

## **OPINION**

### **of the Foreign and European Union Affairs Committee regarding the Conference on the Future of Europe adopted at the sitting held on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

On 9<sup>th</sup> May 2020, the day that marks the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Schuman Declaration signing and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of World War II, the Conference on the Future of Europe will begin its work.

The need for a substantive debate on the necessity to preserve the fundamental values underlying the European project as well as on strategic agenda, including how to ensure a more democratic decision-making process, has become evident. The EU institutions have agreed that Europeans should be able to actively participate in setting Community's priorities.

Therefore, the Foreign and European Union Affairs Committee of the Senate of the Republic of Poland proposes to include delegations of national parliaments, local and regional government authorities, academia, social partners as well as non-governmental organisations in the work of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

National parliaments share the responsibility for shaping the future of the EU along with the European Parliament. Therefore, the number of delegates from national parliaments should be at least equal to the number of representatives of the European Parliament. Only with the active participation of those who have direct insight into the citizens' concerns and expectations will we be able to avoid repeating the fate of the Constitution for Europe, which was rejected in the French and Dutch referenda.

The Foreign and European Union Affairs Committee of the Senate of the Republic of Poland calls for caution from the future participants of the Conference on the Future of Europe when proposing treaty changes. In the face of the observed instability, it would be difficult to codify a better legal framework for the European order than the current one. The need of the moment is to fill it with content that guarantees Europeans greater opportunities to influence and decide how the community should serve its citizens.

The Foreign and European Union Affairs Committee of the Senate of the Republic of Poland believes that the national representation which will participate in the Conference on the Future of Europe should be politically diverse. Also, the Committee calls for such representation to include individuals who believe it is in Polish national interest to strengthen the European Union.