

Recommendations adopted by the panel (to be taken forward to the plenary EU in the World



Stream 1 Self-reliance and Stability

Substream 1.1 Autonomy of the EU

1. We recommend that strategic products from European fabrication (such as agricultural products, semiconductors, medical products, innovative digital and environmental technologies) should be better promoted and financially supported to keep them available and affordable to European consumers and reduce dependencies from outside Europe to the largest possible extent. This support could include structural and regional policies, support to keep industries and supply chains within the EU, tax breaks, subsidies, an active SME policy as well as education programs to keep related qualifications and jobs in Europe. However, active industrial policy should be selective and focused on innovative products or those that are relevant to secure basic needs and services.

We recommend this because Europe has entered too many dependencies from outside Europe in key areas that have potential for diplomatic conflicts and could result in shortcomings of basic or strategically relevant products or services. As production costs in the EU are often higher than in other parts of the world, more active promotion and support of these products will enable and incentivise Europeans to buy competitive European products. It will also strengthen European competitiveness and keep future-oriented industries and jobs in Europe. Stronger regionalisation of production will also reduce transport costs and environmental damages.

Greens/EFA comments:

Already the Covid crisis with its major supply chain disruptions revealed blunt vulnerabilities of our economic system and the importance of a resilient local economy and locally rooted supply chains. Accordingly, strategic resilience and a long-term sustainable, fair economic and social EU industrial policy should be one of the cornerstones for rebuilding and strengthening our economy while ensuring that companies are internally and externally competitive. Besides the provision of socially fair and environmentally sustainable products and services, the availability of strategic manufacturing capacities as well as an active EU research and innovation policy are key in strengthening the EU's resilience and reducing its dependencies, while making it fit for the future.

2. We recommend that the EU reduce dependencies from oil and gas imports. This should be done by actively supporting public transport and energy efficiency projects, a Europe wide high speed rail and freight network, the expansion of clean and renewable energy provision (in particular in solar and wind) and alternative technologies (such as hydrogen or waste-to-energy). The EU should also promote the cultural change from the individual car towards public transport, e-car sharing and biking.

We recommend this because it creates a win-win situation both for the autonomy of Europe from external dependencies as well as ambitious climate and CO2 reduction targets. It will also allow for Europe to become a strong player in future-oriented technologies, strengthen its economy and create jobs.

Greens/EFA comments:

Hydrogen can play a role in decarbonisation and greening certain sectors of the industry, but a respective strategy must be built on 100% additional renewable energy capacity to produce green hydrogen only and any funding of hydrogen produced from fossil fuels would be a greenwashing exercise and not in line with our climate commitments.

3. We recommend a law is passed at EU level in order to ensure that all EU production and supply processes and the goods which are imported, comply with qualitative, ethical, sustainable and all applicable human rights European standards; offering certification for products abiding by this law.

We recommend this as it helps both consumers and traders to be able to easily access information about the products they are buying/trading. This is achieved through checking the certification system; certification also helps to reduce the gap between cheap and expensive products available on the market. The cheap products will not meet the required standard and therefore cannot pass as being of good quality. Qualification for this certification would serve to protect the environment, saving resources and promoting responsible consumption.

Greens/EFA comments:

In February 2022 we very much welcomed the long-awaited European Commission's proposal for a new Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDD) that will require companies to take steps to identify, assess and address human rights and environmental risks in its supply chains and operations. It incorporates due diligence requirements developed and adopted by the EU and

all EU Member States in 2011 via the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. The proposal came out together with a Commission Communication on Decent Work in the World. Once this is adopted, it could also be the basis for the proposed certification and the transparency it would bring for clients and consumers.

4. We recommend the implementation of a European-wide programme to support small local producers from strategic sectors across all Member States. These producers would be professionally trained, financially supported through subsidies and encouraged to produce (where raw materials are available in the EU) more goods fulfilling requirements at the expense of imports.

We recommend this because by supporting EU based producers in strategic sectors, the EU can reach economic autonomy across these sectors. This could only serve to strengthen the entire production process thus promoting innovation. This would lead to more sustainable production of raw materials in the EU, reducing transport costs and serving to protect the environment.

Greens/EFA comments:

Shorter and more local supply chains and production strengthen the EU's resilience and may have a positive impact on transport costs and in terms of climate impact. Simultaneously, the sustainable transformation of businesses and a well rooted circular economy approach need to be promoted, which in turn would strengthen the EU's resilience in terms of external input needs and dependencies.

5. We recommend to improve the implementation of human rights at a European level through: Raising awareness in countries that do not comply, at the required extent, with ECHR (European Convention of Human Rights) or the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; a strict control, coordinated by the EU and the Justice Scoreboard, of the extent to which human rights are respected among Member States and a strong enforcement of compliance through different types of sanctions.

We recommend this because human rights have already been agreed upon by the Member States when ratifying the European Convention of Human Rights, now being necessary to increase the acceptance in each individual state in order to make sure human rights are actively known and implemented in these Member States.

Greens/EFA comments:

We support monitoring the human rights situation in the Member States, including compliance with the ECtHR judgments, through the establishment of the Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights (DRF) Mechanism, as proposed by Parliament, in the form of an interinstitutional agreement and with a permanent DRF policy cycle among the EU institutions, involving independent experts.

6. We recommend a revision and an intense communication campaign at a cross European level to be initiated in order for EURES (European Employment Services), the EU Immigration Portal and the EU Skills Profile Tool for Third Country Nationals to be better known by European citizens and more frequently accessed by EU companies in order to advertise and publicise their vacancies.

We recommend to not create a new online platform advertising job opportunities for European youth. There are more than enough similar initiatives which already exist at a European level. We believe enhancing what already exists is the key to promoting the existing workforce and employment opportunities at a European level.

Greens/EFA comments:

We support this recommendation and especially the underlying idea of making existing tools and information portals better known to specific target groups and also the broader public.

Stream 2: The EU as an International Partner

Substream 2.1 Trade and Relations in an Ethical Perspective

11. We recommend that the EU enforces restrictions on the import of products from countries that allow child labour. This should be done through a blacklist of companies that is periodically updated according to current conditions. We furthermore recommend to ensure gradual access to schooling for children leaving the workforce and to promote consumer awareness on child labour through information made by official EU channels, e.g. campaigns and storytelling.

