

A  
**DECLARATION**  
OF  
**INDEPENDENCE**  
AND  
**SOVEREIGNTY**

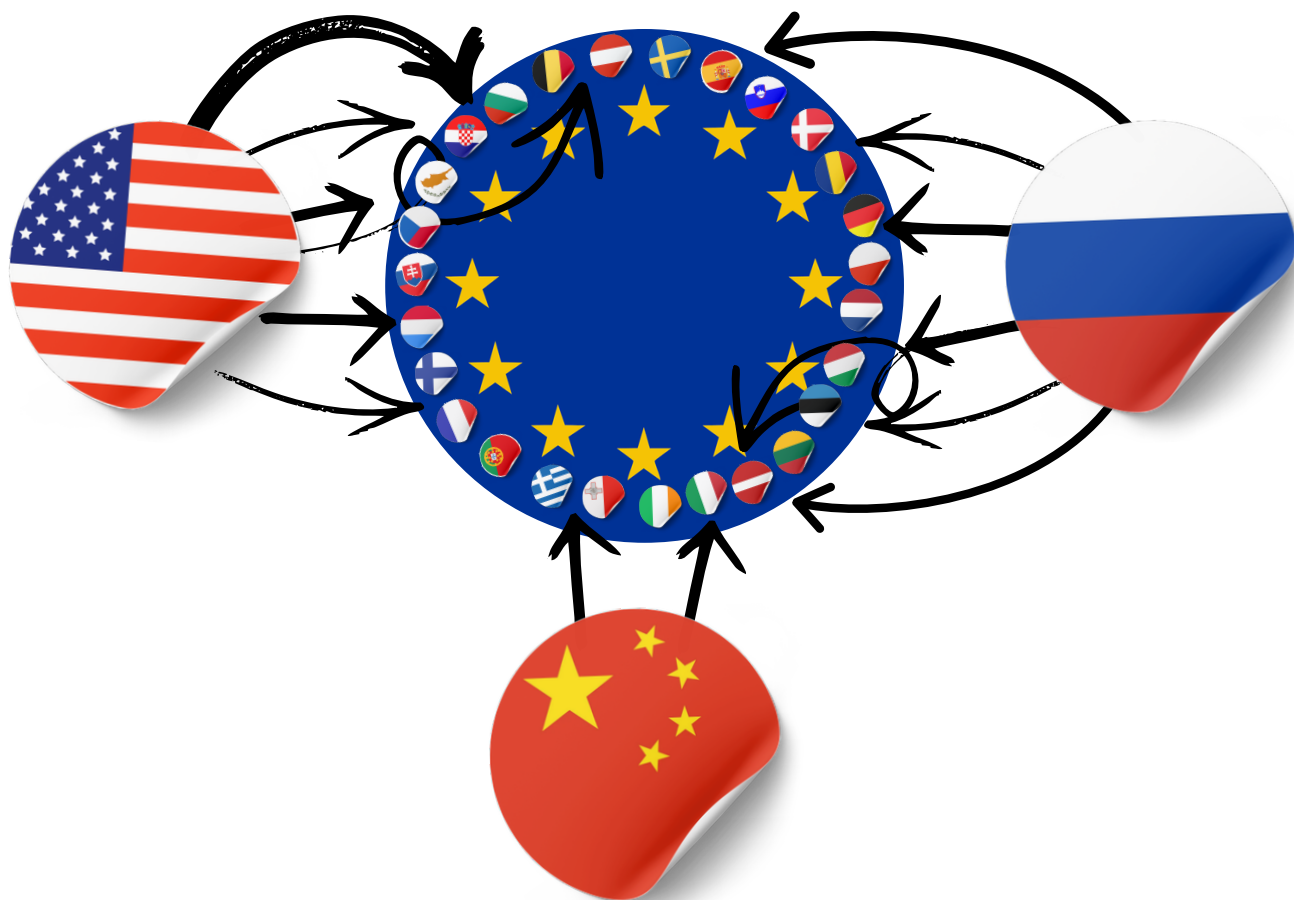


UNION OF  
EUROPEAN  
FEDERALISTS

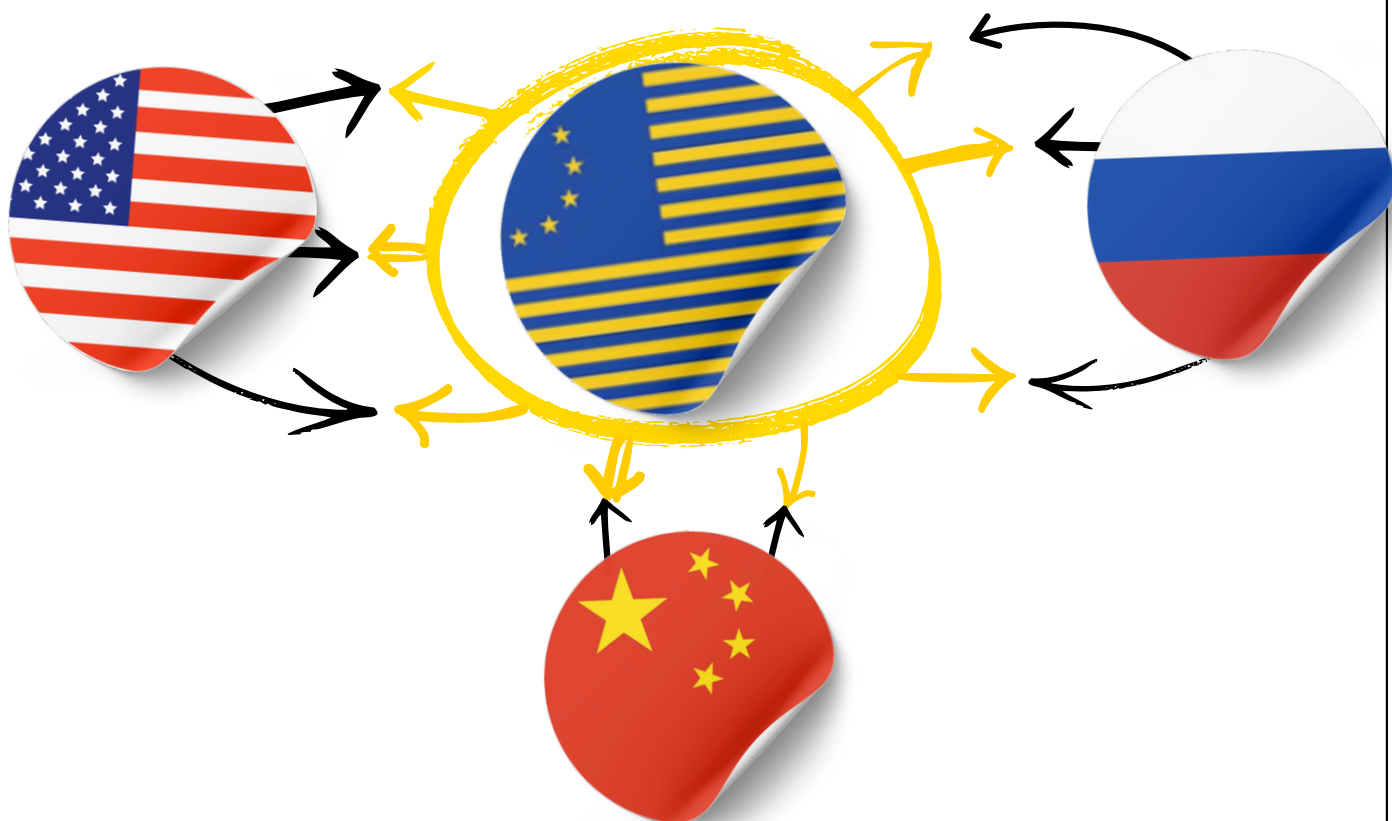
***THE POLITICAL MANIFESTO***

Barcelona, 22 March 2026

## Where we are now



## Where we must be tomorrow.



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# Introduction

We, the Union of European Federalists (UEF), formulate our claims for the future of the European integration process. Ongoing geopolitical transformations and the emergence of a more fragmented and competitive world order make it urgent to progress towards a sovereign and democratic European federation, capable of contributing to peace, justice, social progress, and a sustainable future for a more united world.

