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# Draft

**Title:** **Draft 2024 Manifesto - CHAPTER II: The Courage to Stand Up Against the Far Right – For a Europe of Democracy, Feminism and Human Rights**

**Tabled by:** EGP Committee, Editorial- and Manifesto WGs

PDF full draft Manifesto - Courage to Change (no line numbering)

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PDF Spreadsheet Amendments on Chapter 2 (18 January)

**for CAS 2 -** PDF Pre-CAS Amendments on Chapter 2 (25 January)

Outcome CAS 2 - PDF AMs on Chapter 2 (26 January)

**for CAS 4** - PDF AMS on Chapter 2 (30 January)

Outcome CAS 4 - PDF AMs on Chapter 2 (31 January)

Outcome CAS 6 - PDF AMs on Chapter 2 (2 February)

For the final CAS on 4 February - PDF AMs on Chapter 2 (3 February)

Outcome final CAS on 4 February - PDF AMs on Chapter 2 (4 February)

Consolidated text CAS accepted AMs on Chapter 2 (4 February AM)

## Draft text

Charlie just wants to be Charlie. Nothing more. Why is their gender so difficult for the world around them to accept?

Zara knows what she wants: end the horrible pain of endometriosis. Find a drug that could help so many women. But sometimes it seems like people can't see any further than her skin colour, her last name, or her choice of clothing.

Daniel wants to scream it out to the world. He is in love with a man. He wants to go out at night, walk the streets of Sofia with his partner, and bring his partner to the company Christmas party.

Prejudice and discrimination continue to hold our societies back. But we can change this. It must change.

**The European Union of democracy, freedom and fundamental rights is ours to build.**

Racism never went away. Today, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and anti-Gypsyism are all on the rise. Discrimination and exclusion remain far too common for people living with disabilities, people living in poverty and other vulnerable groups.

At Europe's borders, people are dying. Mediterranean migration routes are the deadliest in the world. People seeking safety and protection increasingly face detention, brutal and illegal pushbacks, and violence at the hands of smugglers and border authorities. The far right exploits and deepens their suffering, dragging mainstream parties to the right and normalizing migration policies that are both dysfunctional and unsustainable.

Far-right parties are gaining ground with their tried and trusted tactics of spinning half-truths and scapegoating minorities. This conservative backlash is working strategically to roll back our rights and freedoms. Once firm believers in the European project, even mainstream Conservatives are opening the door for anti-democratic forces who threaten the rule of law.

**We have the courage to stand up to the far right to protect everyone's rights and freedoms.**

Greens will safeguard democracy and the rule of law and demand a different

European Union. We are convinced that the European Union needs to be more united to tackle our shared problems. We call for a federal European Union with increased powers, deep democracy, and real transparency and accountability.

We will fight racism and exclusion in all its forms. We will make sure that nobody can make decisions about your body. We demand a fair asylum system that defends human rights and dignity. We work towards a migration policy that recognizes the immense contribution that migrants make to our societies. We believe that policies work best when shaped by the people concerned. We are certain that democracy cannot flourish without vibrant civic space and empowered civil society actors.

The European Union was founded to protect peace and democracy and uphold freedom, rights, and justice.

**We will make that founding promise a reality for all.**

## The Necessary Next Step: A United Europe Ready for Enlargement

To face the great challenges of our century, from the green transition to fighting growing inequalities and protecting democracy, the European Union needs to reform its treaties, move forward towards a federal Europe, and ensure its ability to act when welcoming new members.

At the Conference on the Future of Europe, European citizens gave a clear message that they support new treaties giving the EU greater competences. They called for deepened European democracy, with more power for the European Parliament, an end to national vetoes, a larger EU budget, and stronger EU competences on key issues such as health, tax, and social protection. As Greens, we stand behind their proposals.

### *Extending democracy at the heart of Europe*

We stand for a federal Europe, for a fully fledged supranational democracy able to deliver.

