

renew europe.

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Mrs Ursula von der Leyen,
President of the European Commission
European Commission
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels

Mr Charles Michel,
President of the European Council
European Council
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 175
1049 Brussels

Dear President von der Leyen, Dear President Michel,

On behalf of my group Renew Europe, I am writing to you regarding the management of the COVID 19 health crisis in Europe. We know already from the beginning of the pandemic how harmful the lack of coordination between European member states can be. Unfortunately, we witness today the situation where a member state decided to designate all other EU countries as a red zone and close borders. This is disproportionate and, once again, undermines the foundations and functioning of our Union.

Even though many Europeans have been able to benefit from free movement, especially during the holiday period, great disparities persist due to a lack of consultation and common actions. What a negative image for the Union, when many Europeans have been systematically subjected to different rules depending on their place of residence and not just on where they have travelled to. We therefore regret that there is no common risk criteria.

The ReOpen-EU website, dedicated to informing citizens about the restrictions in place in different Member States, is a first step but does not solve the problem of uniformity of decision-making. Moreover, there is still no common modality for counting cases, no common cross-border testing strategy and no common protocol for monitoring asymptomatic patients. In fact, each country follows the recommendations of its own scientific council without coordination.

Our observation is clear: despite the recommendations of the European Parliament in its resolutions of 17 April and 10 July 2020, and despite the Commission's roadmap, too little European progress has been made.

We expect strong and clear initiatives from the Commission, to inspire trust in this coordination process, and we expect from all EU member states real cooperation, in good faith, for the interest of all European citizens. Our common response needs to be better structured. We need to put in place tools for coordination between the Commission and the Member States, between the national authorities themselves and establish common criteria for reporting cases and monitoring the pandemic.

We therefore call for:

- the rapid establishment of a strong and predictive coordination between the Commission and the Council, with all the Health Ministers of different Member States, to provide clear political guidance and a common approach in addressing efficiently the challenges of limiting the spread of COVID-19.*
- the rapid establishment of a COVID-19 task force led by the European Commission. Each Member State should be represented in this task force and designate a contact point from national executives. Its main objective will be to regularly disseminate recommendations relayed at European and national level. For reasons of democratic control, the European Parliament should have a permanent evaluation mission.*

More than ever, we need a common vision implemented by real European health policies. The lack of Europe makes us less efficient. We do not deny that there are strong differences in the circulation of the virus from one country to another, but we ask that, faced with a given situation, the same measure is taken all over the European Union. It is also a question of maintaining fundamental principles such as free movement within the European Union.

Madam President, Mister President, the pandemic has moved from an acute to a chronic risk management phase. I am afraid that this phase will continue, especially as the risk of increased infection rates is real. Europeans deserve coordinated, effective and humane crisis management. We have a duty to put in place a real European health policy.

Yours sincerely,



Dacian Cioloș,