

Declaration of the Leaders of 27 Member States and of the European Council, the European Parliament and the European Commission

The Rome Declaration

(25 March 2017)

We, the Leaders of 27 Member States and of EU institutions, take pride in the achievements of the European Union: the construction of European unity is a bold, far-sighted endeavour. Sixty years ago, recovering from the tragedy of two world wars, we decided to bond together and rebuild our continent from its ashes. We have built a unique Union with common institutions and strong values, a community of peace, freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, a major economic power with unparalleled levels of social protection and welfare.

European unity started as the dream of a few, it became the hope of the many. Then Europe became one again. Today, we are united and stronger: hundreds of millions of people across Europe benefit from living in an enlarged Union that has overcome the old divides.

The European Union is facing unprecedented challenges, both global and domestic: regional conflicts, terrorism, growing migratory pressures, protectionism and social and economic inequalities. Together, we are determined to address the challenges of a rapidly changing world and to offer to our citizens both security and new opportunities.

We will make the European Union stronger and more resilient, through even greater unity and solidarity amongst us and the respect of common rules. Unity is both a necessity and our free choice. Taken individually, we would be side-lined by global dynamics. Standing together is our best chance to influence them, and to defend our common interests and values. We will act together, at different paces and intensity where necessary, while moving in the same direction, as we have done in the past, in line with the Treaties and keeping the door open to those who want to join later. Our Union is undivided and indivisible.

In the ten years to come we want a Union that is safe and secure, prosperous, competitive, sustainable and socially responsible, and with the will and capacity of playing a key role in the world and of shaping globalisation. We want a Union where citizens have new opportunities for cultural and social development and economic growth. We want a Union which remains open to those European countries that respect our values and are committed to promoting them.

In these times of change, and aware of the concerns of our citizens, we commit to the Rome Agenda, and pledge to work towards:

1. A safe and secure Europe: a Union where all citizens feel safe and can move freely, where our external borders are secured, with an efficient, responsible and sustainable migration policy, respecting international norms; a Europe determined to fight terrorism and organised crime.
2. A prosperous and sustainable Europe: a Union which creates growth and jobs; a Union where a strong, connected and developing Single Market, embracing technological transformation, and a stable and further strengthened single currency open avenues for growth, cohesion, competitiveness, innovation and exchange, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises; a Union promoting sustained and sustainable growth, through investment, structural reforms and working towards completing the Economic and Monetary Union; a Union where economies converge; a Union where energy is secure and affordable and the environment clean and safe.

3. A social Europe: a Union which, based on sustainable growth, promotes economic and social progress as well as cohesion and convergence, while upholding the integrity of the internal market; a Union taking into account the diversity of national systems and the key role of social partners; a Union which promotes equality between women and men as well as rights and equal opportunities for all; a Union which fights unemployment, discrimination, social exclusion and poverty; a Union where young people receive the best education and training and can study and find jobs across the continent; a Union which preserves our cultural heritage and promotes cultural diversity.

4. A stronger Europe on the global scene: a Union further developing existing partnerships, building new ones and promoting stability and prosperity in its immediate neighbourhood to the east and south, but also in the Middle East and across Africa and globally; a Union ready to take more responsibilities and to assist in creating a more competitive and integrated defence industry; a Union committed to strengthening its common security and defence, also in cooperation and complementarity with the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, taking into account national circumstances and legal commitments; a Union engaged in the United Nations and standing for a rules-based multilateral system, proud of its values and protective of its people, promoting free and fair trade and a positive global climate policy.

We will pursue these objectives, firm in the belief that Europe's future lies in our own hands and that the European Union is the best instrument to achieve our objectives. We pledge to listen and respond to the concerns expressed by our citizens and will engage with our national parliaments. We will work together at the level that makes a real difference, be it the European Union, national, regional, or local, and in a spirit of trust and loyal cooperation, both among Member States and between them and the EU institutions, in line with the principle of subsidiarity. We will allow for the necessary room for manoeuvre at the various levels to strengthen Europe's innovation and growth potential. We want the Union to be big on big issues and small on small ones. We will promote a democratic, effective and transparent decision-making process and better delivery.

We as Leaders, working together within the European Council and among our institutions, will ensure that today's agenda is implemented, so as to become tomorrow's reality. We have united for the better. Europe is our common future.
