

Deutscher Bundestag



Bundesrat

President of the European Parliament  
Mr David Maria Sassoli

President of the European Council  
Mr Charles Michel

President-in-Office of the Council of the  
European Union  
Mr Heiko Maas

President of the European Commission  
Ms Ursula von der Leyen

Berlin, 30 November 2020

**Gunther Krichbaum, MdB**  
Chairman of the Committee on  
European Union Affairs

Deutscher Bundestag  
Platz der Republik 1  
11011 Berlin

**Guido Wolf**  
Chairman of the Committee on  
European Union Questions

Bundesrat  
Leipziger Straße 3-4  
11055 Berlin

Dear Madam President,  
Dear Mister Presidents,

Your institutions are currently negotiating a Joint Declaration to implement a Conference on the Future of Europe. The declared aim of the inclusive Conference is to make the voices of citizens more audible, to involve them closely in shaping the future of Europe and thus strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the EU. The Joint Declaration shall define the final concept, structure, subject and timetable of the Conference. In many areas, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the need for a forum for open discussion on the reorientation of the EU even more visible.

COSAC has already discussed the Conference on the Future of Europe project on several occasions and has expressly welcomed the idea. National Parliaments have voiced a clear desire to be appropriately involved in the Conference and its various fora, including the Steering Group, and have reached out to the European institutions vis-à-vis this matter several times. The 34<sup>th</sup> Bi-annual Report of COSAC now addresses the topic again and provides further insights into questions regarding the participation, the choice of formats and possible content of the Conference.

Consequently, we reaffirm that the national Parliaments should ideally be involved on an equal footing with the European Parliament in the organisation of the Conference, in its steering committee and in drawing up conclusions. For this purpose, COSAC structures could be easily emulated. National Parliaments best represent the composition of the population as



assemblies of directly elected representatives. They will play a key role in implementing the results of the Conference; by communicating these results they are indispensable partners as a direct link to the citizens.

We support a decentralised approach for the Conference with the organisation of several events in the Member States and their regions. The plenary of the Conference should take up the results of these events. Final declarations could then be adopted at events in the Member States to provide impetus for the plenary of the Conference. Digital solutions should be applied when organising these events in light of the pandemic and also to increase the Conference's outreach – video conferences and representative surveys are conceivable, for example. Some physical events should, however, still take place on a smaller scale as far as possible, in order to enhance proximity. Moderated debates, dialogues with citizens and experts or town hall meetings with political representatives and civil society could be suitable for this purpose.

Regarding possible topics of the Conference, we suggest that institutional aspects should be taken up, for instance, with view to the participation of National Parliaments in the EU legislative process, the extension of the subsidiarity check period to 12 weeks. The Conference could also focus on questions related to green transformation and the rule of law. Moreover, it should be able to put topics on the agenda in addition to the thematic framework defined by the Joint Declaration of the European Institutions.

Even though the Conference is not a Convention, its scope should be kept open for all possible outcomes including legislative proposals and, if deemed appropriate, treaty discussions or otherwise.

We call on you to take these aspects into account in your further discussions on the Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe, and appeal to you to adopt the Joint Declaration in a timely manner in order to enable the Conference to start as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely,

Gunther Krichbaum

Guido Wolf



Co-signatories:

**Domagoj Hajduković**

Chair of the Committee on European Affairs  
Croatian Parliament

**Luís Capoulas Santos**

Chair of the European Affairs Committee  
Portuguese Assembly of the Republic

**Reinhold Lopatka**

Chair of the Permanent Subcommittee on EU Affairs  
Austrian National Council

**Christian Buchman**

Chair of the EU Committee  
Austrian Federal Council

**Mikuláš Bek**

Chair of the Committee on European Affairs  
Czech Senate

**Vita Anda Tērauda**

Chair of the European Affairs Committee  
Latvian Parliament

**Marko Pogačnik**

Chair of the Committee on European Union Affairs  
Slovenian National Assembly

**Dragomir Stoynev**

Chair of the Committee on European Affairs and Oversight of  
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Bulgarian National Assembly

**Ondřej Benešík**

Chair of the Committee on European Affairs  
Czech Chamber of Deputies

**Gaëtan Van Goidsenhoven**

Co-Chair of the Federal Advisory Committee on European  
Affairs  
Belgian Senate



**Bojan Kekec**

Chair of the Committee on International Relations and  
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Slovenian National Council

**Jean-François Rapin**

Chair of the Committee on European Affairs  
French Senate

**Bogdan Klich**

Chair of the Foreign and EU Affairs Committee  
Polish Senate

**Yves Cruchten**

Chair of the Committee on Foreign and European Affairs,  
Cooperation, Immigration and Asylum  
Luxembourg Chamber of Deputies

**Susana Sumelzo Jordán**

Chair of the Joint Committee on European Affairs  
Spanish Congress of Deputies

**Nikitas Kaklamanis**

Chair of the Committee on European Affairs  
Hellenic Parliament

**Eva Kjer Hansen**

Chair of the European Affairs Committee  
Danish Parliament

**Sabine Thillaye**

Chair of the Committee on European Affairs  
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**Sergio Battelli**

Chair of the Committee on European Union Policies  
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**Dario Stefàno**

Chair of the Committee on European Union Policies  
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**Angel Tîlvăr**

Chair of the Committee on European Affairs  
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**Tomáš Valášek**

Chair of the European Affairs Committee  
Slovak National Council

**Emanuel Mallia**

Chair of the Foreign and European Affairs Committee  
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**Radvilė Morkūnaitė-Mikulėnienė**

Chair of the European Union Affairs Committee  
Lithuanian Seimas



**Satu Hassi**

Chair of the Grand Committee

Finnish Eduskunta

(This statement of support does not include the passage on the extension of the subsidiarity check period.)