

Synthesis of the Theme-based Workshops

Session 2 : Major challenges of Europe

First things first, we have to compliment everybody for their wonderful contribution to the workshops. The team in charge of the summary was not only overwhelmed by the amount of themes presented in the reports, but also by their quality. The present summary cannot match with the richness of the contributions.

I. THE EUROPEAN VISION

TS2 A: The European model, with its strong emphasis on productivity, grounded in heavy social protection and on the central role of institutions, is simultaneously shaken by the requirements of sustainable development, by the crisis of the welfare state, and by the crisis of its institutions.

A series of changes causes the post-war European model to be called into question. They include social changes such as population aging and family breakdown, cultural changes with the values crisis affecting not so much individuals as trust in institutions, and the financialisation of the economy which reduces the ability to take action in the long-term. They also include the industrial model's negative impacts on agriculture, and the functional model's negative impacts on human activity.

TS2 B: A new model is sought, revolving around a global approach, scientific and technological mastery, and sustainable development.

Europe is aware that it must turn to a new model of development, less materialistic, segmented, and consuming of natural resources. It has a number of tools to do so at its disposal, such as liquid assets that would permit long-term investment, or the Internet that could lead to a rethinking of the economy. This line of thought also touches on better ways of socially controlling both development and the use of science and technology.

TS2 C: The relationship between unity and diversity is at the heart of the European question. It is valued in principle but in practice, it is often conveyed in nationalistic withdrawals and a lack of common vision.

Though difficult to define, common values do underpin the European identity. They are reflected in a certain notion of general interest and in the importance of public services. However, the European Union lacks a political plan. Withdrawal can be observed in most European countries, and they have difficulty agreeing on a common plan.

TS2 D: Europe promotes new world governance however consensus

on the subject is elusive. In its relations with other regions of the world, Europe is progressively tending towards a more egalitarian stance, but whether it is prepared to pursue this course to its end remains unsure.

Europe's relations with the rest of the world are changing. In response to the interdependence of problems, the idea of world governance is widespread. Europe is conscious of its full involvement in globalization and is convinced of the risks of a non-regulated world market. The European Union is also a fresh international player that imagines a world system based on relations between regional poles. In principle the EU has gone from a relationship based on superiority to one of equality with other regions of the world. Nevertheless, the example of its relationship with China suggests that a truly symmetrical relationship is still far from being shared.

TS2 E: Europeans are convinced of the importance of public regulations but are also involved in a redistribution of power between the players and the levels of governance. The idea of joint

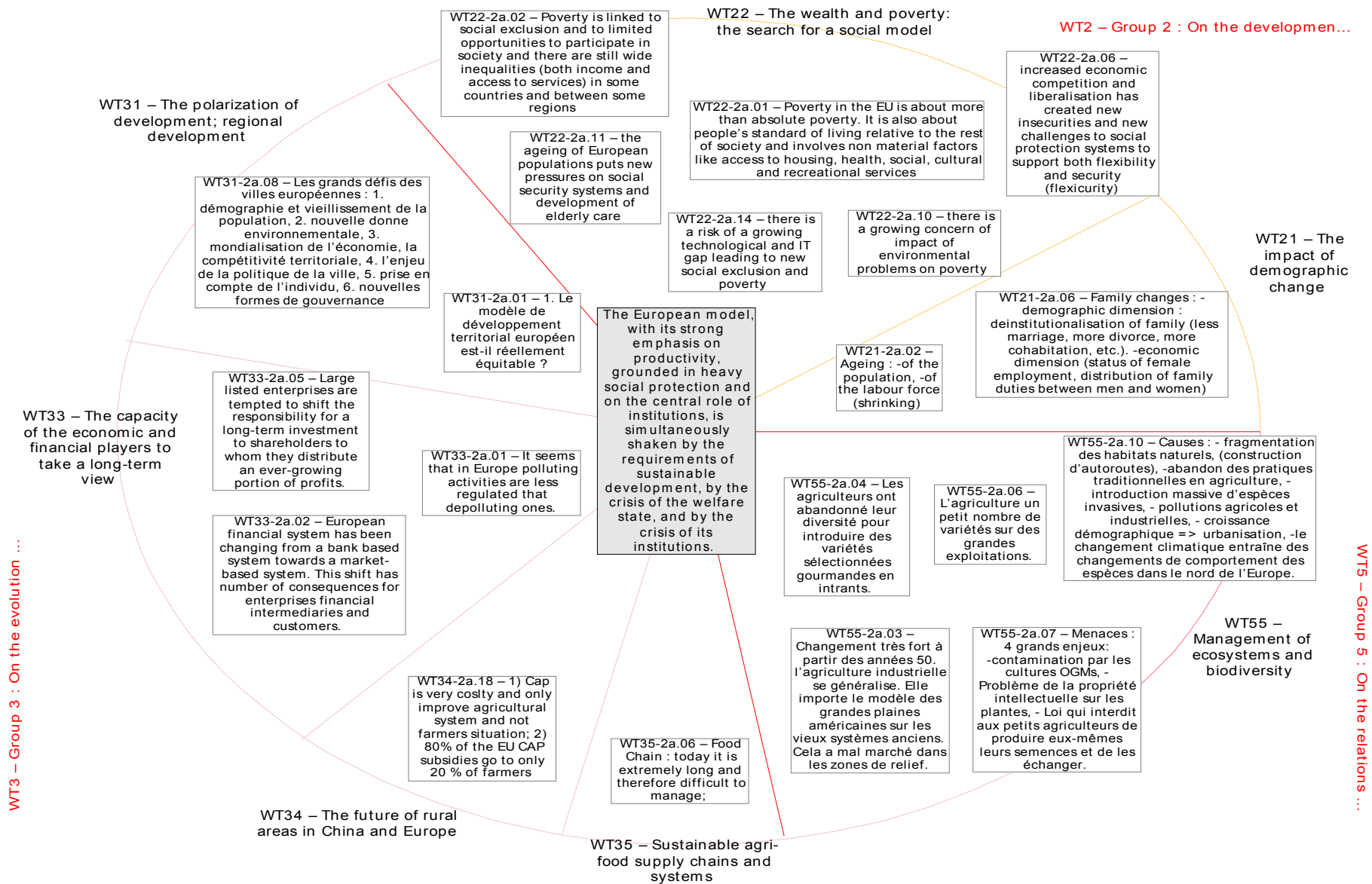
production of public goods is widely held.

