lying coastal areas is forcing people to migrate to higher ground, with millions of people vulnerable to flood risk.

Considering the emergency of the situation and the necessity, especially for EU leaders, to act, protect populations and prevent catastrophic scenarios, the IED is publishing a research project titled: **“Sea Level rise, a crucial challenge for the future of cities and communities, ecosystems and the heritage, in our world upset by the Covid-19 Outbreak”** gathering a series of scientific articles and reports. The publication is illustrated with graphs, maps and infographics,

which make it a comprehensive and pedagogic instrument for decision makers and citizens.

The IED is convinced that countering and limiting the effects of rising sea and ocean levels is an important part of the crucial commitment of our time to mitigate and adapt to Climate Change.

Introducing the publication, Francesco Rutelli, the President of the Institute of European Democrats, links the content of this innovative work with the current COVID-19 crisis:

“The crisis that has paralysed the world since March 2020 hasn't happened out of the blue: all the conditions for it to arise were in place, and in addition we were caught unprepared, without adequate preventative or counter-measures.

The climate crisis is already underway and it will certainly bring the consequences analysed in this work, among others. Unless we manage to take the necessary, widely-known measures in a rational, planned and shared manner, we will not be able to stop and reverse the current course of events.

This leads us to think that the post-COVID-19 period will bring greater attention to the need to face global threats which until recently were indeed considered ‘distant’.

Now, the challenge is to have the European Union fully on board.”

Download the publication here: <https://www.iedonline.eu/publications/2020/sea-level-rise.php>





6.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

The research activities have involved both members of the IED Scientific Committee and young people under 35 through a Call for papers.

6.1 THE IMPACT OF THE DIGITAL REVOLUTION ON DEMOCRACY AND DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

IED RESEARCH PAPER BY MIHAI SEBE, 30.12.2020

The research project analyses the impact of new technologies on topics such as democracy, values and liberties and how an increased e-literacy of the EU citizens may help promote them in a time of increasing technological evolution marked by the importance of big data, AI, deep fakes, etc.

<https://www.iedonline.eu/publications/2020/digital-revolution-democracy.php>

6.2 COOPERATIVE BANKS AND MUNICIPAL SAVING BANKS: WHICH EFFECTS DO LOCAL BANKS HAVE ON SMES?

IED RESEARCH PAPER BY HORST GISCHER & BERNHARD HERZ, 30.12.2020

This research shows that small and medium-sized enterprises and their financing by local banks are crucial for the sustainable regional development in Europe. The aim of this study is to identify and analyse the distortions that prevent regions and SMEs to realize their full potential and follow a sustainable path of economic and social development. We focus on the national and regional interlinkages between the real and the financial sector as research on the role of financing for SMEs in Europe is scarce.

<https://www.iedonline.eu/publications/2020/banks-sme.php>

6.3 EXTERNAL RESEARCH PROJECT

CALL FOR PAPERS: GEOPOLITICS & VALUES: WHAT IS THE REAL POWER OF THE EU? 18.12.2020

Soft power can be defined as the use of a country's cultural and economic influence, as an effective substitute to military power. The European Union is commonly perceived as a 'soft power', promoting democracy and fundamental rights with its neighboring countries and globally. Based on both, cultural heritage and creative industries, the 'soft power' make at the same time very important parts of European GDP and jobs.

How can this approach be maintained while this position is being challenged in the last years by re-emerging hard power and 'sharp power' policies?

The recent COVID-19 crisis has profoundly shaken the international scene, showing the fragilities of single countries going it alone and the strategic necessity of global cooperation and solidarity in the field of health care and scientific and medical research in particular.

Can the COVID-19 crisis more generally be used as a catalyst for change in international relations? How can multilateralism be relaunched and what could be the role of the EU in this new setting? Which traditional or new tools of 'soft power' can be used in this context to promote Europe's values on the global scene such as democracy, rule of law, liberties, solidarity, sustainability?

The Institute of European Democrats (IED) is proud to present the 39 Research Papers which have been selected in the frame of its Call for Papers on Geopolitics & Values: what is the real power of the EU? launched in July 2020. The 39 selected research papers are bringing new ideas and proposals to redefine Europe's role and mission on the global scene after the COVID-19 crisis. Through this research, the IED wishes to provide democratic ideas & solutions to promote a new effective multilateralism. We wish you a good reading...

