

[Disruption of organised crime group selling worthless stocks](#)

20 November 2019

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The OCG ran call centres and contacted potential victims, offering them shares in worthless stocks. Since 2017, the Public Prosecutor's Office of Düsseldorf, Germany, is leading an investigation into the OCG. They asked for the assistance of Eurojust in the execution of related European Investigation Orders, Letters of Request and European Arrest Warrants.

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Speech by President Donald Tusk at the EPP congress in Zagreb

I would like to begin with a few words of thanks. First and foremost, let me thank all-the-delegates and participants of our congress for their great work, courage and determination, which you have demonstrated throughout this year, since our meeting in Helsinki. Despite the current trends, negative predictions, and efforts by our opponents, we again won the elections to the European Parliament. And don't let anyone tell you, that those who won, are losers, which is, what our competitors and, unfortunately, our malcontents, like to repeat. It could have been better – someone may say. My dear friends, it can always be better, and this is why we are here today, but nobody will stop us from feeling proud and from walking with our heads held high!

I would also like to thank our President for the six years of leading our family through really tough times. Dear Joseph, it will be very difficult to replace you, you did an excellent job. You gave us all a feeling of safety and a meaning to our actions. You were a true leader of our community.

Let me also thank you for your trust. It was you, who more than a year ago, came to me with the suggestion that I become your successor, and you took such good care of this idea that I am the only candidate. This is another example of your extraordinary effectiveness, Joseph, thank you. And so, here I am, at your disposal.

Yes, it is true that I am a little younger than Joseph, but let's not pretend that my candidacy is a generational revolution. After all, I've been with you for more than twenty-five years. You know my good and bad sides. So there's no need to bore you with introducing myself. You also know that I am usually brief, to the point, and frank, perhaps sometimes too frank, but I cannot act any other way, and I don't intend to. Since I am the only candidate, I will not pretend to be leading an election campaign, which would force me to present opinions on every subject and answer precisely to every expectation from a long wishlist. So please allow me today, to focus on only one, and in my opinion, most important challenge for our political family.

Until recently, many of us thought, that with the rise of modernity, such needs as security and identity would lose their significance. And, that as a consequence, the role and tasks of the state and public authority would also change.

But the reality turned out to be quite different. Today, even more than in the past, it is fear that plays the biggest role in politics. Most people still care more about their safety than about anything else. For example in such moments as the migration crisis and a new wave of terrorism, it is fear which dominates over other social emotions. "Give us a sense of safety and security!" – this is what we have been hearing in Europe in the last years,

and whoever can best respond to this call, gets the support of the public.

In times of uncertainty, and most probably there will be no other times, when everything changes around us, and runs off in all directions, people want to be certain, that those in power will not abandon them, that they will not turn their backs on them. When left alone, they start looking for those, who offer care and concentration on their problems. They desire attention. "Look at us" – they seem to say – "we are here". They, or should I say, we all are hungry for appreciation, dignity and importance, and we all feel the need to be part of a bigger community. And to be proud of it. This is why it is so easy to win people's hearts by those who shout in a loud voice: "get up off your knees, make your country great again, take back control". In other words, those who strike the right chord, the chord of dignity, will get people's votes.

As always, people have a need for order, harmony, and understanding the world around them. That is why we all need to be deeply rooted in our traditions, understandable cultural codes, and in places we call ours. And which are somehow distinctive from others.

As I have already said, people also want to be part of a bigger community with which they know how to identify. Through language, religion, or a common understanding of history. And most often, it is still a nation that is such a community. Whoever rejects from his political vocabulary and axiology terms such as: homeland, Heimat, domovina, patria, ojczyzna, will find that it is very difficult to face up to the crucial task, that of giving people this sense of safety and security.

Under no condition can we abdicate from this task. It is in fact encoded in the genes of Christian Democracy. And it is not a coincidence that one of the most important Christian Democratic schools of thought was the so-called Ordoliberalism, which built a difficult but possible synthesis of freedom, order and tradition.

I deeply believe that only those who want and are able to give people a feeling of safety and security, preserving at the same time their freedoms and rights, have a mandate to run for power. Under no circumstances can we give away the sphere of security and order to political populists, manipulators and autocrats, who lead people to believe that freedom cannot be reconciled with security. That protecting our borders and territory cannot be reconciled with liberal democracy, and an effective governance with the rule of law.

