



# France and Europe in the upcoming French elections

31<sup>st</sup> **MARCH** 2017

at Fédération Nationale des Travaux Publics

3 rue de Berri, 75008 Paris



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Debates will be held in  and 



# ISSUE FOR DEBATE

Although a big state and one of Europe's founding members, France is currently a weak point in Europe. It is struggling to adjust to globalization, make reforms, and/or ensure these reforms are re-appropriated by the French people who have to be involved. It is experiencing a profound crisis of identity and a lack of prosperity which is not benefiting everyone, leaving much room for populism and extremism. Europe's future is also at stake. What we will make of it depends not only on French people, who have to hear what other Europeans think, live, and hope for. Yet our future together also depends on how European issues will be dealt with during these elections and on where areas for common compromise can be found and built.

This conference is structured around three roundtables: reforming France for itself and for Europe; building and sharing progress in Europe; and Europe faced with the democratic challenge.

Despite its undeniable assets, France is currently undermined by major challenges: massive unemployment, an inefficient training system, fading competitiveness, weak growth, and a persisting public deficit. We are entering an important election year in a context of increased fears about globalization, terrorism, and defiance towards the elites, so what must we do to restore sustainable growth prospects and national cohesion? Which social and structural economic reforms (education, training, health, security, etc.) are needed, not to please Brussels, but for France's own good? Failure to reform the state and its missions will likely result in a worsening of the economic and social situation, a continued erosion of France's influence and the further weakening of an imbalanced European Union. At a time when the very existence of the European Union is in jeopardy, Germany cannot and does not want to be alone in command: France should learn from others and restore a balanced relationship, aggregating other European countries to shape the Europe of tomorrow with a rethought governance.

With the new global configuration (China, Russia, etc.), where voices calling for protectionism are rising (Trump, Brexit, etc.), Europe should play a role in rising to the security and development challenge. Sharing a common diagnosis between European citizens and economic and social players on what is at stake and what needs to be done in a context of accelerated mutations (digital, energetic, environmental) is crucial if we are to turn challenges into opportunities for all. Yet, appropriate pedagogy on the crisis and mutation is far from being achieved. Given the lack of shared prosperity, where many still hope to stick to an outdated "model" incompatible with a changing world, economic development requires sharing, pooling resources, investing together to produce on European territories and save the planet, enabling everyone to live from work and build Europe's future. What are the key challenges for Europe as a global public power to escape stagnation, strengthen competitiveness, build a sustainable industrial policy, combine public and private funding, and remedy social and fiscal competition?

Europe is facing a democratic challenge; how to bolster it as a democratic lab? Brexit, Trump's victory, among other developments, have stressed the crisis of our national and European democracies, focusing on elections. Divisions are threatening our national and European cohesion and solidarity; governance is criticized – and rightly so. How can we foster a "rapprochement" among Europeans on shared values: we must begin by undertaking institutional reforms and sharing a political project, and in this case, which Europe do we want? What should be done to enable Europe's citizens and a European civil society still in the making to take a more active part and choose among genuine long-term options?

# PROGRAMME

8:30am

WELCOME

## 1ST ROUNDTABLE

Reforming France and Europe for itself and for Europe

9:00am - 10:00am

*Speakers :*

**Vincent AUSSILLOUX**, Head of the Economics and Finance department, France Stratégie

**Dr. Frank BAASNER**, Director of Ludwigsburg French-German Institute

**Laurence PARISOT**, CEO, former president of MEDEF

*Facilitator :*

**Carole ULMER**, Director of studies, Confrontations Europe

## 2ND ROUNDTABLE

Building and sharing progress in Europe

10:15am - 11:30am

*Keynote :*

**Stéphane PALLEZ**, CEO, Française des jeux

*Speakers :*

**Jean-Louis MARCHAND**, President, European Construction Industry Federation

**Stéphane PALLEZ**, CEO, Française des jeux

**Emmanuel TUCHSCHERER**, Director for European Affairs, ENGIE

**Thiébaut WEBER**, Confederal secretary, European Trade Union Confederation

*Facilitator :*

**Anne MACEY**, Chief Executive, Confrontations Europe

## 3RD ROUNDTABLE

Europe faced with the democratic challenge

11:45am - 12:45pm

*Keynote :*

**Sandro GOZI**, Secretary of State, Italy

*Speakers :*

**Sandro GOZI**, Secretary of State, Italy

**Martin KOOPMANN**, Director, Stiftung Genshagen, Germany

*Facilitator :*

**Philippe HERZOG**, Founding President, Confrontations Europe

## CONCLUSION

12:45pm - 1:00pm

**Marcel GRIGNARD**, President, Confrontations Europe

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Sharing diagnosis and concrete proposals for a more human, competitive and cohesive Europe.

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