View the 39 papers here: <https://www.iedonline.eu/publications/2020/geopolitics-values.php>

EU CLIMATE DIPLOMACY: A TOOL TO OVERCOME THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND PROMOTE EFFECTIVE MULTILATERALISM? Angeline Sanzay

#ClimateDiplomacy #ClimateAction #COVID-19 #pandemic
#Multilateralism #ParisAgreement

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MUTUALITY ABOVE GEOPOLITICS: RESHUFFLING EU STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN COVID-19 TIMES

Domenico Valenza
#geopolitics #strategiccommunication #culturalrelations
#disinformation #listening #mutuality #covid-1

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MULTILATERALISM AND IDENTITY. CAN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CREATE A SENSE OF COMMON SHARING AND AN IMPROVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS? Jacopo Giraudo

#Multilateralism #Identity #EU #COVID19 #ForeignPolicy #CFSP1

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THE DIGITAL ECONOMY AND RESILIENCE BUILDING AT THE HEARTH OF EU'S DEVELOPMENT FINANCING IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA? Anais Marie

#AUPartnerships #BuildForwardBetter #DigitalTransformation1

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TOWARDS NORMATIVE POWER EUROPE: THE EU AS A STANDARD-BEARER OF MULTILATERALISM AND THE ROLE OF EUROPEAN NORMS AND VALUES IN THE POST-PANDEMIC GEOPOLITICAL ORDER

Dawid Aristotelis Fusiek
#normativepower #europeanglobalstrategy #euvalues
#thefutureofEurope ##europeanforeignpolicy
#europeangeopolitics

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SOCIAL ECONOMY: A TOOL OF EUROPEAN SOFT POWER IN THE TIMES OF COVID-19 Eleonora Lamio

#SocialEconomy #SocialEnterprises #SocEnt #SocEntEU
#SocialEconomyEnterprises #socialandsolidarityeconomy
#EUSES #SocialEconomySummit #SocialInnovation
#UNSDGs #SDGs

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THE INFLUENCE OF COVID-19 ON THE EUROPEAN ASYLUM AND MIGRATION POLICY – MAKING HEALTH A PRIORITY WHILE ENSURING RESPECT FOR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS Marguerite Arnoux Bellavitis

#COVID19 #MigrationPact #NewPact #Asylum
#EuropeanHealthUnion #FundamentalRights

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EU AND LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS: A RETURN TO MULTILATERALISM Nicholas Beaumont

#EuropeanUnion #LatinAmerica #covid19 #multilateralism
#trade #sustainabledevelopment

> [DOWNLOAD](#)

AGAINST THE EXCEPTION: PUBLIC POLICY FOR KNOWLEDGE AND PRIVACY Sara Soto Velasco

#CovidApps #publicpolicy #privacy #transparency

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THE POWER OF EU SOFT LAW – EU'S GLOBAL LEADERSHIP IN PROMOTING MULTILATERALISM THROUGH SOFT LAW Hava Yurttagül

#EU soft law #soft law #EU external relations
#EU global actor

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OPERATIONALIZING TRADE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CHAPTERS OF TRADE AGREEMENTS

Matthew Hanrahan

#sustainability #mercosur #Trade #EUGreenDeal #EU
#climatecrisis

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PROGRESSIVE REALISM AS A MODEL FOR EUROPE'S NEW FOREIGN POLICY Stefan Drexler

#Covid19 #debatingEurope #EUglobalstrategy #smartpower
#Progressiverealism #successvalues

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DISINFORMATION-19: CHALLENGES TO THE EU'S INFLUENCE IN THE WESTERN BALKANS Ana Cojocaru

#disinformation #WesternBalkans #narratives #fakenews
#coronavirus #aid

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CORPORATE STIMULUS FOR EUROPEAN CROSS-BORDER CULTURAL INITIATIVES: AN INTEGRATED, CROSS-SECTORAL CULTURAL APPROACH TO STRENGTHEN EU SOFT POWER Bella Schuster

#EU cultural policy #CSR #EU values #Cultural diplomacy
#Cultural and creative sector #Corporate diplomacy

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EU'S SOFT POWER IN GREEN DIPLOMACY: SCALING-UP CONSENSUS FROM SUBNATIONAL AND NATIONAL INITIATIVES Clara Volintiru

#EUgreendeal #ClimatePolicy #ClimateChange
#ClimateAction #ClimateDiplomacy

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LESSONS LEARNT BY THE EU DURING THE PANDEMIC THAT CAN BE USED AS POTENTIAL SOFT-POWER TOOLS Eliza Vas

