



# EUROPEAN ALTERNATIVES

DEMOCRACY, EQUALITY, CULTURE  
BEYOND THE NATION STATE







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A low-angle photograph of a person standing on a concrete pillar, reaching up with both arms towards a large, curved concrete highway interchange. The person is wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt, blue jeans, and green sneakers. The background shows a cityscape with other buildings and greenery under an overcast sky.

DEMOCRACY,  
CULTURE,  
EQUALITY  
BEYOND  
THE  
NATION  
STATE



# ABOUT EUROPEAN ALTERNATIVES

European Alternatives is a transnational non-profit organisation with as main objective to promote democracy, equality, and culture beyond the nation state through cultural, artistic and social activity and education concerning Europe. With civil society often fragmented and largely focusing on single issues at the national level, there is no common framework for citizens to implement real change at the European level and address the crisis of European economies, governments and institutions. There is also a lack of imagination for alternative ways of life and political institutions in Europe. European Alternatives (EA) seeks to drive and facilitate the development of participation of citizens and civil society, opening up the possibilities for cultural, social and political experimentation and innovation with a specific focus on the younger generation.

The organisation acts in the belief that the most urgent political and social questions can no longer be understood or dealt with at the national level alone, and that new forms of transnational collectivity must be created to restore to citizens' democratic control over their future. In doing so, European Alternatives seeks to build a broader vision of a viable alternative Europe, as well as relaunch active citizenship and public commitment. EA therefore seeks to promote alternative means of social and political action,

as well as means of participation, and finds in Europe and its transnational institutions an interlocutor to which to address transnational claims on behalf of citizens in general.

Accordingly, European Alternatives does not limit its action to one theme, topic or geographical area but endeavours to be generalist and transnational. Working through its various offices, European Alternatives has over the past years developed innovative approaches to promoting European citizenship and fundamental rights by organising citizens' panels, campaigns, festivals and conferences, by using innovative online methods (multilingual websites, online radio, social networking, online videos, web documentaries) and by involving unusual or excluded groups in activities with a European focus (migrant groups, local democracy groups, youth groups, artistic organisations).

European Alternatives is composed of 4 affiliated organisations in London, Paris, Cluj-Napoca, and Rome. It also has a strong membership base in over 16 countries including a strong presence in new Member States (those who joined the EU in 2004 or 2007), as well as in Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia. EA is a member of the Expert Group on Citizenship of DG EAC, registered in the Commission Register of Interest Representatives.

# STATEMENTS

'I really enjoy taking part in this new experimental platform of participation from the bottom up.'

Luisa Maria Schweizer

'I am very happy to be part of a network of people willing to do something to make Europe a better place.'

Daniel Peslari

'I understand better what it means to be European. We are united around the same values for Europe: above all equality, solidarity beyond the nation states. EA is a great experiment of European transnational democracy where all the members can have a say.'

Mara Gabrielli

'I became a member because EA is unique in that it combines political, social and artistic projects, like the Transeuropa Festival taking place simultaneously in more than 14 cities.'

Flore Murard

## **INNOVATIVE** DEMOCRATIC METHODOLOGY

As a transnational membership organization, European Alternatives works with and for a network of activists from throughout Europe. The organisation's unique model represents an experiment in transnational bottom-up democracy and participation bringing together all EA members to collectively shape the organization in its political, cultural and social positions. The membership is organized by means of local groups with individual members able to propose and vote on thematic priorities and participate in running campaigns and

activities, in particular the TRANSEUROPA Festival. A key focus for European Alternatives in the past two years has been an expansion of its active membership base in order to increase the capacity and reach of the organization throughout Europe and ensure a democratic participative approach spanning the regions of Europe. This approach has resulted in highly active local city groups in over 10 countries, running local activities and fundraising, as well as ensuring the sustainability of the transnational programme.

## **MOVING** BEYOND THE BORDERS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

For the first time in 2011 and 2012, European Alternatives reached out beyond the borders of the European Union. Underlying this approach is the idea that Europe cannot be understood in isolation, but should be seen in relation to the other regions of the world. In 2011 and 2012 EA focused part of its activities beyond the frontiers of the EU with the project Transnational Dialogues bringing together Chinese and European young artists, scholars, and researchers around a series of core topics for exchange of experience and ideas. European Alternatives is increasingly focusing on collaboration with third-countries in developing programs to empower civil society in democratization processes, particularly through the engage-

ment of representatives of the cultural and media sector. This is planned to continue throughout 2013.

The organisation's reach also expanded to North Africa as part of engagement beyond the nation state and within the context of the uprisings in the region. Furthermore the organization developed membership and capacity in Serbia and Croatia. This came together in the 2012 TRANSEUROPA Festival which took place in Belgrade, Serbia for the first time, and included participants from Serbia and Montenegro and new collaborations from Northern Africa such as the Cinémathèque de Tanger and the Egyptian Democracy Academy.



## MAIN SOURCES OF FUNDING

European Alternatives has had support from a board range of donors, institutional and private since its inception in 2007, and has grown very significantly over the past 5 years. We are grateful to the following donors for their support:

- **The European Commission:** Citizens' Programme from DG EAC which provides structural funding to the organisation helping cover some operational costs, as well as having provided specific project support for the TRANSEUROPA Festival, the People Power Participation programme; funding through various Youth in Action and Youth in the World grants; funding from the Culture Programme for various projects.
- The **Allianz Kulturstiftung** which provided important core support to the TRANSEUROPA festival in 2010, 2011, 2012; The Open Society Foundation Media Initiative and the Stichting Democratie en Media for supporting the European Initiative for Media pluralism; the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, ERSTE Foundation, Fondation Hippocrène, Mercator Stiftung and the CEE Trust which have provided important support to the core work areas of the organisation.
- Cultural Institutes including the **British Council**, **Institut Français**, and **Goethe Institut**.
- Local authorities including the **Province of Rome** and **Lublin City Council**.
- EA also increasingly raises funds from self-financing through **membership fees and awards**, and is moving towards a revenue model based on **consultancy** to raise further funds to co-finance activity programme.

## AWARDS

European Alternatives's work is increasingly recognised by institutions, NGOs, and private and public bodies internationally. Amongst others, the organisation was recently awarded:

- **The 2011 Civil Society Prize by the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)** for the best civil society initiative in Europe as judged by Europe-wide members of the EESC council.
- **The 2012 Youth Democracy Award of the German Federal Agency for Civic Education** for the best European initiative promoting democracy and active citizenship amongst young people
- **The 2012 Paolo Giuntella Freedom of Information Award in 2012**, together with partner LasciateCIEntrare for excellence in the promotion of media freedom and pluralism





EUROPEAN ALTERNATIVES CONTRIBUTES TO THE  
CONSTRUCTION OF A TRANSNATIONAL SPACE  
FOR ACTIVISM AND DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION





OVER 50 CONSULTATIONS ENGAGING  
THOUSANDS OF CITIZEN'S FROM FAR  
REACHING CORNERS OF EUROPE



# PROGRAMME AREAS 2012-2013



European Alternatives has continued to define and expand its programme areas over the past two years and in 2013 will continue to focus on four areas of priority that have evolved throughout 2011 and 2012 in keeping with the overall mission of the organisation: promoting democracy, equality and culture beyond the nation state. The four areas are: cultural and artistic production and exchange to develop and stimulate a space for innovative reflection on the current challenges Europe is facing; the development of trans-European proposals emerging from direct engagement with citizens through deliberative and participatory methods; the implementation of transnational campaigns to act on those proposals; engagement with the rest of the world to develop an outward looking Europe.