We recommend this because we recognize the link between the lack of access to schooling and the presence of child labour. Through this recommendation we want to raise awareness of the consumers, to reduce the demand for products made by child labour, so that the practice can eventually be abolished.

Greens/EFA comments:

Development cooperation and EU trade policies is the main response to tackle the issue of child labour in third countries. Unconditional trade bans and sanctions would likely lower child welfare and increase child labour. That's why an approach to child labour should consider the degree of socio-economic development of the EU trade partners. Therefore, a system of incentives and disincentives/sanctions depending on the country situation, could be put in place. These would consist of general aid (in form of European aid programmes such as the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation instrument (NDICI); conditional aid (premised on performance tied to educational outcomes); conditional market access and trade preferences; surgical import bans; public procurement measures; creation of lists; or rebalancing measures (In order to be in a position to credibly challenge a trade partner on child labour ultimate outcomes, the EU should insert conditionality in re- negotiated and future trade deals, which in turn could trigger "rebalancing measures").

12. We recommend that the EU establishes partnerships with developing countries, supporting their infrastructure and sharing competences in exchange for mutually favorable trade deals to aid them in the transition towards green energy sources.

We recommend this in order to facilitate the transition to renewable energy sources in developing countries through trade partnerships and diplomatic agreements. This would establish good long-term relationships between the EU and developing countries, and it would contribute to the fight against climate change.

Greens/EFA comments:

We would agree with this proposal and indeed the partnership should be mutually beneficial, including technology transfer on renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies to benefit the people in the partner countries concerned. We would not like to see situations where local populations continue to be reliant on centrally and fossil fuel produced energy, whereas renewable hydrogen is exported to the EU: We want that people in partner countries are empowered to take part in the energy transition towards a highly efficient and 100% renewables

based economy. They should be able to access affordable renewable energy individually, as part of a community scheme or via the energy grids.

13. We recommend that the EU introduces a mandatory eco-score to be displayed on the front of all products that can be bought by the general consumer. The eco-score would be calculated according to emissions from production and transportation, as well as harmful content, based on a list of hazardous products. The eco-score should be managed and monitored by an EU authority.

We recommend this in order to make the EU consumer more aware of the environmental footprint of the products they buy. The eco-score would be an EU-wide scaling method, to easily show how eco-friendly a product is. The eco-score should include a QR code on the back of a product, providing further information on its environmental footprint.

Greens/EFA comments:

We support this recommendation as part of a series of measures that can help citizens to be better informed as to the environmental footprint of the products they buy. We are also in favour of regulating advertisement content, with a ban on baseless claims of green credentials and on adverts for products or services that are harmful to public health or the environment. Providing transparent, accountable and accurate information will increase the trust of consumers in products and markets, leading ultimately to more sustainable consumption.

Substream 2.2 International Climate Action

14. We recommend that the European Union adopts a strategy in order to be more autonomous in its energy production. A European body integrating the existing European energy institutions should coordinate the development of renewable energies depending on the needs, capacity and resources of Member States while respecting their sovereignty. The institutions would promote knowledge sharing between them to implement this strategy.

We recommend it because the current dependency makes us vulnerable in situations of political tensions with countries we import from. We see it with the current electricity crisis. However, this coordination should respect every country's sovereignty.

Greens/EFA comments:

We agree that the EU should urgently reduce its fossil fuel imports and use its abundant domestic potential in renewable energy. In addition to more renewable energy, we also need increased efforts in energy efficiency and savings, as every unit of energy saved does not have to be produced, imported and paid for. Whereas the coordination body for renewable energy is an interesting idea, given also the historic foundation of the EU on a community for coal and steel, we also believe that existing legislation on renewable energy and energy efficiency, notably the Renewable Energy Directive and the Energy Efficiency Directive, are the right tools to ensure achieving increased sovereignty and the energy transition. The required renewable shares and efficiency targets need to be raised in line with our climate targets. At the same time, we need tailored support to those households that have difficulties to afford their energy bills. Vulnerable groups, low income households and those in energy poverty need to receive support and empowerment to access renewable energy and energy efficiency.

15. We recommend higher environmental standards for the export of waste inside and outside of the EU and more stringent controls and sanctions to stop illegal exports. The EU should incentivise the Member States more to recycle their own waste and use it for energy production.

We recommend it in order to stop environmental damage when some countries get rid of their waste at the expense of others, especially when this is done outside of any environmental standards.

Greens/EFA comments:

We support this recommendation. In November 2021, the Commission presented a proposal to revise the waste shipment directive. Waste trade is a longstanding and a major environmental problem with the EU de facto exporting its waste problem to third countries for decades. And indeed, more should be done to address the significant share of illegal waste shipments. In addition, in July 2022, the Commission will present a review of the Packaging and packaging waste directive to reinforce the essential requirements for packaging and establish EU level packaging waste prevention measures and targets. We need to make all packaging reusable or recyclable in an economically viable way by 2030. We also support waste reduction measures and binding targets as well as ambitious essential requirements to reduce excessive packaging, including in e-commerce.

16. We recommend that the EU encourages the ongoing environmental transition in a stronger way by setting a goal of eliminating polluting packaging. This would involve promoting less packaging or more environmentally-friendly packaging. To ensure that smaller companies can adapt, help and adjustments should be provided.

We recommend it because we need to reduce the use of natural resources, especially raw materials from outside the EU. We also need to reduce the harm done by Europeans to our planet and its climate. Increased support to small companies is critical to ensure they can adapt without increasing their prices.

Greens/EFA comments:

The elimination of polluting packaging is one step of the way. We support the sustainable transformation of businesses, in particular SMEs being the backbone of the European economy. To this end they should be provided with more targeted information, advice, assistance and training, such as on the implementation of sustainable entrepreneurship and business models, the uptake and development of eco-innovation, access to funding and markets, exchange of best practices as well as better linking of potential business partners, in particular from a circular economy perspective and participation in circular/green procurement.

17. We recommend that countries of the European Union, together, look into the question of nuclear energy more seriously. There should be increased collaboration around the assessment of the use of nuclear power and its role in the transition that Europe needs to achieve towards green energy.

