

Political Action Programme of the Party of the European Left 2011-2013

Motion of the EL-ExBoard to the EL 3rd Congress

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Agenda for a social Europe

Joint Action Platform for resistance and alternatives in Europe

The 3rd Congress of the European Left is taking place as more and more unbearable sacrifices are imposed on European people. Indeed, in the vast majority of European countries, programmes of public spending cuts, of super-austerity, of liberalisation of public services and the labour market are being implemented. To generalise these policies, countries, with the full complicity of their governments are being placed under custody of the European Commission, the European Central Bank (ECB) and other institutions such as the IMF.

These policies are presented as a necessary response to the financial and economic crisis. But this is a crisis of capitalism, and of its current globalised and financial form. This crisis also impacts on the environment, energy, food, cultural and moral values. Therefore this crisis finds expression at all political levels and in all societies marked by the ruling capitalist mode of production and similarly at the EU level with its recent orientations, neoliberal policies and institutions.

The current debt problem constitutes a new phase of the protracted crisis. It has its roots in the economic and political developments of the last 30 years. Interlinking the multiple causes of the crisis, it is increasingly impacting on people's everyday lives.

We, the Party of the European Left, together with other socialist, communist and red-green parties and organisations – widely regarded as the current plural European left, oppose these neoliberal policies and structures applied to the EU via successive treaties up to and including the Lisbon treaty.

The responsibility for these policies lies with the coalition formed by European , liberal and social-democratic parties that has dominated at the European and national level. We seek to present a political alternative to the neoliberal model. Given the widespread use of austerity, new resistance is developing across Europe. The major challenge facing the Left is to set out alternatives,

encourage this resistance, and mould from it a movement for an alternative vision of civilisation committed to solidarity. We do this in the name of a social, ecological and peaceful Europe.

Ever firmer adherence to the Stability Pact and the EU 2020 strategy, modelled on IMF structural adjustment programmes, will not lead to the end of the crisis: on the contrary, it heralds the prospect of aggravated distortions, tensions, authoritarianism and social inequality. There is a risk of economic collapse, massive exacerbation of poverty and precariousness, and the destruction of the social model and European civilisation itself. There is a risk of further depression within the Euro-zone, not to mention the insurmountable problems imposed on other countries, such as the United Kingdom, Hungary, Romania or the Baltic countries. There is a risk of powerlessness in the face of the challenges posed by the ecological question. There is a serious risk of strangulation of democracy, of authoritarian "governance" of member states led by the interests of the market, and the management of national economies by the Commission, the ECB and the IMF.

There is already a substantial threat that the EU's legitimacy crisis will worsen, that a lack of democratic impetus and of solidarity among the scorned and excluded who are unable to enforce their rights and decide their future will bolster the ascent of the ultranationalist, xenophobic and racist ideas of the extreme right.

There is a mounting threat to peaceful coexistence and to national minorities within the EU and the possibility of achieving real equality between women and men is facing significant obstacles. This involves the aforementioned tendency towards dramatic cuts, as well as rollbacks on standards in gender democracy and non-discrimination against minorities within the EU and beyond. More and more social care work is being delegated to families, i.e. mostly to women as unpaid labor. This is the root of many women's poverty and lack of economic self-determination.

It is not people in Europe, the working as well as unemployed, students and those in training, the elderly, women and children, the sick and disabled, the poor and the low and middle-income earners - who should pay for this crisis. No, it is time for radical policy change. This policy change must guarantee that those who are responsible for the crisis will pay for it. Sustainable regulation must be developed, taking the banking and credit system into public control and re-orientating it towards social and ecological aims. Concrete steps can and should be taken to free EU and national government policymaking from the grip of financial markets, to turn the logic of profit into a new logic of human development based on social justice and sustainable ecology.

That is the current path of realism. That is an approach in the interests of European countries and their peoples. With the constructive will to formulate alternatives with which we can enter into a broader dialogue with people – and to organise a common struggle - we present the following proposals. These proposals are not simply to be taken or to be left, but are intended to evolve in an open debate among European people and movements.

