

# Strategic Priorities for 2021 – 2025



**Civic organisations at work**  
Making tomorrow better for all

# THE FUTURE MUST BE DIFFERENT FROM THE PAST

## Ten lessons learned out of the crisis



### Lesson 1: Our security depends on the others' security

*We need universal health and social protection for everybody in our society and all over the world.*



### Lesson 6: We are the earth's custodians, not its owners

*Nature is using our lockdown to recover our damages. We must return to the world with ecological justice.*



### Lesson 2: We are all vulnerable and our destiny is interwoven

*Solidarity, equality, rights and caring must be at the base of international relations and every days' reality.*



### Lesson 7: Essential workers are real heroes. Women are at the forefront

*Their contribution has to be recognized in the social hierarchy; the invisible ones must fully access their rights.*



### Lesson 3: The common good exists

*Public institutions must serve, protect and implement the common good, not particular interests.*



### Lesson 8: Time has to slow down

*Lockdown forced us to give full place to social bonds, patience, compassion: we have to keep this in the long run.*



### Lesson 4: Democracy is the crucial antivirus we all need

*Citizens' awareness, civic participation, trustworthy information, public research and education, transparent institutions ensure the public good.*



### Lesson 9: We need human, social, ecological security

*We commit ourselves for a just recovery and a just transition in our country, in Europe and all over the world.*



### Lesson 5: The global market system failed

*We have to relocalize production, implement circular economy, and have a universal basic income for all.*



### Lesson 10: The future must be different from the past

*We need to learn from the Lessons and act together.*

# Strategic Priorities for 2021 – 2025: **challenges**

## SYSTEMIC

- Declining trust in how democracy



works



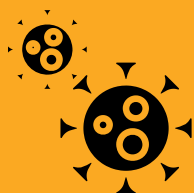
delivers

- Democratic space under pressure

**Institutional populism:** reaching out to individuals vs intermediary bodies.

**Anti-rights narratives** creating competition between vulnerable groups.

- Pandemic crisis



Human suffering

Fragile economies

Fragile democracies

## SPECIFIC

- Democratic space under pressure



Targeting political actions

Restrictions to freedom of assembly

Overregulating the sector

Anti-terrorism and public security laws

Police violence

SLAPPs lawsuits

- Effects of the pandemic crisis

Basic rights come in collusion

CSOs face reduced financial resources

NGOs struggle to maintain their operating capacities and actions

Shift in activities & budgets to deliver basic social services



## GENERAL

*(Local support for vulnerable people, unity and cooperation)*

*(There is no alternative, budgetary austerity...)*

**Human rights and common good are back**

**Revival of Solidarity and Activism**

**Fall of certain taboos**

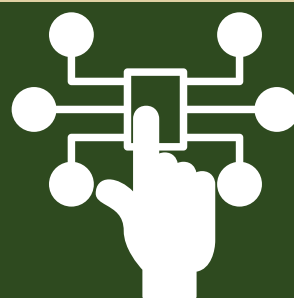
**Change is needed and possible**

**Great opportunity for civic organisations and actors to keep alive and visible these positive attitudes and interest for common good in our societies.**



## OPERATIONAL

**Opportunity for CSOs to showcase their social and societal role towards people and institutions**



### Digitalisation

**Facilitate networking, bridge the distance between EU and national/local levels**

**Systemic challenges require systemic thinking for impactful civic action**



**Bridge different forms of organisation**

**Embrace a systemic approach**

# WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE ECF?



## Political role

Advocate for a society based on our shared values of equality, solidarity, democracy and inclusiveness.



## Platform for democratic civic organisations

To meet, exchange knowledge and experience, support and learn from each other.



## Bridge institutional civil society with social movements



## Connect different forms of organisation and activism

National platforms of NGOs across different sectors: human rights advocacy, educational and cultural associations...