We recommend it because the nuclear question cannot be solved by one country. There are currently over a hundred reactors in half of the Member States, and more are under construction. Since we share a common electricity grid, the low-carbon electricity they produce benefits all Europeans and increases our continent's energy autonomy. In addition, exposed nuclear waste or an accident would affect several countries. No matter what choice is made on whether to use nuclear energy or not, Europeans should discuss it together and build more converging strategies while respecting national sovereignties.

Greens/EFA comments:

We obviously are not in favour of prolonging the use of nuclear power for energy transition and we strongly oppose the greenwashing of nuclear power in the taxonomy. Nuclear energy is not sustainable, not without risks and places a burden on future generations.

We would agree to discuss questions related to nuclear energy all together as Europeans: The EURATOM Treaty that allows only countries using nuclear energy to decide is obsolete and must be abolished.

Substream 2.3 Promotion of European Values

18. The EU should be closer to the citizens. We recommend that the EU creates and strengthens links with citizens and local institutions, such as local governments, schools, and municipalities. This should be done in order to improve transparency, reach the citizens and communicate better with them about concrete EU initiatives and general EU information.

We recommend this because current EU information is not accessible enough to all groups in society and does not reach ordinary citizens. It is often boring, difficult to understand and not user-friendly. This must change to ensure that citizens have a clear vision of the EU's role and actions. To spark interest, EU information needs to be easier to find, motivating, exciting and in everyday language. Our suggestions are: School visits by EU politicians, radio, podcasts, direct post, press, bus campaigns, social media, local citizen assemblies and creating a special task force to improve EU communication. These measures will allow the citizens to get EU information that is not filtered through national media.

Greens/EFA comments:

We support this recommendation as the communication of EU institutions can be made more accessible and improved, keeping untouched high quality levels of the given information. We support the development of innovative measures to better reach citizens and that these measures are intended to increase transparency.

19. We recommend stronger citizen participation in EU politics. We propose direct citizens' involvement events, similar to the Conference on the Future of Europe. They should be organised on a national, local and European level. The EU should provide a coherent strategy and central directions for these events.

We recommend this because such participatory democracy events will provide correct information about the EU, as well as improve the quality of EU policies. The events should be organised in order to promote core values of the EU - democracy and citizen participation. These events would provide an opportunity for the politicians to show the citizens that they find it important that citizens are aware of current events and should be involved in shaping them. Centralised guidelines will give the national and local Conferences a coherent and uniform shape.

Greens/EFA comments:

We support the creation of Citizens' Assemblies as a permanent mechanism of citizen participation reserved for relevant topics. As Greens/EFA, we believe that the citizens' panels organised in the framework of the Conference on the Future of Europe should serve as a pilot for the future institutionalisation of this mechanism as a permanent one. It is important that participation not only collects inputs but also provides feedback to not create false expectations and even more alienation. This could mean that the Parliament Plenary would vote how to deal with the recommendations of a Citizens Assembly or their recommendations could be put to a referendum.

Stream 3: A Strong EU in a Peaceful World

Substream 3.1 Security and Defence

20. We recommend that a future 'Joint Armed Forces of the European Union' shall predominantly be used for self-defence purposes. Aggressive military action of any kind is precluded. Within Europe, this would entail a capacity to provide support in times of crises such as in the case of natural catastrophes. Outside European borders this would provide the capacity to be deployed in territories in exceptional circumstances and exclusively under a respective legal mandate from the United Nations Security Council and thus in compliance with international law.

Were this recommendation implemented it would allow the European Union to be perceived as a credible, responsible, strong and peaceful partner on the international stage. Its enhanced capacity to respond to critical situations both internally and externally is thus expected to protect its fundamental values.

Greens/EFA comments:

We do not support the idea of an EU Army. We do not want an army of military servicemen paid by the EU, which would mean “EU military civil servants”. We also disagree with the task of collective territorial defense. We do not want the EU to duplicate NATO and become a military alliance. Of course, we are also not happy with the poor level of defense cooperation between Member States, the little output it generates, the low efficiency and effectiveness levels of defense industrial and capability processes. However, as we currently rather have ad hoc cooperation, we suggest to now go to the creation permanent but multinational military units at the service of the EU, and not abolishing and fully integrating national forces. EU and NATO should have a smart division of labour, and the EU should focus on military crisis management, stabilisation and prevention abroad.

Substream 3.2 Decision-making and EU Foreign Policy

21. We recommend that all issues decided by way of unanimity are changed to be decided by way of a qualified majority. The only exceptions should be the admission of new membership to the EU and changes to the fundamental principles of the EU as stated in Art. 2 of the Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

This will consolidate the position of the EU in the world by presenting a united front towards third countries and agilise its response in general and in particular in crisis situations.

Greens/EFA comments:

In the accession process unanimity vote should be limited to the start of the negotiation process and the very end once all negotiating chapters are closed. All intermediary steps (opening and closing of negotiating chapters/clusters etc.) should be decided by qualified majority voting and not unanimity, as it would prevent unnecessary bilateral vetoes, while the overall decision on admitting the new member state would rely on a unanimous decision.

22. We recommend that the European Union strengthen its ability to sanction Member States, governments, entities, groups or organisations as well as individuals that do not comply with its fundamental principles, agreements and laws. It is imperative to make sure that the sanctions that already exist are quickly implemented and enforced. Sanctions against third countries should be proportional to the action that triggered it and be effective and applied in due time.

In order for the EU to be credible and reliable, it has to apply sanctions to those who infringe upon its principles. These sanctions should be readily and actively enforced and verified.

Greens/EFA comments:

We agree that sanctions need to be flexible and decided faster. However, there also need to be safeguards and regular reviews, as well as legal recourse. We have been advocating for an addition to the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime that targets individuals who are responsible for or involved in high-level corruption, so a Global Anti-Corruption Sanctions Mechanism. Another aspect is that the EU needs to work better together on implementation, coordinate with international partners, and prevent circumvention.

