



**GREENS/EFA PRIORITIES
FOR THE CONFERENCE ON
THE FUTURE OF EUROPE**



**PUTTING OUR FUTURE
IN THE HAND
OF OUR CITIZENS**

Adopted on 19 May 2021



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 disproportionately 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?



A stronger European democracy

A European citizenship should guarantee the right of equal influence on European politics and the right to vote for European political parties.

It should also guarantee that political debates are truly European and that political families build and campaign for projects at European level and not with a set of 27 different programs. This can be achieved by the creation of a joint European constituency, where a number of members of Parliament are elected on European lists in 2024. European democracy should be furthermore strengthened by ensuring democratic standards for elections all across the EU and by maximising electoral participation and guaranteeing full representation of all votes across the EU notably by avoiding and eliminating parliamentary thresholds and hurdles.

We also want to strengthen the rights of the European Parliament to become a fully legislative body of the European Union with, among others, the right for legislative initiative and enforced oversight rights.

European citizens must have the power in European elections to hold accountable those who lead the Union in its top jobs. A Commission president elected and dismissed by Parliament only, a reduction of the number of Commissioners and turning Council into a normal co-legislating second chamber, working as transparently as the European Parliament should be the aim.

To answer the will of many citizens for more participation we want to strengthen the European Citizens Initiative, allow them to initiate assemblies of randomly selected citizens on specific reform ideas, the result of which could be put to a European wide referendum.

Reshaping Our Economy with a Sustainable investment Fund to invest in a sustainable and social transition

While an end to the Covid-pandemic is hopefully coming closer, we have to focus our efforts on the biggest political challenge of our generation: the triple transition: the climate crisis, the digital transition and the transition towards a new society model that ensures social justice within the planetary boundaries.

To prevent our climate from collapsing and putting the lives of hundreds of millions at risk, a fundamental reshaping of the economies and societies we live in is imperative. If we want to escape a state of permanent crisis, we need to address the underlying structures that prevent us from addressing these problems effectively.

A crisis response like the Recovery and Resilience Fund has to be made permanent and turned into a Sustainable Investment Fund integrated in the Union framework under the European budget, with co-decision or full Parliamentary involvement. This fund should contribute to the financing of the necessary investments in European common goods, to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest, to build an energy efficient and 100% renewable energy-based economy, without nuclear or gas, to foster the Greening of industry and industrial innovation in pursuit of the EU's open strategic autonomy and to invest into a social transition including in health care and social security.

The EU must help addressing the stark contradictions between metropolitan and rural areas and pursue an inclusive internal development strategy.



Unblocking Europe's foreign and fiscal politics

Unanimity voting gives single governments veto power over key decisions. Tax justice, major investment plans, new own-resources are decisive policy areas that cannot remain stuck because one Member State profiting from tax-avoidance schemes refuses to build European solidarity.

This is why we want decisions in all policy areas (incl. tax policy, social policy, foreign and security policy) and on all budgetary dossiers (incl. own resources decision, multiannual financial framework) to be taken by the ordinary legislative procedure, meaning with qualified majority in the Council and full involvement of the European Parliament.

In the future, a reform of the Union's macroeconomic governance will be necessary to ensure the EU and the monetary union have the fiscal independence and tools at their disposal to counter structural imbalances and adverse economic shocks. Anchoring the Union's ability to raise true own-resources and issue European bonds under a European treasury would strengthen its ability to act.

WOMEN
PEOPLE OF COLOR
LGBTQ PEOPLE
IMMIGRANTS, AND
PEOPLE OF
DIVERSE
RELIGION



A Europe that protects fundamental rights and that stands up for an inclusive society

The EU is a union of rights and values. However, this is not always legally true. With the current treaties, European citizens still do not enjoy the same rights and when women's rights, LGBTI+ rights, minority rights are under attacks in some member states, the EU does not always have the right tools to protect them.

That is why we believe that the EU should be competent to protect and promote fundamental rights, through a pillar of rights enshrined in primary law. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and such additional rights should apply also to the actions of Member States, and citizens should be able to defend them in the European Court of Justice. The Union's protection of rights must include those of minorities. The EU must not accept nor finance governments within the Union that refuse to implement core European values. All instruments, including Article 7 (TEU) procedures and the Copenhagen criteria must be strengthened and fully used.

A strong democracy also requires a strong civil society. That is why we believe that the EU should set up a European statute for civil society organizations to protect their activities all across the EU.

To preserve our rights and freedoms in the digital era, Europe needs to embrace a surveillance moratorium and protect its citizens from mass surveillance and bulk data collection policies.

A Feminist Recovery: Equal pay for work of equal value

The labour market is heavily dominated by a gender effect. Most sectors in the economy are predominantly occupied by women or by men, and only few sectors are effectively mixed. Work in sectors predominantly occupied by women is undervalued and therefore underpaid, including in the care sector. At the same time, the absence of gender-budgeting results in unbalanced investment in sectors that mostly benefit men, thus resulting in growing inequalities. The European economy in a post-Covid world has to be built on fair socio-economic foundations. In order to ensure that, the EU has to take a more ambitious role in the way to end pay discrimination by ensuring binding measure for equal pay for work of equal value, pay transparency and gendermainstreaming.



SVP
SANS ABBE TE BORS MEHORS
LINE PIECE OU UN
TICKET RESTAURANT
— MERCI —

Solidarity that does not stop with EU Citizenship

Migration and displacements of people are among the biggest challenges but also hold enormous opportunities for the European Union. It is time for Europe to rethink its migration policy and shift from a policy of deterrence to a policy of safe and legal opportunities. The great potential of voluntary solidarity in our municipalities needs to be a centrepiece of our future system.

