

metropa - the network map of the future

„Despondency, hypocrisy, misery and impotence - and in the end even helplessness: taking a closer look at the war in Syria and the misery at the barbed wire of the Turkish-Greek border, we Europeans haven't felt as miserable as in these days of agony for a long time. So it must be coincidence when at this very moment a map appears as innocent as one hanging in the Munich S-Bahn between Daglfing and Ismaning. Or on a bus in Palermo. On the tram in Vienna. In a train station in Ankara, Minsk, Oslo, Glasgow, Dublin, Toulouse or Tanger.

Perhaps the biggest fascination of the "Metropa" project of a European superfast train comes from it's not just a map. At the same time it is a vision and utopia, a place of longing, a promise and self-assurance. Or, simple and plain: our home.

This map, of course, does not really exist. For the time being, it's only a provocative, stimulating idea by the artist and musician Stefan Frankenberg from Vienna. Obviously, the map can NOT be purchased at the railway companies, but only from the cartography publisher Freytag & Berndt/Vienna. But the previously unpublished map has the power to make itself felt everywhere - as a sign of hope and as the key of faith.

Regardless of whether you take a look at the subway in New York or the tram in Munich, you're always filled with childlike enthusiasm when looking at the colored lines, points and station names. It's like you're Gulliver. Like a giant who, in seven-mile boots, progressively explores the vastness and discovers closeness where previously there was only distance. A map not only puts things into order, it also creates confidence and self-assurance.

For Stefan Frankenberg, a European superfast train like the Japanese Shinkansen, free of charge like recently agreed in Luxembourg, which makes Europe tangible in an ecological and sensually understandable way, is less and at the same time more than just a map. It is an idea. "Metropa," says Frankenberg, "is a vision of Europe as it could be in a few decades, put down as an everyday graphic that shows Europe as a city, as a metropolis: usable, expansive, universal."

Sometimes we wonder whether Europe has lost its narrative, its myth. Maybe this map is what it takes to tell an old story anew."