Substream 3.3 Neighbouring Countries and Enlargement

23. We recommend that the European Union allocate a specific budget to develop educational programmes on the functioning of the EU and its values. Then it will be proposed to the Member States that wish that they can integrate them into their school curricula (primary, secondary schools, and universities). In addition, a specific course on the EU and its functioning could be offered to students wishing to study in another European country through the Erasmus programme. Students choosing this course would be given priority in the allocation of said Erasmus programmes.

We recommend this to strengthen the sense of belonging to the EU. This will enable citizens to better identify with the EU and transmit its values. Moreover, it will also improve transparency regarding the functioning of the EU, the benefits of being part of it, and the fight against anti-European movements. This should act as a deterrent to Member States leaving the EU.

Greens/EFA comments:

While educational courses on the EU are to be welcomed, the EU generally needs to work on its external communications, within the EU and around the world. The Erasmus programme's purpose is to give the opportunity to study abroad irrespective of the study programme, so that it should remain open to everyone equally.

24. We recommend that the EU makes greater use of its political and economic weight in its relations with other countries to prevent certain Member States from undergoing bilateral economic, political and social pressures.

We recommend this for three reasons. Firstly, this will reinforce the feeling of unity within the EU. Secondly, a unilateral response will provide a clear, strong, and faster answer in order to avoid any attempt by other countries to intimidate and engender repressive politics against EU members. Thirdly, this will reinforce the security of the Union and make sure that no Member States feel left out or ignored. Bilateral responses divide the EU and this is a weakness used by third countries against us.

Greens/EFA comments:

The EU must make better and more effective use of its strategic partnerships and form alliances to counter pressure on Member States. The countries in its immediate neighbourhood should be its prime allies in this regard.

25. We recommend that the European Union improve its media strategy. On the one hand, the EU should strengthen its visibility on social media and actively promote its content. On the other hand, the EU should continue to organise conferences such as Conference on the Future of Europe on an annual in person basis. In addition, we also recommend that the EU further encourage innovation through promoting an accessible European social media platform.

We recommend the above as it could not only reach younger people, but also generate more interest and involvement among European citizens through a more engaging and effective tool of communication. These events like the Conference on the Future of Europe should allow citizens to be more involved in the decision-making process and make certain that their voice is heard.

Greens/EFA comments:

The EU needs to improve strategic communications, in particular in its immediate neighbourhood and in the enlargement countries. At the same time, it must become more inclusive in its thinking and planning, given that these countries are crucial for the EU's future development.

26. We recommend that Member States agree on a strong vision and a common strategy in order to harmonise and consolidate the identity and the unity of the EU before allowing the accession to other countries.

We recommend this because we believe it is essential to both strengthen the EU and consolidate the relationship between Member States before considering the integration of other countries. The more states integrate into the EU, the more complicated the decision-making process will become within the EU; hence the importance of reviewing these decision-making processes that are voted through the process of unanimity.

Greens/EFA comments:

In our view it is important that the enlargement policy will not lose its credibility. No one thinks that any new Member State will join the EU in the very near future, but only once they have undergone the necessary reforms and adopted the EU acquis, so to speak, be aligned with the EU's vision/strategy/identity and ready to unite with the EU. But the enlargement is a long process and the most effective incentive to undertake such profound reforms is a realistic perspective of joining the EU.

Stream 4: Migration from a Human Point of View

Substream 4.1 Remedy causes of migration

28. We recommend having a common European labour framework, thus harmonising working conditions throughout the Union (ex. minimum salary, working times, etc.). The EU should try to create basic common standards on labour to prevent migration from citizens that leave their countries of origin seeking better working conditions. As part of these standards, the EU should reinforce the role of trade unions at the transnational level. By doing so, the EU would be considering internal economic migration (EU citizens' migration) as a critical issue.

We recommend this because we have identified that a lot of people within the EU migrate due to economic reasons, since there is a disparity between the working conditions of European Member States. This leads to a brain-drain effect in countries which should be avoided in order for Member States to keep talent and workforce. Even though we support free movement of citizens, we think that EU citizens' migration between EU Member States, when happening involuntarily, is due to economic reasons. That's why it is important to establish a common labour framework.

Greens/EFA comments :

We in general support all efforts to create equal legal working conditions for all EU citizens and to put an end to exploitative, unfair and anti-social working conditions.

Greens/EFA position on European Citizens' Panel 4 Recommendations

MEP Jordi Solé - member of the WG Migration in the COFOE



General overview

The Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament can support the general sentiment, but not all the details, of the majority of the citizens' recommendations. In particular, we fully agree that a common EU approach towards migration and asylum is needed, and that the current approach has a number of significant drawbacks – as mentioned in **Recommendation 29**, for example.

Like the Citizens, the Greens/EFA Group believes that the EU needs an ambitious, humanitarian and rights-based approach towards migration. We uphold EU values by showing solidarity, defending human rights, upholding international law, and sharing responsibility fairly. The Commission's proposals for the new Pact on Migration and Asylum falls far short of this ambition, and the Parliament should do all it can as co-legislator to reverse this.

In particular, we agree with the Citizens that as part of the negotiations on the new Pact and in line with the Parliament's 2017 'Wikström' report on the Dublin Regulation, we should strive for a permanent and mandatory mechanism to fairly allocate responsibility for asylum claims based on solidarity between Member States, discussed in **Recommendation 33**.

There is great merit to tackling global phenomena, such as migration, from the common EU level. However, contrary to the Citizens' recommendations, our Group thinks that new legislation is not necessarily always the solution. Currently existing EU asylum law needs to be fully implemented by MS and enforced by the Commission, through infringement proceedings if necessary.

In particular, Member States must uphold existing EU law on reception conditions (**recommendation 31**). Asylum seekers should not be systematically detained, and registration centers in Member States where asylum seekers first arrive should be designed for a short period of stay until asylum seekers are transferred to the Member State responsible for their claim.

Like the citizens, we also believe that more must be done to ensure asylum procedures are fair, swift and harmonised across the EU (**recommendation 39**) - however, we also do not necessarily need new legislation to make this a reality, but rather need to adopt and implement what has already been negotiated. The main hurdle to this is a deadlock in the Council driven by disagreements over relocation, which urgently needs to be overcome.