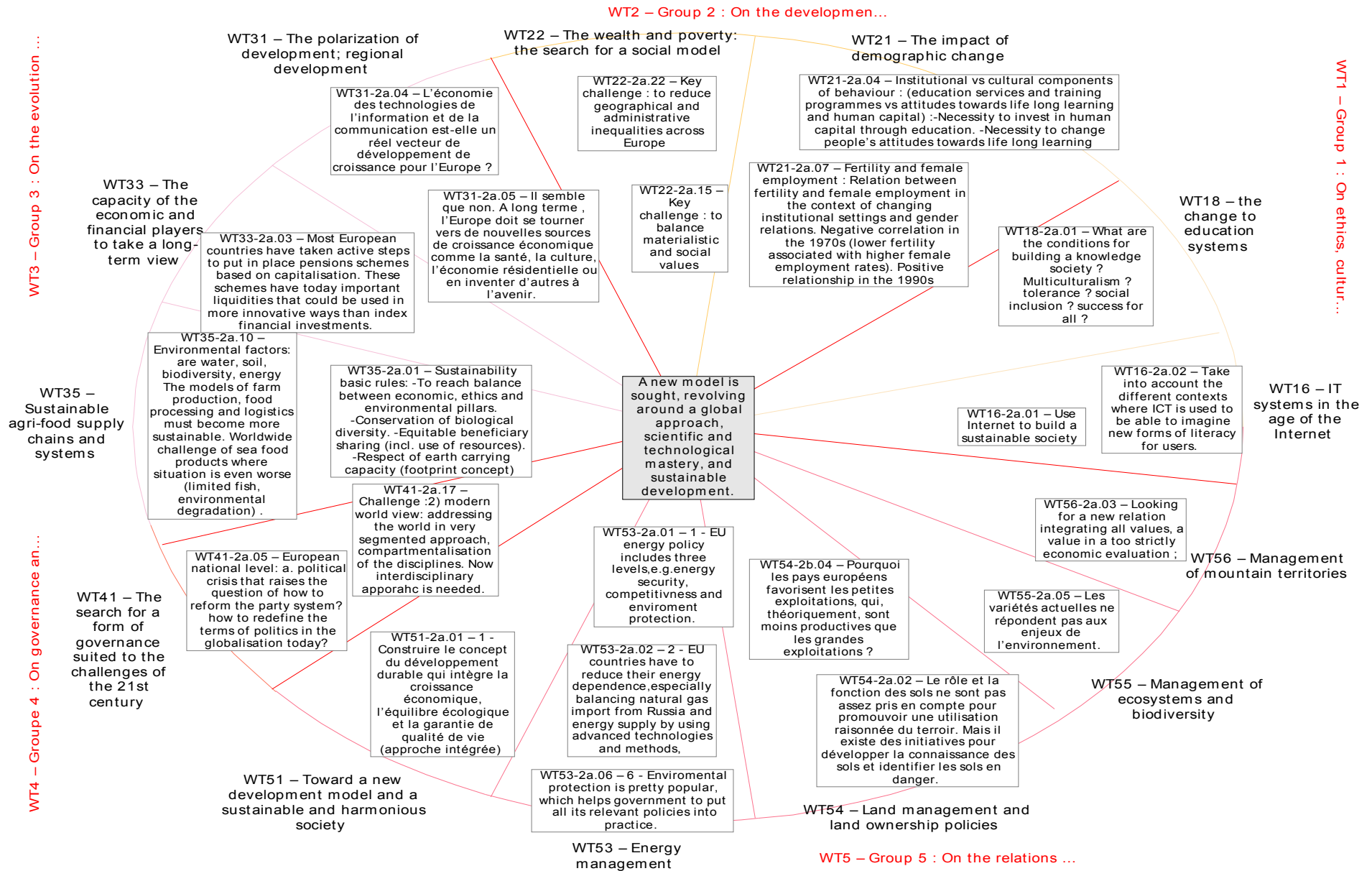
It appears that in Europe there is a triple consensus regarding the relationship between players in the production of public goods. The first concerns the need to better link the levels of governance and to better manage the tensions between central system and decentralized organization. The second concerns the production of public goods with a good fit between public regulation modes and the markets, especially to produce and manage public services. The third is that traditional systems of representative democracy are insufficient and that to manage common goods professional opinions and competencies in addition to the population's participation are essential.