The need for unanimity between European member states on matters from tax and foreign policy to anti-discrimination and Article 7 procedures to protect democracy prevents the EU from taking decisions for the common good.

The European Parliament must have the right to propose legislation and equal budgetary power. The Council of the European Union should act as a second chamber for EU law making, not the venue for late-night haggling over inter-governmental deals. The President of the European Commission should be proposed by the European Parliament. The current budget of the EU is patently insufficient to address the challenges Europe faces. Supported by its own resources, the EU budget should be raised significantly, with an expanded role of the European Parliament and civil society in monitoring EU spending. EU competences should be expanded to ensure the EU can deliver. This truly transnational democracy must also ensure a residence-based European citizenship.

For Europe to take this much needed step, a democratic mandate from citizens is vital. That is why an EU-wide inclusive constituent process should lead to these treaty changes.

Treaty changes should then be ratified through a European-wide referendum according to a double majority system: a qualified majority of states and a majority of European citizens.

## *Bringing Europe to life with citizens' participation*

Public participation and engagement strengthen the European Union. The EU institutions should take steps to make voting in EU elections more accessible, including for people with disabilities. To increase democratic participation, we want to champion internet-voting at least for mobile European citizens to be piloted for the 2029 EU election. Transnational lists for the European Parliament should be introduced alongside national lists, creating an additional single EU-wide constituency to which citizens will elect a large number of MEPs.

As democracy is about more than elections, the Greens will push for the introduction of standing citizens' agoras to make EU policy more inclusive. The framework for petitions and specifically the European Citizens Initiative must be strengthened to open more channels for citizens to influence EU policy and to oblige the European institutions to respond with legislative proposals. A framework for EU-wide referenda should be introduced.

## *Stronger together: enlarging the Union*

Many people in the European neighbourhood long to become EU citizens, first and foremost with Ukraine fighting for our values and European security. Our Union holds the promise of peace, justice, shared values and prosperity and each member, old and new, is responsible for upholding these principles and objectives.

A new push for enlargement is long overdue. The EU has always been a project with geopolitical implications. As the EU is built on shared rules and values, it helps make borders less important. The EU's enlargement is therefore the best prospect for lasting peace and security in Europe.

All countries who strive to be part of or re-join the EU and who share our values must be welcomed on the path to EU membership and given all the required support in fulfilling the criteria.

## *Keeping our promises: A pathway to joining the European Union*

The European Union must keep its promises to candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine. We support Georgia and Kosovo's efforts to become candidates for EU membership. We will support these countries on their paths to meet the Copenhagen Criteria. Accessing the single market and EU budget requires meeting these criteria and progress in the process must be based on merit. As Greens, we believe that the EU must work more closely with civil society in the accession process. We will work towards overcoming unanimity in the Council that is currently hindering accession.

The future of Ukraine lies in the European Union. We will support Ukrainian authorities in introducing the reforms required for EU membership. EU assistance to Ukraine should, insofar as possible, enable a climate-resilient reconstruction and recovery, built on renewable energy, modern infrastructure, and a sustainable and inclusive economy.

Welcoming new members must serve as a vital push for internal reforms to make it easier for the EU to make decisions efficiently and effectively.

## *Taking rapid action for democracy and the rule of law*

One of the biggest blows to European progress in recent years has been the development of authoritarian tendencies in the heart of Europe. Citizens of these countries are EU citizens, and the EU must defend their rights against government power grabs. We want rapid action to put an end to EU law's violations by member states through infringement procedures. This needs a clear timeframe, including for the Article 7 procedure.

We will introduce a Fundamental Values Annual Review to monitor, enforce and sanction the infringement of fundamental values across the EU.

We must ensure that EU funds strengthen prosperity, democracy and the rule of law and do not disappear into the pockets of autocrats and their friends. We have made important progress in equipping the EU with better tools to do so, but they need to be fully implemented.

