

#MEGA **MAKE
EUROPE
GREAT
FOR ALL**

**KICKING-OFF
THE PAN-EUROPEAN CAMPAIGN
FOR EU2019 ELECTIONS**

**19 February 2018 - 2:30-5:30 p.m.
EESC (room VMA 3), Brussels**

Organised by:



In partnership with:



*Comité économique et social européen
European Economic and Social Committee*



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BACKGROUND

BETWEEN RISK OF DISINTEGRATION and proposals for reform, Europe today is cruising through troubled waters. Democratic representation is confronted to a crisis of legitimacy and a claim for accountability. Civil freedoms and Human rights are downsized in the name of security, as if the later implies sacrificing the formers. Regressive policies in terms of democracy and social cohesion strengthen regressive forces. European founding values are threatened by lack of ambitious policies, while nationalist and xenophobic rhetoric strikes back as a boomerang.

To break this vicious circle, the EU must answer some crucial questions: What means equality and solidarity for a quarter of Europeans facing poverty and social exclusion? What means inclusive societies when addressing the consequences of migrations from countries hit by war, poverty and dictatorship? How to build a more democratic Europe where social and environmental rights come before the

economic interests of a few? How to combine political will, legal instruments and action through civil society to safeguard democratic values and translate them into concrete policies?

This kick-off event paves the way to our **#MEGA campaign** in the run up to the European elections, aimed to feed the public debate and address those questions with political leaders and institutions responsible for tracing Europe's future. Putting democracy and civic participation at the core of the debate on Europe's future, we will engage with civic actors all across Europe empowering them to speak better and louder to promote openness and tolerance, transmit the democratic values that guide their work, combat Euroscepticism and demystify xenophobic and nationalist narratives.

DRAFT PROGRAMME

2:30 **WELCOME & INTRO** by **Jean-Marc Roirant**, European Civic Forum (ECF) President

2:45 **EUROPEAN DEMOCRACY: THE BIG CHALLENGE**
Illiberalism: a European dilemma?
Far right from margins to agenda setting?
What's left for democracy with security and defence setting the agenda?

SPEAKERS: **Filip Pazderski**, Institute of public affairs (Poland)
Julie Rosenkilde, Nyt Europa (Denmark)
Claude Debrulle, AEDH (Belgium)
MODERATOR: **Raffaella Bolini**, ECF Vice-President, ARCI (Italy)

3:30 **CIVIL SOCIETY: A STRONG ENGINE**
How to recapture and empower the voice of citizens for democratic values? Civic initiatives and policy proposals

SPEAKERS: **Francesca Chiavacci**, ARCI (Italy)
Ewa Kulik-Bielinska, Stefan Batory Foundation (Poland)
Daniela Vancic, Democracy International (Germany)
MODERATOR: **Andrei Pop**, ECF Board member, Foundation for Development of Civil Society (Romania)

4:15 **COFFE BREAK**

4:30 **FOR BIG CHALLENGE, #MEGA CHANGE!**
What positive drivers for a European renewal?

SPEAKERS: **Georges Dassis**, President of the EESC
Philippe Lamberts, MEP, Co-Chair, Greens/EFA
Linda Maria Ravo, European Commission, DG Justice
Michal Boni, MEP, LIBE Committee, EPP
MODERATOR: **Alexandrina Najmowicz**, European Civic Forum, Director

The European Civic Forum (ECF) is a transnational network that brings together over 100 associations and NGOs across Europe active in various fields such as education to citizenship and democracy, culture, defence of Human rights, environment protection, development cooperation or support to NGO environment.

Since its creation in 2005, the European Civic Forum has is working to: **# Enable civic participation** through citizens' associations and movements for a Europe grounded on Equality, Solidarity and Democracy that guarantees effective access to rights for all; **## Support the structuring** of European civil society movement through alliance building, collective thinking and joint campaigning for the common good; **### Fight for the institutional recognition** of civil society role and contribution through the setting up of a genuine European civil dialogue.

Free admission, compulsory registration: [Click here](#)

ABOUT THE VENUE:

**The event will take place in EESC premises (room VMA 3)
2 rue Van Maerlant – 1040 Brussels
Metro: Maelbeek (lines 1 and 5)
Bus: Treves (21, 27, 64)**

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