



The European Convention and the future of Europe

In December 2001, the European governmental leaders decided to convene a Convention that was assigned to formulate an answer to the challenges and reforms that the European Union was going to face, following the enlargement. The Declaration of Laeken phrased it as follows :

“it will be the task of that Convention to consider the key issues arising for the Union's future development and try to identify the various possible responses”. Crucial notions in this respect are e.g. simplification, transparency and efficiency.



*Plenary session of the European Convention, 11-12 July 2002
Mr. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Chairman*

During the European Council in Thessaloniki (20-21 June), the Chairman of the Convention, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, will submit a draft Constitution.

However, the European Convention is not the end but rather the beginning of reforming the European Union. Under the Italian presidency, in the second half of 2003, representatives of the national governments will meet during an Intergovernmental Conference to examine the draft constitution. If the governmental leaders come to an agreement, the new constitution will still have to be approved by all national parliaments of the current fifteen member states and the ten countries that are to join the European Union on 1 May 2004. Moreover, in some of the countries, a referendum will be held on the new constitution.



*Inaugural session of the European Convention, 28 February 2002
Mr. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, Chairman*

In the context of the Convention, many working groups were created, one of which was to study the realisation of a “Social Europe”. Eurofedop basically agrees with the conclusions of this working group as regards services of general interest and the role of social dialogue. Therefore, through the memorandum that we directed to the Greek presidency of the Union, we called on the member states to take account of the results of this working group in the course of the Intergovernmental Conference.

Considering the importance and the lively discussion that this draft of a European constitution raises, Eurofedop has collected a number of independent links in different languages that should enable you to put discussions and conclusions in a larger framework, with attention for the specific consequences e.g. in the field of Justice and the Common Foreign and Security Policy.



*Inaugural session of the European Convention, 28 February 2002
Hemicycle of the European Parliament*

European Union

* The official website of the European Convention (all languages).

<http://european-convention.eu.int>

* Website of the European Union on the future of the Union with reactions of the member states, the European institutions and NGOs (all languages).

<http://europa.eu.int/futurum/>

Think tanks, research institutes and universities

* The “European Policy Institutes Network” is a network of 37 European think tanks and research institutes dealing with the subject of European integration, the European political debate in 28 countries (all languages).

<http://www.epin.org/about/members.html>

* “Europa 2004” is the website of the Istituto Affari Internazionali (Rome) and contains the opinions of Italian experts and institutes on the future of Europe. Thus the website follows and comments the present developments in the context of the Convention (Italian and English).

http://www.europa2004.it/UK/Frontpage_eng.htm

* “Porte d’Europe” is the website of the European Study Centre of the prestigious “Institut des Sciences Politiques” in Paris (French but with many links to all member states).

<http://www.portedeurope.org/index.htm>

* The “Centrum für angewandte Politikforschung” is the biggest university institute in Germany studying the European Integration. Moreover, it pays ample attention to the present European debate (German).

<http://www.cap.uni-muenchen.de/konvent/index.htm>

* “The Council on the debate of the future of the European Union” is an autonomous institute with the purpose of stimulating the public debate on the European Union in Spain (Spanish).

<http://www.futuroeuropa.es>