
State of the Union Address: Covid-19 leaves its mark on the EU agenda. Von der Leyen, “building a human economy”. The emergencies: sickness, unemployment and poverty

“The Europeans want to get out of this situation created by the coronavirus, from this fragility, from uncertainty. They are ready for change and are ready to move on”. “This is the moment for Europe, towards a new vitality”. The State of the Union Address, given by Ursula von der Leyen in Brussels earlier today, ranged from statements of principle (“we have found we are a fragile community”) to effective ideas and plans for the future, especially in the area of economy, the environment and the 360-degree protection of the citizens’ rights. The first, long chapter in her Address focussed on the public health emergency: “No one is safe until everyone is safe”, the speaker said; hence the investments to get a vaccine for everyone as soon as possible and the announcement of the Global Health Summit, due to take place in Italy soon. Von der Leyen pointed out: “The change we are planning must be dictated by the pandemic emergency but it must respond to a plan of transformation” of the economy (Green Deal), the lifestyles, the EU’s presence in the world. “The pandemic is not over, that’s why we must be there, first and foremost, for those who need it”, “by joining forces”. Sickness, unemployment and poverty are the three big issues to be urgently addressed, “even by building a human economy”.

Valentina Bombelli