

EU Fifty Years, the year 2050 and the Dutch Horizon Scan Project

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This article will present some highlights of the development of a European alliance for peace and prosperity. After a quick scan of this part of Europe's time line, there will be a closer look at peace, at prosperity and, finalizing, what the conclusions are and the lessons learnt. Learnt for the next fifty years, say 2050. Perhaps then there will be a Europe of Fifty in stead of the present Twenty-five. What lies ahead? Lets scan the future, that is what the Horizon Scan Project is about. And you free to join in because there is also a European Forecast Network (forming).

It is only some fifty years ago (1951) that Schuman acted upon Monnet's idea, both men of stature sharing a dream of peace and prosperity amongst the big and small nations of Europe. They had a dream. It became the European Community for Coal and Steel - ECCS- by the Treaty of Paris. But reality carried that dream much further in that split nanosecond fifty years is compared to eternity.

The COS-Horizon Scan project also has a Fifty Year Dream and wants trigger you to work to let reality surpass it as manifold as Schuman's dream. But let us look back what the European countries have accomplished since 1945, since 'Never War Again' became the political prime and proud directive. It hurts beyond words to see new generations -EU domestic as well as EU foreign- completely ignorant of the painful lessons of Europe's cruel, bloody and shameful past. It is a good thing that we all are not psychic and do not 'feel' the infinite grief, pain and sorrow that was caused by wars, prosecutions and genocides that tormented civilization in Europe in the past century and the centuries before; we would not be able to stop weeping and grieving.

Schuman and Monnet's dream turned the tide. A Europe of Six (Germany, France, BeNeLux and Italy ;1951) became a Europe of a common EEC market and a EC for

Atomic Energy (Euratom) (in 1957, Treaty of Rome as the result of plan of the Dutch Foreign Affairs Minister Jan-Willem Beyen). It gained weight as ECCS, EEC and EurAtom joined into one European Community (Fusion treaty 1967).

It expanded to a Europe of Nine as the UK, Denmark and Ireland joined (Jan. 1st; 1973), of Ten as Greece joined (Jan. 1st 1981), of Twelve (Spain and Portugal joined as of Jan. 1st 1986), a Europe of Fifteen as Austria, Sweden and Finland joined (as of Jan. 1st 1995), a Europe of Twenty-five (Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Livonia, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Slovakia, Tjechia, May 1st 2004, a Europe of Twenty-seven (Romania, Slovakia; January 1st 2007 onwards). Talks are ongoing to connect Turkey too to this Alliance of Peace and Prosperity. And every year potential new nations knock at the door to become accepted as Candidate Member States; Ukraine and Georgia, to name only two examples.



Part of the EU processes take place behind the walls of this building. The very first meetings of the EU of Six were hosted elsewhere, in Strasbourg at the premises of the Council of Europe and the European Court of Human Rights.

This unmatched, free and freely peaceful gathering and joining of sovereign nations is not only an impressive breathtaking accomplishment for its timeline. Indeed, their peoples can hardly keep pace and are sometimes scared out of their wits and say 'No' to their own leaders on Europe. Leaders that can only scratch the surface of the enormous effects on prosperity and wealth this European Alliance for Peace and Prosperity has bestowed on its citizens; their citizens. What did happen?

Let us talk peace first. This anecdote perhaps better conveys the message than any lengthy or historical and scholarly exposé.

Members of European Parliament present at the very first speech of the Latvian Representative of a free and democratic Latvia will never ever forget that moment. It was

*never broadcasted, there was no headline anywhere in any EU country, nor will it ever be recalled in any textbook on history. In tears with a trembling voice and highly emotional, a young Latvian woman addressed the European Parliament in her native language. Free and freely for the first time ever since the former USSR seized control over her -ancestor's- country more than 'fifty years' ago, she paved the way for her country to become a potential Candidate Member State Country. *) The translators could translate; yes. But only the words. The rest did not need any translation.*

**) Personal communication of EU MEP Mrs. Lousewies van der Laan addressing and hosting together with MEP Bob van Den Bos, a group of Dutch citizens in Brussels at the House of the European Parliament. Dec 4th 2002 or Oct 9th 2003 or 15th 2003; Verlaan organised three visits in those years.*

There is no 'No' to such an accomplishment and that scene repeated itself some ten times as the EU15 gave way to EU 25. Countries free at last choosing freely for that Alliance for Peace and Prosperity as did a number of countries in the preceding fifty years; peacefully, within bloodshed and without the horrors of wars. That is way more and better than Caesar ever accomplished.

