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A New and European Bauhaus to Face the Climate Crisis

A Greens/EFA letter to the European Commission

Brussels, 8 September 2021

To the kind attention of

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission
Frans Timmermans, Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal
Elisa Ferreira, Commissioner for Cohesion and Reforms
Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth

Since first hearing of it in the State of the Union Address of September 2020, we have been following the development of the New European Bauhaus (NEB) initiative with great interest and anticipation. **We fully share the idea that the European Green Deal has to be made tangible for the everyday lives of citizens, and that this can be done by combining the virtues of art, technology and design.**

From the 1920s to its dissolution under the Nazi regime, the Bauhaus school promoted a revolutionary educational and training curriculum centred around this very idea of unifying arts and crafts. It was a socially progressive view of the education system as a key to transforming the art industry, reconciling aesthetics with function and the needs of mass production, and highlighting the importance of the youth and women as social groups in their own rights.

Whereas a more critical perspective on the Bauhaus can show both positive and negative aspects - including the general understatement of the contributions of female artists - many of its principles and tenets can speak to us today: "*Form follows function*", "*Truth to materials*", "*Less is more*".

As Greens/EFA MEPs, we feel that the same spirit of renewal and social progress that Bauhaus intended to bring to Europe after the devastations of World War I is now needed in the face of the destruction that we are living through because of the climate crisis and the enormous environmental, economic and societal challenges before us.

While being genuinely *New* and *European*, we see the task for the NEB to be reinterpreting Bauhaus in light of the climate crisis and re-design our private and public spaces at a time when natural disasters, social inequalities and their costs for citizens are all dramatically increasing.

Sustainability, trans-disciplinarity, a participatory and inclusive approach and a genuine European nature are all features that the NEB should possess and build on in order to be up to the tasks of facing the climate crisis and making the European Green Deal tangible for EU citizens.

While congratulating you for the level of engagement that has been achieved during the Co-design phase - including through the creation of the NEB portal, its partnerships and the NEB Awards - as a Commission's Communication is expected to be released, **we call on you to consider the following goals during the Delivery and Dissemination phases**:

- Ensure coherence with legislative and programming instruments - both sector-specific (EPBD and national LTRSs) and across complementary policy sectors such as regional cohesion, mobility and social policy - and with a level of ambition that is in line with climate commitments, and create guidelines for Member States to implement the NEB alongside those instruments
- Focus on the renovation and upgrade of the existing building stock and infrastructures
- Ensure that circularity and sustainable criteria for building materials are at the heart of the selection for pilot projects
- Give adequate and targeted financing through Cohesion Funds and Horizon Europe and ensure coherence with Recovery measures
- Create an integrated, non discriminatory, accountable and territorially-structured governance

In the Annex to this letter, we detail the guiding principles and implementation goals that we have just listed.

As Greens/EFA MEPs we believe that by following these principles and pursuing these goals we can succeed in building a New and European Bauhaus to face the climate crisis and make our lives and living areas more sustainable, more inclusive and more beautiful.

Yours faithfully,

Eleonora Evi
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Caroline Roose

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Responsible MEPs

Ciarán Cuffe

Member

Eleonora Evi

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Attached documents

GreensEFA MEPs letter on the New European Bauhaus

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