Europe represents less than five percent of the world's population and yet it weighs some significant 17,4% of global GDP. But in a world shaped by continental powers, no individual European state can effectively safeguard its sovereignty, prosperity, or democratic model alone. Without political unification, Europe risks marginalisation even subjugation in an increasingly competitive and unstable international order.

Our political and federalist demands were long considered visionary. However, many of our proposals have already become reality, such as the direct election of the European Parliament, the creation of an area without internal borders, and the establishment of a single currency. We remain firmly committed to the process of European unification. Precisely because of the multiple crises shaping our time, an ambitious relaunch of European integration is now more necessary than ever. Strengthening the European citizenship and allowing EU citizens to be closer to the EU institutions should be a priority.

The European Union must evolve into a genuine federation based on the principles of democracy, subsidiarity, social protection, justice and sustainability, and committed to the protection of human dignity and democratic global governance. Its supranational institutions must be endowed with the exercise of sovereign powers capable of guaranteeing the effective enjoyment of fundamental rights and freedoms. Such a transformation must be carried out through a genuine democratic process involving European citizens and may be initiated by those Member States willing to share sovereignty more deeply. This process requires Treaty reform or a new treaty among the willing Member States also taking full advantage of a coherent set of strengthened cooperations and, ultimately, the adoption of a European Federal Constitution for a future United States of Europe, a European federation.

