

70th Anniversary of the Schuman Declaration A new beginning for an ever-closer Union

Europe is not at war, but the consequences of the pandemic are just as **devastating** as those of a war. This is particularly true for the production system, between the workers and the most exposed people of our communities.

The pandemic created a **physical and cultural void** caused by the death of **elderly people**. Moreover, it creates **pedagogical and educational difficulties** since not all **students** of all levels of education can access online courses, these courses being available thanks to the ongoing effort of teachers, teaching assistants and all those involved in education, as well as students' families.

1. THE EUROPEAN FUND FOR RECOVERY

Taking into account the instruments already adopted, or on which unprecedented agreements have been reached in the European Union and more specifically in the European Council of **April 23 (ECB, EIB, SURE and credit line without conditionality of the ESM)**, we strongly support the need and the urgency of a **European Fund for Recovery**.

It should:

- be equipped with adequate financial instruments to set in motion substantial public and private resources; these resources are necessary for the much-needed recovery work, and must be accessed both through grants and loans,
- be **already operational in 2020**,
- be based on **European public debt** and on the issue of **irredeemable or long-term titles** with immediate **liquidity aid** for an economy in serious suffering,
- be **managed by the European Commission**, under the scrutiny of the European Parliament,
- be open to the possibility of a **temporary European intervention in the recapitalization and governance of large continental strategic industrial complexes**, by encouraging mergers where it is useful for global competition.

2. EUROPEAN BUDGET AND FISCAL CAPACITY FOR A SHARED PROSPERITY

The Fund must be guaranteed by an ambitious **European budget** increasingly financed by **own resources** which, in order to be quickly available, must be introduced directly within the framework of the **European Union's fiscal capacity**.

If the European budget were to remain bound to **1% of the European GDP**, the cost of the project of a **European Plan** – which we suggest be called '**for shared prosperity**' – would risk adversely affecting the **European Green Deal** and other budget lines such as the **CAP; Europe's most financially modest expenditures for citizens (*Europe for Citizens program*)**, a necessity for **non-profit and voluntary activities; economic, social and territorial cohesion; research and technological development; the European social Fund; culture and education; external actions including common security (through the 'European Defense Fund')**.

The **European Plan** will therefore have to be an **addition to and not a substitute for** the currently foreseen expenses, representing a unique opportunity to direct public and private investments towards **sustainable development** and thus becoming a new part of the European Green Deal.

We celebrate as well, that there is a new political commitment, as the discussion for the new multiannual financial framework has been tasked with preparing the European Commission with **2% of European GDP**.

For this reason, we ask a five-year total of at least **2,000 billion euros, that is, two trillion euros.**

In this context, it is important that the European Union's action is consistent with the **2030 Agenda**, especially now that the United Nations Climate Conference (**COP26**) has been postponed to a future and uncertain date, with the risk of postponing once again every commitment on the fight against climate change.

3. 70th YEARS AFTER THE SCHUMAN DECLARATION: A PROJECT FOR EUROPE

Together with the European Plan, the **European Parliament** and the **European Commission** must have the ambition and courage to develop and adopt a '**project for Europe**' in a **medium-term perspective** according to a roadmap shared by the representative Assembly of European citizens and by the executive branch that derives its democratic legitimacy only from the Assembly.

The consequences of the pandemic must prompt the start of a new phase of European integration centered on the values shared by all Europeans.

A public debate must be launched on the **transformation** of economic and social structures in the context of a **wider sharing of sovereignty at European level** through supranational competences. It is also important to foresee a full-employment program in **order to contrast job insecurity and to create new jobs.**

These transformations concern **equality of opportunities, the fight against inequalities** and the **situation of indigence, inclusion policies, the reorganization of space** and the **role of cities, the organization of mobility, the redistribution of time, generational change and gender equality, forms of civil participation, economic democracy, a renewed strategy for SMEs and for the cooperative system, lifelong learning** and the **development of communication and pluralism of information.**

These transformations cannot be separated from the **international geopolitical framework** of a globalized world, where the European Union must be a leader in supporting **multilateralism, United Nations reform,** and special relations with the **Mediterranean** and with the **African continent.**

4. DEMOCRACY AND THE RULE OF LAW

It is clear that such a project poses the unavoidable question of the **consequences for the European democratic system** and for **national democracies** within our model of a European "Community of Law"; we believe that we are all called to valorize and defend these ideals.

Moving away from this model, the cornerstones of the **rule of law** are now dangerously challenged in some countries of the European Union with serious violations of the principles of the division of powers and freedoms of citizens, and, **at our borders,** towards asylum seekers.

5. THE EUROPEAN CONFERENCE ON THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

It is necessary and urgent to bring the European Union out **of the paralyzing rites of intergovernmental mechanisms** with the aim of **filling the void** that separates the values inherent in European societies and the different layers of its institutions. Ultimately it is a question of making the European system **more transparent and more democratic, therefore more effective** so that all the opportunities that only the supranational dimension can offer are translated into European public goods for all.

For this reason we believe that the **European Parliament** should take the opportunity of the **70th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration** on May 9, 2020, to confirm its willingness **to take on a leading role – in the name of the citizens** who elected it –, paving the way for a political leap and verifying who, among the states and peoples of Europe, is willing to create a "**federal deepening pact**" as a response to the global interdependence that has been tragically highlighted by the pandemic.



In this spirit, the **Conference on the future of Europe** must be conceived as a **public space for transnational dialogue** between the dimensions of representative democracy and participatory democracy to provide the European Parliament – in a time that takes into account the urgency of responding to the challenges brought forward by the pandemic – an indication of the priorities for its leading work and a **political place** to open a debate on the content of the proposed a ‘**federal deepening pact**’.

With this Conference on the future of Europe, we have to go one step further in our European Federation under construction.

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