



Committee of Representatives of the Orthodox Churches to the European Union

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STATEMENT OF CROCEU

In view of the European elections May 2019

In view of the upcoming European elections in May 2019, the Representatives of the Orthodox Churches to the European Union (CROCEU) would like to address all European citizens concerning the future of the European Union.

After having considered the enlarged responsibilities and competencies of the European Parliament and the importance of the participation of European citizens in the upcoming European elections, CROCEU would like to draw attention to the fact that the European Union is not just another institution founded to safeguard individual and collective economic interests. It is rather the recipient encompassing the aspirations of hundreds of millions of people living in their own countries, who wish at the same time to be part of a larger family of nations that work together for the consolidation of social standards, dignity in life and security in society.

It is in this framework that we urge all European citizens to exercise their civil right to vote so that through their elected representatives, they will play a part in:

- Strengthening the open, transparent and regular dialogue between citizens and European Institutions.
- Policies focusing on a long-term perspective, based on social investment. The economy must serve the common good of the people and we urgently need to take care of the most vulnerable members of our society.
- Human Rights strategies rooted in the dignity of the Human person, for the protection of civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights, fostering cohesion

¹ The *Committee of the Representatives of the Orthodox Churches in the European Union* brings together the representatives in Brussels of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the Patriarchate of Moscow, the Patriarchate of Romania, the Patriarchate of Bulgaria, the Church of Cyprus and the Church of Greece.

in society and prosperity for its members, hoping that the new European Parliament will intensify its work on this important matter.

- Education strategies for democratic citizenship, and intercultural competences. These initiatives must reflect the ambition to enable all young people to receive the best education and training, while everyone must be able to access high quality education, irrespective of their socio-economic background; whereas young people should have a strong sense of their identity as Europeans.
- A common responsibility for the reception and integration of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers. We would like to underline the need for solidarity among states and citizens. We should also look at the wider picture. Furthermore, this highlights the need for a deeper reflection based upon more coherent and far-seeing neighborhood and external action policies.
- An environmental policy respecting God's creation based on an innovative, circular economy, offering a firm ground for a sustainable future of humankind where growth will be dissociated from resource use.

It is of capital importance to have the widest participation possible in the exercise of this democratic right. It is essential for all European citizens to cast their vote on the Election Days in May, for our future is in our hands.