

DECLARATION BY THE PRESIDENCY COUNCIL  
ON THE RE-ELECTION OF URSULA VON DER LEYEN

The most significant element of Ursula von der Leyen's re-election appears to us to be the consolidation of the pro-European parliamentary majority that voted for her and that included Christian universalism, Socialist internationalism Liberal cosmopolitanism and Transnational environmentalism by rejecting the Euro-hostile extremism of the conservatives led by Giorgia Meloni whose choices have isolated her government and Italy in the European Union, the patriots led by Viktor Orban and the sovereignists led by Alice Weidel.

As far as Italy's role is concerned, and also in view of the positions taken both in the European Parliament by Fdi and Lega and by the Italian government, the European Movement denounces the risk of our country's marginalisation from the nucleus of the leading countries in the process of reforming the European Union, which will inevitably entail the implementation of the commitments that will be made during the negotiations for enlargement to the candidate countries, which could open the way for innovative forms of differentiated integration.

The European Movement has closely followed the policy statements of President Ursula von der Leyen and has read the political priorities that the European Commission intends to implement in this legislature, which will have to be developed through a dynamic vision of the process of European integration in a manner consistent with the pro-European majority that expressed itself in the vote on 18 July. We will carefully examine both of them, also in the light of our Green Paper, in order to translate our suggestions into specific initiatives that will be set out in a White Paper, also with a view to creating new political, financial and legislative instruments.

While we await the new Commission's programme and the outcome of the hearings of the new Commissioners, in which we hope that the pro-European majority that expressed itself in the vote of confidence in President Ursula von der Leyen will be confirmed, we focus our attention in particular on the following ten priorities

- The European budget, investments and own resources
- The achievement of the European Green Deal
- European public goods
- Artificial intelligence
- The social dimension
- The conflicts in Ukraine and the Middle East
- Migration policies and the right to asylum
- European defence
- Deepening and Enlargement
- The future of Europe and the constituent process

We take note of President Ursula von der Leyen's statements regarding the strengthening of the budget beyond the deadline of the Next Generation EU in anticipation of the draft Multiannual Financial Framework 2028-2032 that will have to support investments in environmental policy, for the digital transition and the social dimension, in industry and in small and medium-sized enterprises, in sustainable agriculture - together with the commitment to the achievement of the

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European Green Deal with projects, rules and resources that must not abdicate the objectives of ecological conversion and the fight against climate change by using the ambiguity of the formula of technological neutrality - in the defence industry and in territorial cohesion so that no one is left behind.

We consider positively the proposal of a European Competitiveness Fund - which responds to the suggestions that emerged from Enrico Letta's and Mario Draghi's reports - to support with directly European investments and with a European direction effective and more impactful policies with a shared method of innovative management to model them on the specific socio-economic context of each individual state.

For years, the European Movement has been strongly committed to supporting European public goods - with particular reference to health, energy, artificial intelligence, environmental sustainability, the new generations, science and research - which require a budget of a federal nature for the period 2028-2032, financed by true own resources as evidenced by the report drawn up together with the Centre for Studies on Federalism and the European public debt.

In this spirit, the European Movement recalls and shares the estimates of the European Central Bank that the European Union will need EUR 1 trillion per year in public resources for green transition, digitalisation, the social dimension, research, innovation and the defence industry, which must also leverage private capitals in close cooperation with the EIB.

We welcome the announced investments in artificial intelligence concerning in particular access to computing resources, the establishment of research institutions or the implementation of the use of data. In order to prevent extensive regulation from harming European companies, these investments must expand to specific artificial intelligence education at all levels as well as the creation of an industrial ecosystem that can bring out one or more European companies of world interest in compliance with European data protection regulations.

We take note of the declaration on the social Pillar, stressing, however, that its realisation must lay the foundations for a still largely unfinished economic democracy and a strengthened social dialogue, just as we reiterate the need for a true European welfare, we believe that a European unemployment benefit instrument on the model of the SURE programme must be introduced along with European rules for safety at work, and we await precise proposals for a European strategy to combat poverty and discrimination.

We are convinced that housing policy - made necessary in our view by the fragmentation of households, social mobility and the migratory phenomena generated by the new needs of the economy - which could be entrusted to one of the members of the Commission, should be placed within the framework of a new social and territorial cohesion.