## Monitor and report on civic space and fundamental rights in Europe

Build positive narratives and campaigns to counter shrinking spaces and rights



## Amplify the impact and visibility of local issues

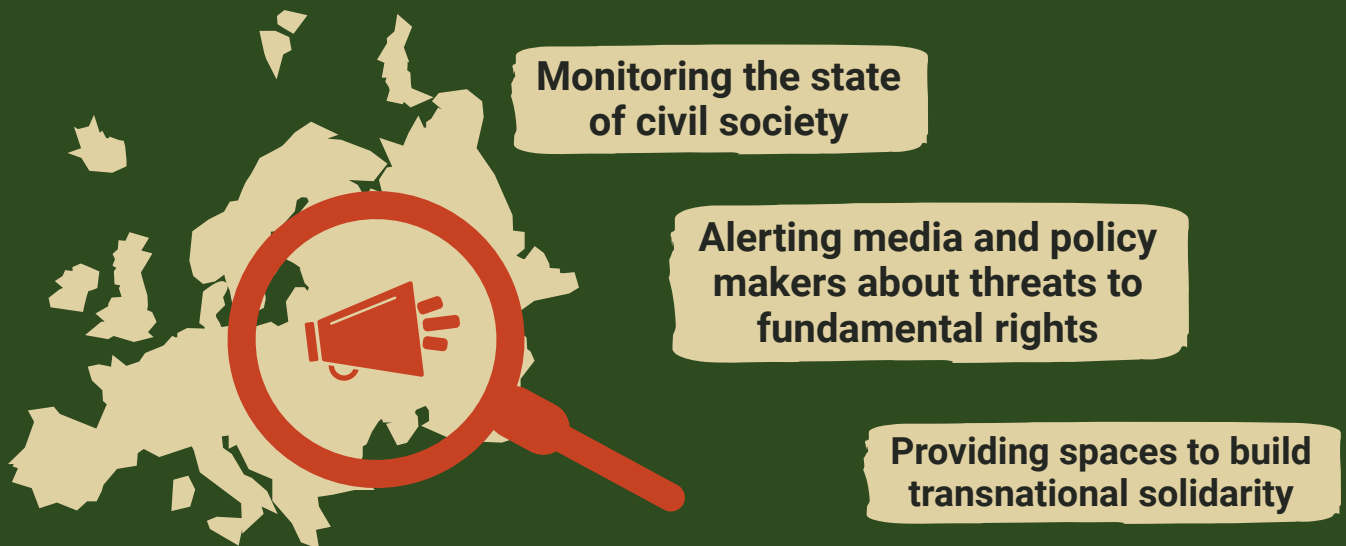
Support and amplify members' initiatives and capacities.



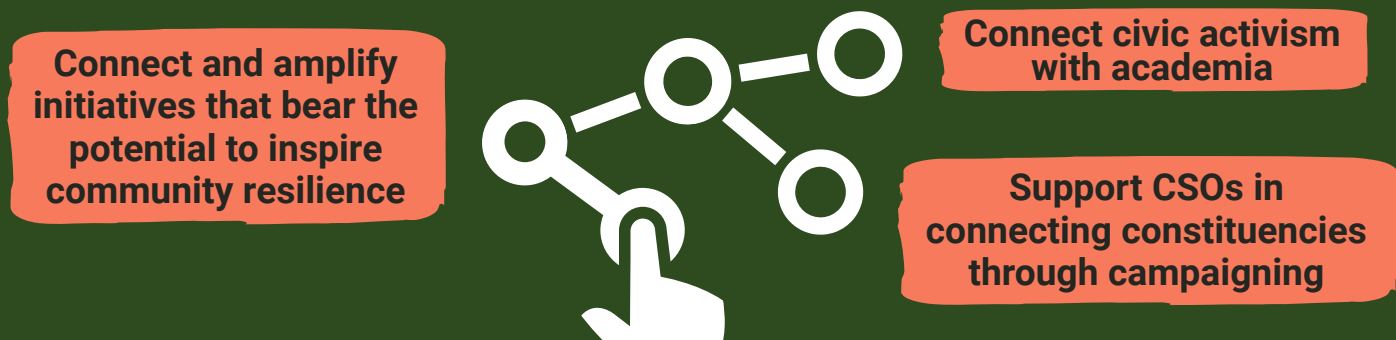
## Be a tool for EU advocacy and institutional dialogue

# STRATEGIC GOALS

## 1. *Protect and expand civic space*



## 2. *Build civic pride and resilience*



## 3. *Enable institutional and political dialogue*





# OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES



## 1. Further develop the Civic Space Watch (CSW)

- Better coverage of all EU countries
- Better reach out to vulnerable groups
- More active cooperation with other organisations
- Carry out more interviews with civic actors under pressure



## 2. Improve information sharing, interaction among ECF members and CSW community

- Provide better visibility to local and national cases
- Inspire civic actors to learn from experience of others
- More engagement: knowledge to act and build coalitions



## 3. Promote a positive narrative about civil society and human rights through storytelling

- Gather and tell civil society' success stories
- Increase civil society's confidence: empowering effect of celebrating the work of grassroots actors



## 4. Carry out more impactful and more evidence-based advocacy toward stronger actions at the European level

- More awareness on emerging trends
- Annual report on the state of civic space
- Trigger institutional actions
- Strengthen relations with the European Parliament

# WORK TO IMPROVE



**Internal governance to better reflect the diversity inside the network**



**Interaction between the members, through working groups, trainings and webinars**



**Membership policy and network development: better coverage of all EU countries and actors**



**Communication: community building, visibility of our actions, media relations**



**Diversity of our sources of funding**

# MEASURE SUCCESS



**Responsiveness and commitment of members/contacts/partners to our activities**



**Quantitative and qualitative indicators such as number, diversity and reputation/quality of speakers/contributors to our activities**



**Social media statistics and traffic on websites**

