

# Political philosophy for 21st century Europe

Harvard University, 22-24 January 2013

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## 1. What's so new about the euro crisis and what should be done about it?

### Point of departure

Martin Feldstein on the Euro being in deep trouble because of differences between the European Union and the United States

### Background material

P. Van Parijs, L'agenda 2010: un modèle pour l'Europe? (Response to G. Schröder, April 2012, English translation forthcoming)

P. Van Parijs, *No eurozone without eurodividend* (September 2012)

### Preview

*The vulnerability of the European currency union is ultimately rooted in the extreme weakness of two major buffering mechanisms that have proved crucial to the sustainability of the currency union formed by the United States: inter-state mobility and inter-state solidarity. As little hope can reasonably be staked in increased mobility between member states of the European Union, it is of crucial importance to explore the way in which a far higher level of solidarity could be institutionalized between member states. After having considered and rejected a number of options, the paper ends up focusing on a universal euro-dividend paid to every resident of the European Union (or of the Eurozone) and funded exclusively or mainly by a Value Added Tax. Taking for illustrative purposes a monthly euro-dividend of 200 euros funded by a 20% EU-wide VAT, it explores some of the key consequences of such a set up and the conditions of its political feasibility.*

## 2. Principles of justice for the European union: four views.

### Point of departure

John Rawls on why the European Union should remain different from the United States

### Background material

J. Rawls & P. Van Parijs, Three Letters on the Law of Peoples and the European Union (2003)

P. Van Parijs, A quasi-European strategy for European egalitarians (2011)

## **Preview**

*At least four very different conceptions underlie common claims about what is and what is not required by justice in the European union:*

- 1. Cooperative justice between nation states pursuing their respective interests*
  - 2. Solidarity between nation states forming a community*
  - 3. Distributive justice between the citizens of an incipient nation state*
  - 4. Global distributive justice as gradually realized at a supranational yet sub-global level.*
- I shall defend this fourth conception.*

## **3. Shaping Europe's destiny: vision and opportunities**

### **Point of departure**

John Stuart Mill on the quasi-impossibility of multinational and especially multilingual democracies

### **Background material**

P. Van Parijs, *Just Democracy. The Rawls-Machiavelli Programme* (ECPR, 2011), chapters 5 (“Should the European Union become more democratic?”) and 7 (“Must Europe Be Belgian?”)

P. Van Parijs, *Linguistic Justice for Europe and for the World* (OUP, 2011), chapter 1 (“Lingua Franca”)

### **Preview**

*How can efficient and just institutions and policies be adopted at the level of a polity where public opinions are kept separate and popular mobilization inhibited by entrenched linguistic diversity and where leaders are accountable to separate electorates that face distinct sets of parties? Only by paying due attention to the linguistic preconditions of a sustainable supranational democracy and by designing and trying appropriate political institutions that should not aim to be as democratic as possible but rather hold the best promise for the pursuit of global and intergenerational justice.*