#democracystatus #softpowertools #newmultilateralism
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CAN THE EU'S SOFT POWER COUNTER CHINA'S HARD LINE? COMPARISON OF THE TWO POWER'S INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS Laia Comerma Calatayud

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#FDI #EU foreign policy

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DEFINING EUROPE DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: EU'S DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH Iverson Chun Sing NG

#COVID19 #EUSURE #NextGenerationEU #Solidarity
#PublicHealth #Economy

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IDEOLOGICAL CLASH BETWEEN EUROPE'S HYBRID REGIMES AND THE EU Ana Jovanovic

#EUdemocracy #COVID19 #Autocratization #RoL
#Poland #Serbia

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DUE TIME FOR DUE DILIGENCE? RESILIENCE AND VULNERABILITY IN EUROPEAN SUPPLY CHAINS AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC Bronagh Kieran

#duediligence #businessandhumanrights #supplychains
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COVID-19 AND THE FUTURE OF MULTILATERALISM: A EUROPEAN CHALLENGE Domenico Bovienzo

#Covid19 #multilateralism #strategicautonomy #softpower

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EU'S SCRAMBLE FOR DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY. WHY BEING THE GLOBAL REGULATOR WILL NOT BE ENOUGH Nicola Bilotta

#EUTechnologySovereignty #BrusselsEffect
#EUDigitalTransformations #NextGenerationEU
#Pan-EuropeanDigitalApproach

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CAN THE COVID CRISIS LEAD TO LEGITIMIZATION OF EUROPEAN UNION'S FOREIGN POLICIES? LESSONS FROM BELARUS Mikołaj Bronert

#EUlegitimacy #EUForeignPolicy #Belarusprotests
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VALUES AND CRISES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION: REFLECTING ON THE NARRATIVES OF VALUES AND CRISES IN THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESSES 2010 – 2020 Sofia af Hällström

#EUdiscourse #SOTEU #EUvalues #EUincrisis

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BOOSTING SOVEREIGNTY AND SHAPING THE RULES. AT THE TIME OF COVID-19 CRISIS, THE EU CAN PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Duccio Maria Tenti
#DigitalEU #digitaltransition #IntellectualProperty
#BrusselsEffect #EUAfrica #GeopoliticalCommission

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CHOOSING THE BEST FORUM: THE ASEAN AS A REGIONAL PARTNER FOR THE EU'S CLIMATE DIPLOMACY Thibaut Le Forsonney

#EU #ASEAN #ClimateDiplomacy #CircularEconomy
#PlasticsStrategy

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STRENGTHENING THE EUROPEAN UNION'S ROLE AS A GLOBAL HEALTH ACTOR Yana Brovdiy

#globalhealth #health #EU #WHO #COVID19

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GIVING EUROPEAN SOFT POWER A ROOF: TOWARDS NEW INNOVATIVE MODELS FOR AN ENHANCED EUROPEAN GLOBAL ACTORNESS AMIDST COVID-19

Gabrielle Bernoville

#ResearchPaper #GeopoliticsValues
#EuropeanCulturalDiplomacy #EEAS #EuropeanCommission
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#InternationalCulturalRelations

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FOOD SECURITY PROMOTION IN TIMES OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND COVID-19: A BATTLE OF NARRATIVES SHAPING A FRAGMENTED EU POLICY ACTION?

Tommaso Emiliani

#FoodSecurity #COVID-19 #FarmToFork #InternationalTrade
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THE EU AS THE GREAT INFLUENCER. FIGHTING DISINFORMATION DURING THE COVID-19 INFODEMIA

Handy Francine Jaomiasa

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TOWARDS A MORE EFFECTIVE EU DIPLOMACY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE EU SOFT POWER IN UKRAINE AND BELARUS

Christian Contro

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#Russia

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HOW CAN A COMMON EUROPEAN HISTORICAL MEMORY ENHANCE EU'S SOFT POWER AFTER THE COVID-19 CRISIS?