Access to justice must become a reality for all people in the European Union. It is essential that vulnerable groups, such as people on low incomes and from marginalized communities, can access their right to seek responses and remedies for injustice.

## *Fighting corruption! Politics need to be transparent and accountable*

Citizens' trust in democracy rests on political integrity. Transparency and accountability are vital for democratic scrutiny and public oversight. When the trust in politicians and democratic institutions is under serious threat, we must act.

The Qatargate scandal showed that the EU institutions are not equipped to prevent corruption and massive misconduct. Rather than another advisory body, the EU institutions need an independent Ethics Authority with the power and resources to investigate and sanction unethical conduct and abuse of office. We need comprehensive legislation on lobbying activities at EU level, including a mandatory EU transparency register.

It remains virtually impossible for citizens to understand how decisions are

made in the Council of the EU. This must change. Corruption and misuse of the EU budget undermines the entire European project. We support the bodies responsible for protecting the EU's financial interest, OLAF and the European Public Prosecutors Office, and call for greater resources for anti-corruption efforts.

## A Union of Rights and Freedoms: For a Truly Feminist and Anti-Racist Future

As Greens, we want to build a world where we all live free from violence, racism, sexism, queerphobia and coercion. We fight for a world where we get to decide over our bodies, where we can love who we want to love, and where racial justice becomes a reality at last. This world is possible, and we will not stop fighting for it. The harder the attacks, the more convinced, compassionate, and determined we will be.

### *Equal rights for all*

We fight for equal rights for all. This is why we want the Charter of Fundamental Rights to be directly applicable to European citizens and fundamental rights to be direct EU competences.

We call for an overall assessment of the EU Anti-Discrimination framework, acknowledging the need for an intersectional and comprehensive approach. To effectively counter discrimination against racialized communities and ensure equal rights and equal treatment for all, the Horizontal Anti-discrimination directive needs a major update. It has been 15 years since it was first brought forward.

### *Smash patriarchy!*

Women are not all the same and understanding their diversity is key to fighting inequality and discrimination.

A feminist Europe must guarantee policies that ensure financial independence for women, notably by abolishing tax regimes that discriminate against women and ending the gender pay gap via binding measures for companies and public authorities.

We demand universal and equal access to childcare. We call for the revision of the Work Life Balance Directive and the Maternity Leave Directive to advance towards fully paid maternity and paternity leaves of equal length.

Gender mainstreaming must make sure that European money benefits men and women equally. We defend a binding parity mechanism for the lists in the European elections and gender balance in EU decision-making, including for the top-jobs. The EU Commission and the Council need specific portfolios for women's rights and gender equality.

## *Your body, your rights*

We fight to expand reproductive freedom. Sexual and reproductive health and rights, including the right to safe abortion, are fundamental rights. They belong in the EU treaties - as core principles and competences of the EU and in the directly applicable Charter of Fundamental Rights. Safe and legal abortion must be available in all EU member states. Abortion care is an essential health service.

We stand up against the devastating regression on reproductive rights all over the world. No one should be criminalized for seeking or accessing abortion services. Women must have access to medical abortions. As Greens, we advocate the provision of free, high-quality contraceptives for all. Young people have the right to comprehensive sexuality education.

## *End gender-based violence*

All women and girls across Europe have the right to live a life free from violence. Gender-based violence is a brutal human rights violation and an expression of the unequal power relations in our societies. We continue our unswerving fight for comprehensive EU legislation that prevents, responds to, and ends gender-based violence online and offline across the EU. Greens strengthen victims' rights with specialized support, access to justice and protection for victims with special attention to marginalized communities. All EU member states must ratify the Istanbul Convention.

## *Pride, respect and equality for LGBTQIA+*

A renewed LGBTQIA+ Equality Strategy should ensure that trans, intersex, and non-binary people are also protected under the EU legal framework, closing legislative gaps in the areas of non-discrimination and hate crime. We want to end intersex genital mutilation. We push for legal gender recognition based on self-determination and access to trans-specific healthcare. The European Union should act politically for an EU-wide ban on so-called “conversion therapy” and forced sterilisation of transgender people. Rainbow families and their rights must be protected in all of the EU, including the full application of the freedom of movement with no loss of rights.