1. It is time for a radical democratisation of European politics

This crisis is also a crisis of democracy. The European Left Party has the commitment to ask for a real democracy in the European Institutions and also a deep change in the European politics in a double sense, first to have a serious control on the capital delocalization and second in the commerce in the sense of taking away the inequalities among the different territories allowing a balanced development among all European regions. Too often crucial decisions are taken without working people. They experience the EU as a far off, incomprehensible and interventionist construction that ignores their demands and their hopes. Changing the foreign, environmental, social and economic policies of the EU and of the member states means instigating a new democratic process based on active participation by people, European and national parliaments via new participatory powers and rights. We stand for democratic republics with electoral laws that respect proportional representation. This democratic transformation process has to concern institutions as well as policies at the EU and national levels. We are struggling for a democratic re-founding of Europe and the EU.

Many people see growing poverty and inequality as a failure of the EU. If the EU is not able to halt speculation, who is? National or Eurocentric solutions in opposition to the interests of people across Europe and the world do not bring equality. Without solidarity and cooperation across national boundaries, we will not get the opportunity to design the policies of the future. We believe that social responsibility comes about only through cooperation, not competition.

Demonstrations, strikes and other forms of protest by workers, students, farmers and the retired all over Europe show that there is growing resistance to austerity as more people demand a pro-people, pro jobs and pro-environment way out of the crisis with a view towards social cohesion, full employment, decent wages and pensions, improved education, health and other social services. However, the protests will not be successful in the long term without Europe-wide political action, and deep changes in European

policy and institutions – such aims being frequently brought together under the slogan ‘Another Europe is possible’. The European Left will continue to act to broaden the appeal of sensible alternatives for a social, democratic, ecological and peaceful Europe. Many people, including those outside Europe, see a new development path that is cooperative and based on solidarity, ecological principles and gender equality, as a desirable, essential and concrete alternative.

Humankind depends on careful management of production and natural resources, rather than consuming, exploiting and destroying them. Clean water, quality education, independence, decent work, healthcare, intercultural dialogue, modern communication and mobility are not luxury commodities but social rights which must be guaranteed. Despite this, many people are denied access to basic services.

The Party of the European Left is campaigning for a democratic and left political alternative, to change the situation at every level: local, national, European and global. We are seeking partners in this quest: political forces, trade unions and social movements, those who believe that another Europe is possible. That means we want to create a political and social front against neoliberalism at the national as well as at the European level. We want to win over the majority for this aim. For these reasons, the European Left mobilises and engages in a dialogue with political forces, trade unions, the peace movement, consumer associations, environmental groups, activists fighting for equality and against racism, science and technology experts, activists from the Social Forums, education and cultural associations. Together with social actors engaged in industry, agriculture and the defence of public services we work towards contributing to the realisation of all political and social rights, and a Europe open to the world. We work for the common rights of people regardless of their nationality, colour, sex or language.

The exportation of a model of domination over humankind and nature that sees every song and drop of water in terms of profit has made this world neither safer nor more humane. The freedom of the individual justifies neither the rights of the strongest nor the limitless dictates of the market. The misappropriation of scientific and technological progress in a trend of “innovation” in order to maximize the profits of financial market capitalism has come to endanger the future of us all. The spirit of free competition, privatisation and deregulation has become the determining factor in politics since the collapse of so-called “real socialism”. The discarding of the principles of post-war Europe such as social, economic and political cooperation and a properly consensual and peaceful foreign and security

policy was accelerated.

With the Single Market, the Maastricht Treaty and the Stability and Growth Pact, wage and social dumping took precedence over public services from the late 80s onwards.

Our public institutions are the backbone of democracy, be they for education, healthcare, transport or culture, to extend credit to regional economies or to ensure access to energy at the local level. At the same time – even with the expansion of the EU – the problems of unemployment, poverty, inequality and of the European agricultural economy remain unsolved.