We agree with the citizens that more needs to be done to facilitate labour migration from outside the EU and to allow asylum-seekers to work as early as possible (**recommendations 7 and 9**). Our Group believes that migration is an opportunity for the EU. It brings economic opportunities and it can also bring positive effects in terms of societies' openness and

diversity, enriching our culture. New and more inclusive legal pathways are therefore urgently needed not only for people in search of protection, but also for those who would like to come to work in the EU and contribute their valuable skills to our economy. We therefore argue for the establishment of a European Migration Code to fully protect the rights of migrant workers and their families, allow for successful integration, and bring about advantages for migrants, host societies and countries of origin alike. Such a Migration Code should create new legal pathways for migrants of all skill and wage levels to come to the EU for work, and should protect them against all forms of labour exploitation.

We also have a number of important recommendations that are **not covered by the citizens' recommendations**. Our Group firmly believes that we cannot defend the EU's values with fences and border walls. We have repeatedly seen the tragic and often deadly consequences of 'fortress Europe', with thousands of people in search of safety perishing at our land and sea borders in the past few years.

All EU institutions and agencies dealing with migration and asylum have to put respect for human rights at the forefront of all their activities. Pushbacks at EU land and sea borders are illegal and the Commission should take appropriate action against Member States carrying out or attempting such pushbacks.

Our Group believes that the EU needs to move from a policy of deterrence to a policy of safe and legal opportunities; from walls to safe and legal pathways such as resettlement and humanitarian visas and with a strong EU role in coordinating search and rescue operations.

Greens/EFA comments on specific recommendations

7. We recommend that a system for labour migration into the EU that is based on the real needs of the European labour markets is created. There should be a unified recognition system of professional and academic diplomas from outside and within the EU. There should be professional qualification offers as well as cultural and linguistic integration offers for qualified migrants. Asylum seekers with relevant qualifications should be given access to the labour market. There should be an integrated agency for which the European Cooperation Network of Employment Services could be the basis. We recommend this because Europe needs qualified labour in certain areas that cannot be fully covered internally. Currently, there are not enough viable ways to legally apply for a work permit in the EU. A European wide recognition system for professional and academic diplomas will facilitate covering these needs and enable more simplified labour migration within and from outside the EU. Employment gaps could be filled more effectively and uncontrolled migration better managed. Opening the system of labour migration to asylum seekers could help accelerate their integration into European economies and societies.

Our comment

We strongly agree with this recommendation. The European Parliament's position on this issue, which we support, can be found in [this recent report](#). It is important to note that the Parliament requests that the Commission submit a proposal for an act that would serve as a

package of proposals. This package of proposals would aim to facilitate and promote entry into and mobility within the Union for legally migrating third-country nationals applying for work or already holding a work permit. As a result, by aligning provisions across the existing legal migration directives, it would serve to reduce bureaucracy, enhance harmonisation, promote fundamental rights and prevent labour exploitation. It should be noted that such a new act supporting legal labour migration from third countries and a greater degree of mobility remains one of the main answers to the current mismatches between labour supply and demand.

We subsequently recommend

Despite being an issue that polarises the debate in Europe, migration is an opportunity for the EU. It brings economic opportunities but it also can bring positive effects in terms of societies' openness and diversity, which enrich our culture. New and more inclusive legal pathways are therefore urgently needed not only for people in search of protection, but also for those who would like to come to work in the EU and contribute their valuable skills to our economy.

It is important for our Group that labour migrants' rights are harmonised as far as possible with those of the national workforce. A European Migration Code is needed to fully protect the rights of migrant workers and their families, allow for successful integration, and bring about advantages for migrants, host societies and countries of origin alike. Such a Migration Code should create new legal pathways for migrants of all skill and wage levels to come to the EU for work, and should protect them against all forms of labour exploitation. It should also enhance family reunification rights, and facilitate intra- and extra-EU mobility for labour migrants.

8. We recommend that the European Union expands its legislation to assign more power and independence to Frontex. This enables them to intervene in all Member States so that they can ensure the protection of all external borders of the EU. However, the EU should organise process audits on the organisation of Frontex, as full transparency is needed in the functioning of Frontex to avoid all kinds of abuses. We recommend this because we find it unacceptable that Frontex can be denied access to the borders, particularly in situations where human rights are violated. We want to ensure that Frontex implements European legislation. Frontex itself must be controlled and checked to prevent inappropriate behaviour within the organisation.

Our comment

Frontex's mandate has been broadly enhanced and strengthened through recent reforms, namely in 2016 and 2019, in terms of Agency's scope, operational capacity and budget allocations. We do not support any further expansion of Frontex, especially in view of several allegations of fundamental rights violations, pushbacks and collective expulsions at EU external borders. We understand the citizens' concerns in terms of enabling the Agency to adequately fulfil its role. We consider the current Regulation already sufficient to achieve this objective, but we advocate for the implementation of mechanisms ensuring a system of effective checks and balance within the Agency, as well as for the proper enforcement of the fundamental rights' framework enshrined in the relevant legislation.

We subsequently recommend

All EU institutions and agencies dealing with migration and asylum must operate with respect for human rights at the forefront of all their activities. Pushbacks at EU land and sea borders are illegal and the Commission should take appropriate action against Member States carrying out or attempting such pushbacks. We strongly advocate that Frontex makes more use of its powers to demand access to all spots and information related to joint operations with EU-countries, in order to better monitor human rights compliance and effectively act upon possible violations.

9. We recommend that the European Union organises, specifically for economic migrants, the possibility of screening citizens (on proven skills, background, etc.) in the country of departure; this is to determine who is eligible to come and work in the EU, depending on the economic needs/vacancies of the host country. These screening criteria must be public and consultable by everyone. This can be realised by creating an (online) European Agency for Immigration. We recommend this because in this way people do not have to cross the border illegally. There would be a controlled flow of people who enter the EU, which results in a decrease in the pressure at the borders. At the same time, this facilitates the fulfilment of job vacancies in the host countries.

Our comment

We support the European Parliament's position on legal migration, which calls for the creation of a Union talent pool for third-country nationals who wish to apply for work with a view to migrating legally to a Member State, as well as for Union based employers to search for potential employees in third countries.

However, we would not support an online European Agency for Immigration, as this goes far beyond the issue of labour migration and could potentially interfere with the fundamental right to seek asylum. The general wording on screening of migrants in third countries is too vague and risks violations of fundamental rights.