This is the essence of our internal debate within the European People's Party. I would like us to end it as quickly as possible with an obvious conclusion. We will not sacrifice values like civic liberties, the rule of law, and decency in a public life on the altar of security and order, because there is simply no need. Because they don't exclude one another. Whoever is unable to accept it, is *de facto* placing himself outside our family.

Ok. This is where I will stop. The last thing I want to do is to bore you. Especially that one of the greatest threats we face is our routine, Newspeak,

lack of emotions and boredom. Some time ago, Bono, the famous leader of U2, visited me in Brussels. At some point he said that we would lose if our narrative was not as melodramatic as that of the populists. Let us remember that in politics, impressions are sometimes more important than facts. Look at the migration crisis. I remember when some worked really hard for many days and weeks to contain the wave of illegal migrants from Turkey, negotiating for hours, hundreds of hours, our agreement with Ankara, thanks to which, the influx of migrants fell by more than 90 per cent. I don't have to remind anyone of the great role Angela (Merkel) played here. However someone else took care of impressions. Someone, who also worked hard, but only on his narrative and self-creation, putting up a fence and billboards with anti-migration propaganda.

We must put a stop to this. In a political fight, truth and decency cannot be completely helpless against fake news, manipulation and hate. You must believe in yourselves and the power of your arguments. Do not be afraid to say in public what you really feel (even if you may sometimes think it's a dangerous experiment), and you will surely evoke people's emotions and capture their attention.

Because you know, we are sometimes terribly boring in our communication, aren't we? But we don't have to.

A few weeks ago I visited Pope Francis. I told him that I would stand as a candidate for the President of the European People's Party. He gave me a long look and asked if we would be able to distinguish between *populismo* and *popolarismo*. I think you know well what he had in mind. If not, please read some of Pope Francis' writings, you are Christian Democrats after all.

As you know, we have a party among us called Partido Popular. I know that not every party may be called *popular*, but every party in our family can be popular. So let us all stand together on this most important political battlefield, on one side parties of irresponsible populism, on the other, our party of responsible popularity. After five years I am fed up with being the European Bureaucrat-in-Chief. I am ready to fight. And I hope you are, too.

["Common sense, common Europe", speech by President-elect Charles Michel at the University of Amsterdam](#)



It is a pleasure to be back at the University of Amsterdam. I spent 6 months studying here as an Erasmus student.

I have many nice memories of this city. For example, when I arrived, I bought a used bike from someone on the street. You know what comes next: 2 weeks later, my bike was stolen. Then, a few weeks later, someone in the street offered to sell me a used bike and it was my bike! So I bought it, the same bike, twice. Today I'd like to make an announcement: if anybody has my old bike, I would like to buy it, a third time!

The Erasmus programme is a great European success story – almost 4 million students have participated. An impressive statistic. But there's another statistic I prefer. Around 1 million babies have been born to Erasmus couples. And who knows, maybe some of you will add to this statistic in the future!

Today I would like to speak about Europe, our common home. Imagine, for a moment, if Europe did not exist. Who would lead the fight against climate change? Who would defend our rights and freedoms? And more concretely, who would eliminate roaming charges across Europe? And who would ban single-use plastics? Europe does all these things, and much more.

Europe should be prouder and more self-confident about how we have improved people's daily lives.

Today, we are free to love who we want. Free to express our opinions without fear. Free to get justice in fair courts. Free to access independent media. Free to travel and live across borders. We should never take these freedoms for granted.

A few weeks ago we marked the fall of the Berlin Wall. A momentous occasion – for both Germany and Europe. It reminds us how far we have come from the old Cold War divisions. Today, democracies and free market economies stretch across our continent. This offers unprecedented opportunity to our citizens. That's why I ask myself: "Why all the pessimism today?" Just look at how much we have achieved since those dark days.

I have met young people here in Amsterdam, and all across Europe. You want to take your destiny into your own hands, and you are not alone.

Support for Europe is growing – the recent European elections showed that. Europeans came out in record numbers – especially young people – to make their voices heard. Loud and clear. A positive sign for the future of Europe. Trust in the European Union is at a 10-year high.

But these elections also tell the complex story of Europe – the hopes, the fears, the dreams of our citizens from the four corners of our continent. Europe is a colourful patchwork of different identities, cultures, traditions and perspectives. And, yes, also with competing interests. I love that about Europe. For me, it is our uniqueness.

But it also makes Europe a challenging place to do politics, find compromise, and take action. I come from Belgium. A country with 6 governments, 7 parliaments, 3 national languages, and more than 1.000 beers. Across Europe, there are 8 political groups in the European Parliament, 24 official

languages and 50.000 different beer brands. So, I should feel right at home in my new job. It certainly won't be boring!

