



## **JOINT DECLARATION**

### **BETWEEN**

**Antonio Tajani, President of the European Parliament**

### **AND**

**Luca Jahier, President of the European Economic and Social Committee**

### **ON THE COOPERATION FOR THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS CAMPAIGN IN 2019**

On the basis of the European Parliament strategy and the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) action plan for the European elections, to be held on 23-26 May 2019, we, the President of the European Parliament Antonio Tajani and the EESC President Luca Jahier, agree to cooperate and undertake a number of activities within the framework of the existing cooperation agreement between the two institutions.

We are both perfectly aware that the next six months will be unlike anything that has come before. Even though the most recent Eurobarometer survey, published in October, found that 68% of respondents agreed that their country has benefitted from EU membership, Eurosceptics and populists will use any arguments to turn public opinion to their advantage.

Once again, Europe will be at risk of being used as a scapegoat by those who will seek to instrumentalise the elections to seize power. Citizens should remain vigilant, take pride in our past achievements and develop a new sense of belonging to our common European project.

We need to anticipate, act and react with proper facts to refute fake news and make sure that positive and true stories are not overshadowed by negative, opportunistic propaganda.

Democracy deserves our dedicated attention to preserving the peace we have built over 60 years. There is no going back.

The actions listed below are envisaged to raise awareness of civil society organisations and the general public about the European elections and to encourage participation.

## GENERAL COMMUNICATION

- Organise three major awareness-raising campaigns for members – one for each phase of the European elections campaign – to be conducted through various communication channels to encourage them to play an active role. The first phase of the European elections' campaign is already ongoing;
- EESC members to act as ambassadors to their respective organisations, transmitting the interinstitutional core message with the help of factsheets prepared by the European Parliament;
- Specific communication training for EESC contact points and other interested members "going local" in the context of the European elections, to be organised in cooperation with the European Parliament;
- Organise a "speakers' seminar" for members and staff who talk to visitors and invite a representative of the EP DG for Communication to present the EP campaign (beginning of 2019);
- Make sure that information documents and info-sheets that can be used by members for their elections in connection with Going Local activities are easily available on the Going Local intranet page;
- Organise an internal event (e.g. a lunchtime conference) for members and staff on how to promote the EU on social media, use of hashtags, target groups, etc.
- Use the European Parliament Information Offices as outlets for future EESC communication initiatives related to the elections.
- Ongoing social media campaign using the EU election hashtags (for example #ThisTimeImVoting, #EE19, #EE2019, #EPelections, #EUelections, etc.): targeted messages on social media and support for messages launched by the EP, also targeting young people as a priority (already started in July 2018);
- Promotion via CESlink portal (digital hub of European economic and social councils);
- Encourage members and their organisations to act as social media ambassadors in their specific areas of interest and expertise (e.g. on the "This time I am voting" campaign).

## EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

- Raise awareness of the elections in all major activities organised by the EESC and/or taking place on EESC premises;
- Ensure proper communication of the EESC Citizens' Convention to be held in Brussels in early 2019, and of selected debates or dialogues aimed at engaging with stakeholders at national level as regards the European elections.
- Encourage EESC members to organise individual or joint Going Local activities specifically linked to the elections with the help of the EP information offices, which can provide standard material (presentations, visuals etc.);
- Interact with the lead candidates (*Spitzenkandidaten*) in Bureau, plenary or at special events;

- Open day ("Europe Day") on 4 May 2019 focused on the European elections: plan specific election-related activities (e.g. questions from participants to EU decision-makers etc.).

### Targeting Youth

- 2019 edition of "Your Europe, Your Say" (special edition to mark 10 years of YEYS), also focused on the forthcoming European elections and on youth participation therein.
- Specifically target youth – in particular the YEYS participants and first-time voters among them – and promote the creation of a young "community" linked to the EU elections; liaise with the EP on this;
- Opening of the YEYS event by Presidents Tajani and Jahier.

### **OUTREACH AND PRESS WORK**

- Coverage/promotion of selected Going Local actions linked to the elections;
- Articles and op-eds on the elections in selected media outlets;
- Seminar for journalists (end-2018) with a focus on civil society in an election year;
- Access to Parliament audiovisual facilities and services
- Cooperation between the Parliament and the EESC on national and local distribution channels, including through the European Broadcasting Union.

*Signed in Brussels, on 5 December 2018*



**Antonio TAJANI**

President of the European Parliament



**Luca JAHIER**

President of the European Economic and  
Social Committee