

**Honourable President,**

it is an honour for our association La Nuova Europa to be able to send you, this year again, the voice of some young Europeans, from Berlin, Paris, Varese and Rome, who met for the occasion of the Ventotene Europa Festival, on Manifesto Island to debate and formulate proposals for the common future of Europe.

They belong to the generation that has suffered more the effects of the year of the pandemic; young people who, instead of living life's new experiences, had to respect social distances, isolate themselves and take classes from a certain distance, as you yourself, Honorable President, pointed out in your 2021 State of the Union Address. Also in that speech You argued that young people must "be able to shape the future of Europe", and this is precisely what the students, gathered there, demonstrated: not only is it their collective project, but they experience it as inescapably unified, without which there is no future.

The proclamation of 2022 as the European Year of Young People significantly denotes the importance that the Commission attached to young people who were able to deepen knowledge, debate, confront each other, sift through different hypotheses, make judgments: be part of the process of change that came to life with the Conference on the Future of Europe, a unique experience of active citizen participation to redesign the European Union, which unfortunately closed on May 9, but still allowed the young people who participated in the Ventotene Europa Festival to express their proposals in the most crucial areas for change, such as climate and digital transition, migration or social rights.

**Honourable President,**

We could have never imagined that, after that dramatic period resulting from the pandemic, we could sink into the blackest of black chasms, the return of war to our borders. The European institutions are at a crossroads: on one side the great powers the U.S. and China, on the other side Russia. It will be difficult to find a European way to the solution of the conflict, without putting a hand to the major structural transformations of the Treaties with regard to foreign policy, defence, energy, to name but a few.

The young people who met in Ventotene did not allow themselves to be intimidated by this new difficult scenario facing them, but rather they saw it as an accelerator of the transformations that will enable them to redefine a more equitable and sustainable economic and social orientation. While the great of the Earth discuss problems contingent on conflict resolution, they have turned to long-term planning, asked themselves the question of how to get to the point of securing peace, rather than thinking about how to stop the war. Differing languages, histories and cultures, yet united by common values: here there are five projects presented under a common denominator, the one of education: perhaps because it is close to their feeling, perhaps because truly peace can only be maintained through education. The title of their work is *My project for Peace*.

**Ventotene, 13 May 2022**

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## 1. OPENING THE EU TO THE WORLD

It's impossible to reach the aim of preserving a European identity without inflated nationalism, if we do not open our minds and our borders in order to maintain peace, not be seen as a threat and to collaborate with the rest of the world. We propose that:

1. The immigrants and refugees arriving in the EU should be equally sorted throughout the member countries.
  - a. The newly arriving immigrants will be equally distributed throughout the countries of the EU to ensure the efficacy of asylum requests. The countries that are most commonly receiving heavy immigration flows would not hold the majority of the pressure while taking care of the people in need.
2. An interdependency between countries is highly advertised for a world in which peace has more advantages and is more rewarding than war. It must be specified that the countries shall share equal interests in maintaining the peaceful relations.
  - a. The interdependency will be based on a mutual exchange of goods and services that are equally needed by the countries partaking in the collaboration. This could be done by offering services such as:
    - Sharing knowledge on specialized subjects by traveling to other countries in order to finish one's studies and offer support in areas of need such as architecture or medicine.
  - b. Moreover, helping developing countries will improve their living conditions, leading to a decrease in citizens choosing to flee their countries and seek a better way of living. This will lower the inflation of refugees in Europe and therefore resolve social tensions related to migration.
    - Even though we're aware that refugees can boost the European economy, we still want to give them a chance to live in their countries and not be forced to move away from what is rightfully theirs.
3. Furthermore, to benefit both Europe and the environment, we could receive solar power from northern African countries in exchange of medical aid and social help. To reach and keep peace, environmental maintenance is necessary.

SUMMARY: We have to stop giving out the wrong image of Europe as a union that isn't willing to collaborate and we have to portray ourselves to the world as an open minded and united system with honourable goals.

By: Elena Cirino, Carolina Negrão de Carvalho Barroso, Sveva Rembold, Natalia Dell'Aere, Lucilia D'Onofrio, Emma Baroffio, Lila Perrin-Jaïdi, Sofia Fichera, Mila Turci.

