

## **THE DECLARATION OF EUROPEAN MEASURES FOR A JOINT ANSWER TO THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS**

We, the undersigned,

Believe that the call by the President of the European Commission for a Marshall Plan for Europe indicates the direction to go beyond what nation states can realize on their own and to affirm our common destiny as Europeans, which is to be translated into concrete actions just as in the aftermath of World War II.

Such actions must not only address the forms and procedures of economic measures benefitting this or that country, but they must address the practical realization of a new vision for Europe by sharing, as never before, our stock of knowledge, social relations and economic resources to strengthen Democracy and the Rule of Law, to improve citizens' quality of life and sustainable development, as well as to build a more open and welcoming society. We have to highlight that rights must be guaranteed in order not to remain on paper, and that only a big common action could allow us not to go back to the way things were "before", because "before" things were highly unfair and unequal.

We will need the support of Mayors from all around Europe, and beyond, coming together to provide more efficient tools to those who can, and must, make a difference in their territories at local level.

For this reason, we support the following petition to the European Parliament:

"We are living in extraordinary and risky times. We need the EU to take the leadership in putting in place an action plan able to address in the short and medium-term concrete actions to answer the global challenges we are facing today. No State can face alone the consequences of Covid19. We call on the EP to implement adequate mechanisms to resume its work as soon as possible, and to organize a space for the elaboration, proposal and mobilization of all possible instruments. The current EU institutional system has shown its weakness and inadequacy. In addition to short term measures, it is necessary to relaunch the initiative of democratic reform of the EU in order to make it fit for purpose.

The EP must be at the forefront of this effort, and urge the EU to push for a strategy to trigger this path, based on 5 pillars:

- 1- Giving a systemic and common European Union response to the Covid-19 crisis;
- 2- Enhancing reforms of the EU healthcare system and civic protection instruments and competences to respond to outbreaks;
- 3- Implementing all economic, financial and monetary policy measures to allow the EU to unlock resources and common measures to support citizens with the consequences of the pandemic, including measures for the mutualization of public debts, own resources for the EU budget, according to a radical ecological reform of European taxation (including the acceleration of the Green New Deal);
- 4- Turning the first stages of the Conference on the Future of Europe into a public online assembly and reshape its goals;
- 5- Contributing to a global mechanism to prevent and face epidemics and pandemics.”

All the information about the promoters and supporters of this initiative can be found on: [eumans.eu/eucandoit](https://eumans.eu/eucandoit)

*Leoluca Orlando*  


# PETITION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

**Empowering the EU to face global challenges: from Covid-19 to the social, economic and climate crisis**

The petition was officially presented to the European Parliament on March 24, 2020. On April 2, the European Parliament's Committee on Petitions voted in favor of an emergency debate on this petition and that of other citizens on the urgency of coronavirus during a Dedicated session of the next Commission meeting

We are living in extraordinary and risky times. We need the EU to take the leadership in putting in place a plan able to address in the short and in the medium term concrete actions to answer to the global challenges we are facing today. No State can face alone the consequences of Covid19.

We call on the EP to implement the adequate mechanisms to resume its work as soon as possible, and to organize a space for the elaboration, proposal and mobilization of all possible instruments. The current EU institutional system has shown its weakness and inadequacy.

In addition to short term measures, it is necessary to relaunch the initiative of democratic reform of the EU in order to make it fit for purpose.

The EP must be at the forefront of this effort, and push the EU to trigger this path, based on 5 pillars:

- giving a systemic and common response of the European Union to the Covid-19 crisis;
- enhancing the EU healthcare and civic protection instruments and competences to respond to outbreaks;
- implementing all economic, financial and monetary policy measures to allow the EU to unlock resources and common measures to support citizens with the consequences of the pandemic, including measures for the mutualisation of public debts, own resources for the EU budget, according to a radical ecological reform of European taxation;
- turning the first stages of the Conference on the Future of Europe into a public online assembly and reshape its goals;

- contributing to a global mechanism to prevent and face epidemics and pandemics;

The first pillar refers to measures needed to face the Covid-19 emergency in the short term, and should be implemented immediately:

### **1. Emergency measures and rule of law**

The EU should strengthen and implement its resources and instruments (including the solidarity clause ex art. 222) to support national healthcare and civil protection instruments. This includes harmonizing criteria for the measurement and classification of cases fully activating the EU Mechanism of Civil Protection – with particular attention to the prevention of future epidemics and pandemics – for the supply of the necessary medical equipment and its distribution to the countries and regions most in need.