We are a Union of 28 democracies, with open debates, political parties, and a free press, where we are able to have open discussions and disagreements.

For me, this is not a sign of weakness. It is a sign of strength. As long as we are able to agree on the most important thing – to stand together, unified, for our common good.

And putting labels on people doesn't help either. When I speak to people across Europe, they don't say, "I'm an elite or I'm a populist." They say, "I care about my family. I care about my job. I care about my future". I believe we all want the same things. It is how we get there that matters. Young Europeans in particular are expressing their grand ambition for Europe, especially on climate change.

Europe needs more confident thinking. And we have reason to be confident. Because we speak from a position of strength – the economic power of 500 million consumers, representing 20% of the global GDP.

A Confident Global Leader

Today the world is changing at lightning speed. Your generation knows this better than anyone. Climate, digitalisation, and geopolitics are radically changing the way we live. This can create a feeling of anxiety. A questioning of the traditional bonds of family, community, and country.

But I believe it is how we respond to these changes that will define us and influence Europe's future. We need tolerance, openness, and mutual respect and certainly not a bunker mentality. Europe is built on the solid foundation of cooperation, fair trade, and the rules-based order. These are not empty words.

Fighting Climate Change

Today climate change is threatening our very existence. We must address it with laser focus. We must shift into high gear. We must lead. And inspire others to act.

The numbers speak for themselves:

- Over 90% of geo-physical disasters are climate-related
- These disasters have killed 1.3 million people between 1998 and 2017.
- The economic losses from climate-related disasters are hundreds of billions of euros.

This simply cannot continue. Only firm leadership will energise people to act.

I want Europe to be the first climate-neutral continent. To achieve this, we need to transform our economy and our society. And mobilise private and public investments. Climate change is not the end of the story. Human history

shows that obstacles are often unique opportunities to make progress, innovation, new technologies, a better quality of life. This is what we need now. Urgently.

Bold climate action could trigger trillions of euros in economic benefits. And create millions of jobs in the sustainable energy sector alone. We must seize this opportunity. Europe will promote the Paris Agreement on climate change and your generation has taken to the streets to demand action for a healthy planet. We are all in the same boat. I share your urgency.

Building a Strong & Fair Economy

To be a strong leader, Europe needs a strong economy. But today our open economy is being questioned. Countries and companies are throwing out the rule book. Taking an unpredictable attitude to globalisation.

We must stand our ground, promote a level playing field, and take an integrated approach to the economy. A strong, healthy economy helps our societies flourish while driving down poverty and inequality.

We need to speed up economic reforms that clear the way for young innovators with game-changing ideas. But we need to do it the European way. With social fairness. With equal access to the labour market, fair working conditions, and social protection.

A More Assertive Europe

Greater European unity will provide more stability, more security and more fairness for our citizens. Europe is at the forefront of global cooperation – a credible, respected, and valued partner at the international table. So we shouldn't be shy about promoting our interests and values more confidently. We must be at the table. Not aggressive, but more assertive. Self-confident, at the heart of today's core debates.

I believe we can be more assertive in 3 areas:

First, Trade. I am in favor of free trade and entrepreneurship. Europe needs to build a new generation of trade agreements around the world, based on transparency and high social and climate standards

The second way is to better support our digital and private sector companies. Europe must harness the vast potential of digitalization and move fast on break-through technologies. Just like you are doing here in the Netherlands. The Netherlands is home to one of the most vibrant start-up ecosystems in the world. In bio-tech, electric mobility, and healthcare, to name just a few. Last year alone, Dutch startups raised more than 500 million euros in investments. And Amsterdam was Europe's 4th biggest startup hub. We should increase our support for these kinds of startups. They are the lifeblood of tomorrow's economy.

Our digital strategy must be compatible with our European values. Today Big Data is on the digital agenda. It has evolved into a massive economic resource. But we must protect consumers' privacy and individual freedoms

along the way. I firmly believe we can do both: compete with the global tech giants on innovation and build markets that are good for people, business, and society. Along these same lines, our tax policy should be fair and balanced too. Companies should contribute to the countries where they make their profits. In my view, this is common sense.

The third area where Europe can be more efficient is Defence and Security. We need to improve our defence capacity, if we want to influence global events. And protect our interests. Bolstering our joint defence capabilities and investing smarter is the way forward. A strong NATO and a strong European defence are complementary. With NATO and within NATO. More cooperation on security and defence will advance Europe's strategic autonomy in the long term.

