



*A new narrative for Europe not because we don't remain loyal to the raison d'être of the European community and the European Union; of course this remains valid.*

*But because I think we need, in the beginning of the XXI century, namely for the new generation that is not so much identified with this narrative of Europe, to continue to tell the story of Europe. Like a book: it cannot only stay in the first pages, even if the first pages were extremely beautiful. We have to continue our narrative; continue to write the book of the present and of the future. This is why we need a new narrative for Europe.*

# **FOR** New Narrative Europe

GENERAL ASSEMBLIES  
ON FORMS OF  
IMAGINATION AND  
THINKING FOR EUROPE

**PRESIDENT BARROSO**

*Launch of New Narrative for Europe*

*Bozar - Brussels, 23 April 2013*

## AN INVITATION TO ARTISTS, INTELLECTUALS AND SCIENTISTS TO DRAW UP A "NEW NARRATIVE FOR EUROPE"

This is an invitation from the European Union to our citizens, in particular artists, intellectuals, and scientists to engage with and contribute to a reflection on the European 'story'. Recent years have brought significant new challenges that have profoundly affected the European project, citizens' beliefs and societal values.

### WHY A NEW NARRATIVE?

This initiative stems from the recognition that there is an urgent need for citizens to regain trust in Europe and to commit and engage with the project that was started over 60 years ago by six countries in a divided and devastated continent. The long-standing postwar leitmotiv «peace through a common market» needs a new 'version 2.0', which can stand the test of time. It should be an all-encompassing narrative that takes into account the evolving reality of the European continent and highlights that the EU is not solely about the economy and growth, but also about cultural unity and common values in a globalized world.

As such, the New Narrative project aims to give artists, intellectuals and scientists a space for long-term discussion and other forms of expression about Europe. It responds in particular to European Commission President Barroso's recent call which he made during his State of the Union speech in 2012, for 'more and better Europe' and for expanding the public debate about Europe. This appeal was echoed by the European Parliament, giving the Commission the instruments to launch a debate on creating a 'New Narrative for Europe'.

### HOW WILL THE NARRATIVE EMERGE?

To breathe new life into the European spirit, the European Union is calling on European artists, intellectuals, scientists, academics and all European citizens to jointly explore the history, values, symbols and cultural aspects that unite citizens and to come up with a new vision for Europe.

In 2013 and early 2014, three general assemblies "On forms of imagination and thinking for Europe" will take place across Europe. They will serve as an inspiration for the New Narrative. Apart from the assemblies, there will be other parallel events to enable the debate to take place in other European cities.

A subsequent publication will present a summarized version of the Narrative together with a number of individual visions on Europe given by artists, intellectuals, scientists and other citizens.

### WHY ARTISTS, INTELLECTUALS AND SCIENTISTS?

A sustainable future for Europe requires the participation and engagement of all sectors of society. Citizens from all walks of life must be given a voice in this debate about our common future.

Artists, intellectuals and scientists in particular have a valuable contribution to make, because the European project is not only about economic cooperation. It is also about bringing together our different European cultures and aspirations which constitute a powerful source of strength for the continent. In addition to human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, Europe's core cultural values are an essential part of the European project. Cultural sectors, from artists to scientists, have an essential role to play to promote these values for the benefit of citizens and the whole European construction.

### CONTRIBUTE TO THE NARRATIVE

The project aims to involve a large number of European citizens, in particular intellectuals and artists as well as scientists. The European Union would like to invite them to contribute in writing to provide their own vision of a possible new narrative for Europe.

Their contribution should give a personal and imaginative assessment and vision of the development of Europe and the evolution of its values and symbols for its citizens. It should offer a creative reflection on the image of Europe and on the commitment and responsibilities of all its stakeholders to strengthen the European integration process.

In particular, everyone wishing to contribute may choose to answer the following questions:

1. WHAT DOES EUROPE MEAN FOR ME:  
WHAT SHOULD IT MEAN TO CITIZENS?
2. WHY DO WE NEED A CULTURAL EUROPE TODAY?
3. HOW SHOULD THE NEW NARRATIVE FOR EUROPE  
BE SHARED AMONG EUROPEAN CITIZENS?

Contributions can be uploaded on the website:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/new-narrative/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/debate-future-europe/new-narrative/index_en.htm)