

Invitation

Part I – Expert talk on Thursday, 20 March 2014, 16.00h
“Experience and achievements in dealing with European right-wing populists”

*Representation of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia to the European Union
Rue Montoyer 47, 1000 Brussels*

Part II – Evening event on Thursday, 20 March 2014, 18.30h
“Europe under the pressure of the political right wing – a challenge for the European democracy”

*Representation of the State of Baden-Württemberg to the European Union
Rue Belliard 60 – 62, 1040 Brussels*

Introduction

Before the European elections, Europe's anti-European front of the political right wing is tying up, and seems to be successful. This has become a problem of pan-European dimension. The European Union has been identified as a concept of enemy and a mobilization tool. This threat seems to be eligible that after the European elections the most anti-integration parliament will be constituted in the history of European unification.

The classical idea of a sole European peace project does not fructify. In the awareness of many citizens the EU does not stand any longer for the promise of peace and wealth. The opinion that the European integration should be our democratic, economic and socially successful answer to globalisation is still shared by too less. In the last months the economic and financial crises played a huge number of supporters from the society's mainstream into the hands of the nationalist right-wing populists.

A European association “Transnational Nationalists” with an international cooperation of the right-wing scene is paradoxical. However, there are topics and aims that link up these groups: the rejection of the “others”, a growing heterogeneous and multicultural society in Europe – the continent of diversity - the idea of a “Europe of the fatherlands”, the current discussion about the principle of freedom and, not least, the right music scene.

Currently, the establishment of the right-wing populists especially causes that their demands also effect the positions of the political mainstream parties. Also parts of the media reproduce these reduced contents without reflection. The current debate about poverty migration and the so-called “social welfare tourism” shows how far-reaching consequences an ethnicization of the social can have solely due to simple slogans and old prejudices.

How can the pro-Europe parties manage to develop a strategy against the grey discomfort in the centre and against the garish political right-wing opponents of Europe? Are there any good examples from the practice?

Which role might play the EU hereby? How might policy and media communicate “positive reports” that demonstrate the self-evidence and the added value of openness, freedom and European integration for our society?

Europe needs support. The event makes a contribution to this.

Programme

Part I – Expert talk

“Experience and achievements in dealing with European right-wing populists”

Venue: *Representation of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia to the European Union*
Rue Montoyer 47, 1000 Brussels

16:00	Registration and snack
16:30	Welcome address Rainer Steffens , Head of the Representation of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia to the European Union
	Podium discussion with Jonathan Birdwell , Head of the Citizenship and Political Participation Programmes, Demos, London Dimitris Droutsas , Member of the European Parliament Heather Grabbe , Director, Open Society European Policy Institute, Open Society Foundations EU Affairs, Office Brussels Anna-Lena Lodenius , Journalist, Sweden
	Facilitator Doris Simon , Deutschlandradio
18:00	End of the first part

Part II – Evening event

“Europe under the pressure of the political right wing – a challenge for the European democracy”

Venue: *Representation of the State of Baden-Württemberg to the European Union*
Rue Belliard 60-62, 1040 Brussels

18:30	Aperitif
19:00	Greeting Johannes Jung , Head of the Representation of the State of Baden-Württemberg to the European Union
	Statement Adam Krzemiński , Journalist, Poland
	Podium discussion with Reinhard Bütkofer , Member of the European Parliament Adam Krzemiński , Journalist, Poland Angelica Schwall-Düren , Minister for Federal Affairs, Europe and Media, North Rhine-Westphalia
	Facilitator Doris Simon , Deutschlandradio

Followed by a reception

Simultaneous translation German-English