Likewise, critical issues such as energy security, climate change, and free access to communication and information networks remain problematic. It is time to upgrade the role of people and parliaments in Europe at all levels in legislative policymaking and democratic supervision.

The crisis of capitalism, its neoliberal management, its imperialist system, militarisation and its related ultra-sectarian strategies profoundly mark international relations and push the limits of a system of exploitation, predation and domination that requires radical, large-scale democratic transformations.

On the other hand, the multi-faceted crisis is playing a catalytic role in changing the international balance of power with US hegemony being increasingly challenged as countries outside the so-called developed world acquire a pivotal role (China, India, Brazil, etc). Independent from the US, EU and European countries need to become progressive international actors in a world of mutual respect and cooperation.

2. We are not paying for your crisis

The international financial and economic crisis washed like a wave over humanity's unsolved problems. In the last two years, the governments of the dominating powers, headed by the G 8, have kept the global financial system alive with enormous sums of public money. They have taken up their role as the rescuers of a collapsing global financial market. At the same time, they remain indifferent to growing poverty and the challenges of climate change. Public budget debts have reached record levels. The most serious financial

and economic crisis for decades is nowhere near being tackled. Those in government have questioned neither the international financial markets, which are out of control, nor the global economic order. There are no effective regulations to prohibit speculation on currencies, foodstuffs or essential goods. The undefeated financial and economic crisis is a growing security risk: this is true both for daily life and for the peaceful coexistence of countries.

Europe and the EU are mired in crisis too. Millions of jobs have been lost or are under threat. Meanwhile more people are being forced to take more than one job in order to get by. Precariousness and flexicurity are more than ever a bitter reality. Social problems are growing. European countries, the EU and the international community have yet to employ effective measures to make financial speculators pay their share of the crisis. National governments are also reluctant to involve financial speculators in the solving of the crisis, via creaming off capital gains yields. Thus, their answer is loud and clear: the costs of the financial crisis should be borne by the taxpayer, particularly those of the poorest Euro-zone countries. However, the roots of dramatic national debts, particularly in Eastern and Southern Europe, but also in Ireland, Great Britain, Iceland and the Baltic countries can also be found in European policy. Now those countries are supposed to bear the consequences alone. Moreover, they are forced to forego urgently needed investment in education, health and social protection and to make further cuts to their welfare services and public sectors. The renovation of public infrastructure will have to wait. This sows the seeds of tomorrow's social problems. Thus a veil is drawn over the fact that catastrophic wage dumping in the richer member states has, for years, brought pressure and political errors in its wake. The failing policies of the most vulnerable countries are a mirror image of the larger countries' exclusive orientation towards relocation and export. Higher wages would also protect the large countries from the maelstrom of financial instability and tomorrow's national deficits; they are an essential condition for anti-dumping social clauses in international trade deals. However, the prevailing policy of low wages continues to favour the dogma of competition based on cutting social expenditure.

Today, people are forced to pay for aid measures for banks whereas those who caused the crisis are spared. The belief that nationalisation of the banks is some kind of socialist profanity has been shaken. States have taken financial institutions under their wings, and some of them are already trading again and making respectable profits. However, government influence goes only so far as to rescue the banks, the bankers and their incomes. Equitably redistributing the wealth is not part of the programme. Governments are "nationalising" without ensuring democratic influence and control. They are

therefore only nationalising losses by increasing national debt, insufficient investment and higher charges. Thus they are already responsible for all kinds of unsolved social problems.

As previously, this “regulation” serves the interests of financial capital but not the interests of the majority. The prevailing political line knows only one answer to the crisis: plunder the public coffers and increase the exploitation of the workers. It participates in this class struggle from above and does not shy away from pitting low earners, against people reliant on social welfare contributions and both against immigrants and refugees.

We are convinced that the majority of people can be won over to the campaign for socially fair, ecologically sustainable, democratic and peaceful European policies based on solidarity, and so we are publicising alternative solutions to the financial crisis.