There are of course compelling episodes to recall from various wars that rampant the European territories over the last centuries, they are all in our shared histories and textbooks.

The immense conference room is where this all happened, where over 600 Members of European Parliament (MEP) meet. At the back, behind the dark windows the translators do their work, allowing everyone to speak one of the official languages and being heard in all others for the Parliamentarians. Another part of the MEP's job happens in 'the corridors' and during numerous contacts. Not all arguments will be rational but emotive, for instance regarding 'Strasbourg' as it concerns the French.



Let us talk prosperity. No bombs fell upon our houses, nobody had to work several lifetimes in agony to rebuild them at the expense of our children's education and other

hardships. No children were kept out of schools or lost mums, dads or brothers and sisters in war efforts.*) No, indeed. Standing in the big conference room of the European Parliament the idea is overwhelming that this is the place where the peoples settle their differences. Being able to do so in their own languages. Thanks to the 'invisible' translators in the boxes all around. Peoples, with histories of bloody and cruel wars with each other, now using that energy in a constructive way.

*) In 1999 the Netherlands contributed some 11 billion Dutch guilders (equivalent to approximately 5 billion Euros) to the EU and received some 3.8 billion guilders (equivalent to some 1.7 billion Euros). The Net Difference of 7.5 billion guilders (equalling Dutch Guilders f470,= pro Dutch Citizen; say 210 Euros). The Netherlands was the highest net contributor and remained that for some time, calculated and assumed the Dutch Ministry of Finance. (http://www.minfin.nl/default.asp?CMS_ITEM=E28B2444C00848078550AC80836FD477X2X39635X68#bijdrage; 17.9.2001)

All energy is used fruitfully and prosperous; for "small" things and for big things, for the "old" countries and the new ones. The scoreboard has no end. A small thing for example was agreeing to a common GSM standard for mobile communications. That saved business -guess who pays the final bill, you and me as customers- hugh amounts of money on translating one code to another in between country communications. And citizens needed not by a cell phone and appropriate phone cards during holidays and travels through Europe. Free traffic of goods and people qualifies as a big thing, as is the agreement on one single mutual currency (euro) and mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications. Hell, young people can do part of their studies in another Member State

A pick from examples of results from BvdB's chapter on Education.

Agreements were made about mutual recognition of professional qualifications, (diplomas, certificates, titles) allowing teachers, nurses, physical therapists, pilots, bus & truck drivers and many, many other professionals to work in other countries because they want to themselves, are better paid or because they want to be with their spouse AND have a life themselves.

And arrangements have been made that 10% of all students in higher education do part of their studies in another country, by programmes such as Lingua, Comenius. At organisational and staff levels this is supported by programmes such as Tempus and Leonardo.

Specialised programmes such as Youth and Marie Curie allows young citizens to experience each others culture off school or for young scientist to do research in other countries, easing future contacts and co operations. (BvdB, p 100-103)

Country and receive a qualification that is fully accepted in both countries and with only few limitations elsewhere in the EU. They do not only live in a free country as did (most of) their parents, they live in a free EU and are free to fulfil their dreamt lives.

The benefit for the "old" EU countries is manifold to. First of all, no resources needed to be wasted or were destructed in pointless war efforts as was 'custom' until some fifty years. Nor were resources wasted on rebuilding destroyed facilities and infra structures. That saved billions and billions of tax payers money.

