

# EFA GROUP

Activity report  
2019-2024



EUROPEAN **FREE** ALLIANCE  
in the **European Parliament**



THE **GREENS/EFA**  
in the **European Parliament**

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# PRE SIDENTIAL WORDS



Dear reader,

As EFA Group president, I have the pleasure to present to you our activity report for the mandate (2019-2024).

In this booklet, you will have the opportunity to see the main endeavours that the EFA Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have done during the last 5 years.

The European Free Alliance (EFA) in the European Parliament is a group of MEPs fighting for the right to self-determination, linguistic and cultural diversity, international solidarity, peace, social justice, climate justice, rights and democracy, an economy which works for the people, and vibrant local and rural communities.

This mandate has been challenging, to say the least. It started with an unprecedented situation where, a MEP, our EFA Group President at the time, Oriol Junqueras, was prevented to seat in the European Parliament despite being democratically elected by the people of Catalonia. The reason: he was imprisoned for having organized a self-determination referendum in Catalonia in 2017. Then, the term continued with multiple and unexpected crises. At the beginning of 2020, Brexit became a reality, and for the very first time, a Member State left the EU. Thus, the people of Scotland and Northern Ireland left the EU while they had never voted for Brexit.

In the course of 2020, a global pandemic killed millions of people; halted the entire global economy, and put under pressure our healthcare system. In 2022, the war came back in our continent due to the brutal invasion of Ukraine by Putin's Russia.

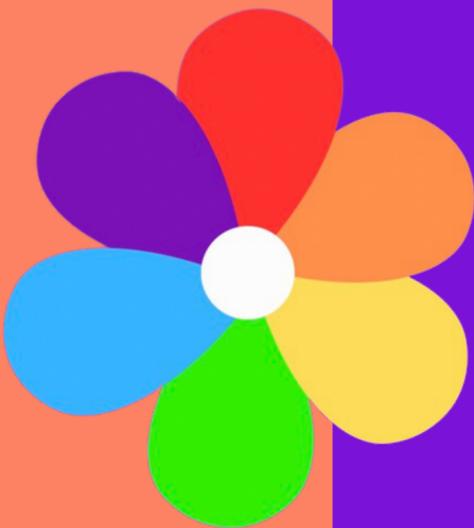
And finally, in 2023, after the despicable attacks committed by Hamas against innocent civilians on October the 7th, the subsequent disproportionate Israeli military reaction in Gaza led to an unprecedented death toll and humanitarian crisis in the besieged Strip.

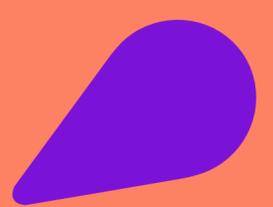
Despite all these crises, all these challenges, all these difficulties, EFA has kept its political compass and has been working in the interest of the stateless nations, regions and minorities in Europe and beyond.

From plenary speeches to missions abroad; from written questions to visits different territories; from conferences to amendments on EU legislations, during the last 5 years EFA MEPs have been active in the European Parliament, in their respective territories and also abroad to defend our fundamental values and common principles as you will discover in this activity report.

Last but not least, if the struggle for a more fairer and more democratic Europe is far from being over, "the dream shall never die".

Yours,  
Jordi Solé, EFA President, Catalonia





## Caucus & campaigns

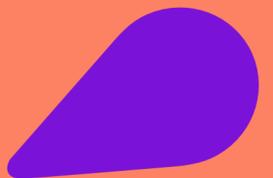
During this mandate, EFA has been particularly active on defending the right to self-determination. In 2022, **EFA created its very first autonomous political campaign focused on “self-determination & multi-level governance”**. On September 2023, it organised in Barcelona - the day before the Diada - a public conference on independence, gathering Independentist leaders from the Basque country, the Faroese islands, Québec, Scotland, Wales, and, of course, Catalonia. Moreover in 2021, EFA was one of the founding actors of the Self-determination Caucus, which is cross-party group of MEPs fighting for self-determination. Its members have been very active and, in January 2024, in presence of the Presidents of the Catalan, Corsican and Basque governments, **the Caucus presented the very first proposal of EU law (regulation) on how to implement the right to self-determination in Europe, without vetoes nor need for treaty change. EFA fights for Self-determination.**



## Islands

In the EU policy making process, too often, islands are not considered correctly while drafting and adopting EU laws. Islands, and their respective populations, have to face permanent natural handicaps in several policy sectors (transport, food, energy, water management, waste management, tourism, housing affordability...). Therefore, on top of the already existing status for outermost regions and territories, **EFA has been pushing for the creation of a special status and agenda for islands** in order to consider islands' permanent natural handicaps into the EU law. In June 2022, the EP adopted a report in that direction, and EFA has taken an active role in its drafting, adoption and dissemination. EFA cares about islands.





