

BLOG POST

FROM TRUMP TO THE EUROPEAN NEW DEAL

The annual State of the European Union debate takes place this week in Strasbourg. It is about finding out which progresses in European politics can still be achieved before next year's European elections, as, from then on, they may become impossible. Notably if a nationalist and authoritarian pole will be strengthened in the European Parliament, changing the balances across all European institutions.

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Will the EU be able to pursue new trade agreements and promote international cooperation according to its patterns, at a time when the Trump Administration actively dismantles such cooperation all over the world? Will the EU be able to sustain an international coalition for the Paris climate agreement, while Trump does the opposite? Will the EU be able to develop its own defence capacity, avoiding dependency on American behaviour in the framework of NATO? Will the EU be able to define its own rules for the governance of the internet and the digital economy, in terms of privacy protection, cultural production, labour conditions and democracy?

In summary, **will the EU understand at last that, in order to defend its values and way of life in an ever-changing world, it will have to assert itself not only as a big market or monetary area, but also as a geo-political entity with a democratic legitimacy** to decide over economic, but also social, cultural and political matters, and an external action to go with it?

The answer to these external challenges, however, is highly conditioned by the capacity of the EU to respond to its internal challenges with a series of measures, which will also face a race against time until May 2019: will a European asylum system be adopted? Will migration in the European territory be managed in an organised way? Will measures for the integration of immigrants be adopted, in parallel with the reinforcement of the life and work conditions of European residents based on the recently adopted European Pillar of Social Rights?

It will also remain to be seen how far the EU will be able to go in the preparation of its next multiannual budget to fund all these measures, but also to promote investment and the creation

of new jobs against the background of the big energy and digital transformations taking place. And will the reforms to complete and rebalance the Euro zone, like the banking union and own resources, see the day at last?

The nationalist, anti-European, authoritarian movement has been flaring in several European countries with the argument that, in order to protect the citizens, it is better to go back to national borders and solutions. A credible answer to this illusionary, yet dangerous, agenda cannot be the conservative European *statu quo*. **It must be the affirmation of much more ambitious European solutions.**

European ambition must be promoted by a **European New Deal**: a strong compromise between European values in regards to democracy and migration management, and the financial means to promote investment, jobs and economic and social convergence. A core of Member States can develop and implement this New Deal. And one of them has been and must continue to be Portugal.

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