

DEBATER
A EUROPA

13

jul-dez 2015

A (DES) CONSTRUÇÃO DA EUROPA
(1939-1945)

(DE) CONSTRUCTING EUROPE (1939-1945)

(Re) constructing Europe after 1945: the Council of Europe and the new political and normative architecture

Ana Isabel Xavier

Invited assistant Professor in NOVA University of Lisbon, Portugal

E-mail: xavier.anaisabel@gmail.com

Abstract

Since its foundation, the Council of Europe has played a leading role both in the post-World War II, and after the Berlin Wall fall, striving for the adoption of high standards of protection of fundamental freedoms and human rights. Although the constitutive Treaty of the Council of Europe was signed in London in 1949, its headquarters were set halfway between Paris and Prague, recognising the importance of linking “two former Europes” economical and socially devastated by the two world wars.

After more than 50 years, it’s important to recall the origins and the evolving role of the Council of Europe, as well as discuss the future prospects of one of the most important but also probably one of the less recognized, and frequently misunderstood, European political Organisations of the post 1945.

Keywords: Council of Europe, European Union, Human Rights, Democracy, Normative power

Introduction

It was still during the Second World War (1939-1945) that Europe’s post conflict reconstruction seemed crucial for the international community in order to avoid a further war escalation in European soil. In early 1943, in a radio broadcast, Winston