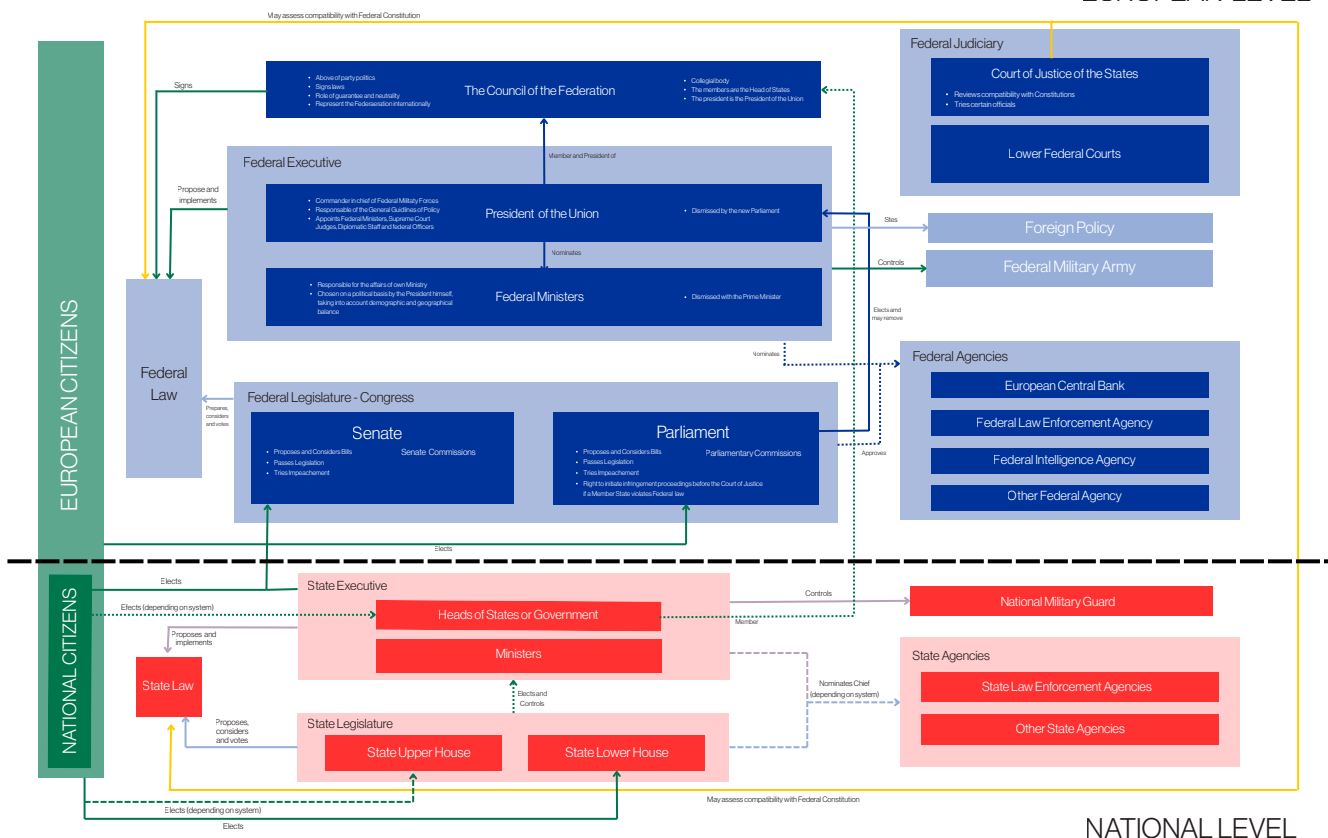


# Democratic Europe

1. The European Federation shall be democratic and pluralistic, founded on respect for human rights, the rule of law, and the pursuit of justice. Democracy, fundamental rights, and the rule of law constitute the non-negotiable foundations of the European political order.
2. These principles must be continually reaffirmed and resolutely defended, both internally and externally. This requires strong institutions and effective instruments to safeguard democracy and the liberal constitutional order. The separation of powers must be reinforced, together with democratic checks and balances. Transparency, accountability, and the fight against corruption must be fully enshrined at all levels of governance.
3. The European Parliament, as the direct representative of the citizens, shall be the central pillar of democratic legitimacy. As requested by citizens during the Conference on the Future of Europe and in the proposal for Treaty reform adopted by the Parliament itself in its Resolution dated November 2023, it must be granted the right of legislative initiative and participate on an equal footing in all European decisions, including legislation, revenue and expenditure, and foreign policy.
4. A uniform European electoral law shall be established, including transnational lists and genuinely European political parties. European elections can no longer be a mere copy of national politics. Current transparty arrangements are not satisfactory. This reform is necessary to strengthen representative democracy, enhance the European public sphere, and ensure meaningful citizen participation in European political life, including the effective application of the lead candidate system for the presidency of the European Commission.
5. The European Commission shall fully become the executive authority of the European Federation. Its President shall be elected on the basis of the results of the European elections, taking into account the candidates designated by European political parties, and shall be accountable to the European Parliament.
6. The Council of Ministers shall evolve into a Federal Senate representing the Member States. The unanimity rule shall be replaced by qualified majority voting in all policy areas, including foreign policy, defence, enlargement, taxation, debt and Treaty revision, in order to ensure the Union's capacity to act.

## A PROPOSAL FOR A FEDERAL EUROPE

EUROPEAN LEVEL



7. Europe belongs to its citizens. They must therefore be effectively and sustainably involved in decision-making processes. Organised civil society, including associations, social partners, and youth organisations, plays a vital role as a bearer of expertise and democratic participation. Structured dialogue with civil society must be strengthened prior to and beyond parliamentary decision-making, including through the reinforcement of participatory instruments such as the European Citizens' Initiative and deliberative instruments such as citizens' assemblies. We need more and greater active participation of citizens in political and cultural life as well as in the economy including in workplaces.

8. The European Federation remains open to all European states that share its values and are willing to adopt European law. At the same time, the Union must safeguard its capacity to act. Its decision-making structures and policies therefore need to be adapted to accommodate enlargement, based on detailed merit evaluation. We support a gradual and progressive integration of candidate countries, including participation as observers in EU institutions and agencies, prior to accession, starting with the Western Balkans and Moldova. In the case of Ukraine, an even faster pathway may be necessary to preserve its security and deter further Russian aggression.

