

# Common statement by 177 European and national Civil Society Organisations and Trade Unions

12 September, 2016

## A new Europe for people, planet and prosperity for all

Europe is at a crossroads, and the future of European cooperation and the benefits it brings are at stake. **This is about the future of our society and how we want to be viewed by the wider world. The future of our planet and the kind of Europe our children will grow up in.** The current crisis highlights the urgent need to reflect on fundamental questions: how do we ensure that the European project reclaims its promise of peace, democracy and solidarity? How can Europe work for its people?

Too many people across Europe are dissatisfied and disillusioned with the European Union and feel remote from its institutions and policies. But there are groups of committed politicians, trade unions, community groups and non-governmental organisations across Europe who are ready to take action and work for a renewed Europe. Together, we can shape a Europe that is inclusive, open, just, sustainable, and that works for people of all ages, social backgrounds and nations.

Where do we go from here to build the Europe we want and need?

### Reject populist solutions

This crisis in confidence comes as people struggle with decreasing living standards, declining buying power and the rise of precarious work, hardship created by austerity policies, anxiety over movements of people to our shores, and the impacts of climate change and environmental destruction. As people search for answers, euroscepticism and nationalism, intolerance and misinformation are winning out over cooperation, humanity and solidarity with one other. **We must all – leaders, media and individuals – actively and at every opportunity speak out and act against division, marginalisation of different groups in society and those that play on fears for their own political ends.**

### Tackle challenges together

Many of the challenges facing Europe – such as inequalities, climate change, natural resource depletion, and a global economy that benefits the few and not the many – are better tackled together than by countries individually.

The European Union, which embodies international cooperation and collaboration, needs to be leading in ensuring **sustainable and inclusive development, advancing human rights, and allowing for dignified movements of people, where refugees are welcome and all people feel safe.**

### Fight for a sustainable, social Europe for people and for our planet

There needs to be a decisive and transformational change in political will, direction and policy. Such a vision is provided in the **United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in which people, social justice, environmental and health protection, democracy and transparency take centre stage.** Guided by this agenda, EU economic policies need to go hand in hand with strong social and environmental

policies. The EU single market and international policies must promote enforceable rules to protect workers, consumers, all citizens – men and women, young and old – and the planet. EU policies must support democracy, dialogue and more equality within and beyond the EU. **We need a Europe that aims at improving the living standards of everyone.**

## Work for better Europe, not less Europe

The current tendency to weaken EU institutions and to strip away protections for people and planet in the name of ‘deregulation’ is not the answer. **Current economic policies of reducing deficits and boosting ‘competitiveness’ have promoted too narrow an interpretation of growth**, and corporate profits have failed to make it into workers’ wages or trickle down to improve people’s lives.

It is these policies, not ‘too much Europe’, that have alienated people, leaving them feeling disempowered and left behind. We now need new, progressive European initiatives to deliver tangible benefits for people and to win back their confidence and trust. A ‘better Europe’ is where joint European action creates tangible benefits for people and planet. This includes **a new focus on equality and inclusion, a relaunch of the European social model to provide decent work, quality jobs and better living conditions, strong environmental protection, meaningful action on climate change, and an EU-wide effort to welcome and integrate migrants.**

## Listen and engage

EU leaders, prime ministers, presidents, chancellors and parliamentarians must **listen and engage actively with citizens of all ages and social backgrounds** to understand and respond better to people’s concerns and propose a new, positive vision of Europe. Everyone, perhaps most importantly the young, needs to be more actively involved in decisions that have an impact on our future. Together, we can take the decisions and actions on the issues that matter.

## Make the case for Europe

We need a genuine, democratic and inclusive dialogue on the future of Europe, and on how the EU can deliver tangible benefits for Europeans. We stand ready to play an active role in this dialogue, and to **work even harder in making the case for the benefits that working together have brought to European citizens, and the values for which this Union stands.**

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*This common statement was drafted on the initiative of WWF, CONCORD, ETUC and European Youth Forum, and supported by the 177 signatories below.*



### European and International signatories

ACT Alliance EU  
ActionAid International  
ADG  
Africa e Mediterraneo

AGE Platform Europe  
ANME - Association for Natural Medicine in Europe  
BirdLife Europe  
BLOOM ASSOCIATION  
CARE International

#### For media inquiries:

Angelika Pullen, WWF European Policy Office, [apullen@wwf.eu](mailto:apullen@wwf.eu), +32 473 947 966  
Helene Debaisieux, CONCORD, [helene.debaisieux@concordeurope.org](mailto:helene.debaisieux@concordeurope.org), +32 2 743 87 93  
Sarah Farndale, European Youth Forum, [sarah.farndale@youthforum.org](mailto:sarah.farndale@youthforum.org), +32 496 396 765  
Julian Scola, European Trade Union Confederation, [jscola@etuc.org](mailto:jscola@etuc.org), +32 2 224 04 30

