

Estella emphasizes the new progressive values and policies the Lisbon Treaty adds to the EU and which did not exist in previous treaties

The Head of the International Area of IDEAS Foundation, Antonio Estella, at a roundtable last Wednesday on the future of Europe from the enforcement of the Lisbon, made a comparison between this treaty and the foundational Treaty of Rome. He pointed out that the Lisbon Treaty includes social democratic values to the EU and reinforces progressive policies that exceeds and complement the liberal political program that inspired the Treaty of Rome.

Estella made clear that, as a social democrat, he feels reasonably satisfied with the progress brought by the Lisbon Treaty compared to the previous ones, progresses which he set in the context of values and policies. Estella thinks that the most disappointing part of the Lisbon Treaty is the lack of governance in fiscal policies.

Regarding the new values with which the Lisbon Treaty to the EU, the head of the International Area of IDEAS Foundation first mentioned sustainability in its three aspects: social, economic and environmental. As an example, he mentioned the specific references of the Lisbon Treaty to social economics and the welfare of the communities, both of which had never appeared in previous texts of the community.

Regarding EU policies, Estella insisted that the Lisbon Treaty reinforces social and redistributive policies in the fields of education, assistance and environment as well as taking on citizen rights.

A part from Estella, Francisco Aldecoa, Professor of International Relations at the Complutense University of Madrid, also took part in the round-table with a reference to the Lisbon

Treaty as s an ambitious text that introduces 5 essential changes: greater dynamism of the institutions, the visualization of the new European political power, the notion of economic governance, even though not developed, fostering common diplomacy and opening a the way towards a common Defence policy.

Araceli Mangas, Professor of International Public Law at the University of Salamanca, explained the new institutional architecture that emerged from the Lisbon Treaty to show that the “hardly-appreciated” task of setting the mechanisms in motion is incumbent upon the Spanish Presidency.

The journalist Xavier Vidal-Folch, from the newspaper El País, who adopted the most critical position on the Lisbon Treaty, said that “it started already out of phase because, regarding the economic union it does not make any progress at all”, and therefore predicted its future reform. He specifically referred to the case of Greece, declaring himself in favour of rescuing its institutions and asked for the creation of an emergency fund to prevent States from collapsing, “since the same has been done for banks”.

Finally, Carlos Carnero, special Ambassador for the EU, declared that the Lisbon Treaty “is not just another one”. Similarly to Estella, he showed his satisfaction on the specific references the social market economy and sustainability, even though, he complained about the scarcity of progress towards an “economic union”, in the same way as the head of the International Area of IDEAS. “We have a political union, but not economic, therefore we must culminate the Treaty in the future”. Finally, he highlighted the role of the Spanish Presidency, emphasizing its decisive role in the recovery of Greece and in relaunching the Climate Summit of Mexico, following the failure of Copenhagen.