



Draft

Tabled by: EGP Committee (European Green Party)

Title: **Coronavirus Recovery: Let's build a better tomorrow!**

Draft text

1 *Please keep in mind that several parts of this draft resolution will need*
2 *revision as we get closer to the vote at the 31st EGP Council. The Committee*
3 *will coordinate with Member Parties in order to table amendments aimed at*
4 *updating the resolution.*

5 Our world is going through one of the worst crises we have ever experienced.
6 Already more than 300,000 people globally, including many healthcare personnel,
7 have died from coronavirus. Our thoughts go first and foremost to them all and
8 their families and friends.

9 This crisis has caused tens of millions of people to lose their jobs and now
10 face a situation of economic uncertainty and suffering. It has also shown us the
11 crucial need for well-funded healthcare services and strong welfare states. We
12 express our deepest gratitude to all the workers and volunteers in essential
13 fields whose efforts and courage have allowed our societies to keep on
14 functioning during these difficult times.

15 Although we remain preoccupied by the current crisis and the need to avoid a
16 second wave of infections, we also believe that it is essential to prepare for
17 the 'day after'. We must make our societies and economies more resilient to
18 these and other shocks, as well as trying to prevent them.

19 As Greens, we believe the only way to recover from this crisis is through action
20 at the **European and global scale**. We cannot face the current challenges by

21 falling back on nationalist egoisms.

22 **Therefore, we deeply regret the lack of European solidarity** we witnessed at the
23 beginning of the pandemic which caused many citizens to lose trust in the EU,
24 especially in the countries most affected by the coronavirus. In those
25 countries, instead, trust was directed to other international partners who were
26 quick about sending support, but often with the aim to weaken the EU.

27 As time passed, EU institutions and Member States came together to show ambition
28 in working on a common strategy to recover from the crisis, striving for
29 solidarity-based solutions.

30 As European Greens, however, we believe further commitments and proposals must
31 now be put forward. It is time for Europe to show true leadership in proposing a
32 new paradigm that has at its centre the **protection of people and the planet**,
33 rather than markets, multinationals and wealthy individuals. Europe must lead
34 the way in shaping globalisation around **environmental, social and fiscal**
35 **justice**. Europe must also show leadership in **global solidarity** – starting from
36 within its own borders – by making recovery funds available also for its
37 candidate members and neighbouring countries, as well as supporting humanitarian
38 aid, medical support and debt relief for poorer countries facing the disastrous
39 consequences of the pandemic.

40 **HEALTH RESPONSE**

41 Healthcare and other public services must be viewed as **commons** that we need to
42 protect and fund adequately. Neoliberal recipes which rely on cutting public
43 spending and on the functioning of markets to deliver sufficient healthcare,
44 have obviously failed. Member States need to allocate adequate resources and
45 stop viewing public services as items of expenditure to be cut whenever budgets
46 are tight.

47 This crisis has made evident the need to **reduce our dependency** on importing
48 pharmaceutical and medical products and to relocalise parts of these economic
49 sectors in Europe. At the same time, the crisis has also made clear the
50 importance of global cooperation within the framework of international
51 institutions such as the World Health Organization, especially in view of
52 developing shared responses and coordinating research for treatments and
53 vaccines.

54 The EU must strive to make vaccines and treatments available and affordable for
55 all. Now is the time to change our model to one based on open science, where

56 pharmaceutical products are not made more costly by patent licensing and non-
57 transparent research and development costs.

58 To increase crisis emergency preparedness and better coordinate responses, we
59 must strengthen the **EU Civil Protection Mechanism**. The rescEU programme for
60 stockpiling medical materials must be expanded to include more medical and
61 crisis-related supplies. Moreover, we must enhance **prevention mechanisms** by
62 adequately financing the relevant EU agencies and making sure Member States
63 strengthen their cooperation and exchange of information and expertise in this
64 field.

65 The European Commission should initiate a **European Health Force** that would enable
66 the deployment of doctors and nurses specifically trained for various kinds of
67 emergencies in all EU hospitals.

68 In general, **EU research programmes, as well as tools for better communication**
69 **and exchange of information and best practices**, particularly in essential
70 sectors, must be fostered and further financed.

71 Furthermore, given the current phase of the crisis, we believe that it is
72 particularly vital that all public health responses to the pandemic and its
73 consequences, at all levels, must integrate and consider mental health concerns.