2.1. Fight the crisis effectively – now!

The EU and European countries must move towards cooperation, and contribute to reforming the European and international monetary systems. Important strategic sectors, like the banking system, should be organised based on social ownership, democratic control and public access. In the neoliberal Europe, we have seen a generalised process of attacks on the rights of workers and wages. The European Left is fighting against social dumping. We want to support all movements that are active against the strategy of pitting the poor against the poor. We support workers across Europe, the redistribution of income, and the fight against mass unemployment and job insecurity. In order to defend social and workers’ rights, we must restore our capacity to tackle social and class conflict in Europe. To counter social and fiscal dumping, a fiscal policy must be built based on the principle of progressive taxation. We fight for the principle of equal pay for equal work in every European country.

The European Left proposes the following measures to reduce the power and influence of financial markets:

- € The European character of the debt crisis poses the urgent need for a European approach. We propose the annulation of part of the sovereign debt, in order to assist the indebted countries to develop policies for the restructure of their economies and avoid the destruction of social development.
- Against the so-called “Crisis Management or Orderly Default Mechanism”, the establishment of a permanent protective mechanism

of solidarity (and not of punishment) of states in difficulty. This Mechanism will cover also the states which do not belong to the Eurozone. This mechanism must be set in motion at the early stages of a crisis and not after it has completed its disastrous effects.

- Transformation of the mission of the European Central Bank. Through cash generation and based on social criteria, the ECB should extend low interest credit to member states to finance social development. Regarding the banks, the ECB should introduce selective credits, favouring investment intended to create employment and discouraging financial operations;
- Taxation of all speculative transactions. EU institutions and member states should overhaul the architecture of global financial markets;
- New public revenues should be generated by taxing the income from financial assets and big capital, by means of a socially just tax reform aimed at stimulating the real economy. Domestic economies should be revitalised through structural policies and higher gross income;
- Abolition of tax havens established inside and outside European territory; banning – not only registration - of hedge funds and junk bonds;
- Creation of a European public rating agency. Countries can no longer be hostages to private rating agencies, which serve speculative interests;
- Issue of Eurobonds to allow member states to borrow at reasonable interest rates.

To fight wage and social dumping, and to strengthen social and ecological requirements, the following measures must be introduced or tested in all countries in coordination:

- Macroeconomic balance between states and a strong internal market;
- The introduction of standards which secure in all EU-countries – by law or by collective agreements – minimum wages at the level of at least 60% of the national average wage and always above the poverty threshold, with a high quality of social security for all;
- Restrictive regulation of subcontracted labour and the limiting of the number of short-term contracts. New regulations that make it illegal to employ foreign workers on a lower wage or worse conditions than those existing in the country where the work is done. The so-called Laval verdict and other rulings undermining the right to strike and work for better wages and working conditions must be annulled;

- Strengthened and binding collective agreements on working conditions and compliancy with required standards in the case of “posted workers”;
- Modernise public services and infrastructure with an investment programme for the key areas of education, health and social care, research, transport and environmental technology. This will guarantee millions of new jobs in the future both in industrial and service sectors.

We want to lead the campaign for a global tax on financial transactions, for higher incomes, more protected and good jobs and humane working hours, secure pensions and better public infrastructure. We will do this together with trade unionists, social forums, women’s, environmental and youth movements, migrant organisations and local authorities. We want to lead this campaign in our countries, and at the European level. We assume that this campaign must be carried through as a global demand.

Without immediate action, there will be no effective change in the response to the crisis. A sustainable political change must go beyond this; alternative political courses of action and a European action plan to fight poverty must be agreed. Together with the trade unions, we will lead the campaign for the establishment of a *Social Progress Clause* in European primary law. The consistent combination of the economic and monetary *policy* with a social and environmental policy is essential. To fight for a *Social Progress Clause* in European primary law and the orientation for a social and environmental policy is more than an EU-concentrated political approach. These demands are to be found in the trade unions and so they provide a link to social movements.