# Linguistic diversity

Unity in diversity is the EU motto and EFA cherishes it. However, since the very beginning of the European integration, linguistic and cultural diversity has been limited to state cultures and languages while the EU is much more diverse than that. Since its creation, EFA has been pledging for the recognition and official status for other EU languages like Catalan, Basque, Galician, and even Welsh before Brexit. Moreover EFA also fights for the promotion and protection of minority and regional languages, especially supporting immersive education and increasing their presence in the digital sphere **EFA will keep on demanding the official status for Catalan, Basque and Galician and on fighting for rights for every European languages** until linguistic justice is reached. **EFA strives for linguistic rights.**



# Democracy

Democracy is at stake all over the world, but also within the EU. The far right is rising in several member states, like in Spain, France & the Netherlands to name a few. In some cases, it has already been in government, like in Poland, or it is currently in government, like in Hungary or in Italy. Furthermore, democratically elected politicians have been spied and/or jailed and/or forced to go on exile, like in Catalonia. Finally, a democratically elected MEP (Oriol Junqueras) has been deprived of his fundamental rights and maintained in jail despite being elected to the EP.

**During this mandate EFA MEPs have used all possible opportunities to defend another Europe, a Europe of all Peoples.** EFA successfully introduced several amendments in legislative and non-legislative reports to promote multi-level governance and to strengthen the role of the regional/sub-state parliaments. EFA actively supported Junqueras's and all MEPs' rights before the EU Court of Justice. During plenary debates, in public conferences, or even during the unprecedented exercise of the Conference on the Future of Europe, in which EU citizens were involved, EFA has been present and active by promoting its values and ideas. EFA promotes a European Union based on diversity & subsidiarity. **EFA stands up for democracy.**





## Rights of the Peoples

During this mandate, EFA MEPs have been vocal and pro-active to defend the rights of the peoples all over the world. From Nagorno Karabakh to Western Sahara, from Ukraine to the inindigenous peoples in Latin America, from Kurdistan to Palestine, EFA have been the voice of the voiceless and has put the focus on the right of the stateless nations and minorities, which are too often undermined by the mainstream parties and realpolitik. For EFA, international solidarity is a must and does not depend on the colour of the state government. For us, peoples' rights (women's rights, children's rights, access to and master of natural resources...) should never be traded off. **EFA fights for Self-determination in Europe but also all over the globe.**



## Latin-America

During this mandate, with the support of EFA, the EU has adopted a new strategic partnership with Latin American in order to renew and strengthen our political, economic and cultural ties with the sub-continent. In this framework, EFA promoted and supported democracy in the region by being present in different EU electoral missions (Guatemala, Colombia) and/or different international fora (Mexico, Argentina, Dominican Republic...) for instance. EFA also supported rule of law, individual rights and collective rights which are under attack in the sub-continent (Brazil under Bolsonaro for instance). However, EFA has always criticised the EU economic policy in the region, and particularly the EU-MERCOSUR free trade agreement. EFA supports exchanges that respects higher environmental standards, reduces inequalities, fights corruption and protects human rights defenders and indigenous people's rights to master their own lands and resources, but opposes old fashioned free trade agreements, which deepen existing asymmetries. **EFA stands up for indigenous people's rights.**



## Global South

EFA solidarity is not limited to the stateless nations and minorities in Europe or across the globe, EFA solidarity goes towards all the people in need. From the fight against climate change, in order to avoid some Pacific islands from despairing ; to the protection of democracy in Mexico, where journalists are killed ; from the freedom of expression in Iran to the defense of women's rights in Congo; from the fight against the return of the Taliban in Afghanistan to the right of autochthone populations to protect their own land from being exploited by multinationals. If there is no unique global south, there shouldn't be double standards in the EU foreign affairs policies either. The EU must lead by example and be coherent. EFA is the party which remains consistent on Democracy, human rights and international law all over the Planet. **EFA stands up for international law, human rights, women rights and democracy.**



## Ukraine

On February 24nd 2022, Vladimir Putin started a brutal and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. This invasion killed thousands of innocent women, children and men. It threatened lives of millions and many had to flee to the EU which must remain a safe haven for people forced to leave their home and seeking asylum. This war also shook our European Union and our democracies. Democracy must prevail. EFA condemns Putin's aggression.