74 **A GREEN AND JUST RECOVERY**

75 *(Depending on the Commission proposal for a recovery plan, this chapter will*
76 *obviously need revisions)*

77 The recovery from this crisis has already resulted in enormous expenditure, from
78 both the Member States and the EU, which would have been unthinkable a few
79 months ago. The austerity dogma has proved inadequate in responding to such a
80 crisis. On the contrary, safety nets provided by well-funded welfare states,
81 have been essential to guarantee an income and a social safety net to the many
82 who have lost their jobs during the crisis.

83 Now is the time to shift to a new paradigm whereby the economy and finances are
84 put in the service of society and the protection of our **commons**, and not vice
85 versa. We are and will continue to dramatically increase public debt, the weight
86 of which will be carried mainly **by future generations**. We owe it to them to make
87 sure this debt leads to the green and just transition we need to make Europe
88 more resilient and stronger in the face of emergency.

89 ***Fair and ambitious financing***

90 As much as this has been a symmetric crisis, its consequences, both in terms of
91 health and economic impacts, are extremely asymmetric. Member States have very
92 different resources available to allocate to stimulus plans, state aid and other
93 measures to mitigate the economic consequences. This is why the EU must
94 **guarantee that the recovery is fair** and that the financial burden to save
95 European lives, jobs and economic systems is shared among the Member States and
96 no country left behind.

97 The massive ECB bond-buying programme is a very positive, and fully legitimate,
98 tool for funding the recovery. However, it is clear that the European common
99 monetary policy alone will not be sufficient to tackle the consequences of the
100 crisis or address the increasingly evident inequalities between European
101 economies.

102 This is why, as Greens, we demand that the Commission and the Member States
103 boost the Recovery Package further by increasing it to at least 5 trillion euros
104 over the next 12 years – first and foremost through a consistent increase in
105 their contributions to the EU's long-term budget (MFF).

106 Moreover, they must commit to **mutualisation of debt, for example, by issuing**
107 **eurobonds**. They should also step up their political ambition for **a real**
108 **solidarity-based common fiscal policy** that would allow the EU to collect its **own**
109 **resources**, notably through European taxation, such as the carbon border
110 adjustment, plastic and kerosene taxes as well as contributions from
111 multinationals, particularly those in the digital and financial sectors (e.g.
112 the Financial Transaction Tax).

113 ***A resilient economy***

114 Make no mistake: only if these massive resources for the recovery plan are used
115 to protect people and the planet will we be able to re-emerge from this crisis
116 stronger than before and with the ability to mitigate its long-term socio-
117 economic consequences.

118 Therefore, the EU recovery plan must act as a powerful driver towards a socially
119 resilient and climate-neutral economic system. The EU must enable a real
120 **European industrial policy with the Green Deal at its core**, moving investments
121 from a fossil-dependent and overproducing system to a climate-neutral circular
122 economy; financing the energy transition as well as innovations and technologies
123 making production more sustainable; and **unleashing the enormous potential for**
124 **the creation of green and quality jobs** in these sectors. Relocation of
125 production and shortening of supply chains should be considered, especially in

126 essential sectors such as food, health and pharmaceutical production.

127 Specific plans have to be put in place for the recovery of sectors heavily
128 affected by the crisis, such as **culture and hospitality. The care economy**, which
129 has proven to be the core pillar of our welfare systems, also needs more and
130 better support. Social entrepreneurship, stemming from experiences and
131 solidarity initiatives developed during the pandemic, should be encouraged and
132 supported.

133 As for **tourism**, investments are required at the national and European level to
134 compensate for the loss of jobs and income, first and foremost in territories
135 heavily dependent on tourism, like islands or coastal areas, in the
136 Mediterranean and elsewhere. At the same time, the entire tourism industry must
137 evolve **from its current mass and low-cost model to a new sustainable and quality**
138 **one**. This will require a change of paradigm based on new cooperative business
139 models as well as on the circular economy and local culture and products aiming
140 to involve local communities more and ensuring that most of the added-value
141 created remains in the local territories.

142 Furthermore, we call on the European Commission to ensure that Member States
143 agree **to a common framework for public investment** that would privilege the bail-
144 out of SMEs and other stakeholders most affected by the crisis. They should make
145 sure that funding is not given to companies that avoid paying taxes via fiscal
146 dumping, nor to those whose registered offices, or those main shareholders, are
147 based in **tax havens** (including within the EU). To access funding, companies
148 should commit to not resorting to lay-offs except in cases where they can show
149 they are absolutely crucial to the survival of the business, capping their CEOs'
150 salaries, and creating quality jobs in the future. Bailed-out companies must not
151 **have paid dividends or bonuses** during the pandemic in Europe and must commit not
152 to do so until the economic effects of the crisis are over.

