

Shaping Europe's Recovery

The European Movement International's Policy Priorities for 2021-2023

The coming years will be marked by Europe's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting health and economic crises. As the focus now lies on ensuring a swift and equitable access to vaccines for all EU citizens, the coming years will be crucial for Europe's recovery. What is more, the recovery period offers Europeans a chance to enhance their efforts in tackling the climate crisis while creating, fostering sustainable development and ensuring that no citizen is left behind.

The European Movement will continue to address and support a recovery marked by collective action and solidarity, based on shared European values. Moreover, our network will continue to provide input to the policies and solutions that can allow Europe to emerge stronger from the crisis, at the same time enhancing citizens' trust and engagement in the European project. Citizens' voices must be heard at all times in the debates that shape Europe's recovery. By promoting our network's views, we will strive to connect Europeans' priorities and bridge the gap between citizens and the EU in the context of the pandemic, while ensuring that Europe's social and economic recovery leaves no one behind.

As part of Europe's long-term recovery and revival, the green, digital and just transition, as well as the protection of our European democracy, rights and values, have become some of the most defining and challenging issues of our time, and remain high on citizens' agenda. The last European elections made clear, once again, how citizens' are committed to taking action together, defending European values and contributing to policies in the making. In this context, the Conference on the Future of Europe offers a timely opportunity for citizens and organisations across Europe to come together to debate the key issues facing Europe and the future direction of our cooperation.

With an eye towards the European elections in 2024, our network will continue to work on connecting citizens across countries, sectors and interests, will amplify citizens' voices on the key issues that shape Europe's future, such as climate action, social rights and democracy, sustainable development and upskilling, and will promote citizen participation at the local, national and European level. Moreover, we will highlight the multiple benefits of our shared culture and heritage for our society, economy and environment and for the much-needed sense of togetherness in Europe. As we work to increase transparency and accountability of decision-making processes and EU bodies, we continue to prioritise the protection of European rights, values and freedoms, and promote a vibrant and healthy civil society across Europe.

Last but not least, as Europe experiences a shift of geopolitical powers in its neighbourhood and on the world stage, we will connect our network's views and expertise to produce thinking on Europe's place in the world and its role in promoting peace, cooperation, citizen engagement and fundamental rights beyond its borders.

To shape the debate and to facilitate the active participation of citizens and stakeholders in the discussions on Europe's future and to find common solutions to today's challenges, the European Movement International will dedicate its work to the following priorities during the years 2021-2023:

Democracy, citizen participation and fundamental values

Bridging the gap between citizens, representative associations, and the EU

- Building opportunities to innovate the EU's democratic governance and legitimacy;
- Fostering citizen's participation in EU decision-making at the local, regional, national and EU level and bringing forward the consolidation of a European public sphere;
- Fostering involvement of youth in EU decision-making at local, regional, national and EU level, providing opportunities for debate and serving as a bridge between youth and stakeholders on all levels;
- Fostering responsible citizenship civic education and history education about the EU placed in a wider European context;
- Promoting civil society organisations and civil dialogue at all levels in line with Article 11;
- Increasing transparency of decision-making procedures and lobbying activities at all levels.

Promoting and protecting values, civic space and European unity

- Defending the EU's fundamental values including the rule of law, democracy, fundamental rights and equality across the European continent and connecting these issues with the EU's long-term budget;
- Protecting our borderless Union by ensuring the freedom of movement and the reinforcement of the Schengen agreement;
- Promoting civil society, diversifying civic space and strengthening pluralistic and diverse societies in which fundamental rights are protected against all forms of discrimination as well as nationalist and populist movements, while paying particular attention to the needs and rights of minorities;
- Protecting sovereign parliaments, fair elections, independent courts and free press during the COVID-19 pandemic and recovery, and beyond;
- Enhancing the regulation, transparency and accountability of online platforms and shaping the digital sphere to accommodate inclusive, democratic dialogues while tackling discrimination, hate speech and violence online;
- Highlighting the cultural considerations and cultural dimensions of Europe, promoting cultural heritage as a key vector for achieving all policies in Europe, promoting investment in the cultural sector, in particular in times of crisis, and emphasising the crucial role of our shared cultural heritage for the promotion of our shared European values;

- Countering fake news and disinformation and promoting the collaboration of organisations and policy-makers to promote common solutions to these issues;
- Supporting a long-term, sustainable and multi-dimensional approach when it comes to the integration of migrants, based on respectful intercultural exchanges and mutual understanding, while promoting cooperation and the exchange of best-practices among key actors across Member States.

