

Civil Society for EU

#ourvoiceinEurope

EP 2024 elections campaign for better
civic space and civil dialogue



Who we are



EU-level network of social rights actors
(NGOs, service providers, social
enterprises)



EU-level coordination of CSOs on
transversal issues as civil dialogue and
civic space



50+ networks and CSOs working on human rights, social policies, environment,
youth, health...

The context

- Civil society plays a **key role in healthy democracies** by supporting governments and institutions in **responding to people needs**, promoting and protecting **fundamental rights**, and better **connecting people to decision-makers**

BUT

- **Shrinking civic space** all over Europe: restrictions on civil society space, threats and smear campaigns, limited funding...
 - **Limited civil dialogue**: limited involvement of civil society in policy-making, inconsistent practices of civil dialogue, limited access to documents and decision makers...
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The objective

Strengthening civic space and civil dialogue all over Europe through **better recognition, support and involvement** of civil society

The asks

1) An overarching civil society strategy aimed at supporting civil society at EU and national level

- A safe and enabling regulatory and political environment for civil society
- An EU-wide mechanism to protect civil society, activists and defenders
- Adequate and consistent funding for civil society

2) An interinstitutional civil dialogue agreement to strengthen involvement of civil society and harmonise civil dialogue standards, procedures and mechanisms across EU institutions and Member States

CIVIL SOCIETY 2024 EU ELECTIONS MANIFESTO

FOR BETTER CIVIC
SPACE AND CIVIL
DIALOGUE

Civil society is an essential part of healthy democracies. We play a key role in promoting and protecting the rule of law and **fundamental rights**. We provide crucial and empowering services that enable people and societies to be more resilient in times of crisis, and more inclusive overall. We provide a platform for people - especially marginalised groups - to connect with policy-makers and participate in decisions that affect them.

Yet, civic space - the political, legislative, social and economic environment that enables people and civil society actors to play their role in shaping our societies - is shrinking all over the world, with **growing restrictions at all levels**. The EU and its Member States are no exception to this trend. Moreover, civil dialogue - the essential exchange between civil society and policy-makers - is not sufficiently open, transparent or regular, leading to a democratic deficit which means that many people living in the EU are uncatered for.

We envisage a European Union where civic space is strengthened and civil dialogue is valued and encouraged, so that we as civil society - including the philanthropy sector - can continue to exercise our vital role in achieving **positive social outcomes** and increased wellbeing for all.

We call on European political parties and groups to make civic space and civil dialogue central topics in the 2024 European elections, and on the future European Parliament and European Commission to take concrete steps during the next five years to better recognise, protect and engage civil society at all levels.

Campaign manifesto

The Civil Society for EU manifesto outlines the campaign's key asks relating to the launch of a European civil society strategy and the conclusion of a civil dialogue agreement.

Over 130 civil society organisations at EU and national level have endorsed the manifesto so far: shorturl.at/houLN

Thank you!



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