

## **Midterm agreement on political priorities**

We, EPP, S&D and Renew Europe are determined to move the European Union forward. Since the European elections, our Union has demonstrated its capacity to change and adapt, with job-creating recovery plans and life-saving vaccines. Over the next 2 years and a half, we will accelerate substantial reforms in the interest of all Europeans.

The multiple challenges and opportunities created by the pandemic, climate change, the digital revolution, the socio-economic inequalities, the volatile global context as well as the rise of nationalism, populism and authoritarianism force us to reinvent the European project to live up to its promises. European citizens expect us to do better and faster.

That is why our pro-European groups will work more closely together to deliver tangible benefits in the citizens' daily lives. We commit to achieve ambitious compromises and ensure stable majorities on our shared strategic priorities. Only a strong European Parliament can make it happen.

We, EPP, S&D and Renew Europe want to create the conditions for a free, value-based, sustainable, competitive, innovative, safe, fair, inclusive and strong Union.

**1. Values: preserve fundamental rights and fight for rule of law.** They are the backbone of our democracy and the cement of our societies. Yet, they cannot be taken for granted. In several Member States, violations are increasing and taking root. The independence of the Judiciary, the freedom of press and expression, the right to association and education, gender equality are at stake. We take action to protect these fundamental rights, to respect human dignity and to rise against all kinds of discrimination, in particular against minorities and LGBTIQ+. All the rule of law mechanisms must be activated without delay every time and everywhere the conditions are fulfilled, in particular the conditionality regulation for the protection of the EU budget, and we should push for stronger action connected with Article 7. We will work jointly with the Commission to unblock legislations currently stuck in Council and we call upon the Commission to present the gender-based violence Directive as soon as possible. Taking into account EU and Members States competencies, this Parliament will continue to promote an upwards alignment of all women's rights in Europe including sexual and reproductive health.

**2. Climate: protect the earth and reach climate neutrality.** Global warming, biodiversity loss, land and sea pollution are existential challenges. The Green deal is a landmark opportunity to address them, improve well-being, create jobs and set global standards. Food, mobility, energy, housing, finance, industry: we share the ambition to transform all sectors of the economy, with both reforms and investments, while preserving our competitiveness, without leaving anyone behind. The climate package shall ensure that our continent becomes the first climate neutral and be accompanied by a Social Climate Fund. Biodiversity, circular economy and sustainable corporate governance are also important priorities where the European Union can become the reference-model. We will push for ambitious agreements in relevant international fora.

**3. Health: continue to fight the pandemic and create a European Health Union.** COVID-19 has demonstrated the importance of cooperation and resilience in the area of health. While we are proud of the ground-breaking EU's vaccination, we must strengthen its anticipation and response capacities. More than ever, the pooling of resources is essential to accelerate research, in particular on cancer. We will make sure that HERA lives up to its promises.

**4. Digital: enable innovation and set global standards.** Our Union must be at the forefront of the next generation of breakthrough technologies: AI, 6G, supercomputers etc. Yet, at odds with the United States and China, the EU leads in regulation worldwide but lags in innovation at home. To thrive, we need to develop an innovation culture, which fosters entrepreneurship, supports start-ups and SMEs and increases the responsibility of online platforms, in a truly European digital market that fully respects fundamental rights and data protection. DMA and DSA shall be adopted and enter into force as soon as possible to regulate the online world. The artificial intelligence Act must strike the right balance between technological opportunity and ethical responsibility.

**5. Economy: promote a new growth strategy and an enhanced fiscal framework.** The EU responded to the crisis with an unprecedented recovery plan, Next Generation EU, based on large-scale investments, smart governance and new own resources. All in all it offers a blueprint for the European growth strategy for the next decade, with suitable rules for both public investments and debt sustainability. We want to translate our political goals into the EU's fiscal framework, in particular the European Semester. We call for a new fund on strategic investments in key technologies, as part of our industrial strategy. We will continue to promote rule-based trade and fair competition, not only with strengthening of our own trade instruments, for reciprocity and against coercion, but also with a reflection on trade agreements that include robust sustainability, social and labour requirements. We fully support the implementation of the OECD agreement on taxation, the completion of Banking Union and Capital Markets Union.

**6. Social: create quality jobs, ensure inclusion and fight inequalities.** The European Pillar of Social Rights and the 2030 targets on employment, training and poverty reduction are our guiding principles. We support all the actions necessary to achieve them and to strengthen the European Social model. Our Union must invest in people, so that everyone has access to affordable and high-quality services, workers have quality jobs with fair pay, vulnerable people a decent living, youth and children an equal opportunity to develop their talents, all across Europe. The Directive on adequate minimum wages shall become reality. Platform workers should have fair working conditions and adequate social protection. We fight child poverty with all the tools at our disposal. Throughout the 2022 European Year of Youth, we will also develop a specific youth agenda to give every young person an opportunity to work, learn and discover Europe.

**7. Security: strengthen external borders and address hybrid threats.** We believe that the EU is the answer to make all Europeans safe. Faced with instability in our wider neighbourhood and within our borders, we want to secure our external borders and maintain our internal freedoms. The mandates and resources of Frontex, EPPO, Europol and ENISA, as the EU's fully-fledged border guards, prosecutors and police, including in cybersecurity, must be upgraded. The

Schengen package is imperative to dismantle internal barriers and strengthen external borders. We call for a new Security Pact to provide for better coordination among Member States.

**8. Migration: work towards an integrated, humane and effective response.** Recent years have shown that the existing European policy on asylum and migration is not fit for purpose. We support a future-proof and comprehensive approach, based on our common values, fundamental human rights and international law. The external dimension of migration, an asylum policy that works, a sustainable return and readmission policy, the fight against human traffickers and smugglers, a coordinated European labour migration policy, and a sustainable approach to integration go hand in hand. We must show European citizens that we are in control of migration flows. Our own compromises on the new Pact on Migration and Asylum, rooted in both solidarity and responsibility, shall set the bar for the Heads of States and governments decisions.

**9. Foreign affairs: increase open strategic autonomy, support multilateralism and become a real power.** Today, the EU is too dependent on third countries. Tomorrow, it shall take its destiny into its own hands, with the ability to act and decide by and for itself, to defend our values, interests and standards. The recent events also highlight the importance of a true European Defence Union and a strong partnership with NATO. The relations with the United States as well as other regional actors, in particular in our neighbourhood, with Africa and Latin America, are essential. The EU shall actively provide development aid to countries in need and support them in light of the pandemic, notably through COVAX. The strategic compass and global gateway are equally important to increase our capacity to act autonomously.

**10. Institutions: reinforce and enforce the powers of the European Parliament and deliver on the Conference on the future of Europe.** The European Parliament is the beating heart of European democracy. We want to make it stronger. It shall be given the right to initiate legislation and the Commission shall uphold the commitment of its President to initiate legislation following the adoption of every legislative initiative report. We commit to make full use of the instruments at its disposal to increase scrutiny of the implementation of the existing legislations. We recall the Commission of its duties to reinforce transparency standards and democratic control over international negotiations. Reducing bureaucracy and cutting red tape for citizens and businesses and in particular for SMEs is also a priority. Most importantly, the Conference on the Future of Europe is a unique opportunity to bring together European leaders, parliamentarians, experts and citizens. We will turn citizens' words into actions with concrete deliverables. We support a lead candidate process combined with transnational lists with a sufficient number of seats to be in place for the next European elections. We support the generalization of the ordinary legislative procedure and qualified majority voting in Council.