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## 2. PEACE NEEDS A VOICE AND WE DO TOO: PEACE STARTS WITH EDUCATION

Nowadays, in a time where unity and peace should be prioritized because they are endangered, cultural division seems to be increasing. Within and outside the EU, people prioritize their nationality and subsequently use nationalism to define themselves. By doing so, the principles of not only coexistence, but cooperation on which the European community relies seem to be at risk. This is why we are convinced that stronger European unity is needed to reinforce peace. As we know the younger generation plays an important role in change. We believe that as young Europeans we must grow stronger and unite: this can be done through stronger cooperation in education within the member states. Our proposal is to instate a Europe-wide net of international education and representation for Europe's young generation. For this idea to be accommodated some laws regarding educational authority would have to be adjusted.

1. We suggest the EU invest in the development of more public international elementary schools as a way to prepare the youth to attend public international middle schools and high schools. This would encourage communication and exchange between European countries, ERASMUS has worked in the past and we believe that this will too.
  - a. These schools would include free language lessons paid by the states, enabling everyone to attend and experience a multilingual environment once again creating a sense of community.
  - b. This would include mandatory courses of one of the three official EU languages (German, French or English) starting in the first grade in order to give students a greater capacity of international communication.
2. Furthermore, every school in every European country (even non international schools) should incorporate mandatory program that would resemble the "Scuola d'Europa" one.
  - a. The students would have a curriculum to follow set by the "Scuola d'Europa", composed of different themes to discuss and debate throughout the year. For example, the course could include specific measures concerning climate change.
  - b. Students will follow this course from the ninth grade on.
  - c. The courses will take place for a duration of 1h hour every two weeks.
  - d. Every course will be taken online with breakout rooms:
    - Learning one of the 3 official EU languages from a young age, would allow students from different countries to collaborate in one class.
    - Students will be divided into different online groups depending on which language they have been learning.
3. In addition, at the end of the school year, each school votes on the topic it wants the EU Commission to address.
  - a. After adding up all the schools' votes, the theme that gets the majority will represent that country, and each EU delegate has one vote (the number of blank votes must also be recognized).

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- b. Ideally, the European Commission would discuss this issue and hypothetically decide to enact a resolution. It would give voice to its future leaders and include them in this comprehensive peacekeeping project.
4. Finally, we strongly recommend the creation of a European website.
  - a. This will allow EU citizens to communicate their common ideas, regardless of their nationality, and allow students to continue conversations they have had within the educational system.
  - b. The "website" would be a platform composed of two different aspects: - An information page on which the EU can upload news articles and verified sources that can be consulted with confidence that there is no fake news. - An interactive page on which EU citizens can upload their ideas on different topics. This chat would have two categories: one where specific topics of interest to the user can be examined and another where it is possible to see which ideas are the most popular (with a "like" button). - It is pointed out that everything uploaded will be checked for any form of hate speech or false information of any kind.

SUMMARY: We encourage the EU to develop more multilingual international public schools that incorporate *La Scuola d'Europa* program, giving them themes to discuss and analyze; each student could elect the theme he or she feels is most important. This theme would be discussed by the European Commission. Finally, we propose a European platform to improve communication within the EU.

By: Olivia Copat, Carolina Negro de Cervalho Barroso, Valentine Boulman, Pauline Gilbert, Maia Maischberger, David Matteoni, Beatrice Ponea, Ava Pampouneau, Sara Mezzabarba, Maria Jaeger.

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### 3. INEQUALITY: social inequality as a cause of conflict

Peace refers to the harmony created when people come and live together as one, as such we chose to focus specifically on peace within the political entity that is the EU, and not peace between the EU and exterior states. We found that the main cause of conflict (inducing an obvious disturbance of peace) are social inequalities. This struggle is observed both between the countries that form our union and within individual nations. Thus, we propose a series of global reforms of economic and educational systems for the European Union, as these inequalities are characterized, in this context, by a continuous growth of economic differences between social classes, targeting unintentionally but systemically marginalized groups.

