

## Conclusions of the II Meeting Report “Reclaim Europe!”

These conclusions are part of the Mid-term Report that aims to provide an overview of the key lessons learned in the second Lisbon meeting of the project “Reclaim Europe!” led by Friedrich Ebert Stiftung with grassroots groups, associations and movements (hereinafter CSO, Civil Society Organisations). The meeting gathered 56 participants, some representatives from CSOs, activists, scholars, practitioners, and members of international organisations.

The event took place on the 7th of November 2018, and was structured in order to provide training and information sessions to support literacy on participation of CSOs in decision-making and debate the “Action Plan” produced in the first meeting of the project on the 14th of July 2018. The first meeting gathered 18 representatives from CSOs (16 from Lisbon and 2 from Porto), who discussed the main topic of the day in three working groups organised around: (i) public space and mobility; (ii) gender, migration, and art; (iii) housing.

The meeting provided a complex overview on both local and international claims that should be addressed to reclaim Europe. Bearing in mind the key issues spotted in the first meeting, together with the topics discussed about the three main areas identified in the “Action Plan”, and the inputs provided by the speakers in the round-table, the following key lessons can be learned.

### Key lessons learned

- **Governance in Europe** needs to rely on improved literacy on which democracy (and which Europe) we want to build in the future. As pinpointed in the first meeting, the democratic deficit in Europe needs to be faced by broadening the debate upon what Europe we want and how it can effectively fund grassroots actions and initiatives. This claim requires serious reflection on the tools (and communication channels) that can be made available to enhance accessible information and adequate training. Mechanisms of citizen participation can represent an effective opportunity to (re)connect European Commission, member states, local authorities and civil society. However, critical attention should be paid on who (and how) is actually provided with needed conditions to participate. Said otherwise, civil society should be approached by tackling its complex, controversial, and often unjust dynamics within. In some cases, as pointed out in the first meeting, top-down approaches are disguised by the rhetoric of participation, which incorporates legalistic

languages and bureaucratic procedures that hinder real citizen engagement. New approaches are needed to approach the complex matches and mismatches of claims emerging from civil society. Along with that, European institutions should commit themselves with adequate funding provided to keep the initiatives working, monitored, and evaluated. Indeed, as already mentioned in the first meeting, the lack of sustainability compromises the relation between European institutions and local contexts.

- **International Networking** needs to rely on existing experiences of grassroots groups and networks in order to identify what is working, what is not working and why. The improvement of either formal and informal international networking should create the necessary conditions to inform and train citizens on the opportunities and impacts of European policies. Special attention should be paid on the effective engagement of the most vulnerable groups of civil society, as also claimed in the first meeting. In order to decrease the power of existing lobbies into decision-making, medium/small CSOs as well as self-represented citizens need to have access to decision-making.
- **International Funding** needs to provide local authorities and groups with needed economic resources. The distribution and allocation of public funding should be organised through systematic open calls for organised citizens and non-governmental organisations. According to what emerged in the first meeting, applying to international funding has become a profession and this is not fair for democracy because it encourages the hyper-specialization of some in detriment of communities. Therefore, a new social pact is needed and public consultations can represent an available instrument of making the debate more consistent.

Summing up, participants in the second meeting point out that there is a “transnational” space that can be occupied by emerging claims of democracy, as clearly argued by Pureza. CSOs and non-organised citizens reclaim stronger links between Europe and local contexts, through new forms of networking that ensure wider participation and more transparent mechanisms of funding. Local contexts can provide the necessary inputs to rethink European policies against risk of isolation, marginalisation, and poverty, as stressed by Domingos and Alagna. These goals should rely on a profound rethinking of the European institutions, as pointed out by Fernandes, and, more broadly, the role of the state as appointed by Marcelino. Participants finally praised the necessity to strengthen further this debate and possibly inspire the organisation of similar meetings outside main cities in order to allow both urban and rural contexts to be represented when addressing local scale.

