

MOVIMENTO FEDERALISTA EUROPEO

SEZIONE ITALIANA
DELL'UNIONE EUROPEA DEI FEDERALISTI
E DEL MOVIMENTO FEDERALISTA MONDIALE

PRESS RELEASE

RECONNECTING THE CITIZENS WITH THE EUROPEAN PROJECT AND PURSUING FEDERAL UNION OF THE EUROZONE WITHIN THE EU

A growing chorus of voices in political debate is now acknowledging what the European Federalist Movement (MFE) has maintained for a long time, namely

- that rehabilitation of public finances is not sufficient to overcome the current crisis, and must be accompanied by a development plan;
- that monetary union is not sustainable in the absence of a fiscal union and an EU budget with resources amounting to at least 2% of Europe's GDP;
- that a fiscal union, since it implies the introduction of European taxes, demands the creation of a political union, in order to confer democratic legitimacy on the European institutions and bring the EU budget under the control of the European Parliament;
- that the Lisbon Treaty is not an adequate instrument to tackle the severe financial, economic and institutional crisis that is currently paralysing the EU.

In this setting, the MFE believes that the German position – according to the German government, pooling the debts of the eurozone countries would demand a degree of European solidarity that, although currently absent, could be provided by a political union – may be read as a challenge to France, which has always resisted transfers of sovereignty to European level. Indeed, France is the decisive terrain on which efforts to complete the construction of a federal Europe must be focused.

From the perspective of a future EU budget funded exclusively from the Union's own resources, and a European fiscal union created to support the monetary union, particular importance is clearly assumed by the tax on financial transactions (TFT), on which the European Parliament recently (23 May) adopted a stance, amending a proposed directive of the Commission. This tax would effectively:

- a) penalise speculation, by forcing the financial sector, which caused the crisis, to contribute to repairing the damage it has wreaked;
- b) deter short-term speculative transactions;
- c) get the financial sector once more fulfilling its key role (serving the real economy), by channelling resources into investments;
- d) generate new financial resources to swell the EU budget, in particular so as to feed the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund and tackle more effectively the problem of youth unemployment.

Given the opposition it is meeting in many countries, particularly Great Britain, the FTT would initially have to be established among eurozone countries, through recourse to enhanced cooperations or, should this prove impractical, through *ad hoc* initiatives of the kind these countries have already shown themselves to be capable of mounting. Instead, collection of the tax and the use of the revenue generated should be managed at supranational level under democratic control of the MEPs of the states involved.

It is up to the governments of the eurozone to initiate a European political project on these grounds.

It is up to the members of the European Parliament, primarily those representing the eurozone citizens, to organise, before the 2014 European elections, interparliamentary conference open to representatives of national parliaments in order to draw up a draft revision of the EU Treaties with a view to convening, before the end of 2014, a constitutional convention;

It is up to Italy, the Italian government and Italy's politicians to play the role they have often played successfully in the past vis-à-vis other countries, particularly France and Germany; in other words, they must be a source of federalist pressure and impetus for completion of the construction of a federal Europe.

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The federalists, for their part, remain committed to helping to build a strong movement from below by

- creating, at all levels, committees for European federation, which will be open to and welcome contributions from political and social forces and leaders of civil society and of local government;
- getting all the forces that care about Europe's future and progress to throw their support, through a European Citizens' Initiative, behind a European plan for sustainable development.

Indeed, without this mobilisation, it is unlikely that the governments will decide to transfer budgetary and fiscal sovereignty in order to create a democratically legitimised European government.

This mobilisation is, therefore, the only way to reconnect the citizens with the European project and pursue federal union of the Eurozone within the European Union.

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