We propose a fundamental change in the educational model to homogenize the level of education that all European citizens receive, as we believe unity is taught, and a change in focus of the economy, centring, not itself and its very limited growth today, but the people that form our nations, as such our main proposition is the establishment of a "European Basic Income" based on the concept of the Universal Basic Income.

1. In a proper meritocracy (which unfortunately implies a certain hierarchy in value of labor) equal opportunities must be offered through an equalization institution, this institution happens to be a school. The difficulties in this regard are found in the nature of the school system, it is why we propose to reform both the system and the specific courses that should be offered to all students.
  - a. Private education represents the opportunity for those with disposable income to escape the realities of public education, and by only funding private institutes, it furthers the gap between public and private sector student's level of education. The individual who is offered to attend a private school will have the opportunity to encounter more advanced methods, better funded school with more activities proposed, an overall better facility. Making excellent education only accessible through monetary transactions or scholarships is making a better future only accessible to the wealthier.

The proposal is therefore to abolish the private school system. Reforming every private school to become public enables funds that parents with disposable income donate to schools to better establishments for all children, as well as a homogenization in the level of education. However, it is very important to make sure that neighborhoods won't fully determine the school a child is affiliated with, to ensure that there is diversity of social classes and that kids who have not benefited from the privileges that money offers can access opportunities that are given to the wealthier.

- b. To better understand how to combat inequalities and thus come together, we propose a series of reforms that would have a direct impact on scholar curricula:
  - a time in the afternoon for children to come into clubs or practice different subjects should be put in place to ensure that what are usually considered extracurricular activities (learning how to play an instrument, dance, draw, or play volleyball...) are accessible to every child as a way to further children's creative and/or athletic education and skills.
  - starting from secondary schools, insert a mandatory curricular subject that offers an understanding of theoretical fundamentals in the economic field and that, at the same time, prepares students to deal with taxes and loans.

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- Through the creation of a new class (it could be taught an hour every two weeks) that promotes equality, specifically equality in how we are allowed to use our bodies: sexual education, should be taught the very important concept of bodily autonomy as to explore the notions of consent and the right to possess your own body, thus try to give back, by teaching it, bodily agency to marginalized groups (women and BIPOC). Sexual education should also be a safe place for queer children and straight children to explore and celebrate the diversity of sexual identities and gender identities.
2. Our second proposal affronts general economic inequality. There is a need to protect human rights, a need to provide people with a basic standard of life.

A significant part of the European approach to securing these rights is various kinds of unemployment benefits. The flaws in the existing systems are, however, quite glaring. By nature, they disincentive labor as being unemployment benefits they are lost when one becomes employed. A fact that often leads to fraud as one attempts to work while maintaining these benefits, the controlling of this has proven to be a difficult challenge requiring large amounts of enforcement. This enforcement is a perfect example of another flaw in our current systems, namely, that they are overly bureaucratic. To control the employment status of each citizen, check that they are actively searching for said employment, in addition to factoring in any potential further benefits for specific circumstances (nb of kids, education cost...) an unbelievably slow, expensive, and inefficient system is formed. These, ineffective systems risk being severely restricting to the individual because they frequently attempt to mitigate their disincentivization of labour by eventually forcing people into jobs that may waste their qualifications or that they are unhappy in.

As a solution we propose a European Basic Income; a universal income for all EU citizens irrespective of any parameters. By European Basic Income it isn't necessarily implied an equal level of basic income for all member states, which would result in problems once considerations of discrepancies in cost of living are factored in, rather it would be more toward the direction of securing the amount necessary to survive whatever value that may be in different states. This system achieves the primary goal of securing human rights as well as avoiding many of the downfalls of the solutions now in place. It would be a simple and elegant system to implement requiring almost no bureaucracy, the bureaucracy would be reduced even further when one considers that a minimum wage would no longer be necessary and therefore wouldn't have to be enforced. Importantly the European Basic Income serves to better maintain the work incentive as it would not be lost with labor, all that is worked for is gained. Workers would no longer be under the pressure of losing their livelihood, which would encourage people to find a job fit for them and crucially also minimize worker exploitation.