The EU should also monitor and provide guidelines on the respect of fundamental guarantees of the Rule of Law and civil liberties under restriction policies implemented by Member States during the emergency. Other necessary reforms refer to measures needed to empower the EU to face global challenges such as social and economic recession, climate change. Some of these proposals address a constitutional change of the European Union. Where needed, the EP should activate its powers to propose treaty changes in view of the establishment of a constituent process.

## **2. Eu competences on healthcare and civic protection**

As proposed in the Treaty establishing a EU approved by the EP in 1984, healthcare and protection should become concurrent competences of the EU, subject to the ordinary legislative procedure. Rather than merely sustain or coordinate the action of Member States under particular circumstances, the EU should frame a harmonic legislation in these strategic

fields, in particular through the establishment of a European Civil Protection Corps.

### **3. Financial instruments and constitutional reforms**

The EP should call on the European Commission to implement a coordinated financial intervention to face the current economic depression and its aftermath. Part of these resources should be used to ensure the ecological conversion of European taxation and promote green investments. In order to facilitate the approval of these measures, the EU should introduce ordinary legislative procedures for all EU competences, including fiscal, budget, financial and foreign policy, by removing unanimity vote.

The following financial measures should be proposed by the EP

- triggering and increasing the budget of the European Globalization Adjustment Fund to provide financial help for workers made re-



dundant due to the emergency. This funding should be also addressed to poor and homeless people, in order to ensure the right to dignity and housing;

- withdrawing the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) of 2014-2020 scheduled to start on 1 January 2021, and proposing a new 5-year MFF providing means to transform the European Stability Mechanism (ESM) into a tool for sustainable growth, and funding for European investment;
- introducing loans and mortgages (EUROBOND or «European Health Bonds») to finance the immediate strengthening of the European and national health systems to cope with the pandemic, which threatens the lives of millions of citizens, as well as the whole economic and financial sustainable growth stability of the EU;
- moving fiscal issues to the ordinary legislative procedure and provide the EU with fiscal powers to adopt new own resources – such as a border carbon tax (and carbon tariffs) – to finance the EU budget (or the Euro-area Budgetary Instrument, if the decision could be reached only at the Euro-area level);

- reviewing the emission reduction targets of the EU in order to make them coherent with the Paris agreement (between -55% to -65% by 2030) and to equip the EU to become climate neutral by 2050.
- accelerating the implementation of the Green New Deal.

#### **4. A constitutional debate to relaunch the Conference on the Future of Europe**

The social and political context of the Conference on the Future of Europe, scheduled for the beginning of May 2020, has been disrupted by the pandemic.

The European Parliament should propose a new framing and composition, taking stock from the current health crisis and the devastating impact on the economy. The Conference on the Future of Europe should be confirmed and reshaped , in its first stage, as a public web conference accessi-

ble to all European citizens, with a portion of participants in the Conference randomly selected from the the entire EU population in order to obtain a highly diverse cross-section of European society in terms of geography, gender, age, socio-economic background and/or level of education.

The main goals and topics discussed by the the assembly should be:

- involving citizens in the debate on the public policies needed to tackle the crisis and the post-crisis recovery;
- drafting proposals for a new Constitutional Pact among citizens and Member States with the aim of empowering and democratizing European Institutions.

## **5. European contribution to global measures**

The EP should urge the EU to contribute to:

- increase financial aid for low and middle-income countries (LMICs) to strengthen and prepare their healthcare systems for new epidemics;
- ensure global access to essential medicines as listed by the WHO;
- promoted the ratification of international human rights instruments (in particular the additional protocol to the ICESCR) allowing individual remedies in case of denial of the right to health and the “right to science”, and use the UN General Comment on Science to clarify the obligations under art. 15 of the ICESCR establishing a special rapporteur on the “right to science”;
- promote international collaboration on data sharing and foster the production of open data – with all the necessary measures to ensure individual privacy – including disease

surveillance, creating databases of cases that are immediately and easily accessible to relevant organizations, providing rules requiring countries to share the information produced free of charge;

- reach consensus on research priorities and trial protocols, in order to allow vaccines and antiviral candidates to move quickly through planned decision-making processes strengthening coordination and platform sharing so that regulatory reviews can take place quickly, based on evidence and medical-scientific needs, enabling suppliers to produce low-cost doses on a large scale in a simple way;
- strengthen the coordination and sharing of lists including local and international trained teams that can be quickly mobilized;

- ensure adequate funding, in partnership with the private sector, to enable existing structures to be rapidly reorganised for production during a pandemic, including through proper emergency funds to finance the procurement and distribution of vaccines to populations in need wherever they are.

All these are global issues needing a trans-national mobilisation – only through a widespread and inclusive participation will we be able to tackle the political, diplomatic, technical and budgetary obstacles that are necessary to improve the individual and collective quality of life protecting and promoting our human rights.