## A TRULY TRANSNATIONAL PROGRAMME OF CULTURE, ARTS AND POLITICS

10,000 PARTICIPANTS THROUGHOUT EUROPE  
70% UNDER THE AGE OF 35



### THE **TRANSEUROPA** FESTIVAL

The TRANSEUROPA Festival ([www.transeuropafestival.eu](http://www.transeuropafestival.eu)), the first cultural, social and political transnational festival in Europe, demonstrates the true reach and success of European Alternatives' approach to communication and participation. Held over 2 weeks in 15 European cities annually, featuring several hundred events, and jointly organised by staff, the membership base and a large number of volunteers, the festival promotes active European citizenship, debate and discussion and free movement whilst providing an alternative image of Europe. The festival offers a platform whereby European Alternatives programme areas come together to reach, involve and represent a large transnational audience with alternative means, creating a transnational space for cultural innovation and political change, enacting a cultural and artistic European citizenship.

In the past 3 years the Festival has grown from 4 cities in 2010, to 15 in 2012 involving over 10,000 people and 400 events. The themes for 2012 were chosen and developed transnationally throughout the year by an active and growing network of citizens – these were alternatives to austerity, migration and movements and new forms of political mobilization. In 2012 events took place simultaneously in all cities: a Transnational Walk, co-curated by artists, spread across the continent and exploring the migratory experience through a transnational lens, with participants travelling from city to city; the Living Libraries in which human beings enter into the story with their readers, often from a minority group subject to discrimination or prejudice which they challenge by telling their story; the programme Histoire(s) curated by the Cinematheque de



Tangier presented a collection of experimental films in all cities on political engagement and transition in Northern Africa before the revolutions.

The Festival was supported by the publication of the Transeuropa Journal (50,000 copies) available to be downloaded. Via media partnerships such as with Presseurop and an active media strategy the festival received significant media coverage in 12 languages in national and local press and broadcast interviews.

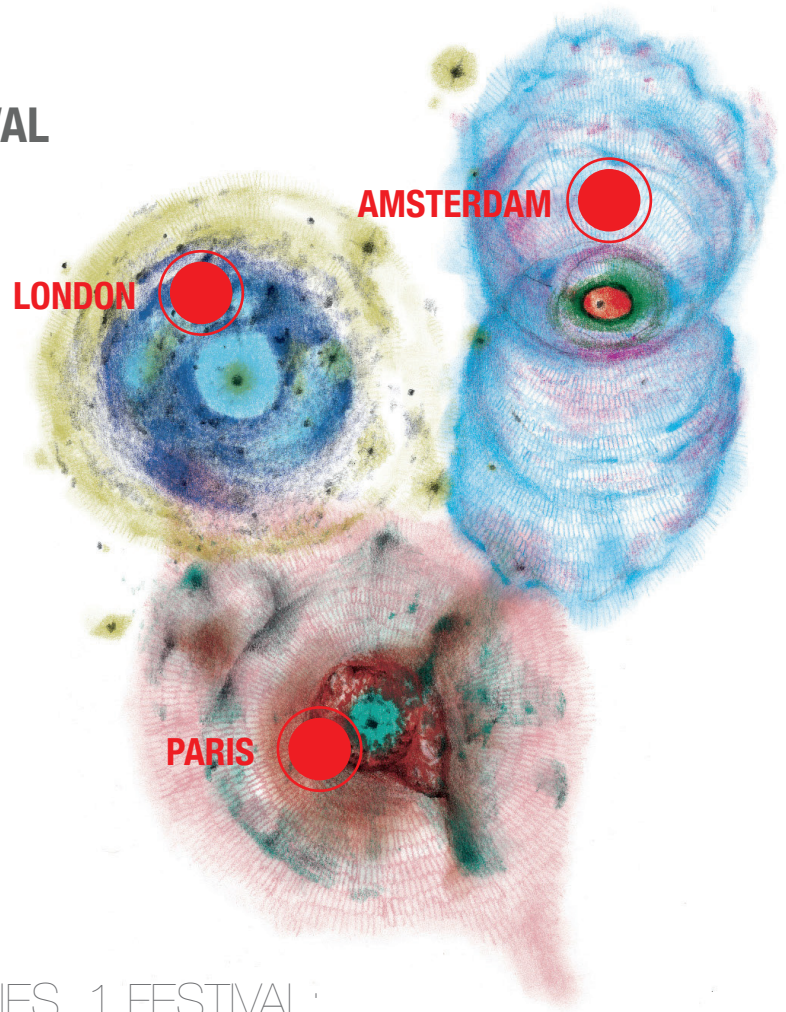
With a unique methodology, the Festival is a result of a year-long participative process building shared visions and proposals to address the urgencies and priorities facing European citizens. In such it is a truly transnational movement. From panel discussions

to performances, video screenings and forums, the festival manages to produce a shared and collaborative space to promote an alternative idea of Europe.

Transeuropa Festival represents a network of more than 150 partners in Europe that contribute fully to the success of the festival. A key element of the Festival has been collaborations with renowned artists, intellectuals and institutions. 2012 was no exception with the participation of artists such as Dan Perjovschi and Tania Bruguera. For the first time, local collaborations with renowned institutions gained a transnational dimension, with venues such as CCCB (Barcelona), Kriterion (Amsterdam), Iniva (London), Kino Arsenal (Berlin), Institut des Cultures d'Islam (Paris), and MACRO (Rome).



## THE **TRANSEUROPA** FESTIVAL



15 CITIES IN 12 COUNTRIES, 1 FESTIVAL:  
A TRANSNATIONAL EXPERIMENT  
AMSTERDAM, BARCELONA, BELGRADE, BERLIN,  
BOLOGNA, BRATISLAVA, CLUJ-NAPOCA,  
LONDON, LUBLIN, PARIS, PRAGUE, ROME,  
SOFIA, WARSAW AND CARDIFF