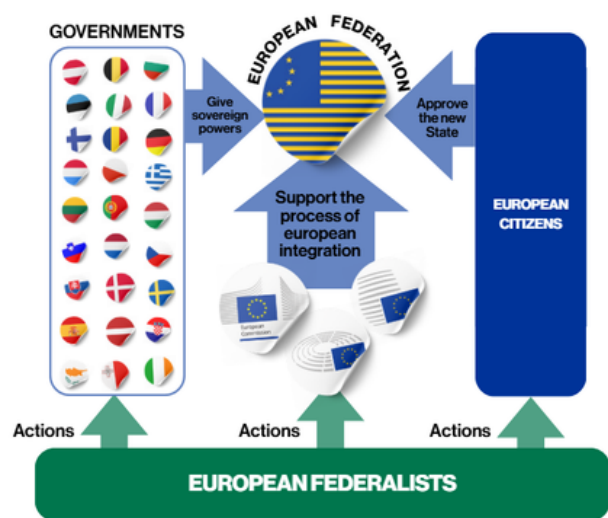
9. Preserving and restoring media freedom and media pluralism, and decisively combating disinformation, are of strategic importance for the future of democracy in Europe. The European Federation must establish a clear legal framework with effective, transparent, and independent monitoring mechanisms to guarantee media freedom, prevent excessive concentration and oligopolies, and ensure fully independent, non-partisan public media. The development of transnational media networks should be actively encouraged in order to strengthen Europe-wide public debates and European transnational democracy.

10. Every democracy depends on informed and responsible citizens. Civic and European education are essential tools for strengthening democratic culture and resilience against disinformation. As proposed by the Conference on the Future of Europe and the 2022 Parliament's report on the implementation of citizenship education actions, Europe shall establish minimum standards for civic education at all levels, reinforce exchange, democracy, and civil participation programmes, and ensure the mutual recognition of educational achievements across Europe.

11. Young people already assume responsibility for Europe's future. Youth organisations, as laboratories of democracy, provide spaces for participation, debate, and innovation. Their effective and transparent involvement in political processes must be guaranteed, together with structural support and needs-based funding. Existing education, youth, and participation programmes shall be strengthened and expanded.

12. We are committed to Europe's cultural heritage, particularly the legacy of the Enlightenment and humanism. Our Europe is united in diversity. We reject all forms of discrimination and affirm the full inclusion of all individuals and groups in political, social, cultural and economic life. This includes the achievement of full gender equality and the systematic involvement of young people in political decision-making, with due consideration of their specific concerns.

### HOW CAN THE EUROPEAN FEDERATION BE FOUNDED?



# Europe Capable of Action

1. The pursuit of peace remains the core of Europe's identity and must be actively defended. In a rapidly changing geopolitical environment, the development of an autonomous European system of defence - partly coordinated or included with NATO frameworks - becomes urgent and necessary in order to enable Europe to defend itself, be taken seriously by global powers, and use defence resources more efficiently than the current fragmentation into multiple national armies and weapons systems. achieving this goal may require treaty reform in order to establish an appropriate system of democratic governance, thereby completing the European project and making war among European states structurally impossible. Peace diplomacy, grounded in Europe's economic strength, is a central task of the European Federation, both as institutional foreign policy and through active citizen diplomacy. Europe's concept of security is comprehensive and not limited to military capabilities: it encompasses social cohesion, economic resilience, justice, environmental sustainability, and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals. A Europe capable of action strengthens the rules-based multilateral order and actively supports reform of the United Nations aimed at reinforcing its democratic foundations and providing it with adequate resources with the perspective of gradually building a Democratic World Federation.
2. A fair and rules-based trade policy is an integral part of a comprehensive European security strategy. Europe shall continue to diversify its economic partnerships with Latin America, Africa, and South-East Asia, while strengthening alliances with like-minded partners with the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, the remaining Western Balkan States, Canada, Australia, South Korea, New Zealand, Japan, and others too. These networks of alliances with other regional blocs from the Global South, and Western liberal democracies, are instrumental to sustain the multilateral order and prevent the creation of imperialistic spheres of influence under Putin, Xi, and Trump. The European Federation reaffirms its full commitment to the objectives of multilateralism, international law as endorsed by the United Nations: international peace and security, disarmament, justice, the development of friendly relations among states, and the promotion of human rights through international cooperation.
3. The European Federation requires a holistic and effective policy on legal migration and immigration. We must ensure safe and legal pathways for mobility, recognise the social, economic and human contribution of migrants, and promote circular migration, where voluntary and accompanied by full guarantees, while also supporting the integration, on the basis of equal rights, of those who wish to remain in Europe. Access to legal protection must be guaranteed for those fleeing persecution, and safe and dignified reception must be provided to recognised refugees, in full compliance with international law. This requires a common, efficient migration policy, based on solidarity, shared responsibility and human rights, governing asylum, international protection, labour migration and integration without reducing migrants to their economic utility. At the same time, Europe must actively contribute to addressing the root causes of forced displacement through fair international cooperation, aimed at protecting rights rather than externalising responsibilities, thereby supporting the vast majority of displaced persons who remain in their regions of origin.