**EFA stands by all the peoples of Ukraine, including national minorities, and EFA continues to stand for peace, and respect for international law.**

# JORDI SOLÉ

## Green hydrogen

Green hydrogen is a key player for climate change mitigation and achieving the Green Deal objectives. **Jordi Solé has been fighting for the phase-out of fossil hydrogen, to end the dependency on Russian gas, and to invest in renewable energy sources.** In the negotiations for the European Hydrogen Bank, Jordi Solé pushed to keep the scope solely on renewable hydrogen and to create a green, sustainable and competitive hydrogen market in Europe. He also commissioned the study 'Green Hydrogen Opportunities for Catalonia. Contributing to the European Roadmap for 2050', conveying to public opinion the challenges and opportunities that green hydrogen can offer in the energy transition.



## Israel and Palestine

The conflict between Israel & Palestine has been in the headlines during the last 5 years, especially after 7th October Hamas terrorist attacks against Israel and the following war in Gaza. As the leading Greens/EFA MEP on this matter, Jordi Solé negotiated many Resolutions on behalf of the Group and was responsible for a Report on the relations of the EU with the Palestinian Authority. He took part on a mission to Israel and Palestine as part of the committee on Human Rights. **Jordi Solé has always been advocating that the only way forward to meet peace and stability in the region is through the two-state solution**, this is, a creation of a Palestinian state, living in peace alongside Israel. With this aim, he launched the cross-party initiative “MEPs for Peace in the Middle East”.



## Catalan in the EU

Linguistic diversity is one of the pivotal cultural pillars of the EU, not only for its 24 official languages but also for the additional 60 non-official languages, amongst them Catalan. Regardless, much work is still needed in the EU to safeguard the linguistic rights of its citizens. In this context, Jordi Solé worked towards establishing an EU policy to enable the survival of all these languages in a technological landscape dominated by English. Concretely, he has collaborated with the European Language Equality Program in conferences and publications, seeking to achieve full linguistic equality in the digital field in Europe. **Furthermore, as a Catalan native speaker, he has actively advocated for the officiality of Catalan in the EU and for the promotion and protection of other regional languages.**

# FRANÇOIS ALFONSI

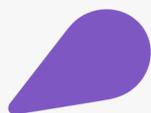
## Mediterranean sea



The Mediterranean region has been facing a steady deterioration in its environmental, climatic, economic and cultural conditions for many years, and climate change is accelerating this trend. States and regions alone cannot solve the problems that threaten the basin and future. For this reason, **François Alfonsi drafted a rapport to aiming at creating a macro-regional strategy for the Mediterranean in order to bring together the competent local and regional authorities** on both shores around common objectives, to guarantee a shared and effective response. This report was adopted by an overwhelming majority of the European Parliament and now the EU must assume its responsibilities and create the Mediterranean macro-region.



## Minority intergroup



The European Parliament's Intergroup on Minorities, co-chaired by François Alfonsi, is a cross-party intergroup bringing together 32 MEPs committed to raising awareness of traditional national and linguistic minority issues in Europe. During this mandate, the intergroup held 25 meetings to discuss issues of concern to minority communities and languages in Europe, good practices and promising elements for the future, as well as new challenges ahead.

**François Alfonsi and the Intergroup has also been active on legislative files and fought for the European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) Minority SafePack** (1,2 million signatures calling the EU to improve the protection of persons belonging to national and linguistic minorities and strengthen cultural and linguistic diversity in the Union).



