ERNEST URTASUN

Interview with Ernest Urtasun, member of the Spanish party Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds and of the Greens-European Free Alliance

What outcomes of the last European parliamentary term ?

• Greatest success of the 2014-2019 parliamentary term (collective or personal) ?

E.U. : « *For my parliamentary group, the greatest success has without any doubt been our ability to reopen the debate on* ***free trade agreements****. We started this with the TTIP and the CETA, which lead to a new reflection on the type of commercial policy we want to set up in the European Union.*

At a personal level, the containment of sales of ***high-risk financial assets*** *in retail banking has been a success. It might be seen as minor but remains very important. It is an important reform, which was in fact included in the Directive 2014/59.*

More information : https://tinyurl.com/y9kul58m

Their sale is now prohibited in bank branches, and the right to purchase these financial products will be restricted to professional investors. The aim is to offer retail customers better protection and to ensure that the information provided in documentation on financial products is adequately graded. »

Biography

2000 : Degree in economics from the Autonomous University of Barcelona

2008-today: Member of the executive committee of Iniciativa per Catalunya Verds (Initiative for Catalonia Greens)

2010 : Diplomat

• Greatest failure of the 2014-2019 parliamentary term ? Is there something you regret?

E.U. : « *The main failure has sadly been our inability to convince the member states of our need to set up a* ***common policy*** *to manage the* ***refugee flows****. Despite Parliament's renewed insistence on reforming the Dublin Regulation, on opening legal entry routes, and on organising sea rescue operations we haven't been able to convince member states of the importance of a common policy when it comes to migration and refugees. »*

• Any forecast for your political family for the 2019 European elections ?

E.U. : « *I am convinced that the **Greens** will keep on being the voice of **critical pro-European forces** in Parliament. Some years ago, I wouldn't have given the same answer, but now the Greens have a much wider range of possibilities in a number of countries and I hope that our group will obtain 15 to 20 additional seats in the next parliament.* »

• Greatest challenges for the EU for the 2019-2024 parliamentary term?

E.U. : « *The greatest challenge will of course be to handle the rise of **far-right forces** within Parliamentary representation. They are already present, but I fear that they will expand their presence during the next legislature.* »

« We should also acknowledge that in the globalised world we are living in, the solutions to the great issues of our time, whether migration flows or financial capitalism, need common reforms. I would like the European Union to experience a fresh and greater impetus. »

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• What will the EU look like in 2030?

E.U. : « *I would like an in-depth **reform of the Treaties** to be instigated and for a momentum to re-emerge for further integration in the European Union. I believe Treaty reform should focus on Euro zone and economic governance. We also need to review our democratic **governance**, and give the European Parliament more weight. We should also acknowledge that in the globalised world we are living in, the solutions to the great issues of our time, whether migration flows or financial capitalism, need common reforms. I would like the European Union to experience a fresh and greater impetus.* »

Interview conducted by Lucie Solem - President of EuroCité