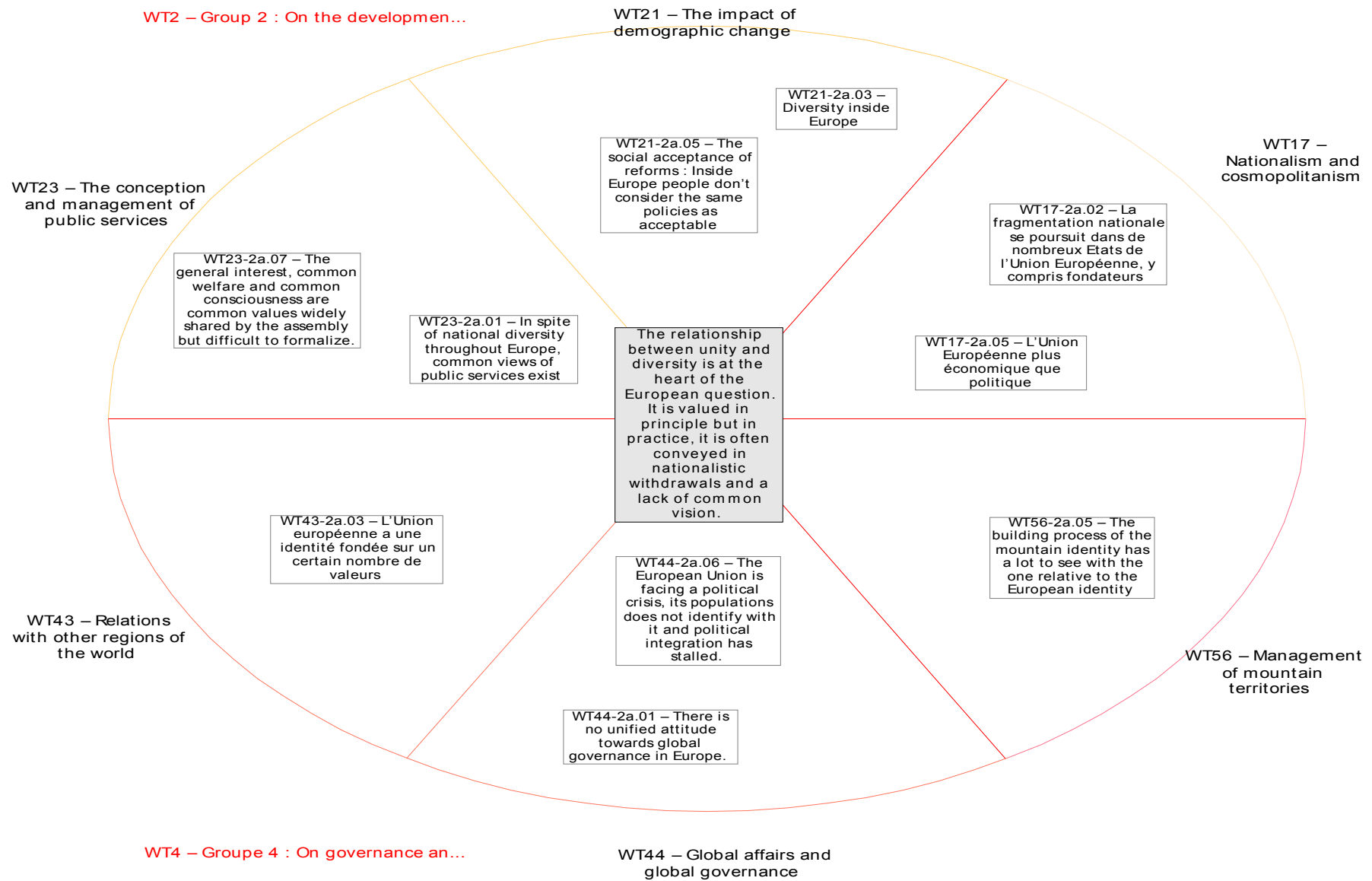
TS2 F : Towards new governance, allowing for a more comprehensive approach to problems and solutions Europe seeks a new governance model aiming to implement work methods that permit resolution of problems in all their complexity rather than to create sectional institutions or policies.

II. QUESTIONS OF THE CHINESE

There are many questions, often revealing good knowledge of the European reality. They mainly concern Europe's ability to arm itself with a political vision and a common plan, as well as the current standing of its desire to consider China an equal partner and to make the effort to really be acquainted with China. They also concern the viability of the European model confronted with the American model.







WT4 – Groupe 4 : On governance an...

WT3 – Group 3 : On the evolution ...

