

Our federal Europe: sovereign and democratic

Appeal text and initial signatories



Union of European Federalists
Union Europäischer Föderalisten
Union des Fédéralistes Européens



THE
SPINELLI
GROUP

At watershed moments in history, communities, to avoid sliding into an irreversible decline, need to be able to adapt their institutions, equipping them to govern new circumstances. After the end of the Cold War, the European Union, with the creation of the monetary union, took a first, crucial step towards adapting its institutions; but it was unable to agree on a true fiscal and social policy for the euro. Later, with the Lisbon Treaty, it strengthened the legislative role of the European Parliament, but again failed to create a strong economic and political union in order to complete the euro.

As a result, the EU was not equipped to react effectively to the first major challenges and crises of the XXI century: the financial crash of 2008, the migration flows of 2015- 2016, the rise of national populism, and the 2016 Brexit referendum. This failure has also resulted in a strengthening of the role of national governments — as shown, for example, by the now excessive concentration of power within the European Council, whose action is blocked by opposing national vetoes —, and in the EU's chronic inability to develop a common foreign policy capable of promoting Europe's common strategic interests.

Now, however, the tune has changed. In the face of an unprecedented public health crisis and the corresponding collapse of its economies, Europe has reacted with unity and resolve, even indicating the way forward for the future of European integration: it has laid the foundations, starting with an unprecedented common vaccination strategy, for a “Europe of Health”, and unveiled a recovery plan that will be financed by shared borrowing and repaid with revenue from new EU taxes levied on the digital and financial giants and on polluting industries. This federal plan constitutes a major leap towards the creation of a financial and fiscal Union capable of asserting European sovereignty both domestically and abroad, and as such, it needs to become permanent.

Now, as European citizens, we are eagerly awaiting the start of the Conference on the future of Europe, an event

designed to bring together citizens, leading exponents of civil society, NGOs, trade unions, and representatives of national and European institutions, to debate and decide how to go about adapting our institutions in a way that will complete the building of our federal Europe. And their efforts must be underpinned by the clear realisation that the fundamental decisions on common borrowing and taxation cannot remain indefinitely in the hands of national governments alone, but must be taken in an effective, transparent and democratic way.

Today, therefore, we need and want a strong, legitimate and properly financed political Union that can tackle the great transnational challenges of our time, acting decisively in a wide range of policy areas, from climate change, growing social inequalities, health and migration to foreign affairs and defence. Moreover, we call for stronger pan-European democracy — real European political parties and movements, and proper campaigns for European elections, based on the creation of a pan-European constituency and transnational electoral lists headed by the candidates for President of the European Commission.

We are striving for a Union that is, at the same time, a community of destiny and values, and a model for the new world now taking shape — an example of how countries can live in peace together, build cross-border and social solidarity, and protect human rights, the rule of law, and fundamental freedoms.

We firmly believe that our future lies in a Democratic and Sovereign Europe. And the time to build it is now: now or never.

Let us not waste this opportunity.

INITIAL SIGNATORIES

- ◇ Sandro Gozi, *President of the Union of European Federalist (UEF) and Member of the European Parliament (Renew Europe)*
- ◇ Brando Benifei, *Chair of the Spinelli Group and Member of the European Parliament (Socialists & Democrats, S&D)*
- ◇ Esteban González Pons, *Vice-President of the European People's Party (EPP) Group in the European Parliament and Member of the European Parliament*
- ◇ Danuta Hübner, *Former Member of the European Commission, EPP spokesperson in the Committee on Constitutional Affairs in the European Parliament and Member of the European Parliament*
- ◇ Domènec Ruiz Devesa, *Vice-President of the UEF and S&D spokesperson in the Committee on Constitutional Affairs in the European Parliament and Member of the European Parliament*
- ◇ Pascal Durand, *Renew Europe Group spokesperson in the Committee on Constitutional Affairs in the European Parliament and Member of the European Parliament*
- ◇ Daniel Freund, *Member of the European Parliament (Greens/EFA) and Representative in the Executive Board of the Conference on the Future of Europe*
- ◇ Damian Boeselager, *Greens/EFA spokesperson in the Committee on Constitutional Affairs in the European Parliament and Member of the European Parliament*
- ◇ Dimitrios Papadimoulis, *Vice-President of the European Parliament and Member of The Left - GUE/NGL in the European Parliament*
- ◇ Fabio Massimo Castaldo, *Vice-President of the European Parliament and Member of Movimento 5 Stelle*