

PROJECT

# European Benches in every city



YOUNG  
EUROPEAN  
FEDERALISTS



GIOVENTÙ  
FEDERALISTA  
EUROPEA



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# OBJECTIVE

Create an "European Bench".

Choose a bench, paint it blue and draw the 12 stars of the European flag in yellow.

## IT'S NOT JUST A SYMBOL

Building a feeling of identity is a complex and long process. It is favored and punctuated by historical events of primary importance. Still, it needs, in order to be settled, a set of symbols and a narrative, with respect to which the role of state institutions has always been decisive.

On these aspects, the reflections on the cause-and-effect relationship between the constitution of state institutions and the formation of identity are fundamental: is it the state that creates an identity or an identity that creates a state? In our commitment to building a federal Europe, it is certainly worth reflecting on these questions, but also taking concrete actions.

Among the various actions that can be carried out for the dissemination of a European identity, a successful initiative is the promotion of the "European Benches". A simple thing like seeing a bench in the place where you live, painted with the EU flag, could help shorten the distance between citizens and European Institutions.

This emblem is all the more relevant where the representation capacity of the European Union is less widely perceived. In this way, it is also possible to reach new social strata and lead representatives of local institutions and civil society to express favorable positions towards the process of European integration, who normally do not care about European politics or consider themselves Eurosceptics.

# **A BENCH BECAUSE...**

it's a meeting place, a place of social gathering, a place for everyone, regardless of sex, age, religion, or cultural affiliation.

A symbol of the community and of everyday life.

## **HISTORY OF THE PROJECT**

The project is promoted by the Italian section of the Young European Federalist, supported by the offices of the European Parliament in Italy and of the European Commission in Italy. It was conceived as a response to the vandalization of a the European bench realized in Lecco, with Nazi symbols, in the month of July 2021.

Following this episode, a group of JEFers from the local section created a fundraiser on Go Fund Me, with the aim of buying the necessary material to fix the bench in Lecco.

Given the numerous donations from citizens, it was decided to rename the fundraiser "European Benches In Every City" and to use the donations to spread the blue benches around Italy, through the purchase of paint and organizational support.

Thanks to the fundraising, the interest and support of local administrations, parties and associations, about fifty benches have been created throughout Italy, in most regions.

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# SOME PHOTOS OF THE EUROPEAN BENCHES ACROSS ITALY

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