



EL Working Groups and Networks' Annexes

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Africa Working Group

Economic Partnership Agreements

The European Union has committed more than ten years in negotiating Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with the ACP countries (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific). These agreements aim to lift three quarters of tariffs on European products in African markets. They will disrupt the agricultural markets and the public finances of these fragile economies.

Despite the pressure from the European Commission, the ACP countries have so far, thanks notably to the mobilization of civil society, partly resisted the liberalization threatening their agriculture, their economic and social development and the process of regional integration.

For several months the European Commission is putting pressure on West African countries, via the publication of leaked “delegated minutes”, to ratify their Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) before October 1st, and threatens to raise its taxes on products from six countries (including the Ivory Coast), if they don't, by abruptly removing their preferential access (*to European Markets*).

By its pressure the European Commission seeks to force governments to sign without parliamentary approval, thus depriving people of their right to a democratic debate.

The European Left denounces the technocratic blackmail of African countries by the European Union. It calls for an end to this iniquitous agreement aimed at the submission of the African economies to big capital. The EL calls for the opening of negotiations with the ACP countries, to reach agreements based on solidarity which takes into account the true, best interests of the people.

HEALTH: strengthen health systems and work for the rise of a social protection system.

Africa recorded a significant improvement in health outcomes over the last decade. Mortality rates have declined significantly in children, mothers and adults, and the burden of disease linked to several diseases including malaria has declined markedly.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), between 1990 and 2011, the continent had to face the most devastating epidemic in the history of humanity, the HIV epidemic, and started dealing successfully with it.

The mortality rate among children under 5 years has dropped. It passed from 173 to 95 per 1,000 live births, between 1990 and 2012. The global reduction in maternal mortality was also observed in sub-Saharan Africa, where it dropped by 41% between 1990 and 2010. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have helped focus the attention of the world on development issues, especially those demanding change. Progress has been significant but many countries in the

region have not achieved the MDG targets set for 2015. Progress has not always been up to legitimate expectations. Compared to other regions of the world, health progress in Africa remains largely insufficient.

One of the obstacles to health progress in Africa is that health policies are not decided by the actors involved. Under the pretext of global health, international public health policy is under the influence of major pharmaceutical companies, US private foundations and a few rich countries. They dictate an agenda that focuses on the eradication of certain specific pathologies (AIDS, polio and malaria) at the expense of a systems approach.

The European Left calls for greater involvement of Africans in the definition of health policies that concern them. The EL demands solidarity, which will also provide aid to strengthen the health systems, most important to Africa.

The EL expresses its full solidarity with African progressive forces who should see the improvement of the population's health as a means to development, but also as an ultimate goal of it. The EL congratulates them for their desire to build solidarity social protection systems in which everyone contributes according to his means and receives health care according to his needs.

Demographics

According to the United Nations (UN) projections based on the medium-fertility scenario, the population of Africa, which amounted to just over 800 million in 2010 will more than quadruple by 2100, reaching 3.7 billion. The share of the region in the global population will increase from under 12% to about 35%. Most strikingly, Africa will be the source of virtually 100% of the 2 billion increase in the economically active population worldwide expected during this period. Its share of the global workforce climbing from about 10% to 37 % by 2100.

Africa will be the main engine of global population growth during this century. While the rest of the world ages, SSA will become the main engine of growth of the global workforce.

This growth can be seen as an opportunity, as synonymous with youth, dynamism, rapid urbanization. It can also be seen as a danger, if the economic take-off fails to reduce poverty by allowing 12 to 15 million young people who arrive each year in the labor market to have a decent job.

The EL calls for solidarity with Africa to create the conditions for a controlled population growth.

Promoting peace, security, justice, democracy and the protection of civilians in Africa.

Africa is in crisis because of wars, of political conflicts, of terrorist attacks by obscurantist groups such as Boko Haram, of imperialist actions such as the aggression against Libya, because of the

absence of democracy, of no respect for human rights, of corruption and greed, because of the colonial legacy and of the generally unfair global system.

The looting organized by the multinationals and by organized crime contributes to the increase of the prices of goods and services and exposes the populations to risks.

The increased militarization of the continent and the imposing and ominous military presence of foreign forces, especially European and American as well as various other military and armed forces have increased defense budgets in most countries in the name of a fight against terrorism while the struggles of workers and peoples have been brutally repressed.

We also witness with concern unconstitutional changes of governments, which are a major cause of insecurity, instability, violations of human rights and violent conflicts in Africa.

Electoral propaganda, elections and the election results have become sources of conflict, violence, insecurity and instability on the continent. Politicians and political parties of the right have designed strategies based on tribalism, ethnic origin and religion to mobilise, voice and advocate violent unrest.

Peace is not just the absence of armed conflict, but the existence of general conditions promoting human dignity, justice, equality and development. The absence of these conditions forms the greenhouse where violence and cyclical conflict grow. It is then the workers and the poor who suffer most.

The EL expresses its solidarity with the progressive forces fighting on the continent through political parties, unions or grassroots associations for the building of a free, peaceful, just and democratic African society.

For an economic growth whose fruits are shared.

