



# RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CONSERVATIVE LOCAL AND REGIONAL LEADERS FOR THE 2024 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

## A LESS BUREAUCRATIC EU

that is more in touch with its citizens, more flexible, less corrupt and with greater transparency

## SUBSIDIARITY AND SOVEREIGNTY

which allow us to protect our citizens from any abuse of competencies from Brussels and to retain national sovereignty in areas such as education, health and social issues

## TECHNOLOGICAL NEUTRALITY

should be our guiding principle. Burdensome and utopic policies such as the Green Deal are too costly and are suffocating our businesses and our industry

## FIGHTING ILLEGAL MIGRATION

is continuing to place huge pressure on our Member States, disrupting their social cohesion and social models. Current migration policies have failed

## RURAL AREAS AND FARMERS

are continually exposed to major challenges such as natural disasters, additional environmental rules and bureaucracy

## FAMILY-FRIENDLY POLICIES

are essential in combatting the ongoing demographic crisis, which is jeopardising a solid future for our nations

## A less bureaucratic EU

### *Let's scale back the EU!*

Our citizens are losing trust in democratic institutions because of the overburdening bureaucracy, excessive control, less freedom and recent scandals of corruption. All attempts by centralist EU lawmakers to take powers away from the Member States should be stopped. The call to change from unanimity to qualified majority voting is unacceptable as are any calls to change the Treaties through a Convention. This would undermine the very institutional balance on which the EU institutions were founded and further reduce the impact of regions in the EU's decision-making system.

## Subsidiarity and national sovereignty

### *Let Member States cooperate on issues that matter to them!*

The principle of subsidiarity should be respected in areas such as education, health and social issues. Education must remain a Member State competence, reflecting key values of social and cultural heritage, staying free from political and ideological influence. In this context, the defining role of families in education and the transmission of social values must also be recognised. Healthcare is also a national competence and EU health policy should complement rather than challenge national responses. As each Member State has unique social challenges in varying historical, cultural and societal contexts, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. The difference in Member States' diverse approaches to education, health and social issues must be respected.



## Technological neutrality

***Let Member States determine their energy mix to avoid the risk of energy poverty, to protect jobs and for the EU to remain competitive and energy independent!***

The war in Ukraine demonstrated and confirmed just how weak the EU is in terms of its energy policy. It revealed many flaws that we had been drawing attention to for a long time. Member States have the right to determine their energy mix. Energy policy goes beyond just the environment and climate – it also impacts our industries, our small family-run businesses and our citizens. Technological neutrality must be the guiding principle. For example, banning the registration of conventional petrol and diesel vehicles throughout the EU from 2035 is a punishment for our automotive industries and for our European drivers who want to drive freely. Additionally, nuclear energy must finally be recognised as a key technology for Europe's green transition, energy sovereignty and strategic autonomy.

## Fighting illegal migration

***Let Member States enjoy their right to control migration flows and their external borders!***

The EU's current migration system is totally flawed. Member States need more support to protect the EU's external borders. The rate of returns for failed asylum seekers to their country of origin should be increased and the role of Frontex should be strengthened. We have continuously called to continue working with third countries to reach cooperation agreements to prevent migrants from making the life-endangering journey across the Mediterranean to the EU. We must prevent potential infiltration of terrorists and therefore we call on the EU institutions to support Member States in making sure that migrants can no longer illegally enter the EU.

## **Rural areas and farmers**

***Let's ensure that our farmers have all the necessary resources so that they can continue to provide food security for our citizens!***

Agriculture has a vital function of contributing to economic development, food security and making rural areas more resilient. Enhancing competitiveness and productivity in the agricultural and food sector while encouraging generational renewal is indispensable for this vital function to be carried out. This needs to be supported by private investment in physical, human and knowledge capital. The sector is eager to contribute to a stronger Europe, but can deliver only if it stays competitive, and if farmers and their cooperatives can innovate, grasp new business opportunities and benefit from technological advancements. Farmers, agri-cooperatives and rural entrepreneurs should be given a good range of tools so that they compete fairly with other economic sectors without being subject to unfair competition from third countries.

## **Family-friendly policies**

***Through family-friendly policies let's ensure our demographic continuity across Europe!***

Investment must be better targeted towards long-term employment opportunities in regions. Without children, there is no future for Europe. To this end, we must work to eliminate obstacles discouraging European citizens from having children. Family-friendly policies, including housing support for parents, or ensuring financial security through soft loans, subsidies or tax breaks can all be instrumental to encourage couples to have children and to ensure demographic continuity across Europe. Accordingly, recognition, advocacy and support of family-friendly policies is absolutely crucial, including on an EU level. We stress the need to develop projects to promote the return of young people to rural areas who have already left by supporting youth employment, digital connectivity and entrepreneurship, learning from best practices of Member States.

