



MEET & GREET WITH MEP IRENA JOVEVA Tuesday 26th of January From 10AM - 11:30AM CET

Number of participants: 22

1) Welcome and Introduce yourself

Celine

- Thank you MEP Joveva for joining us. We have a big agenda. The meeting will be principally in Slovenian. Press French, if you want to listen to the meeting in English.

Irena Joveva opening the Meeting

- Good morning from my side. I'm sorry for a little late start. Used to problems with Online-Platforms. I will start in English and will continue in my native language. First of all, thank you for having me here. Thanks to Celine, from ECOLISE, for organizing. Meet & Greet is a pilot. I've been following the work of ECOLISE; especially EU local developmental policy. I miss the bottom-up approach in the EU Union, but that's what ECOLISE is about. I wish that this Action Programme will enable CLI action to the climate and of course other issues.
- I'm 31 years young, MEP for 1 ½ years. We have been working remotely for almost one year, due to the pandemic. Previously I worked as a journalist. By a series of unexpected coincidences I've become a politician. The Committees I'm involved in are Culture, Environment and Employment. These are most relevant for my focus.
- I strongly believe that we must change the whole paradigm to be more socially inclusive, fair and environmentally sustainable. I can't change the world alone, at least I can do my best in the decision-making processes for the change. During my campaign the EP seemed detached from reality. Brussels is far away, most people can't influence the decision making processes, apart from bureaucrats, lobbyists and politicians. I'm trying to make a change to this. Now it's more difficult to talk to people on the ground, but I've tried before the Corona Crisis and am continuing to listen, also through events like this.



- Grateful, that organisations such as ECOLISE exist, so that the private companies are not the only people that we hear. Also Re-imagine and re-design the systems on which we depend. Many good ideas are designed and implemented on the local-level. As small organisations they lack the visibility and means to have a say on important policies, such as Green Deal, CAP, but also the funds. I want to hear what you have to say. How we can find a way to jointly push for change on a local and european level. Most people don't use the opportunity to reach out to their MEPs.

Emily:

- Youth, Policy-Making.

Ana-Margarida:

- Social Scientist, University of Lisbon
- Rural REGEN, aims to increase the lobbying capacity of rural development

Tina Trampus

- I'm from Steyers region
- Institute for protection of reservation of nature
- Glad to see agreements prepared
- I don't see much new, but in the last years
- Work as independent advisor
- Taking trees as my focus, trying to increase awareness of people

Carlos Ribeiro

- Project of collaborative communication
- In a lot of territories we tried to express the local movement about agroecology and sustainability
- Very interested in these topics at the European level

Mieke

- From the Netherlands, Social Entrepreneur
- How to involve youth in the environment, who are not able to contribute with a lot of money - how to bring them on board?

Henk Willem Tiktak

- Part of the Cooperative Society in Holland



- RND Environment, don't get bothered by the old laws
 - How can we combine the economic values with social values
 - We use a lot of youngsters, they have an open-minded view on the new world ●
- We combine the new law with the environmental law of the regions
- For a paradigm shift, we need new laws

Cassandra:

- Expert at environmental forum group in Estonia
 - We implement farming life. Chemicals- & Water-management.
 - Companies in the baltics up to speed in compliance with EU legislation
 - Increase awareness in the public
 - Discuss ways to bring EU legislation back down to the ground
- Questions:
 - How can we come up with communication methods, how to address those discrepancies?
 - How to get everyone involved?

Tomaz Gorenc

- Institute of Health and Environment
- Institute coordinates NGOs, youth organisation
- Awareness raising & advocacy
- Work a lot on air quality and air pollution and climate adaptation
 - Various groups, we can't measure everything in Euros. Or maybe it could be a tool in measuring external burdens in numbers, maybe we need to find ways to account for this

Rok Lesar

- Assistant based in Brussels
- Expert of Irena, if you have any questions, you can reach out to me
- What kind of initiatives or amendments can be suggested
- We can push or address European legislations
- So people who are active in different fields can pass information to us

Andrej Gnezda Umanotera

- Slovenian NGO
- Recovery package = interest



Gianluca Vella

- Second year of university
- Representative of Youth Council
- Represent the opinions of nations youth on climate, AI etc
- Work on organizing multiple events, organizing simulations of Committees of the Parliament, such as the Council of Europe
- Joining Committee, to be able to create better solutions

Meera:

- Policy Coordinator at ECOLISE
- Happy to welcome you all here
- Originally from Pakistan
- Working on EU legislative proposals mostly focused on Energy and Climate

