



Prime Minister António Costa
Portuguese Permanent Representation to the European Union
12 Avenue de Cortenbergh
1040 Bruxelles
Belgium

Brussels
25th February 2021

Open letter to the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Subject: Participation of Civil Society Organisations with a focus on the just transition at the Porto Summit in May 2021

Dear Prime Minister Costa,

The Social Summit, which will be held in Porto on 7-8 May 2021, will focus on how to strengthen the social dimension of Europe to meet the challenges of climate change and the digital transition, in order to ensure equal opportunities for all and that no one is left behind.

One of the three major stated priorities you are committed to during the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union is the implementation of the Social Pillar of the European Union (EPSR) to ensure a fair and inclusive climate and digital transition.

Beyond EU heads of states or governments and EU institutions, the Summit officially aims to gather social partners and other key stakeholders among which civil society actors, so that all stakeholders can work together towards turning the commitments already endorsed by EU leaders as regards the European Pillar of Social Rights into concrete action.

In this context and with these priorities and objectives set, we, the Greens/EFA Group in the European parliament, would expect Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) working on the just transition of the European Union towards a more sustainable economic model to be invited to participate to this Summit. This should include CSOs working mainly on social issues but also CSOs working on climate change, the energy transition and environmental protection.

Dear Prime Minister, together with Commission President Ursula von der Leyen you have already reached out to the heads of states and governments and EU institutions. Reports are that regarding the attendance of external stakeholders, European social partners have been invited, some CSOs focusing on social policies are in the process of being associated, but no other bodies are expected to attend the meeting. There has been no published way to attend beyond an invitation.

As elected representatives of European citizens to the European Parliament, we strongly recommend that social but also environmental CSOs, which are valuable public policy-making partners and stakeholders, be invited to share their analysis and recommendations as regards the implementation of the EPSR in a way that is synergistic with the objectives of the Green deal and the struggle to limit climate change and its socio-economic impacts.

The Green deal recognizes that climate change and the limited resources of our planet require us to pursue a just transition for all, which leaves no one behind. Social policies and transition policies are deeply interlinked and it is crucial that the European Union and its Member-States articulate a common and comprehensive vision to achieve social well-being in sustainable economies. We have more chances to achieve this with the participation of social and environmental CSOs which provide expertise, a principled approach and innovative ideas to the table.

With our best regards,

Ska Keller

co-president of the Greens/EFA Group

Philippe Lamberts

co-president of the Greens/EFA Group

Mounir Satouri

rapporteur for the Just Transition Fund in the EMPL Committee, Greens/EFA MEP

on behalf of the Greens/EFA Group