

Annual Report 2005

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

2005, my last year as ELEC president, was also a peculiarly difficult one for Europe: if not dead, the draft European Constitution is at best comatose, following its rejection by a majority of voters in France and the Netherlands; the real process of integrating ten new member states has given rise to recurring tensions; the last-minute December agreement on the European budget failed to produce a result commensurate with the ambitions and needs of a European Union enlarged to 25 States; the Lisbon Strategy is seriously lagging behind...

It was thus with great concern over Europe that I left the presidency of ELEC a few months ago. The manifestations of economic nationalism that have surfaced since, especially in some big member states, appearing to question again the very idea of the single market, have done nothing to cheer me up.

Fortunately I do not have the same concern over ELEC, although I am fully aware of the difficulty of its mission in such troubled times. For I have full confidence in my successor Anton van Rossum's ability to steer with a firm hand ELEC's ship. But she owns up to her age, and unless her seams are seriously caulked and her frame strengthened, she is in danger of sinking in a few years.

The programme of the League's new President, outlined in his inaugural speech to the Central Council last December, seems to me to be a perfect answer to this preoccupation. This is why I have wished this text, which truly lays the groundwork for a renewal of ELEC, to be included *in to* in this annual report. Fair winds to ELEC and its new captain!

Ferdinand CHAFFART

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL

In 2005, the Central Council of the League met on the 3^d of June in Paris and on the 9th of December in Brussels.

The **June enlarged Central Council** was lectured by Mr Jean-Claude TRICHET, President of the European Central Bank, over "the eurozone in the European Union". It was also privileged to hear, during the closing dinner, a speech by Mr Alain LAMASSOURE, Member of the European Parliament.

Following the traditional reports by the working commissions' presidents, the Council adopted a resolution, presented by the Economic and Social Commission and entitled "Relocation of businesses and the risk of de-industrialisation in Europe", as well as a message put forth by the Mediterranean Commission over the "Relaunch of the Barcelona process", and a document from the working party Agriculture & Society entitled "Contribution of European agriculture to tomorrow's society".

In addition the Council held a debate over the current political situation, which was introduced by statements from representatives of countries where major votings had recently taken place, *inter alia* France and the Netherlands. Lastly, following reports by the Secretary General and by Mr Malbois, Advisor to the League, it had a general discussion over ELEC's renovation, action programme and financial situation.

The **Brussels meeting** was almost entirely devoted to the latter subjects and to ELEC's future, in the wake of its new President's inaugural speech. The Council also heard a presentation by Mr Freddy VAN den SPIEGEL, Chief economist of the Fortis Group and president designate of the Belgian section, on the theme "*Challenges for the European Economy in a globalising world*".

Following the reports by the presidents of the commissions and working parties, the Council adopted a resolution presented by the Economic and Social Commission over "Necessary adjustments to demographic ageing", as well as a document from the "Europe and Strategy" study unit entitled "Reflections and proposals on the ELEC European strategy".

Lastly the Council heard a report by the Austrian section on the opportunity that arose to set up an ELEC section in Serbia Montenegro, as well as a communication by its Honorary President over the League's relationship with the European Movement International.

ACTIVITIES of the NATIONAL SECTIONS and MEETINGS of the WORKING COMMISSIONS

10 January - Barcelona - Spanish section

Lunch-debate: Alberto NAVARRO, State Secretary for the EU.

14 January / 11 February - Brussels - Working group Agriculture & Society

Preparation of the document "Contribution of European agriculture to tomorrow's society".

24 January - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: Paul FABER, Ambassador of Luxembourg in Austria: "Priorities of the Luxembourg EU Presidency".

3 February - Barcelona - Spanish section

Lunch-debate: Guillermo de la DEHESA, Economist.

4 February - Brussels - Neighbourhood Working group

Preparation of the programme of work.

15 February - Andorra - Andorran section

Debate on the European Constitution.

15 February - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: Franz NAUSCHNIGG, Austrian Central Bank: "The Euro - An assessment".

24 February - Paris - French section

Lunch-debate: Claudie HAIGNERÉ, Minister in charge of European Affairs.

3 March - Brussels - Mediterranean Commission

President: Carles GASÓLIBA. Topics: evaluation of the Naples Conference (October 2004) - collaboration with the European Movement.

4 March - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with IVC: Susanne RIES-PASSER, CEO Wuestenrot Bausparkasse AG: "Politics and the economy".

7 March - Barcelona - Spanish section

Lunch-debate: Josep M^a COLOMER (University Pompeu Fabra) - Xavier VIDAL-FOCH ("El Pais Catalunya").

8 March - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: Zoran JASIC, Croatian Ambassador in Austria: "Croatia and the EU".

10 March - Polish section

Participation in the finale of the school competition "Resident of the changing Europe". Conference by Maciej DOBRZYBIECKI, President of the Polish section.

11 March - Geneva - Monetary Panel

President: Jean-Jacques REY. Topics: situation of the European banking industry (Philipp HARTMANN) - recent developments in the field of hedge funds (Jan FROGG). Message "Stability and Growth Pact".

22 March - Polish section

General Assembly of the Polish section.

4 April - Brussels - Neighbourhood Commission

President: Michael PALMER. Topics: new neighbourhood policy (Eberhard RHEIN, Thomas GRÜNERT, Alexandre STUTZMANN). Resolution "EU new Neighbourhood Policy".

4 April - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: August ASTL, Secretary General of the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture: "The Austrian Agriculture in the EU".

5 April - Paris - Economic & Social Commission

President: Philippe JURGENSEN. Topic: relocation of businesses (Jean-Hervé LORENZI, Jean-Paul MINGASSON - Sylvain PLASSCHAERT, Evelyne PICHOT, Reinhilde VEUGELERS). Resolution "Relocation of businesses and risk of de-industrialisation in Europe".