Civil Society Europe  
 Climate Action Network Europe  
 COFACE Families Europe  
 CONCORD  
 Culture Action Europe  
 Don Bosco International  
 Don Bosco Youth Network West Africa  
 Dynamo International - Réseau International des  
 Travailleurs sociaux de rue  
 EASPD  
 EFFAT  
 ENAR - European Network Against Racism  
 ENNA - European Network of National Civil  
 Society Associations  
 ENSIE - European Network of Social Integration  
 Enterprises  
 ERGO Network  
 Eurocadres – Council of European Professional  
 and Managerial Staff  
 Eurochild  
 Eurodiaconia  
 EuroHealthNet  
 European Anti Poverty Network (EAPN)  
 European Central Council of Homeopaths  
 European Citizen Action Service (ECAS)  
 European Confederation of Independent Trade  
 Unions (CESI)  
 European Disability Forum  
 European Environmental Bureau  
 European Federation of Building and  
 Woodworkers  
 European Federation of Public Service Unions  
 European Humanist Federation  
 European Institute Foundation  
 European Institute of Women's Health  
 European Medical Students' Association  
 European Movement International  
 European Network for Smoking and Tobacco  
 Prevention (ENSP)  
 European Parents' Association  
 European Public Health Alliance  
 European Race and Imagery Foundation (ERIF)  
 European Trade Union Confederation  
 European Transport Safety Council  
 European Transport Workers' Federation  
 European Volunteer Centre (CEV)  
 European Women's Lobby  
 European Youth Forum  
 Fair Trade Advocacy Office  
 FEANTSA  
 Fédération Européenne des Femmes Actives en  
 Famille  
 FEMS - European Federation Salaried Doctors  
 Friends of the Earth Europe  
 Fundación Jóvenes y Desarrollo  
 Greenpeace  
 HEAL - Health and Environment Alliance  
 Housing Europe  
 IBFAN Africa  
 IBFAN Europe  
 IBFAN LATIN AMÉRICA AND CARIBBEAN  
 ICSW - International Council on Social Welfare  
 IFSW-Europe - International Federation of Social  
 Workers Europe  
 IGLYO  
 ILGA-Europe - European Region of the  
 International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and  
 Intersex Association  
 International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN)  
 International Disability and Development  
 Consortium (IDDC)  
 International Federation of Medical Students'  
 Associations (IFMSA)  
 International Planned Parenthood Federation  
 European Network  
 International Union of Tenants (IUT)  
 Light for the World International  
 Mental Health Europe  
 Migrant Tales  
 Misiones Salesianas  
 Naturefriends International  
 Network of European LGBTIQ\* Families  
 Associations (NELFA)  
 Oxfam International  
 PICUM - Platform for International Cooperation  
 on Undocumented Migrants  
 Plan International  
 Social Platform  
 SOLIDAR  
 SOS Children's Villages International  
 The Club of Rome EU-Chapter  
 The European Federation of Older Persons -  
 EURAG  
 The Oslo Times  
 The Salvation Army EU Affairs Office  
 Transport & Environment  
 UNI Europa  
 Volonteuropé  
 World Vision  
 WWF  
 YES Forum

## National and regional signatories

ACT Grupa  
Active Retirement Ireland  
AEPADO - European Association for the Defense of Human Rights  
Alaturi de Voi Romania Foundation  
Albanian Society for All Ages (ASAG)  
All Ears TM  
arbeit plus - Social Integration Enterprises Austria  
Artenave Atelier - Associação de Solidariedade  
Asociación Nacional Presencia Gitana  
ASPUR  
ATDAL Over40  
Ateliere Fara Frontiere  
Atelierul de panza SRL  
Ateljee vzw  
Baby Milk Action/IBFAN UK  
BAGSO  
BirdLife Finland  
BirdWatch Ireland  
Bulgarian Red Cross  
CEIPES Belgium  
Centar za životnu sredinu/FoE Bosnia and Herzegovina  
Center for Equality Advancement  
Centre for Peace Studies, Zagreb  
CHEN, patient fertility association, Israel  
Conference of Religious of Ireland and Irish Missionary Union  
Conseil de la Jeunesse  
Consorzio di cooperative sociali EVT  
Consorzio Sociale Abele Lavoro  
Coordination SUD  
CRIES  
Cultúr Migrants Centre  
Czech Society for Ornithology  
De Omslag  
EcoPolítica  
ENEA apa  
Estonian Green Movement  
Estonian Human Rights Centre  
FAEDEI - Federación de Asociaciones Empresariales de Empresas de Inserción  
FATEC (Federació d'Associacions de Gent Gran de Catalunya)  
Federació d'Organitzacions Catalanes de Gent Gran, Dones i Família - FOCAGG  
Fédération des entreprises d'insertion  
Filipino Women's Council  
FONSS – Federatia Organizatiilor Neguvernamentale pentru Servicii Sociale din Romania  
France Nature Environnement  
Friends of the Earth Cyprus  
Friends of the Earth Finland - Maan ystävät ry  
Fundació Trinjove  
Generation 2.0 Rights, Equality & Diversity  
Generation Earth  
Hellenic Ornithological Society  
Initiative for Development and Cooperation  
Inter Environnement Wallonie  
JURATRI  
KISA - Action for Equality, Support, Anti-Racism  
Latvian Ornithological Society  
Liga para a Protecção da Natureza  
Lipu BirdLife Italy  
Mayo Intercultural Action  
NABU - Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union (German partner of Birdlife International)  
National Youth Council of Ireland  
natur&emwelt  
Natuurpunt  
Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities  
Old'up  
OVN -NL  
Polish Society for the Protection of Birds  
QED Foundation  
RESIT - Rede de Empresas Sociais de Inserção pelo Trabalho  
Roma Community Centre Vilnius  
Slovenian Coalition for Public Health, Environment and Tobacco Control  
Social Firms England  
SOF – BirdLife Sverige  
SOS/BirdLife Slovakia  
Sport Against Racism Ireland  
SST vzw  
Stichting Laka  
Tallinn Children's Hospital Foundation  
The Integraiton and Support Unit  
türkiye emekliler derneği  
BirdLife The Netherlands  
volare a s.stefano  
WERVEL - Working Group for a Fair and Responsible Agriculture  
Youth for Human Rights Denmark  
Združenie Slatinka