Ionuț-Mircea Marcu

#EUsolidarity #historicalmemory #EUsoftpower
#internationalpolitics

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WHAT KIND OF POWER? HOW THE COVID-19 CRISIS AFFECTS THE ORIENTATION OF EU AS A GLOBAL ACTOR

Konstantinos Papanikolaou

#health crisis #soft power #global actor #European Union
#economic consequences

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UNITING CULTURES AS THE CATALYST OF MULTILATERALISM

Borja Saez

#WeArtTheSame #art #EUcreateCulture #museums
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THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS ROLE AS A PROMOTER OF EUROPEAN VALUES AND PEACE IN WORLD POLITICS

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MEMBER STATES SOFT POWER SKILLS. THE IMPACT OF CYPRUS ON EU EXTERNAL ACTIONS

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FORWARDING EUROPE'S 'SMART POWER' THROUGH THE CURRENT COVID CRISIS

Giuliano Irace

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THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH WAR: A NEW REALITY IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR THE EU

Hasmik Khachatryan

#War #Nagorno-Karabakh #EU Foreign Policy #Security
#Geopolitics #Eastern Neighbourhood

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VIDEOS

7.1 HYDROGEN. AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EUROPE TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

30 DECEMBER 2020

The video aims to be a contribute to the consciousness on this big challenge that needs to target research and innovation and may be a strong support to the energy and climate policy objectives.

It responds to the Communication of the European Commission on A hydrogen strategy for a climate-neutral Europe.

<https://www.iedonline.eu/publications/2020/hydrogen.php>



7.2 HYDROGEN. RE-CONNECTING EUROPE

31 DECEMBER 2020

The EU has been created by uniting economic and political interest behind a common goal. In the last years the EU has been criticized for not having a unifying vision that people can support and believe in. The IED believes that Hydrogen could be a solution for many economic and ecological challenges of the 21st century. Through this film, the IED intends to present Hydrogen as a driving force for new integration and new collaboration across all EU member states.

