



Making sustainability an easy choice for EU citizens

Inter-Institutional Group “SDGs for well-being and consumers’ protection” Launch event

DIGITAL CONFERENCE 16 February 2021, 10:00 – 12:00

#SDGsCitizenAlliance

www.interestgroupsdgs.eu

Final remarks by Sergio Veroli
Vice-President at Federconsumatori
President at European Consumer Union

First of all I want to thank all the people who attended: representatives of associations, companies and institutions.

Furthermore, I would like to address to Professor Giovannini a good wish for his appointment as Minister for Infrastructure and Transport of the new Italian Government, chaired by Dr. Mario Draghi, former President of the ECB.

The government that for the first time created the Ministry of Ecological Transition and the Ministry of Technological Innovation and Digital Transition. A strongly pro-European government that I hope can make an important contribution to the European Union.

Looking at the different areas of the world, the response of policies to the pandemic and the socio-economic crisis has been very heterogeneous, but the choice of the EU in favor of sustainable development in all its dimensions, has emerged with great clarity.

This is no coincidence, given that since July 2019 the commission had made the 2030 AGENDA the reference for its policies.

Choice strengthened in April 2020, when it was decided to direct what was then called NEXT GENERATION EU to build a more sustainable, more resilient and fairer Europe.

Unfortunately the pandemic, in addition to causing thousands of deaths in all countries, is damaging many aspects of the 2030 AGENDA for sustainable development, approved by the UN in 2015 and composed of the 17 objectives to be achieved within the next nine years.

In particular, it is causing an increase in poverty, social exclusions, inequalities, a fall in income and employment, a deterioration in the conditions of businesses and in the quality of life.

The ways to respond to ecological threats and implement sustainable development require a reform of our way of thinking. In fact, the word sustainability asks to be declined in different dimensions. Social, environmental, human and demographic.

For these reasons, a new policy would require the joint action of the state, businesses, private associations and citizens.

It would demand what a sociologist has called a “concerted governance”.

It would have to face not only lobbies and corporatism, but also apathy and indifference. It should call for a citizen awakening to bring about awareness of the vital problems at stake.

Such a policy should implement immediate means but, beyond that, it should be a long-term policy.

A terrain on which three major socio-economic phenomena that marked the beginning of the 21st century: technological innovation on the labor market, respect for the climate and the planet as increasingly shared values, and the fight against inequalities.

The ECU will organize the next meeting between European associations, companies and institutions on technological and digital innovation.

The other important issue related to sustainability at the heart of European policies.

We will analyze the role of BIG TECH, of the legal and fiscal rules to which they should comply, of citizens' rights and their hitherto insignificant role in defining digital objectives and strategies.

Thanks to you all.