

MERIFIN CAPITAL

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Mr. José Manuel Barroso
President of the European Commission
1049 Brussels
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Dear Mr. Barroso,

It is considered vital that EU citizens better understand why the European Union is important and what it means for them. This is often not the case leaving the European Union ("Brussels") rather remote from its citizens. Various efforts have been tried over time to close this gap but it unfortunately appears with limited success.

Some of these efforts include bringing national and European politicians together more often or making meetings by the European Parliament more public through radio and television. I am afraid that these and similar rather inward looking measures by politicians do not achieve the required result as citizens generally are not terribly interested in politicians let alone in their deliberations. Instead citizens should be and are quite keen to know what the European Union does for them in their day to day lives. This is not always clear and has become even more distant over time as people (especially younger people) take their life style for granted and ignore which contributions to it are in fact derived from a European Union.

I therefore would suggest a different approach: a concerted and continued media campaign in a light-hearted, easy and fun way to illustrate the European Union's achievements in the citizens' every day life (and perhaps compared to how it was before). Such campaign should not necessarily be the sole responsibility of the European Commission as all citizens are responsible for it. But the European Commission clearly is best placed to take the initiative and promote such campaign. This campaign obviously will need a substantial input by artists and other people in society and should not be left to bureaucrats only. In order to be effective it will need strong and continued support from the top and also take into consideration the respective characteristics of various regions in the European Union.

I hope you may become intrigued by such idea and decide to pursue this suggestion. I remain available to discuss it in great detail with you if you so wish.

Yours sincerely,

Coen Teulings
Chairman