## *Fight racism and exclusion*

Racism in Europe is not just a problem of individual attitudes, it is a structural and systemic challenge that must be addressed as such. Racial justice should be mainstreamed in all EU policies, based on meaningful participation of all ethnic and racialized communities to ensure their lived experiences are considered.

Anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism are on the rise. The EU must be safe for everybody to live. We will protect Jewish and Muslim communities and demand an end to all forms of discrimination.

We will ensure that the EU Action Plan Against Racism is implemented, and work towards its renewal for 2025 with appropriate funding and a civil society advisory body. National Action Plans must be mandatory for all member states.

It is a democratic problem that 96% of Members of the European Parliament are white. As Greens, we work towards having candidates from racialized communities on electable spots. We actively encourage racialized and ethnic-minoritized Greens to run for the European Parliament.

## *Young voices matter: more rights, more representation*

We fight for votes from 16 for all elections in Europe and the right to stand as a candidate from 18, starting with the European elections. As European Greens, we work towards having young candidates in electable spots on party lists.

EU legislation must work for young people. The European Union needs to support

the adoption of an International Convention on the Rights of Young People. Consultation methods such as annual dialogues with youth representative organizations and youth citizens' agora should be institutionalized and legislative impact assessments should systematically include young people. EU funds must properly finance youth organizations.

### *No to ageism*

Age must not be a barrier to a full and active life, but too often older people are held back by aged-based discrimination and exclusion. Older people are among the social groups most at risk of poverty as well as digital exclusion. As Greens, we will take a stand against ageism in European policies and support measures that promote the inclusion of older people.

We demand fair pensions for all seniors in the EU. We believe that the mandatory retirement age should be a concept of the past. We want to have strong long-term care services that benefit the wellbeing of people with long-term care needs, as well as their families and communities. Intergenerational justice is not just a concept: exchange between generations should be anchored in our educational systems, but also more broadly in our community activities.

### *For a Europe that is accessible for all*

People with disabilities in the European Union must be able to pursue a full participation in political, social, and public life, including employment. We will push for the effective monitoring and enforcement of European accessibility legislation and the introduction of Disability Card recognized across the EU. The EU should begin collecting disaggregated data by gender, age, and type of disability to assess the impact of EU policies and monitor progress on the inclusion of people with disabilities generally.

## A Union of Rights and Freedoms: Protecting the Rights of All

Protecting the rights of all is a key battle against the far right. All over Europe, the far right is instrumentalizing migration to spread fear and resentment. They wish to roll-back the rights and freedoms of women and people from the LGBTQIA+community as well as racialised people. We are fighting against

this backlash, standing resolutely for democracy, freedom, and human rights.

### *Upholding human rights with a humane asylum system*

We uphold a fair asylum system that defends human rights and dignity, based on solidarity and responsibility sharing. We are convinced that when the political will is there the European Union can tackle humanitarian challenges and protect the people seeking safety with humanity. As we uphold the fundamental principles of the European Union, the right to asylum is not up for negotiation.

We want to work towards a human asylum system with fast and decentralized procedures. Member states must fairly share the responsibility for asylum applications. For us, it is clear that we need a mandatory relocation mechanism. Parties across the political spectrum let themselves be dragged towards far-right migration policies, as the EU's new Migration and Asylum Pact sadly reflects. The successful use of the Temporary Protection Directive in response to the refugee situation caused by the war in Ukraine should be replicated.

We call for EU visas for Human Rights and Environmental Defenders. New climate visas should be created to allow victims of natural disasters to seek protection and security in the European Union. The specific vulnerability of LGBTQIA+ asylum seekers must be addressed.