<https://www.iedonline.eu/publications/2020/hydrogen-re-connecting-europe.php>



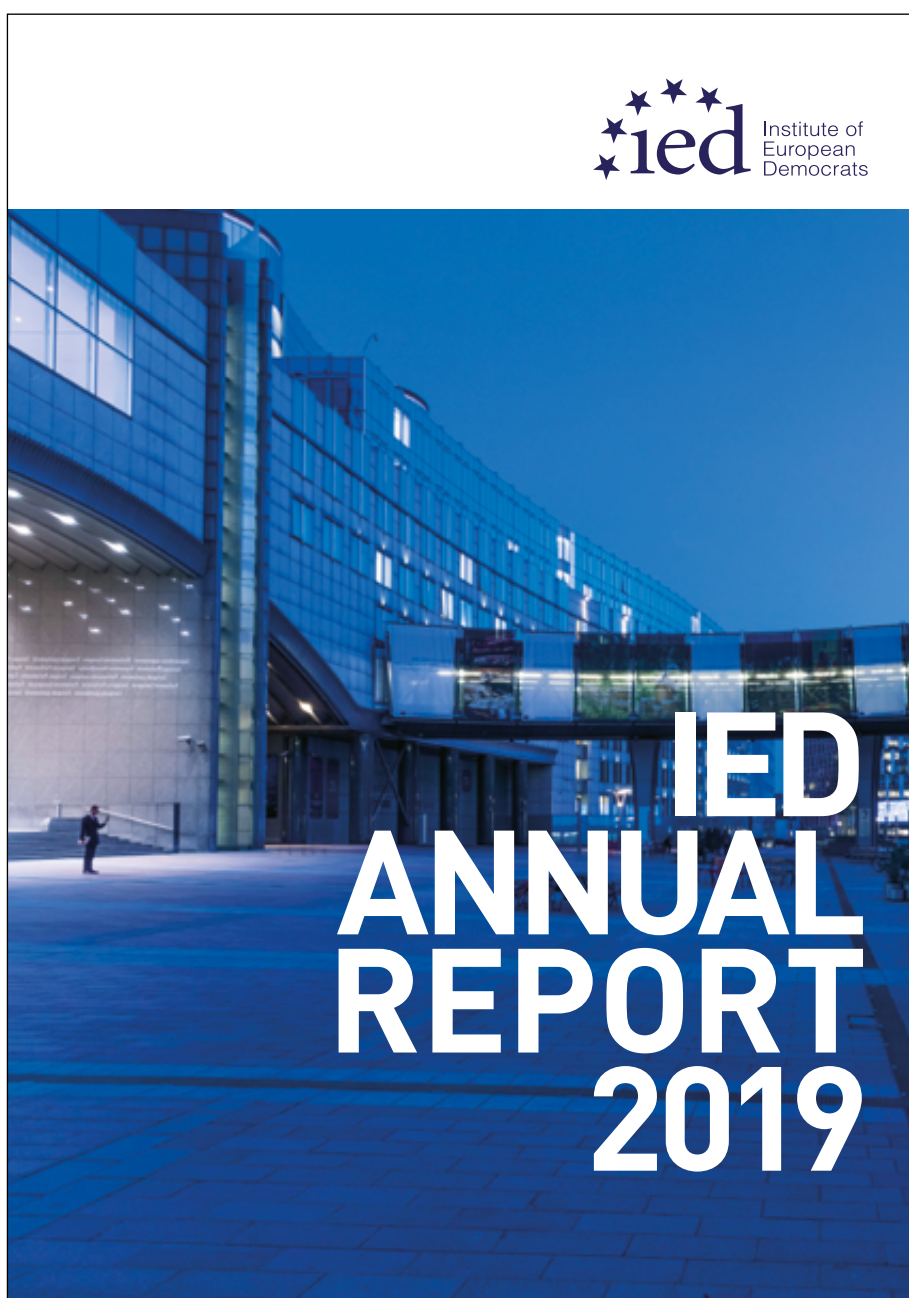
ANNUAL REPORT

8.1 IED ANNUAL REPORT 2020

28 MAY 2020

Through this report, the IED wishes to share the topics and findings of the activities conducted in 2020.