13 April - Barcelona - Spanish section

Lunch-debate: Joan PRAT, Special Ambassador for Mediterranean Affairs.

14 April - Gdansk - Polish section

Meeting with students of the High School.

19 April - Brussels - Infrastructures Commission

President: Klaus MILZ. Topics: European transport policy: the euro-vignette (Elisabeth ALTEKÖSTER) - new concepts for intermodal transport (Norbert GEBBE).

27 April - Vienna - Austrian section

Workshop in collaboration with the European Support Centre of the Club of Rome: "The role of social capital in a sustainable economy".

3 May - Barcelona - Spanish section

Lunch-debate: Miguel Angel NAVARRO, Secretary General for the EU, Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

5 May - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: Reinhard RACK, MEP: "The Austrian Constitution in the light of the Constitution for Europe".

7 May - Polish section

Meeting with Jan KOZLOWSKI, President of Pomerania.

19 May - Brussels - Mediterranean Commission

President: Carles GASÓLIBA. Preparation of the Monaco Conference. Resolution "Relaunch of the Barcelona Process".

20 May - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with IVC: Josef CHRISTL, member of the Board of the Austrian Central Bank: "Perspectives of the economic and monetary integration of Europe".

May / June - Polish section

Meetings with representatives of SMEs.

1st June - Barcelona - Spanish section

Lunch-debate: Isidre FAINE, Director general Caixa d'Estalvis i Pensions de Barcelona.

2 June - Vienna - Austrian section

Presentation by Bozidar DJELIC, former Serbian Minister of finance and economy: "Catching up - The Future of South Eastern Europe in the European Union".

3 June - Paris - Enlarged Central Council and General Assembly.**6 June - Vienna - Austrian section**

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: Heinz ZOUREK, DG Enterprise and Industry, European Commission: "Lisbon Strategy at half-time: where is Europe heading for 2010?".

11 June - Wielkopolska - Polish section

"European Summer Welcome Party".

20 June - Barcelona - Spanish section

Lunch-debate: Josep M^a COLOMER (Chair of Political Sciences, University Pompeu Fabra).

5 July - Andorra - Andorran section

Debate on the future of Europe confronted with uncertainties of the European Constitution.

8 July - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with IVC: Erhard BUSEK, Special Coordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe: "Perspectives for the non-EU countries of South Eastern Europe".

July / August - Gdynia - Polish section

Participation in the "Summer Scene Project".

9 September - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: John McGREGOR, British Ambassador in Austria: "UK Presidency: Progress and Partnership".

15 September - Barcelona - Spanish section

Lunch-debate: Stephen WRIGHT, UK Ambassador in Spain.

19 September - Brussels - Infrastructures Commission

President: Klaus MILZ. Topics: news from the shipping world (Albert FREI) - current development in European rail infra-structures (Marc FALCHI) - updated priorities of European transport policies (Benoît Le BRET) - status of PPP development in the framework of TEN financing (Joachim SCHNEIDER) - private sector perspective on PPP development in Europe (D. BADEA-TAYLOR).

19 September - Koscierzyna - Polish section

Meeting with students from Germany, Denmark, Sweden and Spain.

21 September - Brussels - Economic & Social Commission

President: Philippe JURGENSEN. Topic: demographic ageing and its consequences (Didier BLANCHET, Olivier BONTOUT, François HERAN, Michel LORIAUX). Resolution "Necessary adjustments to demographic ageing".

22 September - Bern - Swiss section

General Assembly.

September - Polish section

Meeting with Slawomir PIETRAS, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs.

3 October - Polish section

Participation in the celebrations of the 25th anniversary of "Solidarnosc".

6 October - Palma - Mediterranean Commission

President: Carles GASÓLIBA. Conference by Joan PRAT, Haut-responsible of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference.

7 October - Utrecht - Monetary Panel

President: Jean-Jacques REY. Topic: cross-border issues in European financial supervision (Dirk SCHOENMAKER). Conclusions "Financial Supervision in Europe".

10 October - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: Julian PRIESTLEY, Secretary General of the European Parliament: "The European Parliament - a common house for Europe".

18 November - Gdansk - Polish section

Meeting with students of the High School.

23 November - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: Ursula PLASSNIK, Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs: "The Austrian EU Presidency 2006".

25 & 26 November - Kronberg - Monetary Commission

President: Rolf BREUER. Topics: "The ECB and the one-size-fits-all problem: experiences and consequences" (Jean-Claude TRICHET) - "The US current account deficit: policy challenges for the US, Asia and Europe" (Axel WEBER) - "The 2005 reform of the Stability Pact: a license to run up debt?" (Klaus REGLING) - "The EU-US financial market dialogue: key regulatory and prudential topics" (Alexander SCHAUB).

29 November - Brussels - Neighbourhood Commission

President: Michael PALMER. Topics: catching up: the future of South Eastern Europe in the EU (Bozidar DJELIC) - creation of a European Democracy Center (Edward McMILLAN SCOTT).

29 November - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with IVC: Zoran JASIC, Croatian Ambassador in Austria: "Croatia - Opportunities and threats of the accession process".

5 December - Vienna - Austrian section

Debate in collaboration with the European Club: Anne-Marie SIGMUND, President of the European Economic and Social Committee: "The European ESC - a common bond between Europe and the organized civil society".

5 December - Paris - French Section

Lunch-debate: Alain LAMASSOURE, Former Minister, MEP.

5 December - Polish section

General Assembly of the Polish section.

9 December - Central Council and General Assembly

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