153 ***Building green resilience***

154 This crisis has not only revealed the direct link between the degradation of
155 biodiversity and the transmission of deadly viruses from animals to humans, but
156 also that air pollution is enhancing the mortality rate of the virus. Moreover,
157 we know that the consequences of climate change and the dramatic loss of
158 biodiversity we are witnessing are responsible for other major crises which we
159 are and will continue to face at the global level.

160 However, as Greens, we believe it is still possible to reverse this trend and to
161 mitigate the impacts of these crises. However, to do so, the EU must take the

162 lead in the fight against climate change and adopt an ambitious Climate Law
163 which enshrines the goal of reducing its economy-wide emissions **by at least 65%**
164 **by 2030** and reaching **climate-neutrality by 2040** at the latest. The European Green
165 Deal must enable the **energy transition to 100% renewables** and the phasing out of
166 coal by 2030 and other fossil fuels as soon as possible thereafter.

167 To achieve these goals, the **recovery package has to be a driving force towards a**
168 **real transition** to a more resilient and sustainable economic model.

169 In that regard, we demand that big companies receiving public financial support
170 must provide plans for aligning their economic activities with the aim of
171 limiting global heating to under 1.5°C. Strict **green conditionalities** must be
172 applied, especially in the case of bail outs for companies in aviation and other
173 carbon-intensive sectors.

174 The Commission should ensure that the recovery package clearly **excludes either**
175 **direct or indirect support to the nuclear and fossil-fuel industries.**

176 In the framework of the recovery strategy, major investments are required to
177 massively reduce **environmental pollution and energy consumption**, and to strongly
178 promote clean energy. Incentives for investment in renewable energies need
179 support alongside an **ambitious strategy for building renovation** which will
180 create new employment, stimulate local economies and increase energy efficiency.

181 Furthermore, the EU and its Member States must invest more in **environmentally**
182 **friendly transport**, such as trains and public transport, as well as for example,
183 by making permanent the expansion of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure that
184 many cities have adopted to promote social distancing.

185 Finally, the **EU biodiversity strategy** must ensure the EU leads the fight for the
186 restoration of biodiversity through the adoption of ambitious binding targets
187 and their promotion at the global level. Furthermore, the lessons from this
188 pandemic should accelerate the adoption of a **zero-pollution action plan for air,**
189 **water and soil, and an ambitious chemicals strategy for sustainability.**

190 ***Towards a real Social Europe***

191 The EU and its Member States have to do *whatever it takes* to make sure the
192 social impacts of this crisis are reduced to a minimum and that no one is left
193 behind. Unemployment is rising and will only get worse in the upcoming months
194 and years. In addition to the financial stimulus, the EU and its Member States
195 must guarantee further social policies to protect their citizens, in particular

196 younger workers, whose rights were already weakened by austerity policies and
197 the 2008 financial crisis.

198 We welcome the adoption of the SURE plan, although the Commission should go
199 further and adopt a permanent **reinsurance unemployment scheme**, which also
200 includes self-employed workers. Moreover, the **Youth Guarantee** should be boosted
201 and made compulsory in all Member States.

202 We strongly stand behind our proposal for a **minimum income directive**, more
203 necessary than ever to guarantee that inequality between different parts of
204 Europe does not grow further with the crisis. **Emergency basic income** schemes
205 should be encouraged to provide income particularly for those workers who will
206 have to transition into different professional fields, due to the pandemic.
207 **Working-time reduction** schemes should be promoted in order to redistribute work
208 among more people, as well as to promote a healthy work-life balance. **Compulsory**
209 **paid sick leave** all over Europe must, of course, remain a key priority.

210 The EU should guarantee the rights of all those workers, often irregular
211 migrants, whose work has proven more than ever to be essential for the stability
212 of our societies during the pandemic, especially in the private care and
213 agricultural sectors. We call for the **regularisation of these workers** and their
214 inclusion, as well as those of other migrants and refugees, in our healthcare
215 system. The crisis has also put the migration status of many people at risk due
216 to administrative delays: no migrant should suffer penalties as a result.

217 ***Women on the front lines***

218 The gender dimension of this crisis has to be addressed: women, whose
219 competences are undervalued and therefore underpaid, are **most often the workers**
220 **in essential professions**. Even as women deal with unequal wages for equal work,
221 they are also most affected by the greater family and care burden, leading to
222 even more unpaid and unrecognised work.