### *End the criminalisation of people on the move*

There has been an intolerable escalation of violence against people seeking protection. We must stop violence, torture, and inhuman and degrading treatment at Europe's borders. Illegal pushbacks at the borders of the EU must end.

EU laws to harmonize standards on asylum procedures, reception conditions and safeguards must be enforced. We cannot accept imprisonment, mistreatment and abuse towards people seeking protection and a better life in the EU.

### *Rescue is not a crime*

We call for an EU-funded and EU-led Search and Rescue Mission in the Mediterranean and strengthen the humanitarian mandate and responsibility of Frontex. We want to end the criminalisation of humanitarian assistance, and

prolific use of state of emergency to limit access to asylum and legitimate rights of oversight by civil society and media. People do not belong in prison simply for seeking asylum. Asylum seekers should be guaranteed access to legal help.

### *No dirty deals with dictators*

We fiercely oppose so-called “migration deals”, such as that with Tunisia, where the EU pays off countries to keep out migrants. Any cooperation with third countries on migration needs a human rights assessment. Making development cooperation with third countries conditional on “migration management” is unethical. We cannot accept that refugees and migrants are exploited for geopolitical gain. Human trafficking can never be a weapon of hybrid warfare.

### *A fair migration policy for the benefit of all*

Throughout history, people have always moved from place to place. Migration is as old as history, and we must return to this pragmatism. Migration can benefit all. It can fill labour shortages – today a key economic challenge. Migrants make an essential contribution to the European economy and enrich our culture, communities, and daily lives.

The establishment of legal and accessible channels for migration is a necessary precondition for ending human trafficking and exploitation. We want to develop a new, comprehensive Migration Code, providing for visa opportunities for families to be reunited and for work at different skills levels. It should also allow migrants already in the EU to change their status, for instance from student to employee. We want to make it easier for newcomers to start working and integrate into our societies, by offering them access to education, language support and job opportunities.

To prevent exploitation of migrant workers, access to justice needs to be ensured in all EU countries. We call for a comprehensive campaign to regularize long-term “sans-papiers”, living in EU countries. Whatever their status, people coming to the European Union to build a life should enjoy equal social, cultural, economic, and civic rights including freedom of movement, the right to work and to social protection, and access to healthcare and education.

## *For a fair and safe digital world*

As the digital world has become an integral part of our lives, the same freedoms and protections that exist offline should exist in online spaces. Preventing the spread of online hate is key to making sure that certain groups are not excluded from the political arena. Countering disinformation is essential for functioning and trusted democratic institutions.

The EU has made progress on the fight against disinformation and the regulation of online platforms with the Digital Services Act. Now its provisions must be enforced. Online platforms must protect legal content and be subject to public scrutiny and transparency on the removal of illegal content.

The EU should use its powers to make particularly harmful manifestations of hate chargeable as EU crimes with minimum rules regarding their definition and related sanctions. Women and racialized people suffer from disproportionate amounts of online hate. The internet must be free from illegal hate speech and discrimination. We want to give support to platforms, civil society organizations, and media initiatives promoting media literacy and anti-hate strategies.

We will push for the right not to be tracked. The EU must lead in the global battle against mass surveillance. Adequate EU legislation must protect citizens against the abuse of spyware and stop member states from evading accountability by evoking national security.

## *Putting humans at the centre in artificial intelligence*

Artificial intelligence has enormous potential. It can lead to both incredible developments as well as tremendous risks for humanity. Artificial Intelligence must work for people, society, and the planet, not for surveillance states or tech capitalism.

Strict limits should therefore be enforced. The most unethical and undemocratic practices in the EU, such as biometric mass surveillance, AI systems used to recognize emotions, gender or sexual orientation and AI used for predictive policing should not be permitted. Non-discrimination laws and data protection laws must be strengthened and enforced to guarantee that AI systems do not

discriminate against racialized communities.

