

RESOLUTION

Making tomorrow a priority of today

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Intergenerational fairness is emerging as a central topic of our time. It is true that most politicians and citizens value fairness and care about the future and the future generation. However, society does not yet have a systemic solution to take care of the future and the various hurdles that come with it. The world needs to assess the impact we're having on future generations and advocate for them. Although Intergenerational fairness often serves a good debate, there is little consequence on such discussions.

Every day political decisions related to housing, healthcare, and transportation result in certain consequences which are experienced in differing ways across generations. Issues, including Climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic, highlight this stark reality. Majority of our decisions today, will have lasting effects on the generation which cannot vote as well as those who aren't born yet.

At the end of each political cycle, democratic institutions like national parliaments go through an assessment of its mandate, about the legacy they leave behind and the future that is to come.

The speed and intensity of the course of action in societies increases the number of demands for everyone, across all societal sectors. Therefore, the main concern is centered in providing urgent solutions, more than on important ones. Political choices, even when they have a severe impact in the future, focus considerably in the present results, neglecting its future effects. Frequently, the Future becomes the Present dustbin.

Governments sometimes take actions thinking about the future, but the challenges the future poses are often forgotten. Many decisions are taken based on beliefs: that the current structures remain unchanged; measures that make sense today, will also fit the reality of tomorrow; that history repeats itself. This leads to a loss of continuity, impact and transparency, elements that are vital for democracy.

We deal with the present in the perspective that today *is important* and tomorrow too. However, the challenges faced today are usually different from the ones we had in the past and from the ones that emerge tomorrow. Besides, there are decisions that make sense today but lose their efficacy in the course of time. Thus, it is vital that there is the guarantee of a long-term vision as well as



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strategic foresight that requires the coexistence of different dimensions of time to which organizations, particularly national parliaments and European institutions, must address.

It is therefore relevant to consider that parliaments and institutions create a specific forum to discuss and address the challenges the Future brings, which are increasingly more demanding. This forum should systematically reflect that decisions taken by legislative bodies are in line with the international trends and with the challenges that we foresee are in line with what the younger generations will face.

National parliaments and the European Parliament have a particular responsibility to accompany the evolution of the society and the exercise of public powers. Monitoring the impact of laws, to be able to update them in an objective and timely manner and identify the big changes that will imply new actions, are key elements in any modern Democracy.

The majority of national parliaments in the EU do not have significant prospective work in spite of consensus for its utility and necessity. There are several ways to develop the concept of intergenerational fairness in practical terms. Any prospective analysis must have a transversal framework that includes all areas of the legislative and executive power.

Hence, YEPP Calls on:

- National Parliaments and the European Parliament to create an official body, the **Committee for the Future**. The said committee **should focus its work on foresight regarding the most important societal trends and challenges for the future, working in close dialogue with the society and its political institutions. This Committee should address and have opinions on legislation** related to the aging population, technology and AI, social security sustainability and environment.
- The European Commission, the EU Council and the European Parliament shall create the **European Ombudsperson for Future Generations**. The pandemic drove the EU to agree on ambitious plans and political compromises. The program Next Generation EU represents an opportunity to change the paradigm in economy and environment but poses a number of questions to its accountability. Including: What if governments fail to use the money to achieve the long-term objectives the Union has defined? Who will the future generations hold accountable? How is it possible for EU citizens to scrutinize the reforms and the correct use of the money?

More than intergenerational solidarity and fairness, we need intergenerational sustainability. To achieve it, we need to give the Future what it deserves: a strong centrality in our democratic lives.