

14 November 2020

(online event – part of the *European Forum of Progressive, Ecological and Leftist forces*)

Organised by Transform! Europe and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation

The annual seminar of Transform! Europe and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation around strategic questions for the radical left in Europe was initially planned for June 2020, however, due to the corona pandemic, it had to be reformulated. The point of departure for our discussion is the left's weak position and its blurry programmatic proposals, a reality that became particularly evident in the European elections. The aim of the seminar is, to deepen knowledge of the specific obstacles to and the difficulties around the transnational organisation and cooperation of the left, and, to improve the capacity of our forces for political action and organisation. The cardinal challenge is how the European left can effectively intervene and promote a policy change considering the social, economic and political consequences of the corona pandemic and the limited capacity, or better willingness, for action of the European Union.

The pandemic crisis accelerated global developments that were already present. These developments are complex and highly contradictory. Key demands of the left, such as the cancellation of the debt, suddenly became possible. The digitalisation of labour, education, cultural expression, and human interaction in general is being pushed forward, creating new forms of subjectification. Moreover, the welfare state was neither strengthened nor upheld. The inadequate health care systems had to make painful decisions to ration care, and the poor continued to be the victims of capitalism's structural inequality.

European integration is undergoing its most serious crisis, with the EU unable to react and act as a collective subject, instead of solidarity and unity, each country is on its own. This only points up how hegemonic the frugal and austerity-inspired dogma of the EU still is, regardless of its manifest failure. Democracy is no longer a compelling principle in the EU, and welfare states are outloawed by the very Constitution of the EU. What remains of the Union after the crisis? What would be the point at which the left might intervene? Where do we stand vis-à-vis the corona pandemic? Are we better prepared than we were for the 2008 crisis? How can we build common projects at the European level?

Invitation

I, Transform! and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation, hope you will accept our invitation to participate in the seminar 'The Radical Left in a Post-Pandemic World: Perspectives from Europe' co-organised by transform! and the Rosa Luxemburg Foundation to be held on 14 November 2020.

The working language will be English. However, during the whole event we provide with simultaneous interpretation in ES and FR.

Please find attached a detailed invitation letter which includes the latest draft of the programme.

Should you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind Regards,

Angelina Giannopoulou

Facilitator

European Integration and the left strategy

The UK and Europe strategy

PROGRAMME

10.00 – 13.00 (a short break in between)

Inputs and discussion. The pandemic as an accelerator of capitalist developments and the consequences for European Integration

(key questions: multiple dimensions and consequences of the corona crisis and their relation to capitalist development, corona as a shock, social developments (digitalisation), the reaction of the member states, the reaction of the Union, processes of destruction, new cultural ruptures, dehumanisation)

Inputs:

Walter Baier, Member of the Board of Transform! Europe

Heinz Bierbaum, President of the Party of the European Left

Catarina Martins, Coordinator of Bloco de Esquerda and MP (Portugal)

Juan Carlos Monedero, President of Instituto25m (Spain)

Anna Mikkola, Vice President of the EL – Vasemmistoliitto (Finland)

Georgios Katrougalos, Professor of Public Law & MP of SYRIZA (Greece)

Maria Karamesini, Professor of Labour Economics and Social Policy

Moderator (+ minutes): Angelina Giannopoulou, Facilitator of Transform! Europe

13.00 – 14.00 break

14.00 – 16.00

Round Table: *'Optimism of the will'*: Building hope for and by the Left

(key questions: points of intervention for the left, anticapitalist-humanism, new struggles in Europe and worldwide, concrete possibilities for EU intervention, ends and means of political intervention and change)

Inputs:

Marga Ferré, Co – President of Transform! Europe

Yann Le Lann, President of Espaces Marx (France)

Danae Koltsida, Director of Nicos Poulantzas Institute (Greece)

Martin Schirdewan, Co-President of GUE/NGL in the EP

Paolo Ferrero, Vice President EIL – Rifondazione Comunista

Hugo Monteiro, Professor of Philosophy & Member of the Board of Transform! Europe

Moderator: Haris Golemis, Scientific and Strategic Advisor of Transform! Europe

16.00 – 17.00 break

17.00 – 19.00

The intervention point: Collective initiatives for the left in Europe

(Presenting concrete projects that can be europeanised. The ability of the European left to intervene depends largely on its programmed orientation, strategic capability and practical intervention capability. The seminar should make a concrete initial contribution to this process)

Inputs:

Javier Moreno, Assistant Professor of Communication & Project Manager in *Fundación por la Europa de los Ciudadanos* (Spain)

David Pestieau, Deputy Chairman of PtB (Belgium)

Katalin Gennburg, Member of the Berlin Parliament for Die Linke

Sophie Binet, Co-Secretary – CGT executives (France)

Deborah James (Director of International Programs, Center for Economic and Policy Research & Coordinator of 'Our World Is Not for Sale')

Patrice Leclercq, Mayor of Gennevilliers with PCF (France)

Moderator: Cornelia Hildebrandt, Co – President of Transform! Europe