2.2. Action plan against unemployment, poverty and social exclusion

80 million people in Europe live below the poverty line. Almost the same number again is acutely at risk of poverty. Rampant unemployment is a major contributing factor. This affects more and more people in meagre and insecure jobs, the working poor. It is a political failure across the board when, in one of the most productive economic areas in the world, one in five children in the EU is threatened by poverty.

Marginalisation by poverty, disadvantage in education, public and universal health, in living environments, the insufficient share of social, cultural and financial services are growing threats to social peace. The majority of the

population expect politicians to introduce measures to counter poverty, and limit wasteful concentrations of wealth. The EU declared 2010 the “Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion”. The EU’s 2020 strategy also called for “poverty prevention”. However, rising poverty and inequality are products of neoliberal policies implemented in the EU.

The logic of the current strategic decisions and the measures being taken to deal with the consequences of the economic and financial crisis still put competition, profitability and competitiveness at the top of the agenda. Just as the European elites provide so few coherent and intelligible answers to the current economic problems, they do nothing to prevent increasing inequalities. The consequences of poverty have not been reduced, because the causes of growing poverty remain unaddressed. The Party of the European Left is committed to achieving social justice. Wealth can no longer be concentrated in the hands of a few. Europe must recognise that property has duties and must serve the interests of society as a whole.

Common goods like water, health, culture, land, natural resources and means of production must not be privatised but, on the contrary, they must be deemed common property and socialised.

The Left sees poverty as a social and political problem. We need development that places people in the foreground. For this reason, the fight against poverty will only be successful when this aim is the key component in all areas of EU and national policy. Europe needs a comprehensive safety net of high social standards. Homelessness and child poverty must end by 2015. Overcoming poverty is closely linked to solving all other social and environmental problems in our society.

With these aims in mind, a Europe-wide action plan is urgently needed. The European Left proposes the following goals, which expand on the main aspects of the immediate battle against the crisis:

- A European-wide minimum wage of at least of 60% of the national average wage and the strengthening of collective agreements;
- An appropriate guaranteed minimum income for the unemployed, and those who do not have the means to sustain their livelihood;
- A decent income for students and people in professional training;
- A decent pension guaranteed for everyone at the age of 60 years;
- Concrete, regular working conditions and decent jobs;
- Shorter working hours without a drop in income;
- Higher investment in social security, health, public services, public housing and the public environment;

- Implementation of a programme for increased energy efficiency in private buildings using existing technology to guarantee warm accommodation to everyone, the housing expenses should not take more than 25% of an average household income.

The taxing of capital gains and speculation businesses, the progressive taxation of incomes and a developed public sector represent the financial means for the implementation of this action plan. European policies that force national tax dumping on companies and demands higher contributions from the employed and socially disadvantaged must end. The European Left underlined in its platform for the 2009 European elections that the Stability and Growth Pact must be replaced by a new solidarity pact, focusing on growth, full employment, social justice and environmental protection.

3. For a new Development Model

The notion that ambitious and coordinated policies are necessary to face the challenges to humanity and the planet has spread. Nevertheless, the capitalist logic represents a major obstacle. The financial crisis, whose systemic nature has become obvious, reveals the extent of the waste generated by the current development approach. This is why all of the proposals that this document sets out reflect an alternative logic, of a new social development model democratic, sustainable and humane. These three dimensions are indissoluble: the social evidently includes the economic sphere, which should primarily be used to serve the needs and the aspirations of every individual. It is a question of creating a new era of human civilisation, based on a progressive process founded on multiple systemic reforms, transforming daily routines, without losing sight of the ambition and the stakes to overcome all kind of repression and exploitation.

