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Position Paper | 21.05.2021

GREENS/EFA Priorities for the Conference on the Future of Europe

Putting our future in the hand of our citizens

The Conference on the Future of Europe is starting when Europe is at a turning point in its history.

Close to a million Europeans lost their lives, millions of people lost their jobs, injustices deepened, marginalised groups have disproportionally been affected, women and girls suffer from a backlash in their rights and opportunities.

The pandemic proved, at a very high price, that European solidarity is not an abstract concept. The EU's slowness to organize its emergency response, the national vetoes, its lack of competences in some fundamental areas are not theoretical debates. They have prolonged the crisis and disappointed millions of European citizens in their democratic institutions. The Covid-19 pandemic has revealed yet again that the European Union is not fit to cope with severe crises unless European institutions and national governments learn to systematically work as one team.

Presently, the EU is not even exhausting the whole range of tools at its disposal since the Lisbon Treaty came into force more than 10 years ago. Earlier challenges to the EU like migration or the Euro-crisis have shown that we repeatedly run into trouble because of flawed and incomplete decision making structures. The EU proved it can do better and found courage to agree on the Resilience and Recovery Fund. The new investment fund overcame political blockades that had long impeded progress. When Europe was facing hardship our citizens have been bypassed way too many times. Structural reform is desperately needed to overcome the obstacles that obstruct decisive and lean decision making and to strengthen democracy at all levels.

Let's not wait for yet another crisis to make the necessary reforms.

Let's seize the unique opportunity the Conference on the Future of Europe is offering us to work towards a more democratic, more resilient, more socially just, more innovative, more efficient, fairer and greener Europe.

As GREENS/EFA, we believe that :

Time has come for new advances in building a more effective governance based on lively and inclusive democracies, to revisit the division of competences, to put an end to national vetoes, to make our decision-making procedure more efficient and transparent, to make the European elections really European and to uphold citizens' rights in the EU.

Time has come to build robust and long-term policies to fight against climate change, to protect biodiversity, to build a new agricultural and energy system, organize the transition of our society towards a green future and to pursue future competitiveness only on the basis of sustainability.

Time has come to build a feminist, inclusive and anti-racist Europe, with reforms to protect fundamental rights and freedoms, equal rights for all and to fight against all types of discrimination in all areas.

Time has come to create a social Europe where all Europeans have access to public services, including health care and social protection, enjoy Union-wide labour rights and co-determination opportunities, guaranteed access to good education and requalification offers and where no one is left behind.

Time has come to create resilient, modern, confident and strong Europe where democratic processes and the rule of law are respected; where citizens are aware of hybrid threats and resilient to disinformation, propaganda and outside interference.

As GREENS/EFA, we believe that the Conference is the opportunity to focus on game changing policy proposals and to include active citizens in shaping our political future. In pursuing our political goals we shall not be limited by the existing institutional frameworks. If the European Treaties in their current form are obstructing the path forward, they have to be amended in a democratic fashion. This position outlines our priorities for the Conference on the Future of Europe and is complementary to our position paper adopted in February 2018.

Our long-term goal is a European Federal Republic. The Conference for the Future of Europe is a next step in that direction.

What do we want?

1. **A stronger European democracy**
2. **Reshaping Our Economy with a Sustainable investment Fund to invest in a sustainable and social transition**
3. **Unblocking Europe's foreign and fiscal politics**
4. **A Europe that protects fundamental rights and that stands up for an inclusive society**
5. **A Feminist Recovery: Equal pay for work of equal value**
6. **Solidarity that does not stop with EU Citizenship**
7. **Combating inequality with a fair and just taxation system and decent minimum living wages**
8. **Protecting our environment with a fair and sustainable agriculture that protects animal welfare**
9. **A strong European voice on the global scene**
10. **Erasmus for all**
11. **European Unity in diversity**
12. **Strengthen citizens' awareness, combat foreign interference and shape digital future**
13. **Guaranteeing access to healthcare for all citizens**
14. **Setting up a strong EU industrial strategy**

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