

To: Federal Chancellor of Austria, Sebastian Kurz; Prime Minister of Belgium, Charles Michel; Prime Minister of Bulgaria, Boyko Borissov; Prime Minister of Croatia, Andrej Plenkovic; President of the Republic of Cyprus, Nicos Anastasiades; Prime Minister of Czech Republic, Andrej Babis; Prime Minister of Denmark, Lars Lokke Rasmussen; Prime Minister of Estonia, Juri Ratas; Prime Minister of Finland, Juha Sipila; President of the Republic of France, Emmanuel Macron; Federal Chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel; Prime Minister of Greece, Alexis Tsipras; Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orban; Taoiseach of Ireland, Leo Varadkar; Prime Minister of Italy, Giuseppe Conte; Prime Minister of Latvia, Krisjanis Karins; President of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaite; Prime Minister of Luxembourg, Xavier Bettel; Prime Minister of Malta, Joseph Muscat; Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mark Rutte; Prime Minister of Poland, Mateusz Morawiecki; Prime Minister of Portugal, Antonio Costa; President of Romania, Klaus Werner Iohannis; Prime Minister of Slovakia, Peter Pellegrini; Prime Minister of Slovenia, Marjan Sarec; President of the Government of Spain, Pedro Sanchez; Prime Minister of Sweden, Stefan Lofven.

7th May 2019

Dear Federal Chancellor/President/Prime Minister/Taoiseach,

On behalf of 55 civil society organisations from across Europe, we are writing to you to urge you **to nominate European commissioners who will support and serve present and future generations, and prioritise environment, quality of life and decent work.**

Every day, people across Europe struggle with growing poverty and inequality, deteriorating access to healthcare and worrying levels of youth unemployment. Meanwhile, many large companies pollute the environment, refuse to pay their fair share of taxes and wield disproportionate political influence. Urgent problems go unsolved – the climate crisis, air pollution killing hundreds of thousands of residents, refugees and migrants fleeing war treated inhumanely to name a few. Causes the EU once championed, such as gender equality and guaranteeing civil rights and labour rights, have stagnated. Too many people in Europe are being left behind.

Many Europeans feel frustrated and have lost trust in the capacity of EU institutions to respond to their aspirations, fuelling Euroscepticism across the continent. The rise of nationalist and xenophobic political forces across Europe is a worrying sign and a severe threat to the EU's fundamental values and to the European project itself.

Fundamental changes are needed today. The Sibiu Summit is set to be the culmination of discussions around the Future of Europe and is presented as a reason to celebrate a more united,

stronger and more democratic EU. **We, as civil society, want European policies, rules and standards that protect and safeguard well-being and health, ensure safety and freedom for people, and protect the climate and the environment. Europe needs to lead and support a just transition towards a sustainable economy and society for all people.**

The women and men you propose to lead the next European Commission will play a major role in making this vision of the EU a reality. We urge you to nominate candidates who will positively contribute to a vision of Europe that:

- Puts public interest first
- Achieves the 2030 agenda for sustainable development
- Respects the universal values of freedom, equality, democracy, the rule of law and human rights
- Delivers a strong social pillar in Europe
- Delivers decent, sustainable jobs for all
- Ensures the freedom of expression, association and assembly, including free media across Europe
- Takes urgent climate action to limit warming to 1.5°C and phases out fossil fuels quickly, showing global leadership
- Promotes sustainable and healthy food systems
- Ensures fair taxation
- Pursues a sustainable trade agenda
- Puts human rights at the centre of the response to migration
- Contributes to a people-centred and gender-sensitive EU budget
- Develops a needs-driven and responsible research and innovation policy
- Ensures a high level of protection of human health and well-being in all EU policies
- Ensures Europe cracks down on corruption both within and outside Europe and promotes greater transparency in member state and EU policy-making
- Ensures meaningful public participation in EU policy-making processes
- Ensures the corporate and the financial sector deliver for people and planet, not for profit

We need European commissioners who put the interests of the people of Europe, not corporations, first. We urge you to **consider candidates without conflicts of interest that may influence the independent performance of their duties.** Such conflicts of interest can arise from candidates' - or their spouses, partners or family members - financial investments or professional roles. Cases of this nature can not only impair the ability of these commissioners to act with impartiality, but they also taint the image of the EU institutions.

The EU must strive to truly represent the diversity of Europe's citizens by ensuring that at least 50% of the commissioners are women, and by guaranteeing it is an equal opportunities employer. This means that appointments for commissioners should not discriminate against people of

different ethnic, religious, and educational backgrounds, migrants, people with disabilities and LGBTI+ people.

As the leader of an EU member state, **you have a unique opportunity to nominate a candidate who will help restore faith in the EU, provide a better future for all of us, our children and the planet.**

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