Shaping the Conference on the Future of Europe

- Ensuring that civil society is involved in the preparation, delivery and follow-up of the Conference;
- Working towards Conference that provides citizens from all walks of life, at the European, national and local level, to discuss the future of Europe and the future institutional framework of the EU;
- Facilitating the wide participation and deep deliberation with citizens and civil society and gathering a diverse and balanced group of citizens that represents European society in its diversity today
- Deepening the dialogue between national parliaments and the European parliament.
- Emphasising the transversality of the Conference on the Future of Europe and its intersection with citizens' and civil society's priorities.

A social, sustainable, creative and prosperous Europe

Promoting a green, digital and just transition

- Investing in health and promoting a common health policy to tackle pandemics such as COVID 19, ensure self sufficiency on medication and sanitary goods and fostering European research and cooperation on vaccines and medication
- Advocating for the full implementation of the European Green Deal, the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals by involving stakeholders at all levels and from all relevant sectors, while aligning the EU's recovery from the pandemic with these frameworks and setting an example globally;
- Promoting effective climate and environmental action in the EU and its neighbourhood;
- Consolidating the EU's energy policy towards a low-carbon economy based on efficiency and renewable energy sources;
- Continuing the development of the circular economy;
- Making sure that all citizens, businesses, sectors, local governments, and Member States are part of such a just transition.

Investing in better education, skills, innovation and job creation

- Advocating for a stronger European social dimension through the implementation of the Pillar of Social Rights;
- Empowering youth through more investment in quality education, internships and jobs;

- Promoting sustainable growth and tackling long term unemployment;
- Fostering European competitiveness and innovation by investing in skills, lifelong learning and digital solutions;
- Promoting a strong digital strategy that balances regulation and innovation when it comes to managing digital platforms, to strengthen businesses and empower and protect citizens;
- Developing the EU's system of own resources and the EU's capacity to issue common debt, with the aim of deepening the Economic and Monetary Union and the Banking Union.
- Increasing the number of students and people who participate in mobilities around Europe, as a tool for competence development and of bringing Europeans together;

Europe in the World

Building a strong and united Europe on the global stage

- Enhancing an effective Common Foreign and Security Policy (CSDP) in particular in the areas of energy security, cybersecurity and counter-terrorism, working towards the establishment of a genuine CSDP in the coming years, and enhancing role of women in security and defence;
- Ensuring that the principles and objectives of the European Green Deal are fully reflected in the EU's relations with the rest of the world, notably in relation to trade and investment agreements and efforts to reduce any negative environmental and social impacts of European lifestyles in other parts of the world.
- Building a close and comprehensive partnership between the EU and the UK that does not hold back the continued strengthening of the EU's environmental, social, labour, consumer and other standards;
- Enhance the dialogue with US organisations and political actors who support transatlantic cooperation on the basis common values;
- Developing a coherent and robust policy on China that takes into account economic as well as human rights aspects;
- Putting in place a common European Immigration and Asylum Policy to protect those in need, improving the joint management of Europe's outer borders and promoting legal migration channels.
- Developing the EU's relationship with the African Union within a partnership of equals by promoting cooperation and exchange, and while supporting civic empowerment and democracy, regional stability and sustainable economic development leading to quality jobs.

Promoting a positive enlargement process and strengthening ties with our neighbours

- Supporting enlargement and the involvement of civil society and all spheres of governments in the negotiations with candidate and potential candidate countries.

Defend European values and the importance of our shared heritage and history in the context of enlargement;

- Strengthening the Eastern Partnership and supporting democracy and economic and societal resilience in Georgia, Ukraine and Moldova with a long term view to accession;
- Supporting democracy developments in Belarus and across the EU neighbourhood;
- Developing EU-Africa relations in the context of the Cotonou Agreement and the Joint Africa-EU Strategy, addressing political, economic and development dimensions and fostering exchange, security, the protection of shared values, sustainable development and civil society dialogue;
- Working towards the return to stability in the Mediterranean region;
- Advancing cooperation with Europe's Southern Neighbourhood, in the framework of a renewed global Mediterranean policy, based on our shared values, culture, heritage and common values and interests, including fundamental rights and democracy, migration, security, sustainable development, and trade;

Contributing to a better world

- Strengthening Europe's role in conflict prevention and resolution, peace-building and peace-keeping;
- Promoting human rights, the rule of law and democracy all over the world, using the huge potential of culture and cultural heritage for fostering peace, trust and solidarity across the globe.
- Fostering open and transparent negotiations on international trade agreements;
- Championing the implementation of the Sustainable Developments Goals globally;
- Supporting and promoting decentralised cooperation and city twinning as way to share good practices, peace-building, local democracy and development of basic public services.