
Future of Europe Conference: Costa (EU Council), “message of confidence and hope”. Von der Leyen (Commission), “we will listen to citizens”

According to Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa, who today signed the Joint Declaration on the Conference on the Future of Europe in his capacity as Council of the EU president, this process, that is starting at a difficult time, is a “message of confidence” that we will be able to overcome the crisis and a “message of hope” that “we will build a Europe for the future”. “It will not be a conference of the institutions but of citizens”, Costa continued, addressing the “political issues that matter to them”. It is essential that “Europeans embrace the project and feel ownership for it” and that we manage to “bring citizens into the public space”. “This is my dream for Europe. One out of 450 million dreams”, said EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, in her speech before formally signing the Declaration. “We want people to take the lead”, we want this process to go “beyond Brussels and national capitals and to reach the silent majority” inhabiting every corner of Europe. For the EC President, the right timing is now because “it is in times of crisis” that we see “where we have to get better”. “We are inviting all Europeans to speak up”, she continued, to “say what Europe they want to live in, to shape it and join forces to help us build it”. “Our promise today is clear: we will listen to them. And then, we will act”.

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