We call for the appointment of a European Commissioner for the social economy to work together with the parliamentary intergroup on the social economy by including support for this economic dimension in the guidelines of the 10th legislature and in the annual programmes.

We strongly support the need for an immediate cessation of hostilities in the Gaza Strip, the release of hostages and the goal of two Israeli and Palestinian states, which will have to be included in a broader reflection on cooperation and security in the Mediterranean on the initiative of the European Union.

We support the idea of re-launching the appointment of a Commissioner for policies towards the Mediterranean as was the case in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, recalling the need to respect the competences of the High Representative for Foreign Policy, as must be the case for the possible Commissioner for Defence.

We reiterate our demand for a Commissioner in charge of migration policies with a mandate separate from that for the Mediterranean, and we confirm our conviction on the need for a policy of reception and not of rejections, expressing strong perplexity on the proposal to strengthen the staff of the Frontex Agency.

We deplore the fact that nothing is said about integration policies in the European Union for migrants and asylum seekers, which instead need to be strengthened, and about how the European Union can contribute to the respect of fundamental rights in third countries (such as Libya and Tunisia) that the EU has asked to stop migratory flows knowing that they cannot be stopped because of the unsustainable living conditions in the countries of origin. We also condemn the fact that space is instead being given to outsourcing asylum applications to third countries, which undermines the fundamental right to a fair assessment of applications for international protection and violates the principles of international law. We reiterate our proposal to remove migration policies from the competence of the interior and justice ministers and entrust them to a 'jumbo' Employment, Education, Health and Development Council.

We support the commitment to the inviolability and integrity of Ukraine attacked by the Russian Federation with a view to a just peace and the relaunching of a project of cooperation and security on the European continent along the lines of the Helsinki Accords, launching an EU initiative for an international peace conference.

Within this framework, we are convinced that the issue of European defence cannot be limited to the dimension of industry and new technologies but must be an integral part of the European Union's foreign and security policy by acting on the interoperability of armed forces rather than on increasing national expenditure, on controlling arms sales to third countries, on a European intelligence system and on the affirmation of an equal partnership between the EU and the US within the framework of the Atlantic Alliance.

We call on the European Commission to take all necessary measures to ensure that transatlantic relations continue to take place within the framework of World Trade Organisation rules, avoiding tariff wars that would seriously harm us by affecting the weakest sections of our populations.

We share President von der Leyen's strong censure of Hungarian Prime Minister Orban for violating the principle of loyal cooperation, the commitment to defend the rule of law, and we reiterate our conviction of the need to remove the Hungarian government from the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union.

We emphasise that the enlargement of the European Union to the Balkans and Eastern Europe must be based on merit - and in particular on the criteria decided in Copenhagen and reaffirmed in the Lisbon Treaty - and on the need for the internal reforms of those countries to be accompanied by reforms of the European Union in its policies, its budget and the strengthening of its democratic dimension. In this spirit, the overcoming of the Lisbon Treaty, signed in 2007, will be an indispensable condition - and not only possible as vaguely foreshadowed both in President Ursula von der Leyen's statements and in the guidelines - before enlargement in order to make the European Union stronger and able to take decisions by planning its future.

We reiterate our conviction that, in face of the governments' immobility and the hostility of the majority of the European Council to overcome the Lisbon Treaty in the logic that the governments are "the owners of the Treaties", the way forward is that of a constituent process that has representative democracy and participatory democracy at its core. For these reasons we believe - and we appeal to the pro-European majority in this House - that the European Parliament should take note of Ursula von der Leyen's proposal for a joint work on the reform of the Treaties, going beyond the narrow limits of an apparent openness that binds the revision to the timing of enlargement by proposing the signing of an inter-institutional agreement that has the substance of a constituent pact.

The European Parliament has the power to speak on behalf of the citizens who elected it, and the European Commission has the tools to help create a public space necessary for the development of an ongoing dialogue with civil society in order to overcome the now unacceptable idea that the reform of the Treaties is a building site open only to insiders. The European Commission also has the tools to launch a wide-ranging information campaign on the future of Europe, which appeared totally inadequate during the work of the Conference that ended on 9 May 2023.

Rome, 23 July 2024