We subsequently recommend

We call on the Commission to include a Talent Pool in the proposal we refer to in our comments on Recommendation 7. As proposed by the Parliament, the Commission should consider including a Union talent remote network within the Talent Pool, that would allow third country nationals to work remotely in a Member State other than the one in which they are residing. Additionally, this would promote further cooperation between the Commission and the Member states to better understand the benefits and challenges of hiring third-country nationals talent remotely, and would promote fair remote hiring of international talent. Such a network would be optional for Member States to use.

10. We recommend that the European Union ensures that the welcoming policy and facilities at each border are the same, respecting human rights and guaranteeing the safety and health of all migrants (for example pregnant women and children). We recommend this because we highly value the fair and equal treatment of migrants at all borders. We want to prevent migrants from staying too long at the borders and Member States becoming

overwhelmed with the inflow of migrants. Member States must all be well-equipped to welcome them.

Our comment

We unreservedly support this recommendation.

Stream 4: Migration from a Human Point of View

Substream 4.1 Remedy causes of migration

27. We recommend that the European Union should participate actively in the economic development of countries outside the European Union and from where there is a high outflux of migrants. The EU, with the help of the relevant bodies (for example local NGOs, local politicians, field-workers, experts, etc.), should look for ways to peacefully intervene efficiently and actively in countries with important migration outflux that have previously agreed with the exact terms of cooperation with local authorities. These interventions should have tangible results with measurable effects. At the same time, these tangible results and effects should be clearly outlined in order for EU citizens to understand the development aid policy undertaken by the Union. In this sense, EU development aid actions should become more visible. We recommend this because, even though the EU is working on international development, it needs to keep doing so and invest in transparency and visibility in the policy and actions that it undertakes.

Our comment

Our Group believes that migration is a natural and perpetual phenomenon, and that the suggestion that it should be 'remedied' therefore paints it in a unduly negative light. The drivers of forced displacement and migration, however, definitely need to be addressed. Partnerships with third countries must be mutually beneficial, and we agree that they should be transparent.

We are strongly opposed to aid conditionality, and object to linking development assistance with migration control – of course, this is not explicitly mentioned in the recommendation but we fear that by following the line or argumentation used by the Citizens, this may be the destination and it is important to rule it out.

We subsequently recommend

We believe, as previously mentioned, that there is a need for addressing the drivers of forced displacement and migration. Aid and investments may prove crucial in improving living standards in the countries of origin, including fair trade deals and tackling also climate change and HHRR violations as a drivers of migration. The European Parliament should play a strong role in monitoring cooperation with third countries; migration partnerships should therefore be formalised and not take the form of bilateral or informal deals.

Substream 4.2 Human Consideration

29. We recommend the implementation of a joint and collective migration policy in the EU based on the principle of solidarity. We want to focus on the problem in regards to the refugees. A common procedure in all the Member States of the Union should be based on the best practice and customs that seemed to be successful in all the countries of the Union. This procedure should be pro-active and actively being executed both by the national authorities and the administration of the EU. The problem in regards to the refugees concerns all the countries in the EU. Currently, the practices in the states are too diversified which has negative consequences for both refugees and the citizens of the Union. Therefore a coherent and consistent approach is required.

Our comment

We strongly agree that a common EU approach to asylum is needed, although we do not agree with framing the fundamental right to seek asylum, or those individuals who exercise it, as a 'problem'. The primary objective and outcome of a common policy should be to ensure high common standards for procedures and reception conditions. What is considered best practice and custom in one Member State may not necessarily be applicable to another's legal or social welfare system, however we strongly support peer exchange and learning to improve conditions for asylum-seekers, refugees and migrants in all Member States.

We subsequently recommend

It seems logical and right to tackle global phenomena such as migration from the common EU level. In order to take a step closer to achieving this, currently existing EU asylum law needs to be fully implemented by Member States and enforced by the Commission, through infringement proceedings if necessary.

30. We recommend that the EU increases its efforts to inform and educate citizens of the Member States about the topics related to migration. This aim should be achieved by educating children, as early as possible, from the beginning of primary school on the subjects such as migration and integration. If we combine this early education with the activities of NGOs and youth organisations as well as wide-reaching media campaigns, we could fully reach our goal. Additionally, a wide range of communication channels should be used, from leaflets to television and social media. It is important to show the people that migration also has many positive aspects such as additional work force. We want to emphasize the importance of raising awareness on both processes, so that people understand the reasons and consequences of migration to abolish the stigma which comes from the fact of being perceived as a migrant.

Our comment

We strongly agree with this recommendation.

We subsequently recommend

The delivery and design of this recommendation should actively involve diaspora and migrant-led organisations.

Substream 4.3. Integration

31. We recommend that the Directive 2013/33/EU on minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers in Member States be replaced by a compulsory EU regulation, which will be uniformly applicable in all Member States. A priority should be that reception facilities and accommodation be improved. We recommend the creation of a specific monitoring body from the EU for the implementation of the regulation. As the existent directive is not implemented in a uniform way in all Member States. Conditions such as the Moria refugee camps have to be avoided. Therefore, the recommended regulation should be implemented and have compulsory sanctions. As for the monitoring body, it should be strong and reliable.

Our comment

We strongly agree with the sentiment of this recommendation - it is unacceptable that today, reception conditions in several Member States are still undignified and that standards vary so greatly across the EU. However, we believe that the recast Reception Conditions Directive, together with a more active approach to infringement proceedings by the Commission, will be sufficient to achieve this.

We also agree that there should be better monitoring of the human rights impact of both EU law and Member State practice, especially at the external borders. However, we would not support fragmented monitoring bodies for specific parts of the asylum acquis. Our Group and the European Parliament as a whole is working hard to ensure that the entire reform of the CEAS, including the RCD, can be adopted as soon as possible. As part of these negotiations, we are also fighting for an independent monitoring mechanism that will allow for monitoring of procedures and practices required by several Directives and Regulations.

