

## **On the plenary discussion titled “EU governance under pressure – institutional responses to global challenges”**

Dear Members of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs of the European Parliament,

Ahead of the upcoming debate on “EU governance under pressure – institutional responses to global challenges”, the Young European Federalists and the Union of European Federalists would like to share a number of key proposals for institutional reform that we believe are necessary to ensure that the European Union remains democratic, effective, and capable of acting in an increasingly unstable geopolitical environment.

Europe today faces unprecedented pressure: Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine, democratic backsliding within and beyond the Union, economic coercion from various state and non-state actors, digital disinformation campaigns, an increasing climate crisis, and uncertainty in transatlantic relations. These crises have exposed the structural weaknesses of a Union that still relies too heavily on unanimity, fragmented competences, and intergovernmental crisis management.

The current governance model is no longer sufficient for the challenges Europe faces. The European Union must therefore evolve into a more democratic, sovereign, and federal political union. In this regard, we call on the European Parliament to champion the following reforms:

- Strengthen qualified majority voting in foreign policy, taxation, and other strategic policy areas in order to overcome paralysis caused by national vetoes and political blackmail.
- Expand the powers of the European Parliament, including granting it full legislative initiative rights, stronger oversight over executive institutions, and a central role in the budgetary negotiations.
- Strengthen the protection of rule of law and democracy by replacing unanimity requirements under Article 7 procedures and creating more effective judicial enforcement mechanisms at European level.
- Advance towards a genuine European fiscal union with autonomous own resources, permanent common borrowing instruments, and sufficient fiscal capacity to finance common defence, industrial policy, climate transition, enlargement, and strategic autonomy.

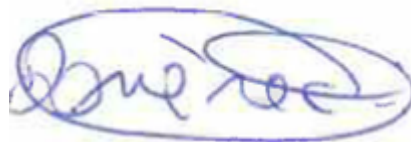
- Reform the Eurozone governance by completing the Banking Union and Capital Markets Union, integrating fiscal governance into the EU framework under democratic parliamentary accountability, and creating the foundations for a future European Finance Minister.
- Launch a democratic treaty reform process aimed at drafting a truly European Constitution. The European Parliament should take the lead in initiating such a process through the convening of a European Constituent Assembly.
- Reform European elections through transnational lists, a renewed European Electoral Act with a common voting age, stronger European political parties, common democratic standards, and a clearer democratic connection between European elections and the leadership of the European Commission.
- Uphold subsidiarity by strengthening the role of regional and local authorities and recognising Europe's territorial and cultural diversity within a framework that also allows for a vanguard of member states moving forward in certain areas where more integration is currently blocked by unanimity.

The debate on Europe's future governance must on how to strengthen democratic legitimacy at European level. A Union capable of protecting its citizens and defending democracy externally must become more democratic internally. We therefore encourage the European Parliament to place institutional reform back at the centre of the European political agenda and to act as the democratic driving force behind a stronger, more sovereign, and more united Europe.

Yours sincerely,



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