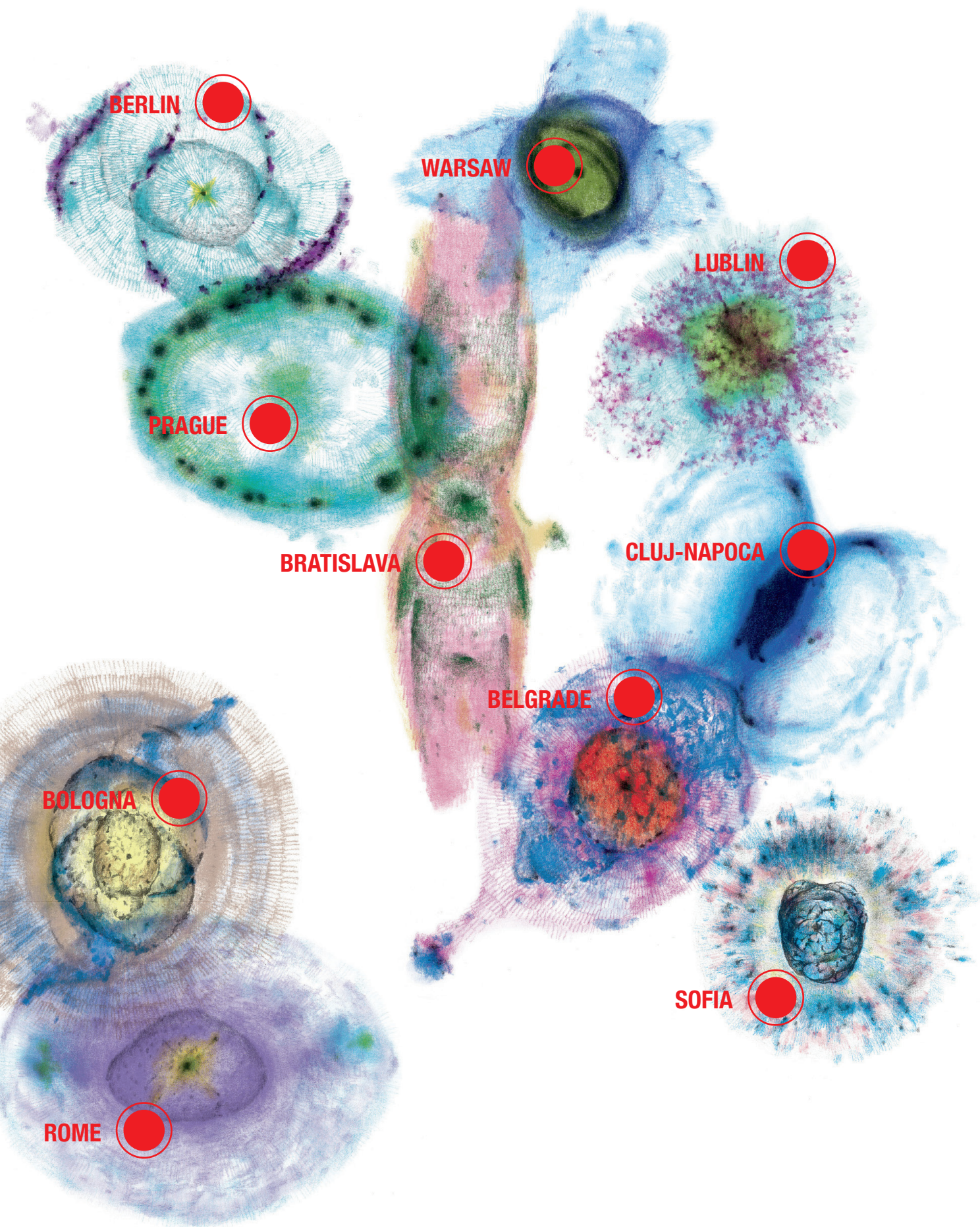
An abstract, textured map of Europe rendered in shades of blue, green, and yellow. One city is highlighted with a red circle and label: BARCELONA (center). The map has a grainy, hand-drawn appearance.

**BARCELONA**

**CARDIFF**







## THE **TRANSEUROPA** FESTIVAL

A NETWORK OF MORE THAN 150 PARTNERS  
THROUGHOUT EUROPE

### HIGHLIGHTS 2012

#### **Innovative practices:**

- The **caravan of theatre artists** from Teatro Valle in Rome to travel to Belgrade and Sofia for exchange of ideas on the commons
- The **living Library** in Bologna, Cluj, Paris, Warsaw, Barcelona
- **Social markets** in Belgrade, Cluj, Barcelona

#### **Strong partners and venues:**

- Kriterion Cinema in Amsterdam
- CCCB in Barcelona
- Grad in Belgrade
- Sala Borsa in Bologna
- Kino Arsenal in Berlin
- Institut Francais in Cluj Napoca
- Iniva and Amnesty International in London
- Institut des Cultures d'Islam in Paris
- Kino Svetzor in Prague
- Teatro Valle Occupato in Rome
- Social Center Xaspel in Sofia
- History Meeting House in Warsaw
- London School of Economics, Goldsmiths University, University College London

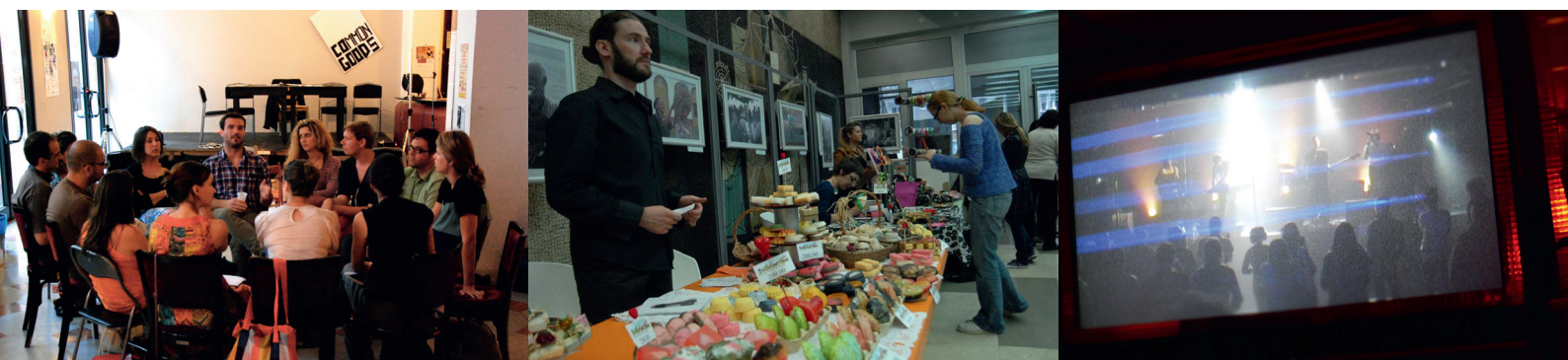
#### **Transnational happenings:**

- The transnational walk opening the festival on May 9, interspersed with performances such as that of **Tania Bruguera** in Paris
- The film screening '**Histoire(s)**' curated by the cinémathèque de Tanger, a selection of short films on political movement and engagement made before the revolutions that have shaken the Arab world
- The **Three festival themes** approached in various guises: debates, concerts, performances, installations and forums
- The **Transeuropa Journal**

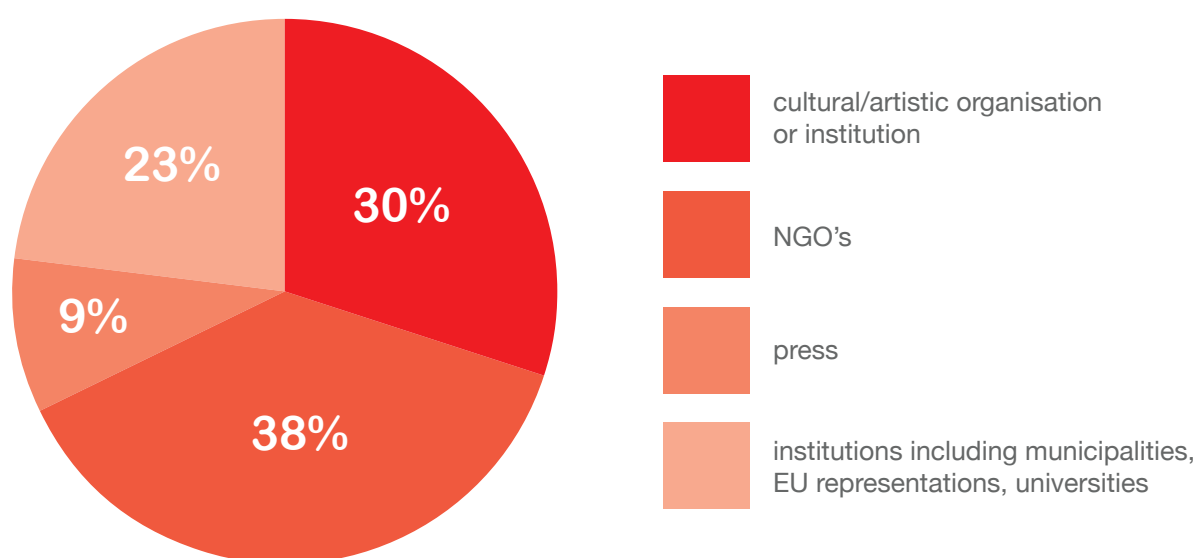
#### **Speakers and artists:**

- Franco BIFO Berardi in Sofia
- Niko Paech in Berlin
- Guy Standing, Yto Barrada and Khlaïd Abdalla in London
- Bassem Samir in Paris (via Skype)
- Mohamed Serifi Villar in Barcelona
- Tania Bruguera, in Paris
- Hiwa K in Berlin
- Li Zhenhua, Zhou Xiaohu, Bolian Shen, Ma Yongfeng in Bologna
- Dan Perjovschi and Stalker in Rome