We subsequently recommend

Humane and dignified reception of those entering the EU is crucial: Member States must uphold existing EU law on reception conditions and asylum procedures. Asylum seekers should not be systematically detained, and registration centres in Member States where asylum seekers first arrive should be designed for a short period of stay until asylum seekers are transferred to the Member State responsible for their claim. Asylum procedures should be fair, swift and harmonised across the EU.

32. We recommend that the EU ensures that every asylum seeker and refugee, during the process of the residence procedure, attends language and integration courses. The courses should be mandatory, free of charge and include personal assistance for the initial integration. They should start within two weeks after the submission of the residency application. Additionally, incentives and sanctions mechanisms should be established. Learning the language as well as understanding the culture, history and ethics of the country of arrival is a key step to integration. The lengthy wait for the initial integration process has a negative impact on the migrants' social assimilation. Sanction mechanisms can help identify a migrants' willingness to integrate.

Our comment

We strongly support early integration and believe this has great benefits to migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees as well as to the local community, promoting active involvement by

newcomers and preventing social exclusion. A case-work approach which allows for personal assistance has also proven to be beneficial in this regard.

However, we cannot support punitive approaches and therefore would oppose mandatory integration courses, as this is likely to penalise the most vulnerable including migrant women - especially while so many barriers to their participation in such courses persist (e.g. lengthy and expensive travel from accommodation to courses, lack of childcare provision). We also oppose the term 'assimilation' and believe that inclusion should be the goal of such efforts.

Finally, what exactly is meant by 'residency application' may need to be further explained.

We subsequently recommend

We believe that more financial resources for inclusion and better integration procedures are necessary. Integration is a two-way street and newcomers are more likely to feel like a part of their host society and surrounding community when they are granted equal access to public services and job opportunities – in decent working conditions – as well as fair access to citizenship.

Stream 5: Responsibility and Solidarity across the EU

Substream 5.1 Distributing Migration

33. We recommend replacing the Dublin System with a legally-binding treaty to ensure just, balanced and proportionate distribution of asylum seekers in the EU on the basis of solidarity and justice. Currently, refugees are required to put forward their asylum requests in the EU Member State they first arrive in. This system transition should be as swift as possible. The EU Commission's proposal for a New EU Pact on Migration and Asylum from 2020 is a good start and should be put into legal form, since it includes quotas on distribution of refugees among EU Member States. We recommend this because the current Dublin System does not respect the principles of solidarity and justice. It puts a heavy burden on the countries at the border of the EU, where most asylum seekers first enter EU territory. All Member States have to take responsibility to manage refugee flows into the EU. The EU is a community of shared values and should act accordingly.

Our comment

We agree that the current Dublin system, as implemented by Member States, is not fit for purpose and places a disproportionate burden on Member States where asylum-seekers first arrive. We also strongly support automatic and mandatory relocation, as is clearly outlined in our Greens/ EFA position paper on a fair and efficient asylum system.

The European Parliament is currently negotiating its position on the proposed alternative, the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation, which is part of the new Pact. Our Group is fighting to completely remove the first entry principle and instead establish a system that would allow for swift relocation based on the meaningful links asylum-seekers have to particular MS, or, when no such links exist, on the basis of a reference key.

It is important for our Group that such a system takes into account asylum-seekers' preferences, as we believe that allowing for agency in the procedure promotes integration as well as being the humane and dignified approach.

We subsequently recommend

As part of the negotiations on the new Pact and in line with the Parliament's 2017 'Wikström' report on the Dublin Regulation, we should strive for a permanent and mandatory mechanism to fairly allocate responsibility for asylum claims based on solidarity between Member States.

The system we propose would also improve integration prospects: our Group recommends that relocation should be based on an asylum seeker's meaningful links to a Member State, such as family connections, and should take the asylum seeker's preferences into account when no such links exist.

34. We recommend the EU provide support to the EU Member States in order to process asylum requests both at a faster pace and according to joint standards. In addition, humanitarian accommodation should be provided for refugees. To take burden off the arrival countries, we recommend that refugees be relocated within the EU quickly and efficiently after their first arrival into the EU so that their asylum request can be processed elsewhere within the EU. For this, financial support from the EU as well as organisational support through the EU Asylum Agency is needed. People whose asylum requests were denied must be sent back to their countries of origin in an efficient manner — as long as their country of origin is considered safe. We recommend this because asylum procedures currently take too much time, and they may differ from one Member State to another. By speeding up asylum processes refugees spend less time waiting for their final asylum decision in temporary accommodation facilities. Asylum seekers who are admitted can be integrated more quickly into their final country of destination.

Our comment

We agree that asylum procedures currently take too much time, and they differ from one Member State to another, leading to uncertainty. By speeding up asylum processes, refugees spend less time waiting for their final asylum decision in temporary accommodation facilities. We support those EU measures already in place to support Member States and address these issues, for example the new mandate of the EU Asylum Agency and the Asylum and Integration Fund 2021 - 2027. We think the existing tools are sufficient to achieve the objectives of this recommendation.

Regarding return, as the Rapporteurs for the recast Return Directive, our Group believes that returns are only efficient when they are humane, dignified and sustainable. The focus should therefore not be on speed or return rates, but on ensuring respect for fundamental rights and comprehensive reintegration assistance.

35. We recommend strong EU financial, logistical and operational support for the management of the first reception which would lead to a possible integration or repatriation of irregular migrants. Beneficiaries of such support shall be the EU border

states who carry the burden of the migration influx. We recommend strong support because some EU border states bear the greatest burden from the migrant influx due to their geographical location.

Our comment

Our Group does not support using terms such as ‘burden’ and ‘influx’ in the context of migration, as they risk dehumanising the people migrating.

In principle we agree with this recommendation. However, it should be noted that Member States of first entry have indeed received very significant EU support both in terms of funding and operational support – Greece is a strong example of this. The key issue remains the fair sharing of responsibility through relocation, as the past years have shown that no amount of financial or logistical support can offset the lack of such solidarity.

In addition, we only promote EU support for procedures that comply with EU law and do not run counter to the right to seek asylum - we do not support EU funding for walls, fences, surveillance material or detention facilities.

Finally, we do not believe that financial support provided directly to Member State national governments is not adequate to deal with this concept. Local authorities need to receive this support directly, as it can otherwise often get caught up in a number of bureaucratic issues at the national level and consequently never reach the organisations and workers on the ground who are the often the refugees’ first point of contact.