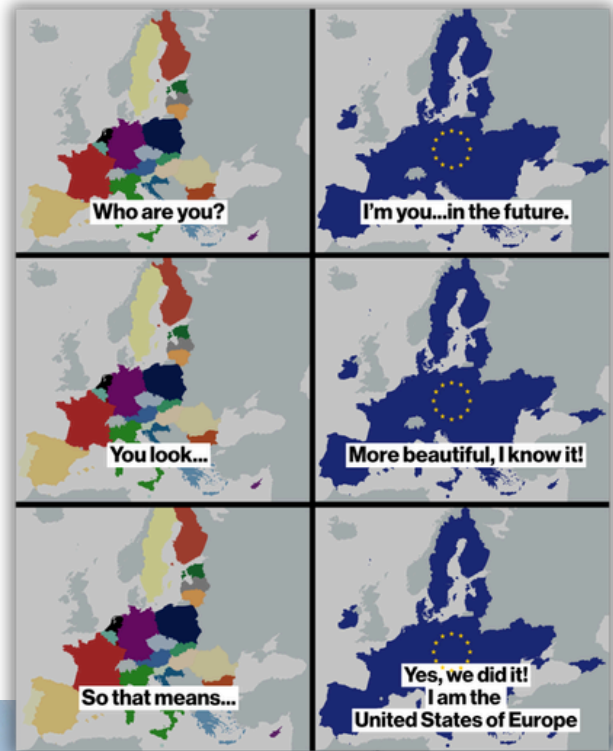


4. The diplomatic dimension of a European Federation also involves solidarity with the rest of the world and the ability to act towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The European Union must create a genuine European development agency, with powers and a budget controlled by the European Parliament. It is the first step towards the EU's extensive participation in a system of global redistribution .

5. The return of high-intensity war to Europe, marked by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, underlines the urgency of a Europe capable of action. The European Union, its Member States, and its citizens shall continue to support Ukraine in its defence of sovereignty, democracy, and territorial integrity, as well as in any negotiation processes that may and must arise with active support and participation of the EU. War crimes and violations of international law must be investigated, prosecuted, and sanctioned in accordance with international justice mechanisms, including the Special Tribunal of the Council of Europe on the Crime of Aggression. The Treaty reform should extend the competence of the European Union to act in the area of justice including on issues of international criminal justice.

