
European elections 2024: EU Economic and Social Committee, “civil society is and must remain the guardian of participatory democracy”

“Organised civil society is and must remain Europe’s guardian of participatory democracy, a powerhouse in tackling current and future challenges”, said the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) in a statement about the upcoming 2024 European elections. “At this particular moment in time, the contribution of grassroots organisations is more vital than ever”, the statement reads. Indeed, by “being active on the ground, they understand what works and what doesn’t and they can grasp the impact and consequences of the digital and green transitions on the EU’s economy and society”. While the EU has shown in recent years that it can respond to crises, the challenge of the green and digital transition and the economy require European societies to make significant adjustments, particularly in the labour market, as evidenced by the EESC. For this reason, the EESC, together with its national partners, is calling for “mitigation measures” to guarantee a fair transition and also to ensure that the “No one should be left behind” principle does not remain “an empty promise”. The EESC also recommends “taking action to bring Europeans closer to the political level, for example through new forms of democratic participation”, using national economic and social councils, or citizens’ panels, as proposed by the Conference on the Future of Europe.

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