



UNION OF
EUROPEAN
FEDERALISTS



YOUNG
EUROPEAN
FEDERALISTS

Joint Declaration of the Union of European Federalists (UEF) and the Young European Federalists (JEF Europe) for Stronger Partnership for the European and World Federation

Eighty years after the founding of the Union of European Federalists, Europe stands once again at a rupture. What began in the aftermath of war as a movement of citizens determined to secure peace through unity remains today a living political project: the construction of a democratic European federation capable of protecting freedoms, prosperity, and human dignity in an increasingly unstable world.

The two sister organisations, the Union of European Federalists (UEF), founded in Paris in December 1946, and the Young European Federalists (JEF Europe), established in 1972 as an independent youth organisation committed to the same federalist vision, reaffirm their shared mission: to unite Europe through democracy, solidarity, and supranational governance based on the rule of law.

Europe now faces a convergence of challenges: geopolitical crises and wars all around Europe from Russia's ruthless invasion against Ukraine to the war in the Middle East escalated by Israel and the US, Chinese global ambitions, a climate emergency, technological transformations, as well as democratic erosion and shifting global power balances. All this, no European state can address alone. The answer, as the founders of the federalist movement understood, lies not in fragmentation but in political union.

On this 80th anniversary of the founding of the pan-European federalist organisation, UEF and JEF Europe reaffirm their common federal vision for Europe, commit to deepening their cooperation and to advancing a common programme of political action aimed at completing the European project.

1. Advancing the Federal Reform of the European Union

UEF and JEF Europe call the governments of the European Union member states to initiate a democratic and constitutional transformation of the European Union into a genuine federal political union.

This requires:

- The launch of a constituent process to reform the Treaties and establish a federal system of governance based on subsidiarity and democratic sovereignty at European level, including strengthening democratic oversight.
- The strengthening of the European Parliament as a fully empowered legislative chamber, including the right of legislative initiative, and the creation of a European Senate representing Member States on an equal basis and replacing existing Council institutions, as a fully empowered European legislative branch,
- The strengthening of the European Court of Justice and the European Public Prosecutor's Office,
- The strengthening of the European executive branch, as a fully empowered European government accountable to the European Parliament and citizens,
- The extension of qualified majority voting in the Council and the overcoming of national vetoes in all policy areas, including foreign and security policy.
- The development of truly European democratic life, including transnational lists to the European Parliament and strengthened European citizenship.
- The deepening of European leaps and great successes such as the Eurozone, the Schengen area and the cohesion policy.

Institutional reform is not an abstract objective: it is the necessary condition for Europe to act effectively, democratically, and legitimately in the world.

2. Building a European Defence Union

UEF and JEF Europe consider the creation of an independent European Defence System an urgent strategic priority.

Europe must acquire the capacity to ensure its own security, defend its democratic values, and contribute credibly to international peace. This requires:

- Integrated European defence capabilities under democratic oversight by European institutions and accountability to European citizens.
- Common strategic planning, procurement, and command structures.
- The progressive establishment of a European pillar of collective defence consistent with and strengthening transatlantic cooperation.

A common defence is a defining attribute of political union and an indispensable element of European sovereignty.

3. Strengthening Federalist Political Mobilisation in Europe

UEF and JEF Europe reaffirm the importance of organised civil society in driving European integration forward. The federalist movement must remain a catalyst for political transformation.

The two organisations will therefore:

- Expand structured joint meetings, with annual joint meetings of the respective Executive Boards events, campaigns, advocacy initiatives, press releases, and public engagement efforts at European, national, and local levels.
- Foster intergenerational leadership and joint training programmes to ensure continuity and renewal within the federalist movement.
- Continue and deepen their cooperation within the Action Committee for the United States of Europe, strengthening its role as a platform for coordination, strategic reflection, and political mobilisation across the federalist family.

4. Expanding the Organised Federalist Presence Across Europe

A united Europe requires a strong and representative federalist movement in every European country. UEF and JEF Europe therefore commit to launching a joint initiative to establish and support federalist organisations at least in all EU Member States where no active federalist organisation is currently present.

Particular attention will be given to the Baltic-Nordic, Balkan and Eastern European countries, where strengthening federalist organisations is essential to ensuring that all parts of Europe are fully engaged in shaping the Union's future. We are committed to closing this participation gap, particularly in countries where voter turnout in the 2024 European Parliament elections was low. Our goal is to engage with the half of Europeans who abstained from voting in those elections, empowering them with the knowledge and tools to exercise their democratic right.

This initiative will include:

- Organisational support and capacity-building.
- Joint outreach and recruitment campaigns.
- Partnerships with civil society, academia, and pro-European networks, working towards the establishment of a joint European federalist think tank.
- Youth engagement as a central pillar of organisational development.

- Improving inclusivity and diversity within the movement in order to open the movement to new and expanded audiences.

A geographically balanced and politically active federalist movement is essential for democratic legitimacy at European level.

5. Empowering the Next Generation of Europeans

UEF and JEF Europe recognise that European integration is sustained across generations. Youth participation in politics and society nevertheless often remains marginal and symbolic. We want to lead by example and give young people a real voice in shaping the future.

The two organisations commit to:

- Expanding opportunities for young people to participate in federalist advocacy and leadership.
- Strengthening civic education on European democracy and federalism, through regular joint webinars, training, and communication campaigns.
- Promoting structured youth involvement in debates on Treaty reform, enlargement, climate governance, digital policy, and defence.

The future of Europe must be shaped with, not merely for, the next generation.

6. Acting within the European and Global Federalist Movements

UEF and JEF Europe reaffirm their longstanding cooperation within the broader pro-European, and global federalist communities. Both organisations remain committed to working jointly within the framework of the European Movement International, contributing to its mission of promoting European unity, democracy, and active citizenship across the continent.

They also reaffirm their shared engagement within the World Federalist Movement and the Young World Federalists, advancing the principles of supranational democracy, peacebuilding, multilateral governance, and the rule of law at the global level with a long term view of establishing a world federation. Through these platforms, UEF and JEF Europe will continue to coordinate advocacy, policy initiatives, and civic mobilisation linking European federalism with the wider project of democratic global governance, with an approach that is both globally minded and respectful of the unique characteristics of each geographical context, fostering a process of mutual learning .

To make this collaboration on Global Federalism more meaningful, following the experience in JEF Europe, we agree on the setup of a Task Force on Global Federalism in both organisations that can meet jointly.

7. Acting Together for a Democratic and Sovereign Europe

UEF and JEF Europe reaffirm that federalism is a political commitment: to democracy beyond borders, to solidarity among peoples, and to shared responsibility in an interdependent world. This project demands broad popular support and strong political will and courage.

Eighty years after the founding of the UEF, the task remains unfinished, but the direction is clear: Europe must become a federation capable of acting, protecting, and inspiring.

Together, UEF and JEF Europe pledge to work with renewed determination to make this vision a political reality.

Signed on May 20, 2026 in Brussels by

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President of UEF

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