Second, expanding trade relationships with the new Member States generated jobs and increased Gross National Products on both sides. In fact (thirdly), the economy growth figures of new Member State Countries are a few percent points above the European average for a number of years.*) Again a profit adding up to billions and spreading wealth directly to the levels of individual citizens, meeting other EU citizens with different

Other accomplishment EU: gross economy

In 'De Europese Unie, de uitbreiding gaat door' (2001; pg 12) one can see that in the time frame 1995-2000:

- a. export from the EU doubled from 70 billion Euros to 150 billion Euros;
- b. imports the EU doubled from 55 billion Euros to 115 billion Euros.

cultural backgrounds and challenging them to use different languages to get their messages across, experientially enriching both sides. Definitely a fourth credit for the Alliance.

**) In 'De Europese Unie, de uitbreiding gaat door' (2001; pg 20) one can see: the in 1973, 1981 and in 1986 newly associated Member State Countries experience higher economical growth rates -for several years- than the EU-average. And; (pag 12) exports from the EU doubled from 1995 till 2000 from 70 billion Euro to 150 billion, whereas imports to EU increased from 55 billion to almost a 120 billion Euros.*

And there is the "small" stuff, infinitely manifold. Think of the logic and pragmatics of one 25 member committee working out minimal standards for safe toys for our children, instead of 25 ten member committees (one committee pro country). Followed by 25 times

25 bilateral committees to facilitate international trade of toys between two countries (of some toys) and followed by similar exercises on other toys and all other thinkable products and services.

Other accomplishment EU, on Consumer Goods:

The CE Marketing label (Conformit Européenne) is to be found on many products in the EU. The European Quality Label indicates that the product meets certain minimal requirements on health and safety. (p30, BvdB). This is only one of many examples for Consumer Affairs in Bob's book.

Oh, sometimes it does not work; the size of herrings (sorry Norway) or 'unbent bananas'. But overall the peoples of Europe and their representatives have exactly the same ideas about what is good for them. Differences can always be negotiated upon and resolved. The benefits of this co acting and getting to terms together, is beyond imagination. The Subsidiarity Principle being the limiting principle to decide what could better be handled at national levels and would be better dealt with supra nationally.

And no, EU is not only advantageous for the big countries and the rich. On the contrary, the small countries have a comparative bigger say than the big ones. And the small gain prosperity too by working together in the Alliance. For instance, small countries that lack the means of developing backward and disadvantageous regions can use funds from the European Structural Funds to do whatever would have impossible otherwise. So also citizen far away from Brussels, may benefit –even unknowingly– from the EU efforts.

Other accomplishment EU: Dutch regions

From 'De regionale steun van de Europese Unie aan Nederland' (Structuurfondsen, paragraaf 4.1), the Dutch may learn that the Netherlands will receive during 2000-2006 in total 3.286 billion Euros. In reference to the 2.654 billion of previous time frame 1994-1999, this is a yearly increase of 6%.

Al right, fair enough. Not all is glorious about the Alliance of Peace and Prosperity. Evil forces profit equally. However, at a European level this is reacted upon accordingly by aligning the crime fighting systems.

And the fate of some job opportunities is speeded up, causing off shoring some work to better suited locations. Yes, at the expense of the local domestic work force. But that

would only be a matter of time anyway, leading to agony and misery because the tide will not really turn. History shows time and again that any national effort, money and energy spent on 'a dying horse' will only satisfy short term political pressures and demand but is a waist of good tax payers money. That drive, energy and resources is better spent at creative, true alternatives and solutions. Solutions much easier to work out 'groupwise' for the open minded. This we can learn from scientists. Working together in 'Frame Work Programmes', the European cooperation allows focus and 'mass' resources successfully. Europe outperforms the USA, as the UK Science Advisor David King (2004) points out.

Other accomplishment EU: Science

Nature, vol 430/15 July 2004/311-316: The Scientific Impact of Nations, David A. King. The USA produces ± 35% of all scientific papers, EU15 37.12%; "...31 of the world's 193 countries""produce 97,5% of the worlds most cited papers." The larger part goes on the account of some top 10 countries The top 8 account for 84.5% of the top one percent of world's most cited science papers. (Most of them are European).

That is exactly what we strive for. Work out 'groupwise' solutions to problems, open mindedly, use your imagination. Think beyond present day problem and even beyond 'tomorrow's problems'. We want you to imagine the problems of 'the day after tomorrow'. Talk about them, exchange views, imagine solutions and that about them too.