TRANSEUROPA FESTIVAL PARTNERS, BY TYPE

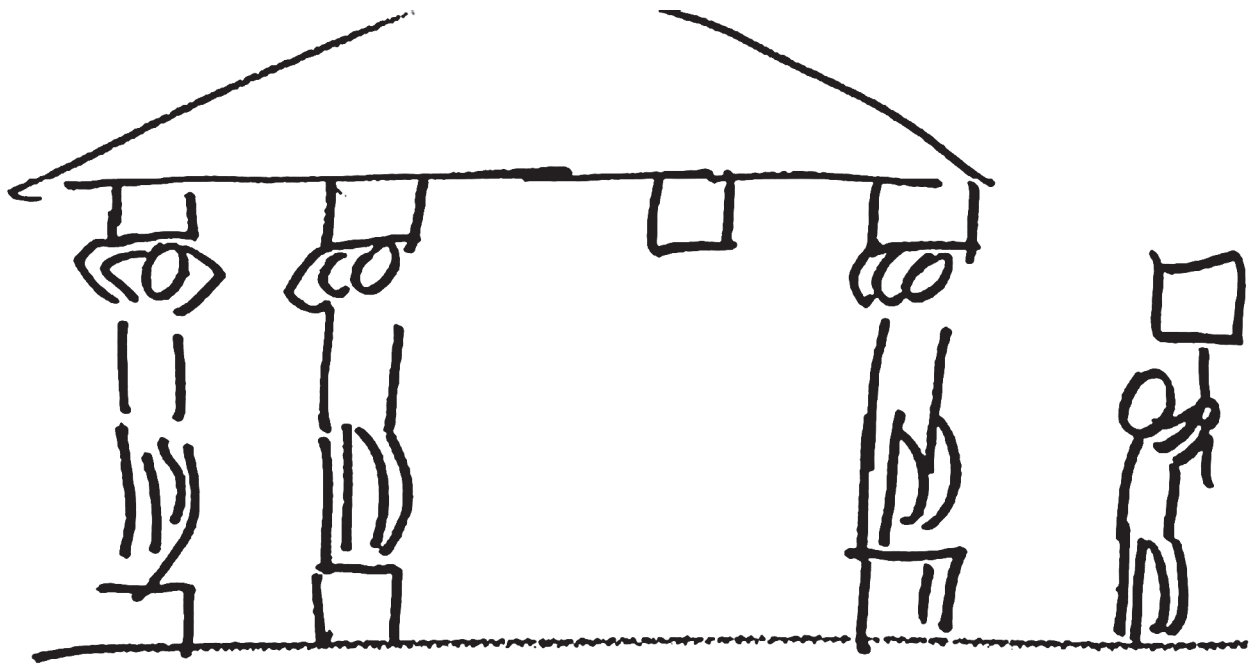






EMPOWERING CITIZEN'S TO PLAY  
A PART IN THE DEMOCRATIC LIFE  
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION





## PEOPLE, POWER, **PARTICIPATION**

In 2011 and 2012, European Alternatives developed the first stages of the People Power Participation project ([euroalter.com/ppp](http://euroalter.com/ppp)), developed in Belgium, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Italy, Romania, Spain and the United Kingdom. This was developed as an action-oriented transnational dialogue on key European policies, strongly placed in the framework of the Stockholm Programme and the Charter of Fundamental Rights, that affect citizens' democratic and social rights. In providing a platform to bring together citizens, civil society and political players, citizens are empowered to play a part in the democratic life of the European Union. To date the focus has lain on the key themes of the rights of Roma, LGBT and migrants, labour and social rights, media freedom, as well as the struggle against corruption. Over 50 consultations engaging thousands of European citizens and residents have so far been organised

around the continent to promote a reflection on European citizenship rights resulting in new forms of transnational organisation. In doing so European Citizens are empowered to directly influence the European political process by means of collaborative work and networks. Amongst others, this process has resulted in three concrete transnational campaigns (the European Citizens Initiative on Media Freedom and Pluralism; Open Access on detention centres; a campaign on roma rights further outlined below)

In 2013, the project will focus on the run up to the European Parliament elections, bringing citizens from throughout the continent to develop a Citizens' Manifesto ahead of the elections on three key challenges facing Europe: a) Work, unemployment and welfare, b) Economic and financial reforms c) Civil rights of those who live in Europe.

## PEOPLE, POWER, **PARTICIPATION**



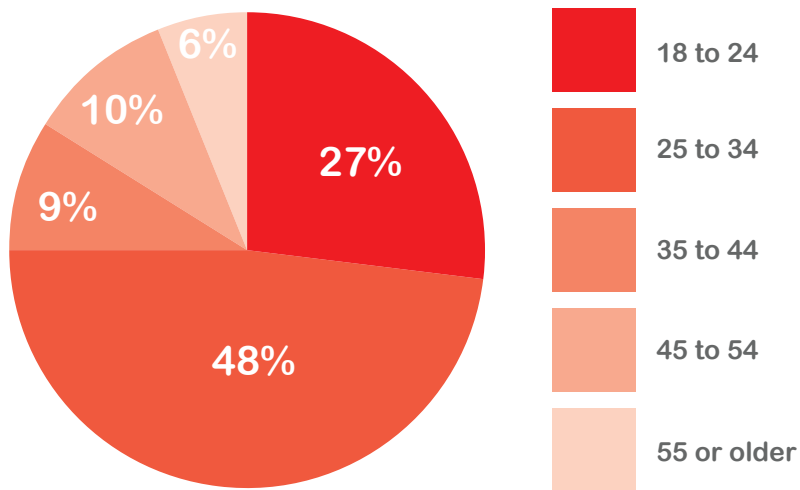
### **THE AIM IS TO HELP EUROPEAN CITIZENS UNDERSTAND THE COMMONALITIES OF ISSUES THAT ARE OFTEN APPROACHED LOCALLY OR REGIONALLY AND ELABORATE SOLUTIONS THAT ARE TRANSNATIONAL AND FRAMED IN A EUROPEAN CONTEXT**

The methodology that EA follows, from local to transnational and back results in concrete policy recommendations, engagement and ownership. Topics can mean different things in different cultural settings and the aim is to help European citizens understand the commonalities of issues that are often approached locally or regionally and elaborate solutions that are transnational and framed in a European context. In 2011, of the participants surveyed, 7 in 10 stated that following the process they could frame their issue in the European context. It is also for this reason European Alternatives does not limit itself to organising forums in capital cities, but expands the reach to smaller towns where exchange with foreign nationals is a lot rarer and understanding of the EU and its mechanisms often limited. We have for example organised PPP forums in Iasi (Romania), Sliven and Stara Zagora (Bulgaria), Vannes and Douai (France), Grosseto and Otranto (Italy).