2) Discussion on EU Recovery Plan

Irena Joveva

- There is historical achievement of the EU, which will in the long term change the whole EU and how it functions.
- I don't like to speak about solidarity as such, not that I don't like it, but because Solidarity is missing. But despite the trouble, we managed to make a big step forward, especially in solidarity. EU paid back, the majority of credit was taken from members. We can be happy with the EU budget of Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), the total amount is 700 900 billion euros.
- We have new programmes, such as European Climate Fund, Just Transition and others ●
What's important for now: In the Parliament we did our best not to spend this money for the projects that we didn't have money before, but instead to spend this money on common goals, like climate, youth etc.
- Despite the good basis of this funding, and individual good goals of MS,
- Without that, targets can't be achieved, alot is based on the MS themselves
- MS are presenting plans, EU Commission will check and approve them
- Rules are clear, percentages are clear, so the Council and Commission will receive them at the



same time

- EU Union prepares frameworks, will on the financial markets, to achieve ●
- Broader strategies: Circular Economy etc. and then applying them
- All our desires as European Parliaments, all depends on Member States, they have issues with using all the available funding, all these preparations are prepared
 - Where are they, we don't have public conversations? There is a big challenge, that Member States don't take advantage of this opportunity

Anrej Genezda:

- Thank you for this opportunity
 - We have the same fears that these fundings won't be used for green, digital etc. ●
- We have social mitigation but we are directing development
- We have questions around transparency and inclusion
 - It's far away from public consultation, although our governments are presenting it as such ●
- We are spending money on that is not connected to resilience, recovery, restoration ● I was comparing: How much money will go into the road infrastructure? A lot will go into roads and railways. Maybe there is some kind of initiative? What is the package? Well planned and also followed, are these funds used in a certain way? What can you do to make sure that the funds are used in the way it's intended?

Thomas Gorenc:

- I can connect very well to Andrej, this is, we have the same opinion, the importance is: What kind of protection is there? How can policy be coherent? Anrej mentioned numbers that can be used. Projects that have no connection with the programme, at the same time they don't include external expenses. There is 300 million for the road - but how can this be evaluated from the perspective of Health?
- Limit of concentration of pollutants in the air? How can we make sure that there is no conflict between different sources of funding?
- E.g. How much does air pollution cost for inhabitants of cities?

Emily:

- I'm changing the topics. I come from a perspective where the majority has already benefited from Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps. But they are looking for ways to stay involved in the topics. How can Young people become directly involved in democratic processes?
- Inclusion: How can include those who have not benefited from higher education across Europe?



Irena:

- Very interesting questions
- As far as the Recovery and Resilience Facility:
 - It's crucial to know that we all have fear, the Commission is the one to take responsibility and press on Member States. Yesterday a news came that said that the States need to prove that a certain % is going towards Climate and the other towards Digitalization. It's good that the funding can't be used for anything else, but bad for the state, because if they are misusing it, they can't sue it for anything else
 - Slovenian Government, e.g., is only focused on the roads, and so we won't be able to use this historic opportunity of using the funds
 - We can put pressure on the member states, on the EU
 - But I can't do anything more than that.
 - Why don't we have more interinstitutional fights that are always present, there is a battle between EP, Commission etc. In the end, parliament is the one that has to be as loud as possible and put as much pressure as possible, but unfortunately, other ones have the final word
 - I just hope that Slovenia will do something, that we make use of it
- You can also send me an Email if you have any more questions
- Youth:
 - It's very important that the Youth is involved. The Youth always feels like they are left out with their issues. I think the main problem here is, that there are a lot of politicians who think that they know everything. They are older or more experienced and they are years already in politics and in a bubble and think that nobody from the outside can teach them. How can we change that? I think only with the new generation coming into the parliament and it is changing slowly. As far as inclusion and involvement is concerned, the main project is going to be the Conference on the Future of Europe. Still in the process, fight again: Which institution is going to be in charge? So the plan from the Parliaments side of few is to get Youth and NGOs involved
 - I'm also a rapporteur of an opinion, it's going to be about citizens dialogue and youth, inside that I'm focusing on young people and education. I will put a stance that we need a curriculum for young people. The plan is that through that they will be included.