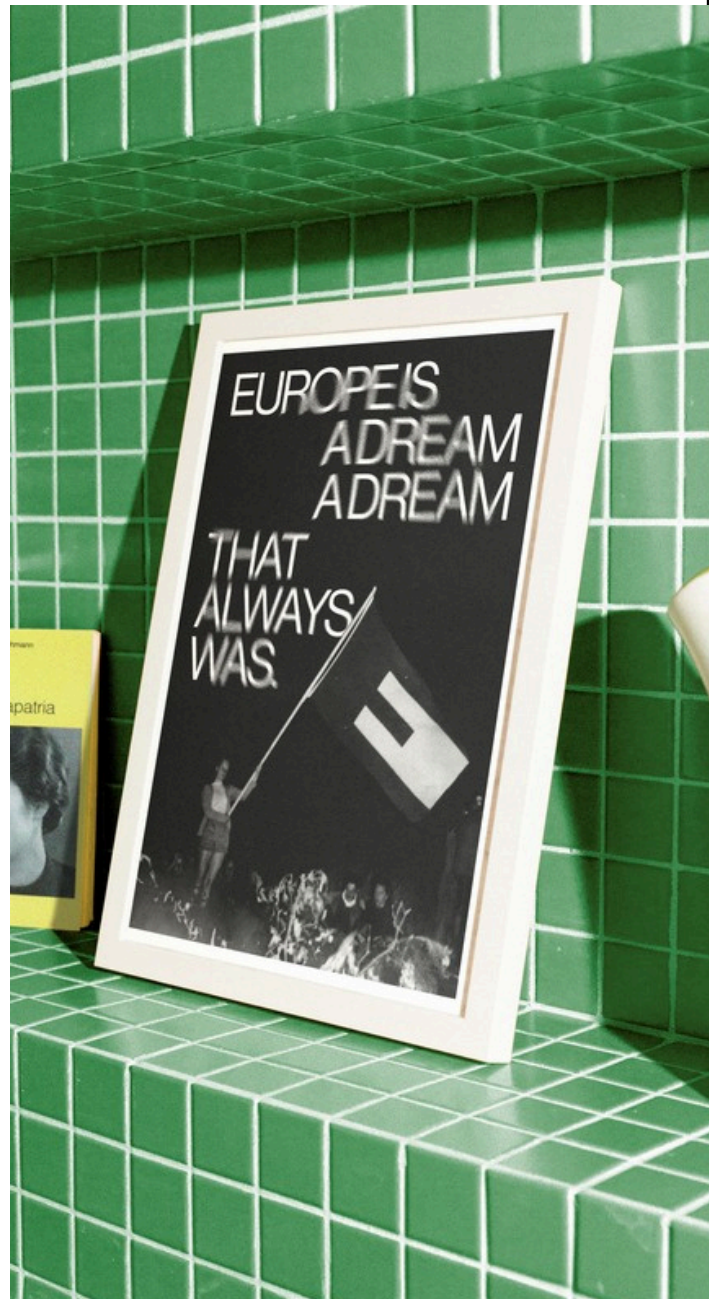
6. Europe's capacity to act ultimately depends on its ability to finance its policies autonomously. To make the EU capable of meeting the considerable needs for European common goods such as security, the fight against climate change and the ecological crisis, innovation and competitiveness, the budget (Multi annual financial framework, MFF) should be set at a sufficient and ambitious level well above the proposal made by the commission for 2028-2034 (only 1,15% of EU GNI since the 1980s) and closer to 4-5% GDP. This requires a genuine federal budget that does not depend on discretionary national contributions and is therefore shielded from political blackmail and the possibility to issue Eurobonds. A federal budget must cover all expenditures linked to exclusive European competences, including defence, diplomacy, ecological transition customs, migration, monetary policy, and trade. Energy, public health, and employment policies should also increasingly benefit from federalisation in order to express and strengthen the European social model. European taxation financing EU budget, either through new taxes for example on the richest or by transfer of existing taxes such as VAT, will also result in

ending national contributions to the EU budget. This major move will give more liberty to Member States to finance their own national policies, according to the federalist principle of subsidiarity, without modifying the existing subsidies received from the EU by Member States, without modifying the existing subsidies received from the EU by Member States.