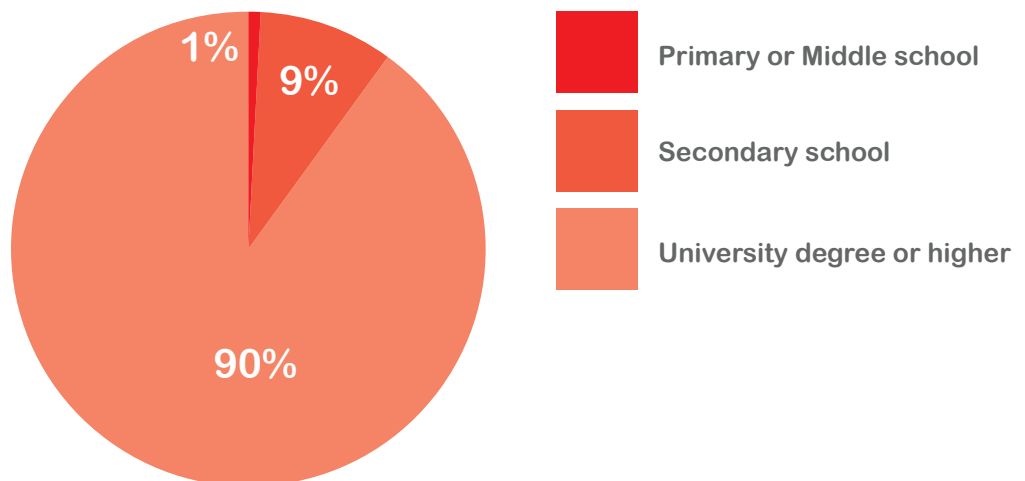
Survey results from the project evaluation underline the importance of the methodology developed by European Alternatives: using round-table discussions with smaller groups of participants, often initially in their own language before moving to the transnational arena, is highly effective in giving citizens a space to express their opinions. We have also seen that involving citizens in a national discussion first, and then bringing them to the European level, builds confidence and ability for the transnational discussion. Furthermore, this helps citizens to better frame issues they are acquainted with from a European perspective. The data collected showed that over two thirds of the participants can now frame a national issue in the European dimension, which is underlined by the impact and reach of the campaigns demonstrating that a difference can be made at the European level. In addition 62% of the participants were under the age of 35 meaning that youth will have an important role to play in forming future issues.



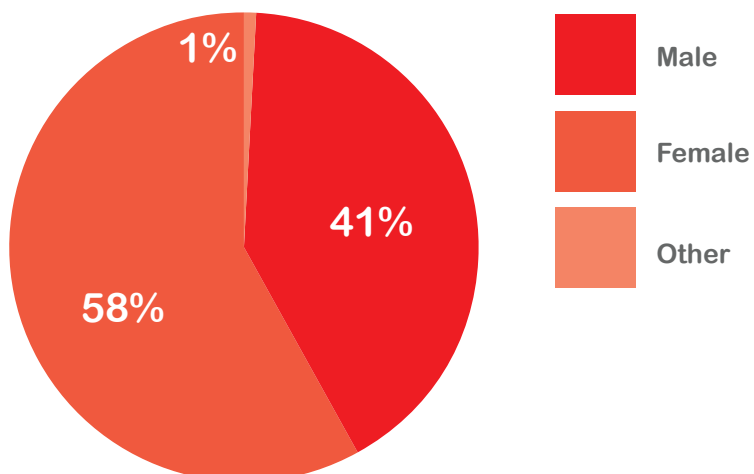
AGE OF PARTICIPANTS TO PPP (Base: n=208)



LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF PARTICIPANTS (Base: n=208)



GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS (Base: n=207)



## extreme right / fascist parties

- danger of far right to democracy is rising during the crisis
- distinction between parties / movements → facilitate reasons:
  - fear of the people in financial / economic instability each other
  - need for a "leader", they feel powerless over their own life
  - nationalistic answers seem ~~easier~~ easier than the construct of a "European idea" which doesn't exist yet.
  - frustration of the people of Europe / the previous people struggle for their lives and are open to an easy construction of xenophobia / nationalistic ideas

### Solution:

- traditional "left" (soc. dem.) have lost their grip on the problems of the people / are not the ones with the solution
- we need a real participation of citizens in Europe
- " " " social

## Troika / EC / IMF

~~EC / IMF~~

- it is also a constitutional process which is on
- the process as (de)democratization
- and that the role of

EUROPEAN ALTERNATIVES HAS TAKEN FORWARD SEVERAL CAMPAIGNS ON ISSUES RELATED TO FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS BY ASSEMBLING A BROAD COALITION OF ORGANIZATIONS AND CITIZENS TRANSNATIONALLY



## CAMPAIGNS

In 2011 and 2012 European Alternatives has taken forward several European campaigns on issues related to fundamental rights by assembling a broad coalition of organizations and citizens transnationally. These have been the result of the consultation and conferences that European Alternatives organises throughout the year which shows the success and impact of the consultation process in developing pan-European coalitions around common demands. Over the past two years key campaigns have included:

- A call for access to migration centers in Europe and North Africa
- The campaign against the closure of borders to migrants from North Africa in the context of the uprising and democratic transition in support of free movement generally throughout Europe
- Social and workers rights issues in the context of the economic crisis
- Minimum income income in Europe
- The financial transactions act and the introduction of Eurobonds
- LGBTI rights and the recognition of civil partnerships throughout Europe
- Media pluralism and freedom

The three most important of campaigns to be carried forward into 2013 for concrete action at the political level are the European Citizens Initiative for media pluralism and freedom, civil society access to migrant detention centers, and that of housing rights for roma communities.

### THE EUROPEAN INITIATIVE FOR MEDIA PLURALISM – THE EUROPEAN CITIZEN'S INITIATIVE

Throughout 2011 and 2012 European Alternatives has been working towards a European Initiative for Media Pluralism to safeguard the right to independent and pluralistic information as sanctioned by the European Charter on Fundamental Rights. In this period we have seen a worsening of the situation of media freedom and pluralism within the European Union. In certain countries, namely Hungary, we are seeing increasing government control and direction of media, in others, such as the UK, it is the concentration of media within specific economic groups

that can lead to undue influence over political processes. And finally in countries such as Italy, Bulgaria and Romania, we see economic, media and political interests increasingly concentrated within the hands of a small group of individuals. To date the European Institutions have refrained from taking a strong stance against individual Member States to counteract the trend. A civil society action to push for a stronger role of the European Institutions in safeguarding and protecting the independence and pluralism is long overdue.

## CAMPAIGNS

### THE EUROPEAN INITIATIVE FOR MEDIA PLURALISM – THE EUROPEAN CITIZEN'S INITIATIVE

SUPPORTED BY 35 MEPS, OVER 100 PARTNERS  
AND IN 9 COUNTRIES: FRANCE, BELGIUM,  
HUNGARY, ITALY, UNITED KINGDOM, ROMANIA,  
BULGARIA, THE NETHERLANDS, PORTUGAL

The Initiative has rapidly found important public support. To date the campaign brings together over one hundred organisations, media, and professional bodies from throughout the continent, including trade unions, NGOs, press federations from ten European countries. With such support, European Alternatives decided to launch a European Citizens Initiative, a new tool of transnational participatory democracy which allows at least one million citizens in at least 7 EU member states to present a legislative proposal directly to the European Commission. The main objective of the Citizens' Initiative is to demand the adoption by the European Commission of a Directive on media pluralism containing:

- Effective legislation to avoid concentration of ownership in the media and advertisement sectors
- Guaranteed independence of supervisory bodies from political power
- Definition of conflict of interest in political office
- Monitoring systems to regularly check the health and independence of the media in member states.

