

Background

Which Way To Europe?

A private European initiative asks young Europeans about their attitude towards the EU

What do young Europeans think about the idea of Europe? What do they associate with Europe? And what do they expect from the confederation of states? Terra Europa, a network initiated in June 2012 by Michel Marliere, is dedicated to answer these questions.

The European house has begun to totter. The approval of EU citizens of the European project continues to decline. Against this background, Terra Europa, together with its partners, wants to animate an intensive discussion about Europe and to inspire greater political participation of the young generation in shaping the European house.

"While Europe is slowly recovering from the financial and economic crisis, the EU's crisis of meaning has never been so deep. Helplessness prevails, perspectives are missing. Young people in Europe struggle for a reliable perspective for the future. At the same time nationalist and separatist voices are getting louder and are becoming socially acceptable. I think this is dangerous. It is, therefore, all the more important to strengthen European cohesion and through an intergenerational exchange to develop a viable vision for Europe," Terra Europa initiator Michel Marlière is convinced..

Students from Germany and France set the ball rolling. Investigating the actualities of life for 18 - to 29 - year olds in Germany and France, they have discovered in a multi-level opinion research, what is the position of the young adults in Germany and in France towards Europe and what, from their point of view, are the most important common projects in the future. Around 2,000 Germans and French have been consulted. In psychologically controlled focus groups in Paris and Berlin, the survey results were subsequently deepened. The process will continue in the coming years in Southern and Eastern Europe.

"Terra Europa is a completely open-ended project. It turns out that even the surveys alone generate important impulses that "stimulate reflection and active engagement with Europe," explains Marliere. The French entrepreneur managed to get on board significant cooperation partners: "We see it as a historic commitment to advance the debate on the common shaping of Europe and to encourage the European citizens, especially the young generation, to get involved," Martin Koopmann explained the commitment of the Genshagen Foundation. The participants at Terra Europa are also the German-French Youth Office, the European German-French campus of Sciences Po in Nancy and the Otto-Suhr-Institute of the Free University of Berlin. The opinion research partner is the international market and social research company Ipsos.

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