Take advantage of past experience, lessons learnt, re apply good practice models and building blocks, assist formal European bodies to accomplish their missions in the Regions at citizens levels and be assisted by them. Start up basic networks and contacts drawing upon our own special expertise, networks, contacts and previous good practice experiences. The Alliance of Peace and Prosperity already paved your way as thousands and thousands of you already were or will be involved in projects like the previously mentioned Lingua, Comenius, Tempus, Leonardo, Youth, Marie Curie, the Frame Work Programmes and many other programmes in other areas of attention then education and science.

Let us talk conclusions, lessons learnt and the Horizon Scan Project. The careful reader notes that there is a anniversary to celebrate in 2007; 50 years after a Europe of Six

agreed on a common market stated in a the BeNeLux plan proposed by the Dutch Foreign Affairs Minister Jan-Willem Beyen. It is also a moment to memorise a lesson: the future is ours to make and the possibilities and results in reality prove to be bigger, larger and greater than in the wildest dreams of Schuman, Monnet and the BeNeLux-representative. That is: if we work together, join forces, talents and other resources. Over the last 50 years we have got to know each other, we have learnt to trust each other and we have

COS Horizon Scan Project

COS (2) is platform for Dutch society oriented foresight organizations that work within the same of adjacent research areas and topics. Its objective is to search for connections between the research questions and results, and to connect the different levels and perspectives of researcher, policy advisers, applied researchers and other users of research results.

COS initiated the *Horizon Scan Project* (3) as the sheer volume of knowledge measured in number of research web pages, articles and books skyrockets and as the cycle for knowledge production and usage speeds up and societies are globalising and becoming more complex; within and between societies.

Its mission is to get high level knowledge, policy and R&D workers to look beyond the present day problems and even tomorrow's day problems. Have them ask, think and discuss: "What will be the problems 'the day after tomorrow?', metaphorically speaking.

So far some ten clusters of problems & chances were identified. Aging. Yes, but more particularly the chances that arise as people –in prosperous countries– live to be a 120 in good health. That is, if mankind can keep the planet in one piece because there are also problems and chances arising from conflicts, within countries and between countries and entire regions. Curious about the others clusters? Visit our website.

learnt that our dreams even fall short to reality if –yes, IF– we work together. Together, the Europe of Twenty-five may become a Europe of Fifty *) in 2050 and still be an

*) There is already a 'Europe of Fifty', Forty-nine actually. That is the Council of Europe; established in 1949. It's mission concerns ensuring and establishing democracy, justice, humanitarian rights and cultural exchange and collaboration between its members and the Regions. More information: see www.coe.int.

Alliance of Peace and Prosperity. It may even not be named 'Europe' anymore by that time because a more appropriate name is found. Or it remains 'Europe' as a tribute to its open minded tradition.

Who's know, let us get on to it and 'make our future'. Peaceful and prosperous; our future and that of our children, children's children and their children. The tools are lying and waiting. And mind you: you find 'Europe' around your corner as there are over 140 information desk spread out over the territory, see for your self at:

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/relays/ed_nl.htm.

If you have an interest in higher education and science, see

http://ec.europa.eu/comm/relays/edc_nl.htm. And all 'files' that are or have been active at

http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/glossary/index_nl.htm.

Quite often citizens like you and me, are invited to take part in the process and have our say long before proposals reach Parliament of become ratified.

You want to now what 'Europe' did to day? See for your self at: -

<http://europa.eu.int/rapid/recentPressReleasesAction.do?guiLanguage=en&hits=500> .

Information about the Horizon Scan Project can be found at www.horizonscan.nl. More information about its initiator, COS can be found at www.verkenningen.nl.

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(2) COS Centraan Overlegorgaan Sectorraden voor onderzoek en ontwikkeling. De voorzitter is mvr. Prof. Dr. Maassen van den Brink

(3) The Horizon Scan Project is chaired by prof. Roel In'Veld (chairman RMNO, see www.rmno.nl and Prof. Dr. Hans van der Veen, director STT, see www.stt.nl

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