

EPLO Round-table Meeting

The European Union as a Peace Project: Defending, learning from and applying our history

Tuesday, 11 September 2012, 12h00 to 15h00 (sandwich lunch will be provided)
Quaker House, Square Ambiorix 50, Brussels

The European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) advocates in Brussels and in EU Member States for the EU to be more active and more effective at building peace and preventing conflict both within and outside its borders. The aim of this round-table is to explore how the EU's history as a peace project can better inform contemporary policy work: are the experience and the idea of the EU as a peace project useful in practice?

We start from the assumption that the EU is a peace project and a very successful one. Yet this experience of peace through regional integration is less and less resonant (and relevant) in contemporary Europe. Non-Europeans working on peace are often inspired by the EU as a model for peaceful development. However, for a variety of reasons, European peacebuilding organisations – EPLO included – have tended to focus on the promotion of peace by the EU outside its borders rather than on its role and potential in the transformation of conflict in Europe.

Comments:

Martina Weitsch, Quaker Council for European Affairs

- Reviving the idea of Europe as a peace project: challenges for peace activists

Bernard Philippe, European External Action Service

- Applying Europe's post-war experience in other conflicts

Professor Bruno Coppieters, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

- The conditions for the EU to transform conflict

Open discussion – all participants welcome to contribute

Moderator: Catherine Woollard, EPLO

Topics for discussion (*inter alia*):

- Why is the idea of the EU as a peace project becoming less resonant? Does this matter? Does the idea need to be defended or revived? If so, how?
- How has the EU transformed conflicts within Europe? What impact does deeper European integration have on conflict in other countries and regions?
- Is regional integration promoting peace in other regions of the world? What are the pre-conditions for integration to promote peace?
- What are the links between the EU's own history of regional integration and its external action? How can/should its own experience inform its activities in the world?
- How can advocacy activities in EU Member States on peacebuilding incorporate learning from the EU's own history as a peace project?
- What are the contemporary threats to peace within the EU? Can European integration help tackle these threats?
- Can learning from Europe's experience be applied in other regions?

If you are interested in participating, **please register by Tuesday, 4 September 2012** by sending an email to Josephine Liebl (jliebl@eplo.org).