## Conference on the Future of Europe



As a member of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, **François Alfonsi worked to increase the participation of European citizens and the influence of regional and local authorities in the European decision-making process.** In the context of the Conference on the Future of Europe, he also defended the rights of national and linguistic minorities, as well as the right to self-determination. The report of the European Parliament for the amendment of the EU Treaties calls now for additional protections for national minorities and for regional and minority languages in the UE to be included in the Treaties;

# LYDIE MASSARD

## Food



As a canteen worker, Lydie Massard's job has been to feed people. Food is a vital good for every human being, just like water or air. That is why the public authorities have to guarantee that everyone has enough food of good quality. This can only be achieved by relocating and diversifying food production in every region, as close to the people as possible. **Lydie Massard has been fighting for strengthening trade regulations at both French and European levels, to make it easier to buy organic and local products as much as to support small-scale farming.**



## Linguistic Diversity



Humanity is diversity. 7,000 languages are spoken on planet Earth, but 90% are threatened with extinction before the end of the century. It is not just the glaciers that are melting before our eyes, but also the number of speakers of minority languages. In Europe, some of these languages are in good health: Catalan, Basque, Galician, Welsh and Ladin. What they have in common: compulsory education in their historical territory, the existence of a standard language as for state languages, and strong territorial autonomy. **During this mandate, Lydie Massard has been pushing for the promotion and recognition of regional languages and their place in the education system.** She has done it throughout Europe in order to live up to its motto: "United in diversity".



## EU-New Zealand Free Trade Agreement



During this mandate, trade has been a key issue in the European Parliament, notably due to the Covid crisis and the problem on the supply chain and the lack of strategic autonomy for EU. But the old-fashioned EU trade policy has been challenged for other reasons too. Indeed, if we maintain the current model of free trade policies in the agricultural sector, the European Union could lose 6.4 million farms by 2040, a drop of more than 50%. Food is not a good like any other. Europe and its regions must work towards food self-sufficiency. However, the free trade agreement with New Zealand, or the one with Mercosur (South America), reproduce an old trade model that undermines this objective.

**Lydie Massard took the floor in the Parliament to express her opposition and voted against the EU-New Zealand free trade agreement.**

# ANA MIRANDA

## Fisheries and transport safety

The defense of Galician productive sectors has been constant in all the parliamentary work of Ana Miranda. She has been active to defend artisanal fishing and shellfish harvesting through various initiatives in the European Parliament, and also by organising multiple meetings with the sectors in Galiza. Moreover, Ana Miranda was rapporteur of the Fisheries Opinion on “flags of convenience” to improve maritime safety. In early 2024, **Miranda had a fundamental role in denouncing the recent environmental disaster, a spill of plastic pellets , on the Galician coast**, which led to a plenary debate in the European Parliament and the adoption of an amendment to the maritime safety package. As Vice-Chair of the EP Committee on petitions, Ana Miranda supported various citizen proposals. Among them, the search for truth, justice and reparation in the accidents of the Alvia train (2013 - 81 people dead), and the sinking of the Villa de Pitanxo ship (2022 - 21 people dead), in order to also improve the EU legislation on transport.



## Internationalism

International solidarity with oppressed peoples, such as in the Western Sahara, Kurdistan or Palestine, has been an important part of Ana Miranda’s mandate. She visited the border area between the Gaza Strip and Egypt with the aim of denouncing, once again, Israel’s occupation of Gaza. She took part in numerous initiatives at the Parliament to denounce it and to support the Palestinian People. Moreover, **Ana Miranda has been extremely active in Latin America by supporting the Galician diaspora and local progressive forces**, by attending parliamentary missions (as a member of the EU-Latin American parliamentary assembly for instance), or by attending several presidential inaugurations.



## Anti-fascism

**The anti-fascist struggle has been one of the guiding principles of the work done by Ana Miranda.** Since the European Parliament approved the Resolution against the advance of neo-fascism in Europe in the last legislature, the extreme right has increased its influence and presence. This requires renewed efforts against the far right, which is active and visible, for example, on social networks through the propagation of fake news. This also requires the defence of freedom of press in the Galician public media or elsewhere in Europe, such as with the recent case of Julian Assange.

