

**Ten elements of reflection by the EM-IT after March 25<sup>th</sup>**

1. The “*Declaration of Rome*”; the opening of negotiations for “*Brexit*” with the letter of the Prime Minister Theresa May and the guide-lines proposed by the President of European Council Donald Tusk; EP reports on the potentialities of the Treaties; the achievement of EMU; the strengthening of the social dimension and the reform of the European system; the Commission’s “*White Paper on the Future of Europe*”: they all mark a turning point in the process of European integration.

2. These elements fit inside a political landscape where the sovereignty wind seems to be losing intensity. It was so for the presidential elections in Austria and then in the Netherlands, but also in Bulgaria and Serbia. European flags appeared in French presidential’ elections campaign - albeit in a context marked by still too strong nationalist tendencies – and political debate in Germany is taking place between "pro-European" political parties, representing over 80% of the German electorate.

3. After a long period in which the European public space have been almost entirely occupied by euro-hostile or euro-skeptics movements, the voices of those who want "more Europe" are rising stronger. The most significant signal came from Rome, with a popular mobilization that brought together several thousand citizens - especially young people - responding to the call of the federalist organizations. This mobilization has ideally united the citizens gathered in Rome with those who demonstrated in other European capitals, with new civil society networks, such as the coalition “*Change course to Europe*”, or with the activists of the “*Pulse of Europe*”. The “*March for Europe*” in London also marked the willingness of a significant part of British people in support of the “*Remain*” and against the “*Brexit*”.

4. The crisis of the European integration process comes from afar: it was prepared by the Maastricht Treaty, which gave priority to the monetary dimension, indefinitely postponing the political integration while the world was radically changing. This crisis was exacerbated by the French and Dutch rejection of the Treaty-Constitution in 2005 and then by the unsatisfactory reform adopted with the Treaty of Lisbon. Likewise, EU was not equipped to respond to the chaos in international finance began in 2007 in the United States, with extended effects leading to a still lingering risk of disintegration. The crisis has created inequalities between Member States and within Member States; unemployment rate has dramatically increased, especially among young people and women; entire social classes were plunged into poverty; the EU and its Members are not yet capable of governing the increasing flows of people fleeing from war, hunger and environmental disasters; European citizens feel that their security is not guaranteed; the EU’s response to the changes announced by new US Administration on the topics of defense and fight against climate change is still weak and confusing, as are relations with other international actors (first and foremost Russia and China) and the policy towards the Mediterranean; the EU is silent about the lack of rules in international finance and violations of fundamental rights.

5. Faced with these challenges, the EU is the scapegoat of all unresolved national problems, opposing selfishness and growing disagreements between governments of Member State. Hence, the temptation to seek national solutions, the contestation of common rules, justifying or considering as legitimate their violation, the theorization of contrast as a means of negotiation and conflict as a method of working instead of dialogue. These temptations exist also in Italy, accompanied by an undervaluation of the economic and social benefits of integration, and forgetfulness of the fact that the Italian

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system prove to be unable to fully exploit them: the access to European markets for SMEs; the pan-European tourism; protection against monopolistic practices; the improvement of product and health quality standards; study, work and research mobility; not to mention the regional cohesion policies and the positive effects of the single currency.

6. The "*Declaration of Rome*" marks an important step towards the disintegration's rejection by the twenty-seven Heads of State and Government. This rejection was complemented by a common commitment against unemployment and inequalities, the sharing of the multilateralism's method and fair and interdependent trade at international level, the fight against climate change, the need to develop the European dimension of external security and defense, the respect for common rules and the democratic strengthening of European institutions.

7. The "*Declaration of Rome*" must be assessed in its proper dimension and within its own limits. A message is not enough if it is not followed by concrete and precise commitments on the projects' content, the method and the agenda to achieve them. Otherwise, the message may be quickly ignored and contradicted as happened a few hours after its signing by the Visegrad Group's countries and Austria.

8. The EM-IT shares and fully endorses the statements of the President Sergio Mattarella on 22 March: "*the reform of the European treaties is now inevitable*" and on 25 March for a "*constituent phase*" knowing that "*without the prospect of progress, the risk of a fatal paralysis impossible to sustain is increasing*". We are convinced that this phase should aim to the European elections in the spring of 2019, with an EP playing a constituent role and the end of the rule of unanimity. In this spirit, the ME-IT chooses the third scenario of the Commission's White Paper: "*those who want more do more*" and thus a Europe developing around concentric circles from the Eurozone in order to transform EU into a Federal Community with a federal government accountable to the EP.

9. The EM-IT is also convinced that the needs of the European citizens must be satisfied from the existing treaties: to establish a genuine "*social union*" which must be accompanied by a "*prosperity union*"; to ensure a sustainable development in the context of an economy based on alternative and renewable energies; to transform the "*European Stability Mechanism*" into a genuine budget instrument for the Eurozone; to govern migration flows by respecting the principles of reception and solidarity and by strengthening the European policy of aid for the developing countries; to ensure the internal and external security of the EU. All these elements will form the basis of a true political and democratic Europe based on a genuine European citizenship.

10. The ME-IT, appealing also to the various organizations that have drawn up the declaration "*Changing course to Europe*", aims to contribute to the drafting of an "*Italian Pact for Europe*" to be submitted to the trade unions and business partners, to the political parties, to the culture and the academic world and to make this contribution to the EIM debate. At the same time, the ME-IT has decided to launch an awareness campaign "*Europe closer to you*" in order to reduce the distance between citizens and the EU and to inform them about the benefits of European citizenship.

April 5<sup>th</sup> 2017