# Sustainable and Social Europe

1. The Europe we want is sustainable and social. In line with the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, sustainability is understood as a comprehensive concept encompassing environmental protection, economic resilience, and social justice. Europe's development must respect the ecological limits of the planet, including planetary boundaries, while guaranteeing the fulfilment of basic social needs and human dignity for all. Europe must honour its commitments under international agreements, including the Paris Agreement and subsequent global accords on climate and biodiversity. Economic sustainability must be ensured alongside social cohesion, and Europe must pursue strategic, digital and technological autonomy as essential components of long-term resilience.
2. We therefore advocate for a European Federation that intelligently combines sustainability with equal opportunities through common industrial policies, coordinated investments, and joint research programmes. These must be accompanied by a regulatory framework that unleashes innovation, prevents excessive market concentration, breaks oligopolies that undermine fair competition, and guides economic transformation in the interests of social mobility, broad participation, and long-term stability. European public procurement rules and supply chain legislation must actively support fair competition, sustainability, and social responsibility.
3. The European Federation shall promote a strategy for reindustrialisation that combines competitiveness, sustainability, technological leadership, and social cohesion. A strong industrial base is essential for Europe's strategic autonomy, resilience, quality employment, and position in global competition. This strategy must be closely linked to research, innovation, skills, and the deployment of advanced technologies, while also relying on strong regional ecosystems and intermediary organisations capable of connecting businesses, universities, technology centres, public authorities, and investors. Europe must support industrial modernisation across all territories, especially through coordinated investment, applied innovation, technology transfer, and the scaling-up of strategic sectors and [inter-regional] value chains.
4. Through the European Single Market, the economic core of the European Federation has already been established. This market must now be completed and consistently aligned with sustainability and social cohesion in order to strengthen international competitiveness while ensuring fair competition and equal market access, in accordance with the Letta and Draghi reports. Consumer rights must be reinforced, social dialogue enhanced, and the European Pillar of Social Rights fully implemented and further developed as a cornerstone of the European social model. The European Pillar of Social Rights and the Turin Social Charter should be added to the Treaties.



5. We call for a cohesion policy that goes beyond traditional regional and structural support and creates targeted incentives for both public and private investment to reduce disparities and equalise living conditions across Europe's regions. This includes European financing of future-oriented investments, the progressive harmonisation of tax policies, the establishment of a European minimum wage framework, a European unemployment reinsurance scheme, a permanent instrument supporting short-time work arrangements, and further strengthening of social dialogue and social protection systems. The objective is to overcome structural imbalances that threaten the Union's cohesion and its evolution into a federation, while ensuring the active participation and co-determination of regions as an essential condition for effective territorial development.

6. We support the creation of a genuine European Savings and Investment Union leading to fully integrated European capital markets. This is essential to enable European startups and innovative companies to access sufficient financing within Europe, scale up, and remain anchored in the European economy. A competitive and integrated capital market is a prerequisite for sustainable growth, technological leadership, and the development of future-oriented industries in Europe. On this basis, we support the central objectives aimed at strengthening Europe's competitiveness, innovation capacity, and strategic sovereignty, as reflected in recent high-level policy proposals. Throughout this transformation, we remain firmly committed to democracy, freedom, the welfare state, and the protection of human rights as defined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

7. Respecting the ecological balance of the Earth system and remaining within planetary boundaries requires decisive action. Limiting global warming, preserving biodiversity, combating pollution, and ensuring sustainable resource use are collective responsibilities of humankind. We expect the full and timely implementation of the European Green Deal and of democratically adopted European environmental legislation by all Member States, as well as the enshrinement of climate neutrality in the Treaties. Priority must be given to the expansion of climate-neutral renewable energy sources — especially solar

and wind power together with innovative energy storage systems — and supported by integrated European energy grids, sustainable mobility systems, and continued research into breakthrough technologies. Europe is uniquely positioned to meet these challenges by acting together.

*Approved on 22 March 2026 by the XXIX European Congress of the Union of European Federalists, convened in Barcelona, Spain*

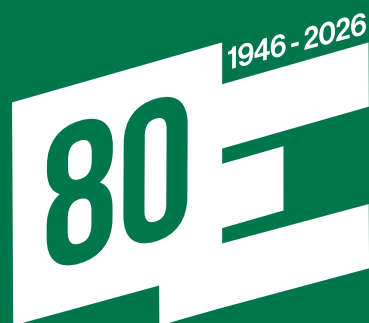


# IN A WORLD FULL OF EMPIRES



# BE A **FEDERAL** EUROPE





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