# PIERNICOLA PEDICINI

## Southern Italy

During 5 years, Piernicola Pedicini tirelessly defended Southern Italy. He presented a petition to ask the EU institutions to implement a modification of the PNRR (EU recovery plan) presented by the Draghi Government in order to defend a fairer territorial division of the EU recovery plan. He wrote a letter to the President of the Republic, Sergio Mattarella, in reference to the Bill on differentiated autonomy because it would have constituted a violation of the Constitutional Charter and would have imposed to the Parliament the necessity to exercise its legislative function, as the Constitution indicated. Finally, **Piernicola Pedicini presented a popular initiative law to request the repeal of the third paragraph of the article 116 of the Constitution**, filed with the Court of Cassation in Rome, requesting the cancellation of differentiated autonomy by the Constitutional Charter.



## Bank & State Aid

During this mandate, Piernicola Pedicini tabled numerous written questions and organized webinars and public interventions on the EU banking sector. **He also opposed the European Stability Mechanism because he believed that its reform favored private banks at the expense of European governments**, especially the most indebted ones, like Italy. He criticized the fact that the reform was not a direct response to the COVID crisis, but allowed the ESM to intervene to save the big banks in crisis, mainly German and French major banks, without imposing conditions on them.



## Peace

**Piernicola Pedicini has been committed to defend and promote peace within and outside the EU institutional framework.** He participated in the peace relay in Lampedusa and also organized webinars on peace. Coherently, he voted against the EU ammunition plan to Ukraine. He presented a motion of no confidence against the President of the EU Commission Ursula Von der Leyen, for her initial unconditional and unbalanced support in favor of Israel and her "double standards" policy with respect to Human rights violations in Ukraine and Gaza. He finally organized the "Le Vie Della Pace" event, at the European Parliament, with the participation of MEPs, international journalists and representatives of associations operating in Italy to promote peace.

# DIANA RIBA | GINER

## Anti-repression

Diana Riba focused the first months of the legislature fighting for the political rights of Oriol Junqueras, Carles Puigdemont & Toni Comín, whom Spanish justice prevented from taking their seats. During that period, she had several high-level meetings with the former president of the Parliament, David Sassoli, and with the Commissioner for Justice, Didier Reynders. Throughout the legislature, **Diana has denounced the abuses and repression of the Spanish state against the Catalan independentist** movement, notably the “Operation Catalonia” and the spyware scandal of the CatalanGate.



## Gender Equality

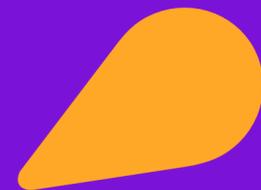
Diana Riba, as the Greens/EFA spokesperson in the committee on women’s rights and gender equality, has spearheaded significant initiatives. **She served as EP rapporteur for a report urging the Council and Commission to reform treaties to classify gender-based violence as a Eurocrime.** She was also the Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur MEP on the first European directive that aims to combat gender-based violence. Diana Riba has also been a vocal advocate against sexism in sports, notably following the non-consensual kiss incident involving Rubiales and player Jenni Hermoso. She advocated for the extension of the Women on Boards directive to include public interest organizations like the Spanish Football Federation, ensuring gender parity in leadership across sectors.



## Freedom of speech & media pluralism

Diana Riba has been a champion of media freedom being the Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur for the European Media Freedom Act (EMFA), an unprecedented set of rules to promote media pluralism and independence across the EU. This regulation aims to prevent interference in editorial decisions, ensure transparency of media ownership and state advertising and protect journalist’s communications and sources from the use of spyware against them. She was also involved in the adoption of the directive concerning the protection of journalists and human rights defenders from abusive civil proceedings (Anti-SLAPP Directive). **Diana Riba was also focused on other parliamentary activities in the fields of EU Audiovisual policy with a strong focus on pluralism and diversity** and she also raised political awareness in freedom of speech related issues such as the Freedom of Artistic Expression topic on which Riba commissioned a comprehensive report.

# BREXIT



On June the 23rd 2016, the UK voted to leave the EU but, nevertheless, Scotland and Northern Ireland overwhelmingly voted to Remain. Furthermore, the rest of the UK did not vote for Brexit mess created by the British conservatives. For almost 4 years, Brexit has become a EU saga where the successive but unsuccessful British governments were unable to explain what Brexit really meant! During this period of time, EFA has worked tremendously with the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish governments as much as with the civil society to limit the negative impacts of Brexit, if not possible to be reversed. Finally on January 31st of 2020, the 73 MEPs elected in the UK in 2019 had to leave the European Parliament due to Brexit.