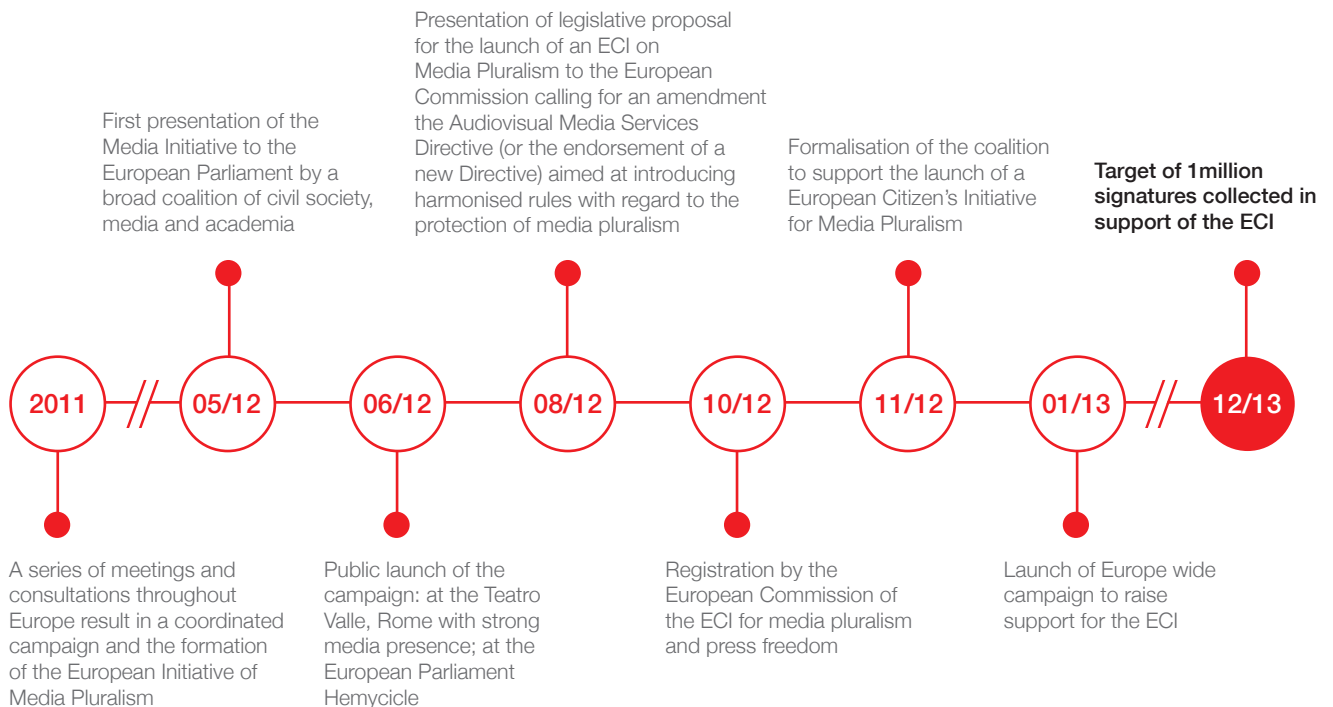
**OVER ONE HUNDRED  
ORGANISATIONS,  
MEDIA, AND  
PROFESSIONAL BODIES  
FROM THROUGHOUT THE  
CONTINENT, INCLUDING  
TRADE UNIONS, NGOS,  
PRESS FEDERATIONS  
FROM TEN EUROPEAN  
COUNTRIES**

The urgency of the call was publicly supported by the EP President Martin Schulz and recognised by the European Parliament in a report by the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, in addition to endorsements from well-known public figures, trade unions and over 45 MEPs. The year 2013 will see the implementation of an ambitious transnational campaigning strategy to collect over one million signatures throughout the continent.



## OBJECTIVES

- Protection of media pluralism in Europe
- Ensure the independence of media supervisory bodies
- Ensure the introduction of harmonized rules to regulate conflict of interest relating to political office, media ownership and transparency
- Maintain a pluralist democratic debate for the free exchange of information within the EU



## CAMPAIGNS

### OPEN ACCESS CAMPAIGN - MIGRATION

In 2011 a number of conferences organized in Romania, Bulgaria and Italy resulted in the Open Access Campaign, where civil society, media and citizens have called for access to migration centres in a number of countries throughout Europe. Against often very limited or no right of access, the campaign calls for access by journalists and civil society to detention centres for migrants in order to document the situation of migrants within the centres. European Alternatives, together with partner Migeurop, launched and steered the campaign throughout 2011 and 2012. This involved bringing together a large number of European representatives from human rights NGOs to bring forward the campaign within their countries and at the European level, in many cases obtaining some form of access to migration deten-

tion centers. The campaign is supported by a website, communications materials and press outreach ensuring European citizens, journalists and national and European parliamentarians are involved in the discourse and practice of the campaign. The TRANSEUROPA Festival served as the platform to showcase some of the results in Amsterdam, Paris and Barcelona. Moving forward to 2013 a steering group has been put in place under the guidance of Migeurop and European Alternatives, which is currently defining the 2013-2014 campaign work-programme while developing an advocacy strategy in particular in the context of the review of the European Union Returns Directive. Main partners and findings of the campaign on right of access <http://www.openaccessnow.eu/>:

### ROMA AND SINTI HOUSING RIGHTS

Following from its engagement in the issue of Roma and Sinti having full free movement rights in Europe and in combatting discrimination, in 2011-12 European Alternatives campaigned on the issue of Roma and Sinti housing rights. Housing rights and discrimination against Roma and Sinti by local authorities and legal instances is often a cause of other social problems and traps some Roma and Sinti populations in a precarious living environment.

European Alternatives supported a number of activities with these objectives in mind. Firstly, together with NGOs such as Amnesty international, Amare Prhala and GLOC, European Alternatives led the campaign in Cluj-Napoca against relocation of Roma communities. In Germany, European Alter-

natives campaigned as part of Jede Stimmer against the deportation of Roma children from Germany to the Balkans. Finally, together with partners from Italy and Greece, and with the street-workers organisation DYNAMO International, European Alternatives produced videos based on interviews with Roma in Romania, and policy recommendations relating to the EU Framework for Roma integration Strategies. These recommendations were presented in the European Parliament to parliamentarians, NGOs and representatives of the Commission. The recommendations focus on housing rights, education and the problem of stereotypes in the media as well as underlining the elements of the Charter Fundamental Rights and Convention Human rights undermined by current practices of member states.



## Q&A

### WHAT IS MEANT BY **TRANSNATIONAL DEMOCRACY**?

A positive program for the triumph of politics in Europe rests on our collective capacity to redesign institutions of democracy which can effectively act on our common concerns, projects and problems. Those institutions must be built at a European level, where a vacuum left by the citizens is currently being exploited by other forces.

(‘Towards a Transnational Democracy for Europe’, Lorenzo Marsili and Niccolo Milanese)

### WHY SHOULD **TRANSNATIONALISM** NOT STOP AT THE EUROPEAN BORDERS?

One of the strengths of the new wave of political mobilisation is its transnational nature: new networks of communication, solidarity and understanding are being built across large parts of the world, from Tokyo to Beijing, Russia to Europe and the Northern Mediterranean to North America. The increased speed of communication between continents has contributed massively to the possibility of these transnational waves of protest. Nonetheless, the problem of translation between all these contexts is consistently underestimated. It is obvious to say that there are significant and massive political differences between Egypt under Mubarak and euro-crisis Greece; between Wall Street and Frankfurt. It is also apparent to many people that there are significant similarities – but these similarities have to be brought out through translation.