A permanent mechanism to fairly allocate asylum seekers, based on a two-stage system with positive incentives to enhance solidarity should be implemented. It would make EU asylum policy more resilient and contribute to solving the acute humanitarian crisis at European borders. In addition, we need a holistic European Migration Code, which addresses the vulnerabilities migrant workers face, reduces inequalities, ensures decent working conditions for all workers, and allows migrants to play an active role in society.

Combating inequality with a fair and just taxation system and decent minimum living wages

The post-covid European economy should be based on tax and social justice, which can be ensured by harmonisation of corporate and environmental tax policies, establishing minimum taxation levels and preventing tax havens. This will improve the financial situation of individual countries. It will help us to better fight against social and economic injustices, to invest in ecological transformation, education, and public services; to fund civil society organisations; to ensure multinational companies pay their fair share of taxes; to guarantee social protection and the upwards convergence of social standards laid out in the European Pillar of Social Rights, and to ensure this is done democratically.

Protecting our environment with a fair and sustainable agriculture that protects animal welfare

The Common Agriculture Policy needs to be reformed. CAP reform could change the general structure of farming in Europe, giving priority to small and ecological farming, restoring biodiversity and fostering animal welfare by actively promoting positive life conditions instead of simply attempting to protect animals from the worst forms of cruelty. This new CAP should be a fair and sustainable CAP, in which payments to large landowners are capped and ensure that small-scale farmers are the main beneficiaries of financial aid. We want to see investment in regional food production, cutting down the distance food is transported, link rural development as well as binding CAP payments to ambitious environmental objectives to ensure the CAP does no harm. Such sustainable rural development will help to bridge the divide to urban centres towards more social cohesion.

**A NURSE
is 4
LiFE
NOT
JUST 4
COViD-19**



Strengthen citizens' awareness, combat foreign interference and shape digital future

Digitalisation and digital technologies are a huge source of innovation and are boosting the economy; they enhance access to knowledge and culture globally and can also help to manage the transition towards green and sustainable production methods and inclusive societies. On the other hand, risks and negative impacts for our democracies, rights and freedoms have emerged due to the dominant business model for online platforms which is often based on surveillance, polarisation and power imbalances. New developments, such as in the fields of artificial intelligence - where we have to distinguish between AI for machines and AI for people - or blockchain, while having good potential can also amplify social, racial and environmental injustices and therefore need to be closely monitored and regulated. Media literacy, reliable protection against cyber threats and political parties' transparency have to become pillars of the future European society. The European Democracy Action Plan should be followed up by legislation and increased financial support for actions in the field of cybersecurity.

Guaranteeing access to healthcare for all citizens

The pandemic has exposed Europe's vulnerabilities but also reminded us of our interdependence. Advantages for pharmaceutical producers in form of public subsidies and patent rights must be linked with obligations to disclose the costs of developments for new medicines and to provide medicine in sufficient and resilient manner. EU agencies for the supervision of pharmaceutical producers must be strengthened to coordinate publicly funded research in the public interest and fight monopoly misuse. Europe must work towards minimum standards to guarantee access to healthcare for everyone living in the EU.

Setting up a strong EU industrial strategy

The coronavirus crisis has highlighted the fragility of a highly fragmented and interdependent economic and trade system. Pandemics are likely to be more frequent, which implies a need to guarantee the EU's supply of essential products. From an ecological point of view, a comprehensive relocation and diversification strategy is also very important, in order to enable employment, intelligence and know-how in a green and carbon-neutral industrial sector of the future and to reduce CO₂ emissions linked to transport and highly polluting production processes.



A strong European voice on the global scene

The European voice is strongly needed on the global scene. Recent humiliations in Russia, Turkey, the lack of a clear policy towards China based on human rights and international law are weakening the EU, but also the protection and promotion of fundamental values at international level. The EU's external policy must strengthen solidarity between democracies and work with like-minded countries to push back against authoritarian and hegemonic ambitions. To this aim, our trade policy must be conditional on the values of the Union.

Europe must continue to offer the Western Balkans a European perspective and pursue its accession talks and enlargement processes with the Western Balkans countries.

Erasmus for all

A strong citizenship is also based on human encounters, on exchanges and common learning experiences. Europeans share a common destiny but a lot of them never have the opportunity to spend time in another Member State. Erasmus is one of the most significant achievements of the EU in creating a European project that goes far beyond economic-political cooperation, proving that the EU is also a strong cultural and civilisation project. That is why we propose to further extend Erasmus+ into a scheme allowing all European citizens, regardless of their academic background or activity, to spend at least one year in another Member State with an adequate grant.

European Unity in diversity

The EU is much more than 27 member states and 24 official languages. "United in diversity" is the European Union's motto that we cherish, but the Union's support for multilingualism is primarily focused on encouraging the use of official languages. We believe that all languages are part of our heritage and form our cultural diversity. The ratification of the European Charter of Regional and Minority Languages by all Member States as well as an official recognition, promotion and use of regional, minority and lesser-used languages, in the EU institutions as well as in the European societies is of key importance. We must build up a common European Sphere to give Europeans the possibility to discuss together and enjoy our diverse culture. Beyond that, the right to self-determination has to be protected in the EU. The EU should foresee a democratic framework in which this right should be exercised.



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