That was a sad day for Europe, a sad day for the European Parliament and a sad day for EFA. 4 of our 8 MEPs were forced to leave the European Parliament while democratically elected in May 2019. Furthermore, that was also a sad day for Scotland and Northern Ireland which did not vote to leave the EU, as much as for the people of Wales and England, who never decided to back this very conservative, backward-looking British Brexit. Alongside **the SNP and Plaid Cymru MEPs who seated with EFA for more than 20 years and until the very last day, EFA was convinced that the best Brexit was no Brexit.**

# BREXIT



But despite Brexit, EFA solidarity and EFA relationship with its partners across the Channel in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland have remained vibrant. Through the EU-UK parliamentary delegation, EFA has kept contact with EFA Westminster MPs. Thanks to EP committee missions, EFA could strengthen its relationship with the Scottish government and other devolved administrations. EFA also organised bilateral and multilateral meetings and received delegations from the SNP and Plaid Cymru in Brussels. **Until Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland come back to the EU, EFA will keep a light on!**



# EFA SOLIDARITY

EFA MEPs are elected in their own territory (Britany, Catalonia, Corsica, Galicia, Mezzogiorno...) and represent primarily their respective people and territory, their respective stateless nation or minorities. However, in line with **Maurits Coppieters doctrine** (the Flemish EFA MEP, who said, in 1981 in Bastia, to the Corsican people, "I will? be your MEP"), **EFA MEPs are the MEPs of all stateless nations, regions and minorities in Europe and beyond.** EFA MEPs, individually or collectively, have supported struggles from all over the continent.



**EFA MEPs are the missing link between the EU and EFA party members without representation at EU level.** For instance, they addressed written questions to the Commission on issues which mattered for EFA member parties such as the question on the non-sustainable transport project supported by the far-right coalition in government (Friuli // Patto per l'Autonomia).



# EFA SOLIDARITY

EFA visited several territories to support local parties which do not have any representation at the EU level. For instance, EFA came to Aland islands to support Aland Framtid in their campaign to get better recognition in Finland and in the EU (Aland island // Aland Framtid). EFA also visited Alsace, where it organised events or meetings with Unser Land (Alsace // Unser Land). EFA attended the Régions et Peuples Solidaires Summer Universities.



EFA also liaised with other EFA MEPs who do not sit with the EFA Group, like the Flemish (N-VA) or the Basque (EH Bildu). Finally, in 2022, EFA created a network, at parliamentary level, in order to strengthen the relationship between our MPs and senators in the state parliaments and the MEPs in Brussels. Thus, EFA went to Paris, to meet Corsican and Briton MPs and Senator, and to Madrid to meet Basque, Galician, Catalan, Valencian, Balearic MPs and Senators. Recently EFA met the Senator from Friesland. **Our greatest strength in EFA is our diversity, which unites us.**



## Food Sustainability

Food is not only about what we eat, it is also about what we produce and how we produce. It is about which agriculture we support and how we support it. It is finally about which economy we want to grow and how to make it grow. Food production is about food sovereignty, by reinvesting in local producers. It is about supporting vibrant and lively local and rural communities and local economy, by fighting against the agro-business industrial model. It is about food diversity, by fighting against food uniformisation. It is about increasing farmers' revenues, by integrating all production costs, reducing transport distances and limiting intermediaries. It is about protecting our health, by investing in quality food and sustainable farming. It's important to remind that the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is still unfair (80% of subsidies go to 20% of the farmers) making the recent farmers' anger partially understandable. However, the EU is not delivering the right answers. **EFA is at the forefront of the battle for another agricultural policy putting food question at centre of the table.**