36. We recommend that the mandate of the EU Agency for Asylum shall be strengthened to coordinate and manage the distribution of asylum seekers within the EU Member States to achieve a fair distribution. A fair distribution requires to take into account the needs of the asylum seekers as well as logistical and economical capacities of EU Member States and their needs in terms of labour market. We recommend this because a centralised coordination and management of the distribution of asylum seekers which is regarded as fair, by Member States as well as their citizens, prevents chaotic situations and social tensions, thus contributing to greater solidarity between EU Member States.

Our comment

We agree with a significant role for the EU Agency for Asylum in relocation. However, it is rather the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation which needs to reflect this - the new EUAA mandate already allows for such assistance by the Agency.

We subsequently recommend

The establishment of a Relocation Coordinator within the Commission would further strengthen and streamline relocation efforts in partnership with the EUAA.

37. We recommend either creating an overarching EU institution or strengthening the EU Asylum Agency to process and decide upon asylum requests for the whole European Union based on uniform standards. It should also be in charge of a just distribution of refugees. This institution should also define which countries of origin are safe and which are not, and

should be responsible for sending back rejected asylum seekers. We recommend this because the current asylum policy is characterised by unclear responsibilities and different standards between EU Member States. This leads to inconsistent handling of asylum procedures across the EU. Furthermore, the EU Asylum Agency currently only possesses "soft" power. It can only advise Member States on asylum issues.

Our comment

We support the notion of a European asylum status. However, we do not support safe third country lists, nor would we support a supra-EU body responsible for both asylum and return.

Our Group fully support a large role for the EUAA. Frontex already carries out returns, however we would not suggest this completely replacing national authorities and their responsibilities - it is important that the national authorities remain responsible for upholding safeguards and rights . EU Agencies will, by definition, always remain subject to the willingness of Member States to let them operate. See above on the Relocation Coordinator for an alternative suggestion.

We subsequently recommend

The establishment of a Relocation Coordinator within the Commission would further strengthen and streamline relocation efforts in partnership with the EUAA.

38. We recommend the establishment, without delay, of dedicated asylum centres for unaccompanied minors across all EU Member States. This should be done in order to accommodate and provide care to the minors according to their particular needs, at the earliest opportunity.

We recommend this because:

- 1) Many minors are likely to be traumatised (coming from areas of conflict).
- 2) Different children will have differing needs (according to age, health, etc.).
- 3) Were this recommendation implemented, it would ensure that vulnerable and traumatised minors would receive all necessary care at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 4) As minors are future European citizens and as such, if treated appropriately, should contribute positively to the future of Europe.

Our comment

The Group agrees that unaccompanied and separated children are particularly vulnerable, and we are fighting for the inclusion of the strongest possible safeguards for them in all EU asylum and migration legislation. However, we do not agree with the notion of children being accommodated in centres.

We subsequently recommend

We believe that unaccompanied children should be immediately relocated and subsequently taken care of in the normal care system, including in foster families or (where possible depending on their age) through semi-independent living arrangements.

39. We recommend the establishment of a common, transparent system for dealing with the expeditious processing of asylum seekers. This process should provide for a minimum standard and should be applied across all Member States equally.

We recommend this because:

- 1) Were this recommendation implemented, it would lead to a faster and more transparent way of dealing with asylum claims.
- 2) A failure to expedite the asylum process leads to illegality and criminality.
- 3) Minimum standards as referred to in our recommendation should encompass respect for human rights, health and the educational needs of asylum seekers.
- 4) Implementing this recommendation would lead to access to employment and self-sufficiency, allowing a positive contribution to EU society. Regularising employment status prevents abuses of asylum seekers in the working environment. This could only benefit a more successful integration of all affected.
- 5) Extended stays in asylum centres have negative consequences in terms of the mental health and well-being of the occupants.

Our comment

We agree with the sentiment of this recommendation (and in particular points 1, 3, 4 and 5), however it is unclear how it should be implemented, other than through the reforms we are currently working on. In particular, the Asylum Procedures Regulation aims to achieve exactly this. We also strongly support regularisation and allowing early access to the labour market, however the former is a matter for the Member States and the latter has been the subject of lengthy debate in negotiations on the Reception Conditions Directive - it is very unlikely that the current threshold of 6 months (down from previously 9) will be changed.

40. We strongly recommend a complete overhaul of all agreements and legislation governing asylum and immigration in Europe. We further recommend that an 'all of Europe' approach be adopted.

We recommend this because:

- 1) All current agreements are unworkable, impractical, and no longer fit for purpose since 2015 and up to the present day.
- 2) The EU should be the first "agency" that manages all other agencies and NGOs directly dealing with asylum issues.
- 3) The Member States affected are the ones that are left largely alone to deal with this issue. The 'à la carte' attitude of some Member States reflects poorly on the unity of the EU.
- 4) New targeted legislation would allow for a better future for all asylum seekers and lead to a more unified Europe.
- 5) Gaps in the current legislation are giving rise to conflicts and disharmony across Europe and are causing increased intolerance amongst European citizens towards migrants.
- 6) Stronger, relevant legislation would lead to a reduction in crime and abuses of the current asylum system.

Our comment

In response to point 1), we believe that the majority of the remaining legislation at EU is adequate and sufficient for tackling these issues. It is yet to be adequately implemented,

however. From the Group's perspective, only the Dublin Regulation needs to be replaced. We also strongly oppose any informal or bilateral agreement aimed at circumventing the EU asylum and migration legislation, and that risk to affect the principle of solidarity and the right to seek asylum.

In response to point 2), the Group questions the legality of this recommendation and we would not support any EU control over important actors such as NGOs or lawyers, as this would compromise their independence.

In response to point 5), we believe that it is the behaviour of Member States, instead of the legislation per se, that is causing conflicts. We do not believe that re-opening negotiations on files on which the Parliament has reached a strong, progressive position, and in some cases has even found a provisional agreement with the Council (e.g. RCD), will alleviate this. On the contrary, we are concerned that in today's political climate the outcome would be even worse.

In response to point 6), we strongly disagree with this statement as it is not evidence-based.