

Renew Europe Now's Joint Priorities

We, Renew Europe Now, the alliance of centrist, liberal, and democratic forces in Europe, are proud of what the European Union has achieved in the last years. This legislature is a success story. A Renew story. We are the driving force that brought concrete solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are the ones who strive to make the Green Deal a success for all. We are the architects who build a safer digital world. We are the reformers who are reshaping the EU's migration policy. We are the force who build a true European defence policy. We are the force who will continue supporting Ukraine until the win. We are the force who makes the autocrats pay for their breaches of the rule of law.

Nonetheless, the artisans of European disunity are on the rise. They are Putin's friends. Those who have cold feet about helping Ukraine. Those who, not so long ago, cheered Brexit and Trump. Those who think democracy is a nice-to-have but can be compromised with.

We, Renew Europe Now, stand against them. We are unequivocally and unapologetically pro-European. We stand for freedom, because freedom is at the core of our democracies and the basic condition for our shared prosperity. We believe democratic principles cannot be toyed with. We know the EU is a source of prosperity and opportunities for its citizens. And we have a strong record to show for. From 2019 to 2024 we've profoundly transformed Europe [[→ insert hyperlink to brochure with achievements](#)] and we will continue to do so.

We prefer actions than words. We believe in facts, not lies. We believe solutions lie within us, not just pointing fingers at others. Here are our 10 priorities for the 2024 European Parliament elections:

1. **Defence, defence, defence.** Peace among Europeans is the EU's biggest achievement and the cornerstone of our prosperity. Peace is the EU's credo. The EU must collectively be prepared to protect peace on the continent. In the next weeks and months we need to ramp up our defence capabilities, from research to military cooperation, to help Ukraine win the war against the Russian aggressor and to deter threats from authoritarian regimes. We need to strengthen defence in the EU so that both NATO and Europe are reinforced. For the security of all Europeans. The defence industry is also a purveyor of jobs and innovation. For the next five years our focus should be on defence, defence, defence.
2. **Regain our competitive edge.** The EU has been losing its competitive edge compared to China and the US. But it also has formidable assets. It has peace and stability in a world that increasingly lacks both. It has the world's largest single market, with its regulatory impact felt around the globe. It has a strong single currency and we support all the willing Member States in their path towards the Eurozone. The next Commission must be an "Investment Commission." We need to focus on investment in research, development, innovation and people and attract private investment to make Europe more competitive and sustainable. Earlier this year, the Renew Europe group released a [10-points plan](#) on how to do just that with proposals to make life easier for SMEs, cut red tape, reduce our energy dependencies, create more access to other markets, make trade fairer, mobilise private investment for innovation and attract talents. We believe that more and better jobs are a key driver for a more social Europe. Strengthening the economy serves to improve people's lives. Fresh thinking and ambitious ideas is what

our economy needs to regain its competitive edge and to ensure the well-being of our society. Renew Europe Now has plenty of that to offer.

3. **European values are not for sale.** Remember the time where wannabe European autocrats could do whatever they wanted with EU money? This is no more possible thanks to the Renew Europe group in the European Parliament. We created a mechanism linking EU funds to the respect for basic democratic principles such as the independence of judges or the fight against corruption. Nonetheless, the people should not pay the price of their government's misbehaviour twice. That's why we want to take that money back from the hands of autocrats to give it to the civil society and respectable project holders. In addition, we are determined to move with the so-called "Article 7 procedure." Neither money, nor voting rights for autocrats. We are committed to do everything in our power to increase the trust citizens have in democratic institutions. European values are not for sale. Full stop.
4. **Your rights, our fights.** We want to build a continent where everyone is free to build the life they aspire to regardless of who they love, who they pray to, what they look like and what they believe in. Wherever the far right came close to power, those rights came under attack, especially women's rights. We are committed to defend women's rights and their access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including abortion, and combating gender based violence. We work for the legalisation and recognition of same sex marriages and rainbow families across Europe and their full rights as European citizens. This is a relentless fight and we need to keep our guards up.
5. **Don't bite the hand of those who feed us.** Farmers are upset, and rightly so. They ensure our food sovereignty and security and yet, they have been portrayed by some on the left wing as the enemies of climate. Opportunistically, the right wing uses farmers' dismay to wedge a war against climate policies. This is the sort of polarisation Renew Europe Now refuses. It's not climate activists on one side and the tractors on the other. No. Climate and farming are two sides of the same coin. The greater risk for harvests is not green rules, but climate change. Farmers know this. But they need to be both respected and supported. They want to focus on farming, not filling out forms. Renew Europe Now has [tangible proposals](#) to escape the black and white debate we've fallen in and simplify farmers' lives to the benefit of all citizens. Let's not bite the hand of those who feed us but rather seize hold of it.
6. **Green and digital rules: it's implementation time.** 2019-2024 saw the unfolding of a paradigm shift on two fronts. With the Green Deal we set the path for an economically viable transition to a sustainable future for our children, grandchildren and those after them. With a raft of new legislation on Artificial Intelligence and big platforms, we ruled the online jungle, ensured fair competition and a trustful digitalisation for citizens. The last five years were about setting up rules, now we need to focus on implementing them, ensure that we have the necessary means and completing the Digital Single Market otherwise our businesses and citizens won't be able to keep up. We've set ourselves ambitious targets, now we need to reach them and set an example -- our technological and environmental leadership depends on it. It's implementation time.
7. **Engage youth through education and culture.** People who have lived through Europe's darkest times are disappearing -- and so are their testimonies. All citizens should fully remember and benefit from the opportunities liberal democracies offer.