## Climate protection

After decades of inaction, or not sufficient actions, since 2019, the European Union has taken the right path regarding the Climate emergency. EFA welcomed and contributed to this shift, as it had been pushing for it for years. For the very first time the EU adopted a Climate law defining the objectives in the medium and long term, even if its objectives fell short of the needed ambition. For the first time, the EU adopted a Nature Restoration law, albeit less ambitious than initially foreseen. Moreover, the Green Deal, the lead initiative of the European Commission, while welcomed, is not complete. The Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is still unfair. The industrial policy is not evolving fast enough. The EU is still subsidising fossil fuels and promoting Nuclear energy. A lot has been done but much more is needed to respect our own international commitments (Paris Climate Agreement). **EFA supported all positive proposals in favour of Climate protection, initiated extra initiatives but criticized the insufficient speed of the policy shift and opposed lobbies trying to slow down the needed Green transition.**



# Social Equality

For decades, EFA has been fighting for a more social Europe, despite the fact that the European Union has limited competencies on the matter. Moreover, at the time of the much needed Green and digital transitions, EFA has been pushing for a just transition in order to leave no one behind. Concretely, during this mandate, EFA pushed successfully to introduce a minimum income in Europe in order to ensure decent income to workers and lift them out of poverty. EFA also worked on improving the mobility package (notably for truck drivers) and limited social dumping even if the final agreement was far from being perfect. EFA was also active to create minimum social rights for platform workers (Uber, Deliveroo...) in order to fight against multinational companies abusing social rights and workers. It has also been active on the creation of a status for artists. Because they, especially the ones from small communities, are extremely fragile in a globalized economic sector. During 5 years, **EFA supported all legislative and non-legislative initiatives improving social rights and social equality in Europe.**



# Youth

Over the past years, young people have been facing several crises on top of the ones faced by our societies. The youth unemployment rate is still higher than the average. The cost of living crisis makes almost impossible for them, not only to become owners, but simply to rent a flat. Some young people have to leave their home country to simply find job opportunities. In this difficult context, and despite limited competencies at the EU level, EFA supported several initiatives in favour of young people. For example, EFA supported greater opportunities for youngsters to study and live abroad, with budgetary top-up for the Erasmus programme. Moreover, EFA joined the European Parliament's call to ban unpaid internship in the EU: if you work, you must get paid. And in order to get young people to engage more in politics, EFA supported the possibility for 16+ people to vote for the next EU elections, which will be the case in several countries like Belgium or Germany. **EFA stands by young people and their right to decide and shape their own future.**



## Rule of law/PEGA

Over the last decade, we have seen several attacks on the rule of law in Europe. In 2020, the EP, with the active role of EFA, successfully obtained and voted for the creation of a Rule of Law mechanism able to sanction financially countries which wouldn't respect the fundamental values of the EU, like Poland or Hungary. However, mainstream parties have double standards when the rule of law is breached in Spain with the police violence on October the 1st 2017 or the use of the PEGASUS spyware used against Catalan political leaders and civil organisation leaders. Despite the opposition of the Spanish establishment, EFA successfully obtained the creation of a Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry with 2 seats for EFA of which the Vice-Presidency (D. Riba). During months, the committee investigated the breach of rule of law linked to the Pegasus software in Greece, in Poland, in Spain but also in Catalonia and was able to make some recommendation to avoid this to happen again, recognizing de facto Spain responsibilities. EFA solidarity and influence led to successful results and pointed at the rogue Spanish judicial system.



## Gender & LGBTQI+ rights

During this mandate some improvements have been made in the field of gender equality. Symbolically, and for the first time the President of the European Commission, elected in 2019, was a women, albeit she is a conservative. Despite some reluctances, in June 2023, the EU finally ratified the Istanbul convention (on violence against women). And for the very first time, the EU agreed on a legislation on Gender-based violence. However, we are far from leaving in a fair and equal society where women and men are treated equally or where people from the LGBTQI+ community could feel and live safe. In the EU, women earn, in average, 13% less than men. In the EU, over half of all women (55%) in the EU have been sexually harassed in their life. Despite EFA tirelessly efforts, rape is still not considered as a Gender-based violence. Moreover, rainbow families are under threat in Italy while Poland tried to create LGBT-free zones. Each Time EFA stood up against these unacceptable discrimination. EFA will keep on fighting for women's rights and LGBTQI+ rights in EU and in the world.