Europe has an almost unique role to play in this scenario: it is both a crucible of shared information and a kind of giant translation machine. Cultures and peoples from every part of the world are present in Europe, meaning it is a place for sharing political knowledge and information on the political situations throughout the world. At the same time, and perhaps unlike the United States of America which has a similar and older claim of being the ‘melting pot’ of the world, translation and diversity is built into the European self-understanding. It is therefore in a position to play the role of a universalising force which maintains diversity and pertinence to different political contexts.

(Niccolo Milanese)



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平台。is an open platform founded by  
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ket development, Dashila(b) will utilize k  
ge in the area. 它负责: (规划) 对该地  
调整, 并为政府提供政策与管理建议;  
, (策划) 对大栅栏的文化、历史资源进  
发展与社区民生建设的新模式; Das  
types modules, and best-practice exa  
sto (市场) 为政府、开发企业、社会  
对立不同形式的居住与商业开发  
栅栏。它的工作目标是**提升区**  
The aim is to encourage the co  
towards the strong yet flexible  
with incre depth and di

UNIQUE METHODOLOGY FROM  
LOCAL TO TRANSNATIONAL





## **TRANSNATIONAL DIALOGUES**

### **A SINO-EUROPEAN INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE**

Launched in 2011, this project aims to look at the role of specific groups in promoting intercultural understanding across borders and transnationally with a focus on social change. Going beyond short, one-off exchanges or collaborations, Transnational Dialogues brings together a group researchers, critics, urbanists, and curators from Europe and China to conduct transnational and transcultural reflection and content production around a key set of topical issues related to labour precarity, urban space, commons and independent cultural spaces, and alternative economic model.

The bilingual (English & Chinese) online portal serves as a depository of original proposals on key issues touching European and Chinese societies, serving to conceptually translate some of the most original suggestions arising out of European and Chinese intellectual and social reflection. During the year Transnational Dialogues additionally coordinates the production of specific, original research products. Among these, European Alternatives recently published a book on relation between artists and the urban/rural divide in China ("Village Politics Being

Watched"), and a magazine with contributions from European and Chinese artists and cultural innovators.

With this project European Alternatives is looking to create an enduring network of partners between Europe and China and potentially beyond. A series of meetings and exchange of ideas resulted in a group of Chinese artists and curators participating in the Transeuropa Festival of 2012. The Festival saw the artists use public space to express and visualize the ideas of the project, and this was complemented by a series of talks and lectures with European counterparts throughout the continent. In the autumn of 2012 a Transnational Research Caravan consisting of a group of artists, curators, critics, writers and theorists from Europe travelled through China (Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu and Chongqing) taking part in roundtables, workshops, visits, art biennales and others. A web and video-documentary of this journey, as well as a printed publication, and interviews with Chinese artists have been produced and are available on the Transnational dialogues website ([www.transnationaldialogues.eu](http://www.transnationaldialogues.eu)).

## **TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING OF OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

Partnerships are core to all of EAs programme areas. Civil Society across Europe demonstrates wide variations in themes, focus and experience. European Alternatives accordingly works with a broad range of civil society partners on different topics, often providing CSOs with the necessary skills and contacts to advocate at the European level, bringing local CSOs voices to the transnational debate and to the European institutions.

ism whilst also bringing forward some of the shared best practices of the recent activism in the region. The discussions and training material were collected in a book published and distributed free of charge to numerous Central and Eastern European CSOs.

European Alternatives additionally places heavy emphasis on training young people and developing sustainable structures for

## **EUROPEAN ALTERNATIVES PLACES HEAVY EMPHASIS ON TRAINING YOUNG PEOPLE AND DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE STRUCTURES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THROUGHOUT EUROPE TO WORK, THINK, PRODUCE, AND ADVOCATE TOGETHER**

In 2011-12 this was clearly demonstrated in Romania, a region where the financial and political crisis has necessarily resulted in more active social movements and civic awareness. As a member of the EU and as a country under IMF program, Romania is feeling strongly the effects of European legislation and decision-making, yet often local CSOs lack the experience to bring their experiences and proposals to the European arena. European Alternatives, with the CEE trust, collaborated closely with partners in Romania to build an understanding of the workings of the European institutions, bringing together networks at the transnational level, and bringing partners directly into contact with European policymakers. This was conducted through the organisation of numerous training workshops in Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Timisoara, and Iasi, a study-visit in Brussels, and a large transnational meeting held in Bucharest in October 2012 bringing together organisations, movements and individuals from Central and Eastern Europe to open up the concept of transnational activ-

young people from throughout Europe to work, think, produce, and advocate together. EA has run several Youth in Action sponsored programs during the year, resulting in a long series of training and capacity-building meetings organised in over ten European countries over the whole of 2012. European Alternatives' youth programs focus on equipping young people from Europe and beyond with various tools necessary to engage with and impact their local, regional and global surroundings. Through numerous trainings, workshops, public events, travel and networking opportunities organised each year, young and motivated activists are introduced to a wide range of skills vital for them to becoming active citizens and engaged members of society. By exposing them to different cultures and languages, encouraging them to travel, to inquire, to demand change, and most importantly to work together to achieve that change, European Alternatives promotes leadership as well as a strong sense of unity among youth originating from all over Europe.

## Developing a joint strategy

involvement of local authorities  
mayors (4)  
from local to global (→ start local)  
a way to link the existing struggles

coming together in different ways with the  
op. institutions (→ eg. talk to particular MEPs)  
discussing on the EU elections

take different approaches depending on the  
political circumstances  
we have to build a network which is  
as broad as possible (unemployed, marginal-  
ised writers)

> reinforce existing campaigns + build  
a political consensus on the need  
of a democ. assembly  
(~ 12 months)

> ESTABLISHING CRITERIA FOR  
THE INVOLVEMENT OF GROUPS

> STARTING AT THE LOCAL LEVEL / WITH  
LOCAL STRUGGLES / MOVEMENTS

## DEBATE

WORKING TOGETHER WITH MAYORS / LOCAL AUTHORITIES  
FROM THE BEGINNING VS. BRINGING THE MESSAGE OUT, RE-  
TO MOVEMENTS / INITIATIVES AS A FIRST STEP AND  
LET THEM DECIDE WHO TO INVOLVE AT INT. LEVEL

• MARCH (Europ. Commission) AS A LANDMARK

THE EU-  
TRAP, THEY  
FOR SOME THAT  
ONE WILL TAKE AN  
1 DIRECTION IS FINE  
2  
EL IS TOO BROAD  
WIDE IN FIGHTS STRUGGLES  
LOCAL LEVEL MORE APPROPRIATE  
ACTIVE

IT RE-  
POWER RELATIONS  
APPROACH  
WORK - WE  
IN THAT  
WEVE IT  
LOCAL

## COLLABORATING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Beyond the numerous partnerships European Alternatives has in place with organisations throughout Europe for the core programme activities, European Alternatives believes it is important to engage itself in initiatives taken by other organisations which further its aims and objectives, and make available its resources, members and contacts for those initiatives. In the course of 2011-12, among others, it has supported and helped to organise:

- **Etats Generaux de l'Europe** in Paris, France, with EuropaNova and many other organisations
- **Firenze 10+10 European Social Forum**
- **Gay Film Nights** as part of **International Film Festival** in Cluj-Napoca, Romania
- **Europe Day** celebrations in Paris with the **Mayor of Paris**
- **Festival International du Film des Droits de l'Homme de Paris**



## MEDIA IMPACT - HIGHLIGHTS

As a young organisation working transnationally European Alternatives has at its disposal a broad network of media and communication experts, both on and off-line. EA has implemented numerous platforms for communication and dissemination and is often at the forefront in novel methods of communication. Active through its own multi-lingual website [www.euroalter.com](http://www.euroalter.com), a platform that serves as a forum for the transnational network of artists, activists and intellectuals, the website provides articles, news, statements and campaigns to provide increased visibility and stimulate debate and participation on issues the organisation is involved in. This is complemented by issue specific websites for the various activities carried out, such as [www.mediainitiative.eu](http://www.mediainitiative.eu) or [openaccessnow.eu/](http://openaccessnow.eu/).

