



## **ELIANT's contribution to the *Conference on the Future of Europe***

### ***On the theme of “the EU in the World”***

#### **Europe – a value-based cultural area**

What is Europe's place in the world community? How can we play an independent role in the tension between the competing super powers?

Europe is the continent where the idea of human dignity, philosophy, statecraft and social science found its inspiration, where the ideals of the French revolution – freedom, equality and brotherhood – found their way into many a constitution and where the democratic form of government originated. This cultural heritage needs caring for and made relevant for the future – including the issue of migration. No one voluntarily flees their homeland – unless the living conditions there are inhumane.

ELIANT is campaigning to raise more awareness for the causes of migration and the degree to which European economic policies have contributed. A cultural transformation is needed if belief in Europe as a value-based continent is to remain. The huge problems of social injustice, starvation, climate change and military conflict must be addressed by society as a whole. The deliberations of citizen assemblies and new democratic processes need to be taken seriously and integrated by EU authorities and member states.

### ***On the theme “Democracy in Europe”***

#### **The free and sovereign human being at the centre and his twin responsibilities**

Europe is the continent of the democratic state. Today citizens are calling for greater inclusion. Citizen initiatives need to and must be taken seriously and listened to by the state. Otherwise it runs the risk of becoming ever more centralised in our increasingly complex times.

ELIANT sees one answer as being a federalised Europe.

The Swiss thinker and writer Denis de Rougemont developed the vision of a federation back in 1947 during an address given in Montreux. At the centre he placed the sovereign human being who would be responsible not only for himself but also for the community. He described six principles as being fundamental to such a federation:

- avoid dogmatism
- avoid any kind of preconceived systems
- look to quality instead of quantity
- retain and promote the specific qualities
- love complexity
- place value on closeness, on people and on groups

This further step in development is essential. Awareness of human dignity is a condition for this as is a transformed approach to economic policy – including meaningful renunciation – in order to meet the ecological and social challenges. The education system also requires a fundamental reform that excludes standardised demand and testing regimes and has an orientation towards the physical, psychological and spiritual development needs of children and young people.