Working Together

The best project in world is nothing without a good strategy. So we must remain united, never forget our past, and build our common future. Finding pragmatic, common sense solutions to our most pressing problems is the hard part.

I want to encourage an unshakeable unity between EU leaders and promote workable solutions, in a spirit of openness and dialogue. Confidence and common sense are the best tools to move forward. I want to build a foundation of trust with other leaders – and among people. The interests of all European countries are interlocking and part of the same bigger picture. We all want the same things for our families and countries: a healthy, prosperous, sustainable Europe.

But how we get there is open for debate. I won't hide behind bureaucratic jargon, institutional competition or mountains of red tape. I want a frank and honest conversation that leads to decisions and actions.

That's why I am here today. I want a conversation with everyone, not just heads of state or government. I want to understand your hopes, your dreams, even your fears for the future.

Please get involved. Don't stay on the sidelines. We need Europe's young generation. Your energy, your optimism, your talents, your fresh ideas. Never underestimate your power to change the status quo. Get involved to innovate, to create. to step forward.

Little by little, day-by-day, together we can build a Europe of common values, based on common sense, that works for all of us.

Indicative programme – Education, Youth, Culture and Sports Council, 21-22 November 2019

Place:

Europa building, Brussels

Chair:

Hanna Kosonen, Minister for Science and Culture

All times are approximate and subject to change

THURSDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2019

+/- 08.30

Arrivals Culture

+/- 08.50

Doorstep by Minister Kosonen

+/- 10.00

Beginning of meeting: Culture (Roundtable)

+/- 10.10

– Adoption of the agenda

+/- 10.15

– Adoption of the non-legislative A-items

+/- 10.20

Adoption of the legislative A-items ([public session](#))

+/- 10.25

Resolution on the cultural dimension of sustainable development ([public session](#))

+/- 10.35

Strengths, innovation potential and global competitiveness of the European cultural, creative and audiovisual industries ([public session](#))

+/- 12.15

Any other business: Nomination of Tartu for the European Capital of Culture 2024 ([public session](#))

+/- 12.20

Any other business: Selection of the European Capital of Culture 2024 in Austria ([public session](#))

+/- 12.25

Any other business: Good practice on the protection and preservation of cultural heritage: Return of archaeological objects to Bulgaria ([public session](#))

+/- 12.30

Any other business: Related rights of publishers and press agencies in the digital age ([public session](#))

+/- 12.35

Any other business: Strengthening the role of culture for the future of Europe requires the word 'culture' spelled out in the Commissioner designate Gabriel's portfolio ([public session](#))

+/- 12.40

Work programme of the incoming Presidency ([public session](#))

+/- 12.45

End of Culture Council

+/- 13.00

Lunch (topic: the Future of European sports model)

+/- 15.00 Beginning of meeting: Sports (Roundtable)

+/- 15.15

Conclusions on combatting corruption in sport ([public session](#))

+/- 15:30

Conclusions on safeguarding children in sport ([public session](#))

+/- 15:45

Promoting good governance in sport ([public session](#))

+/- 17:25

Any other business: WADA meetings: Executive Committee, Fifth World Conference on Doping in Sport and Foundation Board

+/- 17:30

Any other business: Work Programme of the incoming Presidency ([public session](#))

+/- 17.35

End of Sport Council

+/- 17.45

Press conference ([live streaming](#)) Justus Lipsius building

FRIDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2019

+/- 08.00

Arrivals Youth

+/- 08.20

Doorstep by Minister Kosonen

+/- 10.00

Beginning of meeting: Youth (Roundtable)

+/- 10.10

Conclusions on digital youth work ([public session](#))

+/- 10.20

Conclusions on education and training of youth workers ([public session](#))

+/- 10.30

A vision for youth work in Europe – climate change, young people and youth work ([public session](#))

+/- 12.10

Any other business: Conclusions of the World Conference of Ministers responsible for Youth 2019 and Youth Forum “Lisboa +21” (Lisbon, 22-23 June 2019) ([public session](#))

+/- 12.20

Any other business: 4th Eastern partnership youth forum (EAP) Marking the 10th Anniversary of the Eastern Partnership in the field of Youth. Summary of Round-Table Discussion (Vilnius, 19 June 2019) ([public session](#))

+/- 12.30

Work programme of the incoming Presidency ([public session](#))

+/- 12.40

End of Youth Council

+/- 12.45

Exit doorstep by Minister Kosonen