## Post Covid recovery

The Covid pandemic will remain an unprecedented and unexpected crisis which led to unforeseeable and unimaginable measures during more than 2 years. Our economic system was suddenly stopped, our healthcare system was put under an unmatched pressure, our democratic system was shaken as never before. During the pandemic, millions of people died or lost their jobs in Europe and in the world. However, unlike the financial crisis 2008-2010, the EU decided to react collectively and with solidarity. For the very first time, with the full support of EFA, the EU adopted a truly recovery plan (€ 750 billions) in order to support the most impacted economic sectors and EU territories. However, the horse trading approach from the Member states prevented the EU to have a truly fair recovery plan. Regions which should have received more support have been deprived from solidarity. And regions have been deprived from the right to be on the table to draft the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRNs). **EFA will keep on fighting for subsidiarity. Regions and sub-state entities must have a say in the EU decision making process.**



## Local economy

During the past mandate, the multiple crises, have shown how resilient our local economy could be but how fragile they are as well. Investing in the local economy is ensuring flourishing opportunities to all peoples and regions in Europe, it is also ensuring less dependency on autocratic regimes and foreign dictatorship. For instance, more renewable energy farms means more local jobs and resources and less dependency on oil and gas from Arabic monarchies or the Russian regime. More local factoring production means less dependency on China or overseas countries. More local agricultural production means less competitions with third countries which do not have the same social and environmental standards. Globalisation and the EU should not be a threat to local communities and traditional production but should protect them. Re-localisation of our economy should be a lesson to be drawn from, notably, the Covid pandemic. **EFA supports the localisation of our economy.**



LOCAL ECONOMY

# VISITS &

**Åland Islands**  
June 2023



**Galiza**  
September 2022



**Naples**  
April 2023



**Faroe Islands**  
May 2022



**Islas Canarias**  
May 2022



**Euskal Herria**  
March 2022



**Corsica**  
September 2021



# MISSIONS

**Friuli**  
June 2023



**Catalonia**  
September 2023



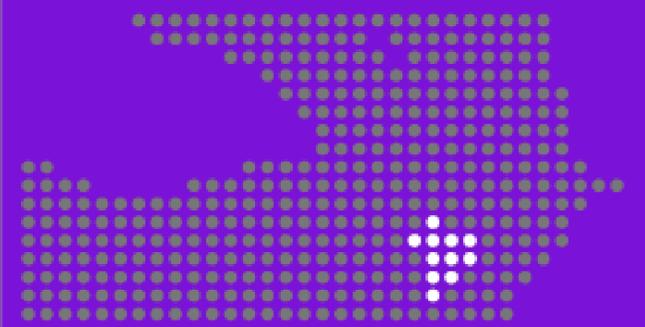
**Strasbourg**  
October 2023



**Brussels**  
February 2024

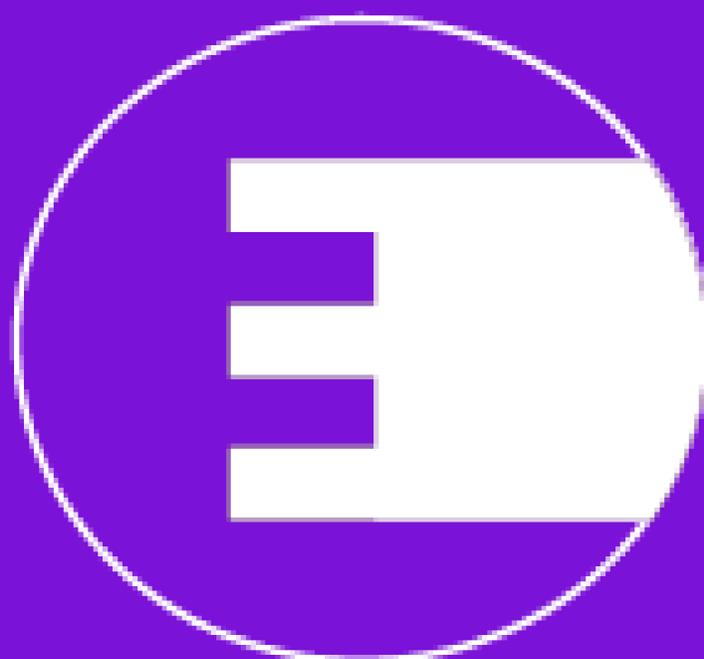


**NAGORNO-KARABAKH**



**CANARIAS**





**EUROPEAN FREE ALLIANCE**  
in the **European Parliament**

