



Joint Statement on the occasion of the 28th Europa-Forum Wachau 2024

20 years after the largest round of EU enlargement, we see it as our duty to remind ourselves of how our countries and their citizens have benefited from EU membership over the past years and decades and to provide a vision on how we can shape our common future to the benefit of all!

The EU has been a driver for peace and prosperity: The idea of making war materially impossible, with the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community over 70 years ago, still forms the foundational pillar of the EU as we know it today. A look at our neighbourhood which is torn by conflicts and crises should remind us of this today. The EU has delivered decades of stability and prosperity, while promoting our values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law across the globe.

The largest single market in the world, the EU has brought us very concrete benefits as a society, as an economy and as individuals – without sacrificing our national identities. As EU citizens, we have the freedom to live, study, work and do business anywhere in the EU.

Over the past years, the EU has been confronted with many crises from which it has emerged a stronger and a more united Union. Looking ahead, we have to continue working towards a strong and secure, a prosperous and competitive as well as a free and democratic Europe in a changing world.

To achieve this, we have to strengthen the EU's resilience and long-term competitiveness, further implement the green and digital transformation, facilitate cohesion, and promote an innovation- and business-friendly environment by reducing bureaucratic burden for our companies. Moreover, a comprehensive approach to migration, strategic action on security and defence, coherent external action, a well-prepared enlargement as well as fostering the rule of law is needed.

The challenges we face – be it the consequences of the on-going Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, the crisis in the Middle East, illegal migration or the climate crisis – do not know borders. We can only address these challenges with common answers at the European level, in full solidarity and unity. The recourse to purely national solutions is an empty promise with no prospect of success.

Today, we have to be very clear that we need the female and the male perspective and a strong commitment by all to work together at European level – with strong and determined female voices that act as the engine for a strong, secure, inclusive, sustainable and prosperous Europe.

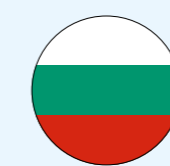
So that we remain united in diversity!



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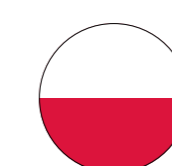
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