



Self-Determination Caucus

Democracy
Diversity
Dialogue
Decision for all

Founding manifesto

January 2021

The undersigned Members of the European Parliament, decide to set up a non-official group of MEPs belonging to Stateless Nations and nations with territorial disputes. Our aim is to advocate that the people of these communities can exercise freely and democratically their right to self-determination in a legally recognized manner.

Over the last years, different European national communities have faced common challenges in political processes focused on reviewing their political legal status and transforming it through a democratic decision. For this reason, we believe that there is an opportunity for Members belonging to different European stateless nations and nations with territorial disputes to cooperate and work together within the European institutions to promote their common views, agree on shared positions and defend the need for a European Clarity Act, as a tool to resolve democratic disputes over self-determination in the EU.

This legal instrument was already included in the "Strasbourg manifesto" approved by the Intergroup of Minorities in this chamber in April 2014. Its goal is to promote dialogue, agreement and a democratic decision, endorsed by a qualified majority of citizens, to resolve this type of problem when processes become bogged down at the local level. This act could be based on experiences in this respect known and applied in the international and European framework in the face of similar problems. In addition, it must be based on the United Nations' doctrine on the right to self-determination. Those realities must be reflected in the concept of diversity that is contained in the motto of the European Union. In the Union, there are stateless nations and nations with territorial dispute with very different degrees of recognition and autonomy and very different aspirations. Some of them want to update their levels of self-government within the framework of the state that contains them. Others claim their independence and the constitution of a new state through the exercise of the right of self-determination.

This is why very diverse MPs with very different aspirations are working together in a group that defends diversity. But MEPs are united in their belief that such political issues can only be addressed through dialogue, negotiation, regulatory developments and democratic ratification.

Moreover, the upcoming Conference on the Future of Europe, offers a good opportunity to raise and debate the situation of those stateless nations and nations with territorial dispute that aspire to create or complete their own state, underlining at the same time the need for a European Clarity Act. As is stressed in the 15th January 2020 European Parliament resolution on the Conference of the Future of Europe, "10 years after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, it is an appropriate time to give EU citizens a renewed opportunity to have



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a robust debate on the future of Europe". Furthermore, the resolution underlines that "the Conference process should be organized in such a way that the diversity of our societies is fully represented" and "national, regional and local level should be the key element of this innovative and original process". Accordingly, "Conference Plenary should be able to enable an open forum for discussions among the different participants without predetermined outcome,... without limiting the scope to pre-defined policy fields". Bearing all this in mind, we want to contribute to this Conference by bringing in the point of view and defending the interests of the different national communities with this proposal on the record of clarity.

The first objective of this group is to sponsor this proposal on the Conference. It was born based on the values of democracy and diversity and was the result of an agreement between many different views, experiences and traditions.

This group remains open for Members/Former members who defend the right of self-determination of all peoples, equal and inclusive societies and share EU values of democracy, the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights. This "caucus" was created at the initiative of Members/former Members from the nations that are closer to achieve a wide recognition of their status as state or the resolution of their territorial dispute; i.e., Corsica, Flanders, Ireland, Catalonia and the Basque Country, but Membership is addressed to any Member who shares our ideas and objectives.

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