223 Therefore, the Commission cannot delay the adoption of the **Directive on gender**
224 **pay gap** and upgrading its **provisions on parental leave**. Member States must also
225 urgently adopt all measures to prevent a step back on gender equality in their
226 countries, ensuring that, for example, if school closures continue, women will
227 not be unfairly penalised for any delays in their return to work.

228 Moreover, lockdowns have seen an increase in reports of **gender-based violence**.
229 EU legislation must be proposed to combat this and EU funds for these victims
230 should be made available. It is more than time that the EU and all the Member

231 States ratify the Istanbul Convention.

232 ***Food sovereignty and security***

233 For many, this crisis has revealed **the fragility of our food supply systems and**
234 **our dependence on world markets**. Clearly, real food sovereignty has yet to be
235 achieved and our unsustainable methods of production have proven inadequate in
236 the face of emergency.

237 To establish food sovereignty and security of supply, while also mitigating the
238 biodiversity and climate crisis, the **common agricultural policy (CAP) must**
239 **immediately change course** to support ecological, regional, diversified, small
240 and medium-sized farms – and stop funding the current agro-industrial disaster.
241 Such a shift has the potential to create tens of thousand of new green jobs and
242 prevent the dramatic loss of small and medium-sized farms in Europe.

243 Our agriculture should be made much less dependent on harmful pesticides and
244 synthetic fertilisers. Orienting our production towards an agro-ecological model
245 will ensure healthy and environmentally friendly food for all Europeans.

246 **Key production must be relocalised** within the limits of the EU ecosystem. The EU
247 must prioritise **internal and regional markets** over exports, give preference to
248 **shorter supply chains** and protect them from **unfair international competition**.

249 The corona crisis has also highlighted **the dramatic lack of workers in the**
250 **agricultural sector and the poor conditions** of seasonal workers in our
251 countries. We must address this issue in the next CAP reform, making sure funds
252 are granted with priority being given to small and organic farmers and that
253 farmers and farm workers are paid at a fair level across Europe.

254 Finally, to further tackle the consequence of the economic crisis, measures will
255 be needed to combat food poverty in large segments of the population and to
256 ensure that all Europeans have access to affordable quality food.

257 ***Education and culture: access for all***

258 To avoid further increasing the inequalities among children in Europe, Member
259 States must put in place all the policies necessary to provide equal **access to**
260 **education for all students**. This may mean ensuring a return to school when it is
261 possible to do so safely or guaranteeing equal access to online tools.

262 At the European level, all students participating in **Erasmus programmes** should
263 be supported within the framework of the emergency and their extra costs fully
264 reimbursed. They should also be supported to make sure they do not lose their
265 academic year, and these programmes should resume as soon as it is safe to do
266 so.

267 The **cultural sector**, which is facing some of the harshest socio-economic
268 consequences, must also be supported. This requires considerable funding, as
269 well as policies to protect artists and cultural workers, and giving citizens
270 equal access to culture.

271 ***Responding to the crisis through digitalisation and new technology***

272 The corona crisis has enhanced the major impact of digitalisation on our lives
273 as well as the costs to bear for those without access to digital services and
274 information. Students with unequal access to online education is a clear example
275 of why we must strive to guarantee equal access to the internet and to close **the**
276 **digital divide in Europe.**

277 **Digitalisation of essential services** must become a priority for governments and
278 for the Commission, as this is an important factor for increasing the resilience
279 of our societies and for creating **jobs** in the field of new technologies.

280 The EU must do everything it can to unleash the power of innovators to develop
281 creative solutions to the crisis. Initiatives, such as the pan-European
282 hackathon organised by the Commission in partnership with civil society, are a
283 step in the right direction.

284 As for the use of tracing apps to collect data to track the spread of infection,
285 we believe that the risks associated with their use outweigh the potential
286 benefits. If tracing apps are put in place by governments, this must be done in
287 strict compliance **with EU data protection rules**, their use must be absolutely
288 voluntary and an exit strategy for their use must be clearly defined. **Mass**
289 **surveillance** must not become a reality, either in Europe or elsewhere.

290 **NO QUARANTINE OF DEMOCRACY**

291 To respond to the health emergency, national governments had to put emergency
292 measures in place. Although most countries are gradually lifting some of the
293 restrictions, a second wave of infections would result in measures being
294 tightened again. As European Greens, we demand that **emergency measures must**
295 **always be time limited, proportionate, strictly related to the health crisis and**

296 **subject to regular democratic scrutiny.**

297 While this has been the case in most EU countries, the Hungarian Government has
298 been clearly misusing the crisis in an attempt to further weaken the already
299 fragile rule of law in Hungary. It has declared an unlimited state of emergency
300 and introduced a series of draconian measures – especially directed towards the
301 media, local authorities and opposition parties as well as transgender people –
302 clearly not justifiable as a response to the pandemic.