Author of the Report: Roberto Falanga

# RECLAIM EUROPE

## URBAN PERSPECTIVES, TRANSNATIONAL STRATEGIES

## Hands-on Workshop and Conference

7 November 2018

9.30-17.30 (closed workshop)  
18.00-20.30 (public conference)

Biblioteca de Marvila  
Rua António Gedeão, 1950-347 Lisboa

### 1. WORKSHOP

Registration:  
<http://bit.ly/workshop-reclaim>

9.30-10.00

#### Welcome and introduction

**Welcome**  
Christine Auer (Friedrich Ebert  
Foundation, Lisbon)  
Ségolène Pruvot  
(European Alternatives, Paris)

#### Introduction: "Reclaim Europe" - what has happened so far and where do we want to go?

Roberto Falanga (Postdoc Research  
Fellow, Instituto de Ciências Sociais  
da Universidade de Lisboa, Lisbon)

10.00-10.30

#### Morning activity

Anabela Rodrigues (GTO LX, Lisbon)

10.30-13.00

#### Parallel training sessions

##### a) The Art of Organizing Communities of Hope

How to Change Europe by Publicly  
Telling Our Political Stories  
Trainer: Georg Blokus (Schule der  
politischen Hoffnung, Cologne)  
Host: Luis Mendes (Movimento Morar  
em Lisboa, Lisbon)

##### b) Actions to claim the right to the city How can marginalized and silenced groups make claims to the use of public space and to the uses of the city? How can they mobilize for actions? How to overcome constraints and how to make the struggles transnational and European?

Kinga Stanczuk (Razem Party,  
Warszawa)

António Brito Guterres  
(DINÂMIA'CEHUL, Lisbon)

Antónia Silvestre (Coolabora, Covilhã)

13.00-14.00

#### Lunch (included)

14.00-15.00

#### Parallel information sessions

**a) Advocacy in the EU**  
Ana Sofia Fernandes (Plataforma  
Portuguesa para os Direitos das Mulheres  
/ European Women's Lobby, Lisbon)

**b) Legislative Procedures in the EU**  
Susana Coroado (Transparency  
International, Lisbon)

#### c) Funding: Where to get support and information to overcome bureaucratic barriers

Domingos Lopes (Operational Programme  
Social Inclusion and Employment,  
European Social Fund, Lisbon)

15.00-17.00

#### The "action plan" - how to concretise it?

Which claims from the first "Reclaim  
Europe" meetings do we want to work  
on further, and how? Which approaches  
are there for putting claims in practice?

17.00 - 17.30

#### Closure of the workshop and transition to the evening event

Feedback  
Follow up

17.30 - 18.00

#### Snack buffet

### 2. CONFERENCE

Registration:  
<http://bit.ly/conference-reclaim>

18.00-19.30

#### Round table debate "Reclaim Europe - from the claims to actions"

The speakers will take position on the  
most relevant claims and ideas of the  
"action plan" and discuss them.

#### Participants:

Ana Sofia Fernandes (Plataforma  
Portuguesa para os Direitos das Mulheres  
/ European Women's Lobby, Lisbon)

Catarina Marcelino  
(Assembleia da República, Lisbon)

José Manuel Pureza  
(Assembleia da República, Lisbon)

Federico Alagna (Cambiamento Messina  
dal Basso, Messina)

Maria José Domingos (Rede DLBC  
/ European Anti-Poverty Network, Lisbon)

#### Moderator:

Roberto Falanga (Postdoc Research  
Fellow, ICS-UL, Lisbon)

19.30-20.30

#### Forum Theatre "Honey and Bitter in Papers"

Forum Theatre by GTO LX (Theatre of the  
Oppressed Lisbon) and AMI AFRO.

Topics: Immigration, cultural identity,  
racism.

#### Organized by

**FRIEDRICH  
EBERT  
STIFTUNG**



#### Forum theatre:



#### FREE ENTRANCE, BUT PREVIOUS REGISTRATION FOR BOTH EVENTS REQUIRED UNTIL 4.11.2018.

The number of places available for the workshop is limited.  
Public event in English and Portuguese (simultaneous  
translation provided).

[www.fes-portugal.org](http://www.fes-portugal.org) [www.euroalter.com](http://www.euroalter.com)