<https://www.iedonline.eu/publications/2020/ied-annual-report-2019.php>





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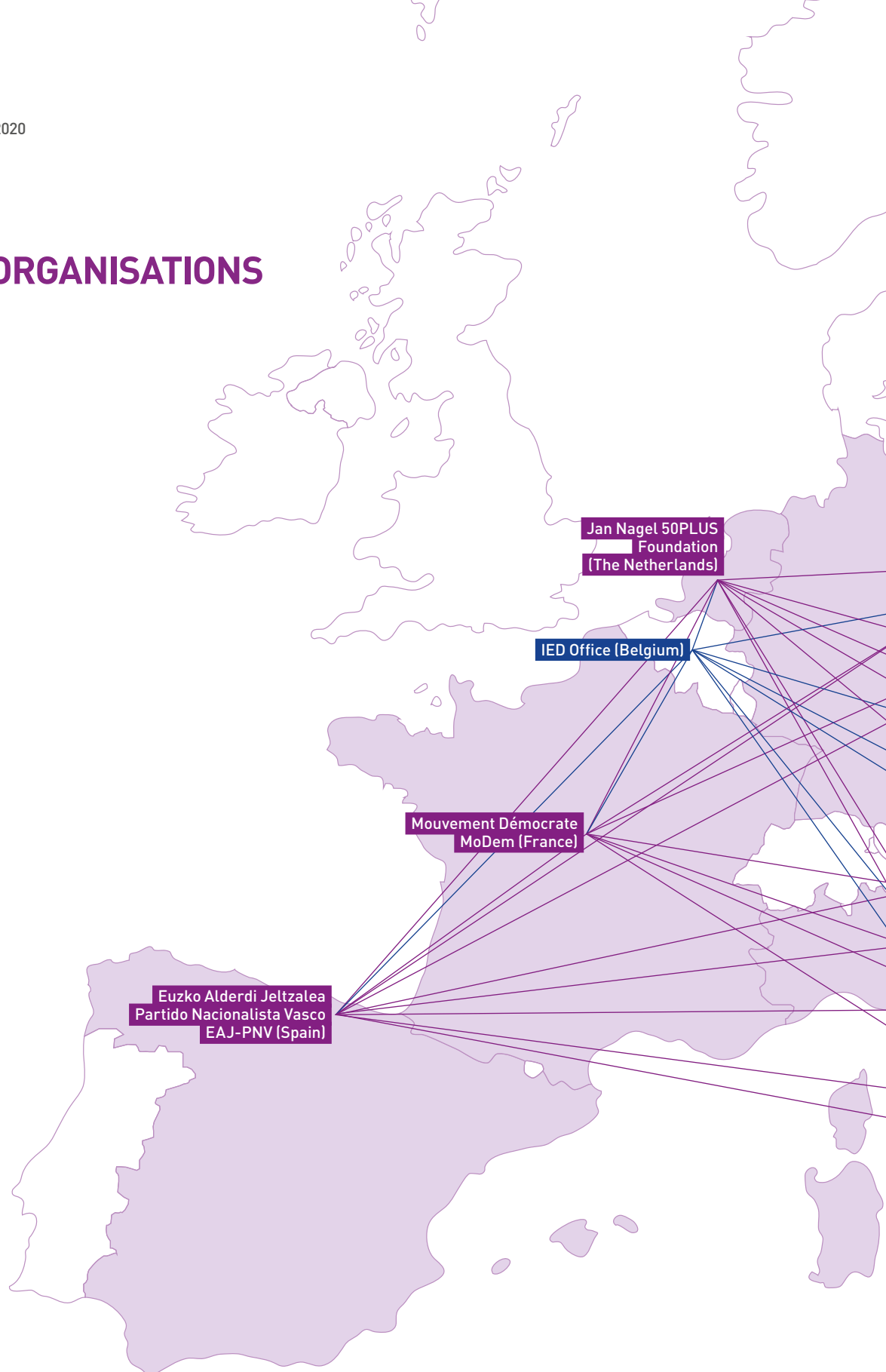
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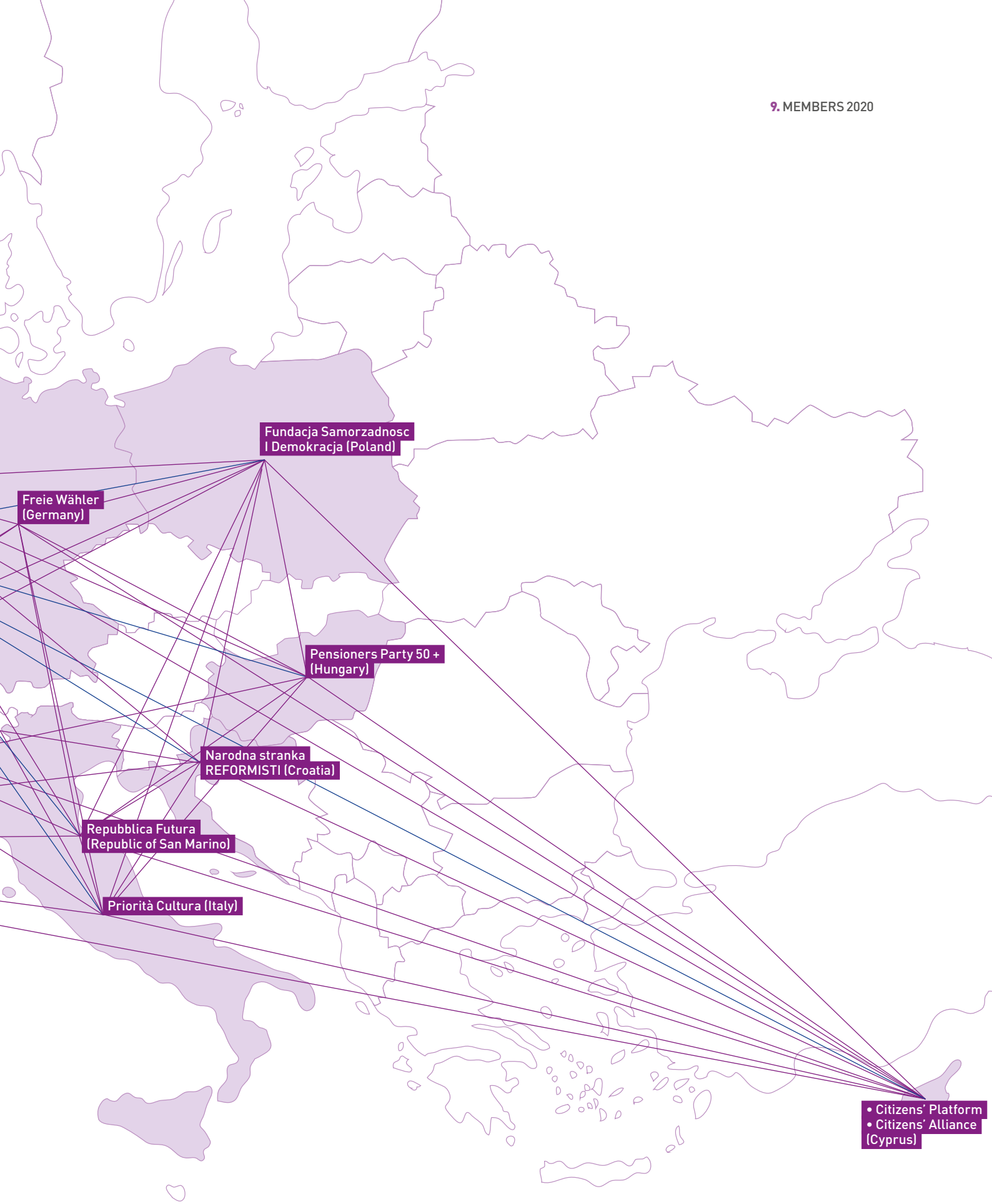


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