303 The Polish government has tried to benefit politically from the pandemic by
304 changing the electoral code and bending the constitution, in order to hold
305 presidential elections in the middle of the crisis.

306 We urge the Commission and the Council to condemn these attempts and demand that
307 the General Affairs Council put the **Article 7 proceedings pending against**
308 **Hungary and Poland** back on the agenda as soon as possible. We also demand that
309 the Commission includes language in the MFF that would require compliance with
310 the rule of law in order to receive EU funds, as well as including an option to
311 distribute funds directly to local authorities.

312 In other European countries, some of the emergency response measures implemented
313 have also further resulted in discrimination and abuse of authority that the EU
314 cannot tolerate. The role of parliaments, including the EU Parliament, has been
315 severely limited. In the recovery phase, **parliaments and citizens must be**
316 **returned their full democratic powers**, as the measures enacted now will shape the
317 world we will live in and cannot be taken solely at the executive level.

318 Governments should not use the pandemic as a pretext to weaken **social and labour**
319 **rights**. If these rights must be limited due to extraordinary circumstances,
320 limitations should be proportionate and strictly limited to the length of the
321 immediate crisis. **Whistle-blowers** exposing wrongdoings and abuses related to the
322 crisis must also be protected.

323 **EUROPEAN LEADERSHIP FOR GLOBAL CHANGE**

324 The corona crisis is a global crisis. No country or continent has been spared
325 from its health and economic impacts, and no country will be able to face these
326 consequences alone. Therefore, the measures taken in response to these
327 consequences have to be shared globally. The **EU has a clear responsibility** to
328 lead in pursuing these efforts, in particular due to the lack of goodwill shown
329 by other global powers such as the USA and China. Initiatives, such as the
330 donors' conference on vaccine research called for by the EU in May, are positive

331 steps forward.

332 The EU should take the lead in supporting countries in difficulty, through
333 humanitarian aid and medical support. **We oppose the ban on the export of medical**
334 **supplies outside of the EU** which was implemented at the beginning of the crisis.
335 While in the long term the EU should certainly support developing countries in
336 building their own independence in these fields, depriving them of supplies from
337 our markets when they are most needed risks catastrophic consequences and
338 damages their ability to manage the crisis.

339 Furthermore, the EU should give a strong signal regarding **debt cancellation for**
340 **impoverished countries**. This could at least partially alleviate the situation
341 and enable them to better plan for the aftermath of the crisis.

342 The EU must take the lead **on re-strengthening multilateralism and global**
343 **governance**. It should re-launch a cooperative approach, not only for crisis
344 management and health but also on issues such as climate and biodiversity, the
345 global commons and human rights.

346 Finally, the EU must profoundly reform its own trade policy and review its trade
347 agreements with other countries. The aim of this reform must be to build a **more**
348 **resilient and sustainable trade system** that does not undermine environmental and
349 social progress either for Europe or for our trading partners.

350 **BUILDING ALLIANCES FOR A BETTER TOMORROW**

351 To overcome this global emergency, we must work with local, national, European
352 and global partners, and focus on involving citizens through truly participatory
353 processes.

354 In this sense, the Conference on the Future of Europe must become a powerful
355 tool to make the citizens protagonists for the kind of change they want to see
356 in Europe. This crisis has shown us that the EU needs more competences on issues
357 such as health, as well as more resources and less barriers from the veto power
358 of the Member States. As Greens, we will continue to fight for a strong European
359 democracy as well as to ensure that the response to this crisis is not an
360 attempt to simply go back to business as usual, but rather a push to **embrace the**
361 **radical change** which now appears more necessary than ever.

362 European Greens believe that the responses to this crisis and the tools to
363 prevent new ones can only be built through synergies and cooperation between all
364 the different parts of our society. This is why we will commit to opening spaces

365 for reflection and interaction, not only among our member parties but also with
366 actors from **civil society, from the scientific, cultural and academic community,**
367 **the business world, and other political families.**

368 We can only overcome this crisis if we work together in good faith and **build**
369 **meaningful alliances.** Only by standing together and combining our efforts will
370 we be able to build a resilient Europe and emerge from this crisis into a better
371 tomorrow.