Action to achieve such a transformation requires a common movement:

- The Party of the European Left will continue its struggle for a consistent peaceful external and security policy for a world without weapons of mass destruction. We take part in all campaigns for solidarity and peace, in particular in the Middle East, for a fair and just settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on UN resolutions, with the founding of a viable Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital. Israel must end the invasion of Gaza and West bank. We demand the end of the war led by NATO in Afghanistan and the withdrawal of all

foreign troops. We also demand the withdrawal of the remaining troops and other military contractors from Iraq and call for the international community to assume its responsibility for civil reconstruction in Iraq. The right to self-determination of the Iraqi people and their sovereign choices in the reconstruction and the future of the country must be guaranteed. It is very urgent the need of being recognized the Arabic Saharawi Democratic Republic as a first step in order to end with the international blockade imposed to the Saharawi people. We condemn the human rights violations committed by the Moroccan dictatorship against Western Saharawi people. We condemn also the intension of the imperialism to convert the peoples from Syria an Iran as a new enemies of humankind in order to favour the interest of Israel in the region. Progressive and reciprocal disarmament with third countries is essential. We want peaceful and mutually beneficial cooperation and dialogue with our neighbours, and stability in Europe including Russia. The EU's military strategic collaboration with NATO must be stopped.

- The European Left reaffirms its demand for the dissolution of NATO and calls for an international cooperative security system conforming to international law and to the principles of a reformed and democratised UN system. We strongly oppose any move towards further militarisation in EU external relations and campaign for a peaceful role for Europe in the world. The EU also has to respect the rights of neutral countries to continue their policy of non-alignment. The Party of the European Left calls for the dissolution of the EU intervention forces and the EU Battle Groups. The EU 'Defence Agency' must be dissolved and be replaced by an EU Agency for Disarmament and Re-conversion. The European Left Party calls for an end to any military engagement of the EU abroad, such as the sending of military experts or advisors to support countries with authoritarian regimes or engaging in civil wars as in Somalia. The Party of the European Left opposes a European External Action Service with military functions and the current EU-Strategy of military-civilian cooperation. Funds for development assistance and anti-poverty measures must not be used for military purposes. We explicitly oppose cuts in structural funds and cohesion funds aimed at increasing funds for a military EU foreign policy.
- The transfer of people from Turkey to the occupied part of Cyprus should be stopped immediately because it seeks to conquer and cement Turkey's occupation of the island. Turkish occupation of the 37% of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus should end. The Turkish government should contribute in practical terms, in order to lead the ongoing negotiation process to a just and viable solution of the Cyprus problem based on the relevant UN resolutions, international and

European law. All parties in Cyprus should contribute to a bi-zonal, bi-communal, united Cyprus solution based on relevant UN resolutions.

- The EL expresses its solidarity and support for political processes taking place in Latin America that seek broader democracy and higher citizenship participation. We consider it very important to continue the joint meetings of the Sao Paulo Forum and the EL in order to exchange experiences on dealing with crucial issues. In particular, we stress the need to end the blockade against Cuba.
- The EL wants to change the EU - Latin America agreements that have been signed and those currently under negotiation trying to impose neoliberal policies in the interests of multinational enterprises, mainly those with the worst environmental records, seeking to establish patents in the fields of health and biodiversity.
- European development policy must oblige all EU member states to fulfil the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 by fulfilling the commitment reserve 0.7% of GDP for development aid. This requires a reorientation of the mode of production and consumption, which does not threaten the capacity of nature and where commodities and money are not the basis of appreciation. With this aim, we are struggling for EU trade agreements that emphasise respect for all core criteria of the International Labour Organisation, labour and human rights standards in all partner countries. They should not be benefiting transnational companies that seek to gain access to natural resources and maximise their profits.
- The European Left works together with other forces for an energy revolution based on genuine renewable energy resources and energy savings. We do not consider biomass for energy to be a genuine renewable energy source on a large scale, especially when it replaces food crops. Climate change mitigations and energy production should no longer be a question of profit making. Natural resources should not be wasted on rearmament and wars. The development and foreign trade policies of the EU must break with the current logic of land grabbing and exploitation of natural resources. We support debt cancellation for the poorest countries and the payment of ecological debt by industrialised countries to developing countries.
- We call for international cooperation to combat global warming. To prevent the most severe impacts of climate change, action needs to be taken by 2020. EL proposes to strive for 40% reduction of CO2 emission by 2020 in developed countries (compared to the level of 1990). In Europe, this particularly affects sectors like energy innovation technologies, agriculture and forestry dedicated to the preservation of biodiversity and carbon sequestration, construction engineering, traffic