Throughout 2011 and 2012 European Alternatives had a strong presence in TV, radio and online media, notably with the TRANSEUROPA festival and its political campaigns with commentary on European news. European Alternatives was featured on international television stations such as BBC, Al Jazeera as well as on national television in countries as diverse as Italy, Bulgaria and Romania, in addition to radio coverage by BBC World and RFI World. Many newspapers including national broadsheets *La Repubblica*, *the Guardian*, *Gazeta Wyborska*, *Corriere della Sera* and *NRC Handelsblad*, and on online media such as *EUObserver*, *Euractive*, *toutleurope* and *Social Europe Journal* provided coverage throughout the year. Pres-

seurop was the official media partner for the TRANSEUROPA Festival throughout 2012, and national and local media partners in all 13 countries involved in the festival. In true transnational communication, *China Art Info*, the first Chinese Art and Cultural Magazine, provided coverage of the TRANSEUROPA Festival. Broad media attention was also generated around the launch of the ECI for Media Pluralism throughout 2012. It generated press and radio coverage in 8 countries throughout Europe: France, Belgium, Hungary, Italy, the United Kingdom, Romania, Bulgaria and The Netherlands. The Open Access campaign for civil society access to migrant detention centers was widely covered in media throughout Europe, and even had a comic book dedicated to it in Toulouse.

For a broader dissemination and reaching out to the organisations' primary audiences, this is further supported by an active Facebook presence serving as an information source but also as a forum for sharing (with language specific pages for the different city groups) and twitter. European Alternatives is now in the process of developing an innovative web documentary format providing users with an explorative resource of knowledge. The organisation of any event or activity is supported by a communication strategy pre- and post event comprising a variety of media, including a press strategy, publications and documentary videos thereby ensuring the broadest possible reach to the targeted audiences, cross-sectoral and cross-generational.



## **EUROPEAN ALTERNATIVES BUILDS MULTIMEDIA PLATFORMS FROM SOCIAL MEDIA, WEBSITES, DOCUMENTARIES AND PUBLICATIONS INCLUDING A MAGAZINE AND A YOUTUBE CHANNEL TO ENSURE THE BROAD DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS AND ENCOURAGE CITIZEN PARTICIPATION**

European Alternatives builds multimedia platforms from social media, websites, documentaries and publications including a magazine and a youtube channel to ensure the broad dissemination of findings and encourage citizen participation. Core to this is the video programme, run and developed by volunteers and disseminated through a variety of channels, including a youtube channel, film festivals, online tv broadcasts, and DVDs. In 2011 and 2012 this has in-

cluded a popular animation video Basic Income Explained, a documentary promoting gender equality and LGBT rights (It Gets Better shown at Ecuador Documentary Festival and proposed for Dutch TV Holland Doc, and shown at the Festival International du Film des Droits de l'Homme in Paris), a documentary on second-generation youth (Voices for a Diverse Europe) and a video promoting the campaign Open Access Now.



## CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PUBLIC DEBATE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

European Alternatives has often been at the centre of the debate around the future of Europe, as one of the only transnational, citizen led organisations. This has ranged from the involvement of citizens in the EP electoral process with the production of a guide to the European Elections for the young and press monitoring in order to provide multilingual updates across the region- to organising debates and discussions surrounding the EU2020 strategy and other environmental, economic and social objectives of the Commission in light of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue.

More specifically, European Alternatives has participated in EC consultations and meetings relating to the European Citizens' Initiative and the Citizenship Report. It has taken part in the Structured Dialogue group of DG EAC, and in particular the working group on Article 11 of the Lisbon Treaty. It is also a member of the civil society Alliance for the European Year of Citizens.

### PUBLICATIONS

In 2011-12 European Alternatives was asked to contribute a number of articles, essays and opinion pieces. This included amongst others: **The Guardian** (UK) on the European Alternatives legal structure; **New Presence Journal** on transnational citizenship; **Social Europe Journal**; **Policy Network** on citizen involvement in defining an economic policy for Europe; **Il Manifesto** (Italy) on a citizen led response to the economic crisis and the **EU Observer** on Roma rights, migrant rights and on Eurobonds.

European Alternatives also publishes regularly within its programme areas, as well as general opinion pieces, editorials and articles for dissemination via the website, commissioning articles from well-respected experts within the different areas of activities. Specifically the People Power Participation programme releases the main findings and discussions on the variety of themes addressed by the programme in a regular publication issued throughout the year.

In addition European Alternatives published the following:

- A well received publication addressing the democratic crisis in the European Union, with proposals for transnational democratic institutions and reform of EU decision-making structures
- Pamphlets on a number of civil liberties issues, including migrant rights, roma rights, LGBT rights, and media freedom
- Policy papers relating to the economic crisis by David Marquand and Giandomenico Majone.
- TRANSEUROPA Journal in newspaper format and regular commentary on its webpage, featuring intellectual and artistic commentary on European affairs by, amongst others, Engin Isin, Tania Bruguera, Dan Perjovski, Guy Standing and Jordi Vaquar.
- A guide to help civil society organisations seeking to influence European policy agendas.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS

Representatives of European Alternatives have taken part in high profile events and debates, including:

- Council of Europe Forum on the Future of Democracy, Limassol, Cyprus. Director and EA Founder Niccolo Milanese presented in a panel on social cohesion and democracy.
- European Forum Alpbach Political symposium, Austria. Niccolo Milanese participated in a panel with Doris Pack, Ivan Krastev, Mihai-Razvan Ungureanu, Howard Williamson and Erhard Busek
- Subversive Festival, Zagreb. Director Segolene Pruvot participated with Michael Hardt, Costas Douzinas in a discussion on the commons and Director and EA founder Lorenzo Marsili participated in a roundtable on social movements in Europe.
- Another Road for Europe, European Parliament, Brussels. Lorenzo Marsili and Mariya Ivencheva participated for European Alternatives in this debate on the economics of the financial crisis.
- Europe Wake Up! We will only return to growth and prosperity if we complete the single market Versus/google+ debate as part of Single Market Week. Niccolo Milanese spoke in a debate with Michel Barnier, Christine Ockrent, David Hannay, Victoria Curzon Price, Andre Krouwel, Konstany Gebert, Ronan O'Brian and Yanis Varoufakis
- In light of the launch of the Media Initiative Lorenzo Marsili presented at numerous events such as the well-attended Pan European Forum on Media Pluralism and New Media on June 27th 2012, a meeting held in the EP Hemicycle under the auspices of Neelie Kroes (VP European Commission responsible for Digital Media)



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