Especially the young. Our answer to this is education. Education means opportunities. Education means skills. Education means getting the tools to shape your own life. That's why we aim to strengthen the emblematic Erasmus programme. Our [Renew for Youth Manifesto](#) is a testament to this belief. We pledge to give every young European a solution. Culture is another weapon against extremism and simplistic beliefs - we must invest into it, from a European Culture Pass to the teaching of our common heritage. Educating our youth is a democratic duty but also an economic one, especially in times of skill shortage.

- 8. Handle migration properly and humanely.** The migration debate has two enemies: populists using incendiary rhetoric to fan the flames of racism and networks of smugglers playing with the hopes and lives of people trying to escape misery or war -- and sometimes both. What the migration debate needs is clarity and stability in the way it humanely manages migrations flows and asylum seekers. "Managing" means having a proper control of our external border so traffickers are being cracked down on. "Humanely" means that people's lives and dignity ought to be at the centre of what we do. "Clarity and stability" means legal clarity for those seeking shelter and engagement to prevent the issues that force people to fleeing their homes. Economic legal pathways should be assessed so that European economies can have the necessary workforce for their growth. As labour shortages are a reality, we need to integrate the talents we need.
- 9. Build a global alliance of democracies.** After the Cold War, enthusiastic thinkers thought that liberalism, democracy and free-market would take over the world. That didn't happen. Today, autocratic regimes across the world proudly say they are here to stay. They attack democracies and stand ready to affirm themselves. We believe that this civilizational view is wrong. We believe that democracies must unite to defend their common goals beyond geographical interest and spread their values. We want to build partnerships with like-minded countries for a Global Alliance of Democracies to strengthen the EU's global influence in order to promote our values.
- 10. Renew Europe Now and unify the continent.** We like the EU but we know it's not perfect. Some say get rid of it then. We say: let's make it even better. We want to reform the EU's treaties to make sure citizens feel better involved. We want to increase the efficiency, transparency and accountability of EU institutions -- the gatherings where national ministers meet are too opaque. We want to transform the Commission into a proper democratic government, with only one president at the helm of the EU's executive so the world finally knows whom to call. We want to strengthen the role of the European Parliament so the voices of the citizens resonate even stronger than today. We want to get rid of the vetoes. Reform needs to happen and needs to happen now. Especially as new members are getting ready to join the family and are on their way to fulfil the Copenhagen criteria. In the same vein, those who meet the relevant criteria should join the free-movement Schengen area without further delay. Ukrainians are spilling their blood to defend our democratic freedom. Ukraine must join and it will join. But we need to be able to welcome it, like other candidates. Without deep reforms, enlargement risks turning into a failure for all. The continent is about to unite, once more. This is good news. The more the mightier. But the governance of a whole continent is no trivial matter. It's time to reopen the treaties.

Based on those 10 principles, our family is ready to continue transforming Europe for a brighter future for all. A ballot for Renew Europe Now is a ballot for freedom, prosperity, and security. A ballot for Renew Europe Now is a ballot for a better Europe.