

# The Values of the European Union

European Elections. Beyond political union and the single market, the European Union is also a question of values. Thanks to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, legally binding since 2009, Europeans are guaranteed the exercise of their fundamental rights and freedoms, an objective for which the Civil Liberties Committee of the European Parliament works. In addition, citizens can be heard in Europe through the Petitions Committee and the European Ombudsman, two bodies dependent on the European Parliament. But the promotion of European values extends beyond European borders, thanks to the intense diplomatic work carried out by the European Parliament in this regard and the recognition of those who work for freedom and human rights, through the granting of Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Conscience.

The fundamental values of the EU

The Treaty of Lisbon includes as fundamental values of the European Union respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality and human rights and establishes that the Union aims to promote the peace and well-being of its peoples. These are legally binding principles that Member States are obliged to observe. In case of serious infringement, the European Parliament could approve the suspension of rights derived from the EU Treaties.

Since its creation, the European Parliament has been characterized as the main defender of these values both inside and outside European borders. Not in vain, according to the latest opinion polls, EU citizens believe that human rights are the value that the European Parliament must defend as a priority. In this way, the European Parliament has over time become the sounding board for universal values and the forum for the defense of human rights and freedoms through its many diplomatic instruments.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU

The European Parliament's tireless struggle for fundamental rights made possible the proclamation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, which was adopted in Nice in 2000. At the convention responsible for drafting the Charter, the delegation of the The European Parliament played a fundamental role. Subsequently, the efforts of Parliament focused on claiming their inclusion in the constituent elements and finally in 2007 they achieved the Treaty of Lisbon will grant binding force. The European Parliament also promoted the creation of the European Agency for Fundamental Rights, created in 2007 as an independent agency of the EU in charge of providing advice to the Member States on fundamental rights issues.