

# Civil Society Appeal on the Future of Europe after COVID-19

Europeans are facing the most severe crisis since the Second World War. The COVID-19 crisis has dramatically affected Europe and the wellbeing of its citizens. Lacking a European Government with adequate European instruments, however, national governments have been left to protect their own citizens and interests as well as they could, and so many have been overwhelmed. With every Government for itself, the COVID-19 crisis has shown - if there was ever a need - that reliance on mere international cooperation for crisis management makes our response less effective, less cohesive, less targeted. We must act as one Europe, we must act as one World.

As civil society activists, on the 70th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, we therefore propose the following ten measures, both urgent and with long-term effect, to exit the COVID-19 crisis in unity, peace, and good health:

1. **Europe must ensure a more effective and coordinated response to the COVID-19 threat:** the European Commission should be able to issue rules applicable across the EU on a coordinated approach to lifting the containment measures.
2. **The Union should abide by its own obligations to ensure a high level of Human health protection to all EU citizens and people living in the EU:** the EU should be entrusted with real competences in the field of public health, public health should be a shared competence between the EU and its Member States.
3. **The COVID-19 virus won't really be defeated until there is a vaccine, or at least a cure to counter its most severe effects:** a European research consortium should be set up to work towards a vaccine or a cure, together with other teams in the world.
4. **Ensure the unity of the European Union, its Single Market and the functioning of the Schengen Area:** all decisions to reintroduce internal border restrictions between Schengen countries must be reversed as soon as possible. The virus knows no borders. The smooth functioning of services, such as food provision and health care, are all the more essential at this moment.
5. **Extraordinary and coordinated fiscal measures to mitigate the most immediate socio-economic effects of the current crisis:** enlarging the scope of the European Stability Mechanism to finance - without undue macroeconomic conditionality - the immediate strengthening of European health systems, mobilising European temporary support to national unemployment systems, extraordinary support to European companies through the European Investment Bank.
6. **The recovery effort must be commensurate to the severity of the economic slump, all the while seizing the opportunity for a transition to a sustainable and carbon-neutral Europe:** the Council should immediately approve a Multiannual Financial Framework for 2021-2027 of sufficient size, financed through genuine own resources and European Recovery Bonds.

7. **Safeguarding Democracy and the Rule of Law in times of emergency:** introduce a European Review Mechanism on Democracy, Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights and revise the Art. 7 procedure. The next Multiannual Financial Framework should introduce the principle of conditionality to suspend EU funds when a Member State violates the rule of law and fundamental principles of the EU.
8. **Europe needs the tools to step up and become a valuable global player providing a model to govern sustainable globalisation:** adopt a new coherent agenda for human security and sustainable globalisation adopt a common asylum and migration policy as well as ensure overcoming the emergency living conditions of refugee camps.
9. **European public goods should be financed by genuine European resources:** The EU should be able to raise and spend its own fiscal resources, including the power to issue genuine European debt on the market - or Eurobonds.
10. The planned **Conference on the future of Europe** should deliver a political mandate to draft a European Constitution.