Rok:

- Possibilities to influence, Council is the one that can influence, it's problematic there was a



protection, pressure is there, but the funds should be used, in the interest of the complete union, there should be interconnections between the funds. The only option is, once we get national reports, to put pressure on the state to adapt the programmes. Currently it's happening in silence, that they're sending the reports to the Commission. If that would happen in public, we could point out the problems. There needs to be a connection, so that they change their programs adequately. Space for maneuvering is different in different states. Industrial strategy is directed towards the 21st century. For hydrogen distance, for solar and energy, there will be a big gap between ambitious and richer countries.

Cassandra:

- Consultation process - It's all a bit obscure
- I'm curious to know more about - How can we ensure that the consultation processes are not just a hand full of the usual suspects? That they are also including others who have an interest in influencing these national recovery plans?

Gianluca Vella:

- Ask a more generic question: I had followed a conference, which you have addressed, a dossier was mentioned, European Solidarity Corps, Work experience, in addition to their education. We see a political instability, were everything can fall apart any time
 - Northern countries tend to be donors, southern countries tend to receive ●
- What is Europe in 15 years? Are we going to keep the Merkelian direction?

Tina:

- I would come back to our problem with communication
- We have European targets, health, food, environment, and local initiatives are doing it already
- And in between we have the national governments preparing programmes that are going into a completely different direction
- From day to day I feel it's easier to get funds for asphalt roads than making something valuable in the park
- So there are structures in place, they need to change
 - On the other hand we need to find a way for all the best practices to bring them forward, so they are valid and implemented in programs, there is so much struggle on the local level
- Tiny projects, groups that are connected, in order for them to struggle through the bureaucracy, it's a big struggle
 - How to bring an investment into lowering the ecological impact? Sustainable forestry, organic farming, shortening the chains from production and consumption. How can this be achieved



on the local level? How to ensure that the EU is setting these goals? But then there is a blockage, I think often. I remember a mayor, he didn't know what to do. He just built a bridge, because he didn't know what to do. So how can we actually implement the ideas that are really constructed? Germans will do solar-energy etc. We have our qualities, our forests, great opportunities for nature. Along with ecological and organic farming. Farming with Northern Europe

Irena:

- Answer to the 1st Question on the Consultation Process:
 - I don't know if you meant the consultations in general, or specific ones, but there is a problem, people feel like they don't have a say
 - I can speak from my experience and I really try my best to listen and consultate
 - We have a lot of untransparent processes, not only for the people but also for us as MEPs, for example within the EU Commission, we don't get all the information that we should get. But unfortunately I can't do magic to change that
 - We have the Conference on the Future of Europe and we should use this opportunity
 - Main thing missing is people on the ground
- 2nd Question: Europe in 15 years?
 - Optimistic at this moment, I criticize a lot, the parliament and Council etc. I still think that the EU as such is the best solution that we have as Europe
 - If we lose that, it's just going to be worse
 - A lot needs to be solved, in 15 years I hope that things won't get worse but only better
 - Before, when I was talking about, later on it did, I hope that we learned from this crisis
 - That people will be more, participate more also through the elections, so the dangerous populists don't have a say anymore. We still have European Trumps, we have to do our best to show to the people that we can get rid of them
 - That's probably going to happen in the generations exchange, I believe in the Young people more than the older generations
 - I completely agree, communication is actually the biggest problem, it was an issue also in the previous government, there was struggle in previous governments. I miss everything you mentioned as a politician. Even if I ask questions, it doesn't help. I agree: roads really shouldn't be priorities. There is a problem on the local level, the mayors: Mayor's promise roads, and people usually think - Yes, that's enough. I



agree with you, that the awareness of people is an issue and it should be addressed, so that they take into account the larger problems that we are confronted with.

○ Increasing pressure, not only by us, but especially from the general public. I can do, whatever I can do in my power, the government has the ultimate say on the funds. They decide. Changing the current government would be a way to bring change. I really hope that we will get there nearly soon.

Rok:

- I didn't mean only on the industrial level. I agree that the failure of the funding should be used for recovery of the environment and biodiversity. The question is how to include people on the ground to include them into those programmes. So that there aren't so many barriers, but people can continue what they're doing and that we have a way of rewarding them. So maybe you can use us, so we can put pressure. Or you have to present good work of what you're doing on the local level.

Irena:

- Will answer all the questions that have been written in the Chat and her team will support her with that

Meera:

- Maybe we can have another Meet&Greet closer to the Slovenian Presidency
- Working together in advance helps us to increase the pressure
- Appreciate the time that you took
- We will share the notes, please direct your questions either to us or directly to Irena Joveva