**SUMMARY:** Inequality is one of the major catalysts for conflicts between people. As a result, we propose to act on the social and economic levels. Firstly, we see private education as an unfair advantage and should therefore be abolished. At the same time, more concrete changes in the system need to take place, such as changes in courses and offered activities. On the economic level, we propose a basic standard of life needs to be secured. This is done now largely through unemployment benefits, which have many flaws: they disincentive labor, restrict the freedom of people in the system, and are overly bureaucratic. As a solution, we propose a basic income for all EU citizens regardless of any parameters

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(European Basic Income). This system avoids the flaws of unemployment benefits as well as minimisation of worker exploitation.

By: Alessandro Di Stefano, Nicolò Schatz, Vittoria, Borgogno, Lulia Bajraktaraj, Giovanni Perna, Matteo Sava, Yamine Nada, Emma Valion.

#### 4. PEACE AND EDUCATION

Offering and promoting multicultural opportunities to achieve inclusion, acceptance, respect of other people, countries, cultures and accomplish peace.

Peace is not a permanent state but it must be continuously determined by our decisions. A crucial role is played by education in the maintaining of peace since it prevents ignorance, intolerance, misconception and disrespect. If people acknowledge and respect foreign people and cultures, they will be less likely to accept war because they are able to fully measure what consequences come with it. This can be achieved through education because, as a major part in the development of an individual, it can teach respect and open-mindedness. However, it is not enough emphasized, especially internationally, which causes inequalities and nationalism, reasons leading to war. Therefore, those are our propositions:

1. Building and promoting European Schools (Schola Europaea)
  - a. Build at least one European School in each member state in order to strengthen European identity.
  - b. These schools should be public and accessible to ensure the same chances for everyone.
  - c. This international perspective should not be limited to European Schools, but it should be included in every other school's program, by studying documents from other countries in history class, for example. In addition to this, they should teach the construction and function of the European Union.
2. Offering exchange programs in all schools
  - a. Offering exchange programs in all schools
  - b. Each student stays in a peer's family while abroad and when the latter comes to the other country, he stays in the student's family.
  - c. To make it accessible to everyone, families with a lower income get financial support from the EU for the travel.
3. Mandatory contribution to society in scholastic career
  - a. Introducing a compulsory number of social working hours per year that can be done in- or outside the country through collaborations with international organizations (such as UNICEF, Save the Children and others) for example.

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- b. The students can decide the type of activities and it is up to them how to distribute the hours outside of school time.

**SUMMARY:** To ensure peace, it is important to fight against intolerance through education on diverse cultures and countries. To do so, the European Union has to expose people more to diversity and implement these measures: building and promoting of European Schools, offering more exchange programs and establishing mandatory social contributions.

**By:** Francesco de Totis, Madeleine Zappia-Riva, Charline Rambour Martens, Thomas Schwietz, Francesca Cerosimo, Hanna Heidt.

## 5. IDEAS ON HOW TO ACT IN CASE OF WAR: Emergency plan

### 1. Putting in place a crisis plan

As seen during the Ukrainian crisis, decision-making takes days or even weeks. Having a plan of action that can be executed quickly without strenuous debate is important. European foreign policies must be unified and agreed upon beforehand in order to act immediately. The ideas of our plan are:

- a. using sanctions as a measure to limit the abilities of other countries (only possible if there is economical co-dependency)
- b. a joint fund that all European countries pay into depending on their GDP, that can be used if need be, for example for humanitarian aid
- c. building a defensive European army, with centralized funding. The first unit, already planned for 2025, will consist of 5000 soldiers; after 2025, more financial resources will be allocated to provide more soldiers and weaponry.

### 2. European States should not send troops or weapons into a country.

- a. We must prioritize solving conflicts diplomatically: it is necessary to strengthen diplomacy by maintaining economic co-dependency between EU and the rest of the world.

**SUMMARY:** In times of war, it is paramount to find diplomatic solutions quickly. To put an end to war in a peaceful way, EU States should share a common foreign policy, that reflects the core values of the union. In addition, we suggest the creation of a common crisis fund, and the gradual creation of a common defensive EU army.

**By:** Sara El Jaafari, Leander Griesinger, Philippine Balmadier, Jeanne Brigot, Florenz Hardt, Iula Alessandra, Francesca Nunnari, Livia De Longis.

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