and regulations by public investment. There should be huge investment in the European energy sector in the years to come. The Kyoto Protocol cannot be reduced to a system of emission quotas to which we are firmly opposed; each new attempt for an international treaty (Kyoto II) must form a new paradigm based on cooperation and not competition. The European Left fully supports the Cochabamba declaration. Time is short.

- We fight for individual civil liberties and the fundamental social and political rights of all EU citizens and immigrants based on the Charter of Principles for Another Europe. The European Left welcomes the EU's joining of the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). We are campaigning for the further development of fundamental rights in Europe based on the ECHR, including all legal instruments both at national and European level. We defend the rights of those discriminated against on grounds of ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, ideology, disability or age. We demand equality between men and women. The European Left defends the respect for the principle of secularism. We seek strategies against racism, xenophobia, chauvinism, fascism, anti-communism, homophobia and all other forms of discrimination. We are working for a refugee policy in accordance with the Geneva Convention. Those who must flee on account of their political activities, religion, ideology, sexual orientation or gender identity must be able to find acceptance and safety in Europe. We demand the recognition of gender-specific and non-national persecution as grounds for asylum, as well as particular protection for child refugees. For this reason we reject the current FRONTEX border control system. The EL strongly opposes any attempts to make migrants "scapegoats" for any kind of social problems. We struggle for a strong social dimension to integration policies.
- Universal access to education, culture, media and the possibility to use one's own cultural forms of expression are essential for democratic dialogue in Europe and worldwide. Intercultural exchange and the neutrality of digital networks should be of public - European and national - responsibility. Free education, freedom of information, modern copyright rules including the rights of users and an appropriate recognition of creativity are overdue. Privatisation of public education must be stopped. All kind of privatization on the educative system has to be stopped and the same applies to all efforts of the introducing market orientations into the same education system as in is proposed in the Bologna Process or the Bolkestein Directive. This is why we reject the Bologna Process. Good working conditions for teachers, journalists, those working in the news sector, and the film,

entertainment and software industry must be fought for daily. Europe needs true pluralism in the media, public or private; it is an essential condition for democracy.

- We want to fight the financial crisis by regulating the markets, creating a consistent macro-economic orientation towards a social, ecological model of development and fighting against poverty. To develop political alternatives towards a new model of development, which we can then introduce into the political discourse, we put forward the following strategic focal points in our political struggles.
- The development of public services that serve the essential collective needs, their bringing together on the European level, a concerted and cooperative management of the world's public goods, and a development of the social and interdependent economy on a truly democratic basis. This means stopping the processes of liberalisation and privatisation of public services and the massive private investment plans in these sectors.
- An active policy of job creation, accompanied by life-long learning systems.
- A new era of democracy on all levels, with new powers for employees and the elected representatives over the public funds allotted to large companies.

With these proposals, the European Left is turning to the population of Europe, to men and women, regardless of which country, regardless of worldview or religion, regardless of whether they were born inside or outside the EU. The sharpening of the socio-economic and ecological crises demands immediate, radical action. We want Europe and the world to become better places to live for everyone. But for this to happen, we must safeguard them from threats. We cannot improve the world if we do not save it, but we can save the world by improving it. The European Left stands for a vision of a radically different world, for democracy, peace and socialism. The European Left is open to everybody who wants to support this agenda. We aspire to a world of freedom, justice, and equality, without repression, exploitation, wars, hunger or need. We want to make this project a reality.