We also want to ensure AI promotes, not hampers, the Green Deal with key environmental provisions. In the workplace, workers should always have the possibility to disconnect from AI systems. Copyright legislation should be properly enforced in the context of AI models to fully protect content creators.

## *For a strong and dynamic civic space*

Civil society organizations (CSO) are at the heart of every democracy. This is why we want to make them strong and truly European. We call for an EU mechanism to protect civil society, activists, and defenders from all forms of attacks, discrimination, and harassment. An EU mechanism should allow CSOs to report these attacks, including through an early warning system. Adequate funding should also be guaranteed, both at EU and national levels.

Measures to support a regular, meaningful, and structured dialogue with civil society during legislative procedures are essential. We will introduce a statute for European cross-border associations and non-profit organisations. We advocate for an EU-level civil dialogue, modelled on the social dialogue, between CSOs and EU Institutions.

## *Free and independent media for Europe*

Media concentration has reached alarming levels, threatening their editorial and economic independence. The protection of journalistic sources is hampered by sweeping anti-terrorism laws and far-reaching mass surveillance measures. Defamation suits and abusive judicial proceedings have become key methods to gag investigative journalists.

We need an EU framework to prevent media concentration and enable journalists to work freely. Investigative journalism needs dedicated safeguards. Free and independent journalism can never be a question of the necessary finances. We want to closely monitor the application of EU law, in particular EU laws such as copyright, trade secrets, the data protection regulation, the Audio-visual Media Services Directive to ensure they are not abused. We will work towards the proper implementation of the future Media Freedom Act and anti-SLAPPs (Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation) directive.

We support the emergence of pan-European media outlets and quality content on European affairs, European citizenship, and European identity, as core elements for a shared European civic and information space, dispelling EU-related myths and building a sense of European belonging.

## *Culture as the spark of change*

Art and culture are some of society's most powerful tools to tell stories, change minds, and build solidarity. As Greens, we believe that the worlds of culture and creativity can play an important political role in helping us imagine solutions to the challenges of our time.

The ability to produce together is a truly transformative aspect of the Creative Europe programme. Continued support for the production and distribution of art and culture produced across Europe, particularly supporting experimentation and diversity of expressions and organizational forms, is essential.

We will push for an EU strategy to engage the cultural sectors in our Green and Social Deal and in any constituent process on the future of Europe. Cultural diplomacy and exchange should form part of the accession process for all countries looking to join the EU. Learning the difficult lessons of the pandemic, we call for common European standards on employment, social guarantees and working conditions in the cultural and creative sectors.

## *Defending Schengen, enjoying free movement*

Freedom of movement – the right of people to travel and move around the European Union freely and without hindrance – has touched and shaped the lives of EU citizens like no other achievement. Millions of people have built lives and relationships in EU countries other than their own and millions more regularly cross national borders for professional opportunities and leisure.

As the border checks in the pandemic reminded us, the days of queuing at the border are thankfully behind us. We intend to keep it that way. The European institutions should act to reverse the steady re-emergence and illegally unlimited maintenance of border checks within the Schengen area, especially based on the justification of migration. As full EU members who have met all the requirements for Schengen membership, Bulgaria and Romania should be welcomed so

their citizens can enjoy their full rights as EU citizens.

## *Policing without prejudice*

No one in the European Union is above the law, including police and security agencies. This core principle that protects everybody's fundamental rights is regularly undermined, seen in all too often cases of police brutality.

To protect the rights of racialized groups disproportionately at risk of police violence and profiling, the EU's Race Equality Directive should be updated to explicitly cover policing and institutional violence. With the right to protest increasingly under threat, we will defend the right to assembly and peacefully demonstrate in line with international and European law.

## *A European fight against organized crime*

Organized crime harms our democracies, puts lives at risk, and destroys local environments. As organized crime is transnational, it can only be fought through European cooperation. We support policies that improve exchange and information flows between European police and intelligence services and create a Europe-wide exchange programme for police officers.