Economic activity in sub-Saharan Africa fell, in 2015, to its lowest level in fifteen years. Production increased by 3.4%, that is to say only a little faster than population growth. It was down compared to 5% growth recorded in 2014 and the even higher rates to which we had become accustomed in recent years. This slowdown was mainly due to the sharp decline in commodity prices, which has badly damaged many of the major countries in the region and had thus pronounced effects on the regional aggregates. Similarly, this year will also be difficult. According to projections of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), economic growth will be even lower, at 3%, as many countries will have to deal with the deteriorating external environment. In addition, drought (especially in Southern and Eastern Africa) will add to the economic difficulties in many countries.

For over a decade, Africa had experienced sustained economic growth, but it did not benefit everyone and was not strong enough to absorb the millions of young people joining every year the ranks of job seekers.

In Africa, the globalization of poverty, of injustice and of inequalities is an even more pregnant reality. The neoliberal forces exploit the opportunity offered by the crisis to strengthen their economic hold over the continent, in order to change the economic, social and political life of these countries, according to their own interests. This is illustrated, among others, by the urgent calls for the privatization and deregulation of economies, unequal and persistent trade relations, all of which exacerbate underdevelopment and exploitation of developing countries and their peoples.

Africa's poor are facing an occupation, the absence of democracy, other human rights violations, general corruption, despotism, violence, military rule and the plunder perpetrated by multinationals and their local henchmen. Nevertheless, they continue their heroic struggles of resistance. The debt burden and the unjust multilateral financial system reinforce the neoliberal grip on African economies.

Therefore the European Left calls for solidarity with the continent to create the conditions needed for an economic growth respecting the environment and enabling to effectively fight against poverty and inequalities resulting by neo-liberal policies imposed by the IMF and the World Bank.

Agriculture Working Group

MODERNIZING AND RECONSTRUCTING THE EUROPEAN AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD SECTORS

The following statement aimed at reconstructing the European agricultural and food sectors, focuses on critics of the liberal policies of the different Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Hereafter, our suggestions are rooted in strong commitment, proposing public campaigns and immediate actions, including on a legislative level.



The agricultural sector is facing a crisis due to capitalism. Our agricultural production could sustain the world and yet more than one out of seven people go hungry. Preoccupations with productivity and free trade have ravaged our rural areas. Speculation, monopolization of land, dumping, it is time to put an end to this waste! In order to “stay competitive” European reforms have continuously sacrificed the local economy and abandoned price and market regulations. From crisis to crisis, the CAP allowed family farming to disappear, whilst concentrating the means of production in the hands of a few giant agrifood and distribution companies, at the expense of public health and the consumer. The remaining farms struggle to survive, depleting working conditions and family life.

Food-related scandals that emerged in Europe (pork and horse meat sold as beef) call for a real debate on the quality of our food, free from any market speculation. Hunger in Europe and worldwide begs for a universal right to a healthy diet, not unlike that of access to education and health. Therefore, each and every people must have control over both **food sovereignty and food security**.

This requires that the agricultural and food sectors be free from today’s neoliberal policies as imposed by the WTO, IMF, World Bank and Lisbon treaty. We suggest the creation of a new international organization within the United Nations. We support the FAO Committee on World Food Security’s reform, which moves to bring together states, international institutions and civil society in an unprecedented way.

As of now, the new CAP (2014-2020) is achieving the opposite of that, by obeying the rules of market fluctuations, consequently imposing all the negative consequences to mankind and the environment.

Subjected to austerity policies and ruthless stateless capitalism, the European people are in search of their own ways to resist and express themselves. Popular struggles to regain control over land, bringing production back to the homeland, cutting out food retailers with direct farmer-to-consumer sales, bills favouring indication of origin...

Alongside farmers and citizens movements, organizations and observers within the EL (European Left party) propose alternative solutions. Together they have initiated a discussion to propose a platform for new European public policies supported by bold legislative propositions.



OPPOSING THE COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY, WE PROPOSE THE CREATION OF THE EUROPEAN FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL POLICY (EFAP) OF THE 21ST CENTURY

We create the EFAP with new ambitions for the decades to come:

- Its fundamental objective is to guarantee food sovereignty and security to its people. In response to the food challenge, European agricultural production must be supported with new public policies coherent with human needs and secure a quality nutritious diet for each and all of us.
- To be dignified in one's work is a legitimate social request. A fair compensation for farmer and salary work is the condition for the development of agricultural jobs. This requires guaranteeing fair market prices, planned production, market regulations, preserving agricultural land, subsidies for more exposed farms and branches.
- Suffocated by mass-productivity, European agriculture must strive to develop a more environmentally sustainable system and more independent farms. Small farms do a better job at accomplishing that. Europe needs primarily to support these farms.

We suggest creating public campaigns.

- To create an international safeguard clause applicable when a country's land or waters (fishing) are threatened by speculation or hijacked food crop production.
- To instigate means for agricultural market regulation, supply regulators, and measures against speculation. An initial step could be the creation of an international commission against the speculation on food related products (campaign during which NGOs have already obtained that banks don't speculate on hunger by withdrawing financial investments indexed on agricultural products).
- To reinstate taxes on imports and exports that destabilize the local markets, so as to financially support relocated productions.
- To cut off any support to the production and import of biofuels.

We are initiating struggles to engage immediate actions.

- Putting in effect the local community priority and suspending the bilateral agreements on free trade negotiated by the European Union (MERCOSUR, CETA, TAFTA...)
- affirming food sovereignty by creating European by creating European security stocks.
- putting in place economic tools to control the profits and conducts of giant agrifood companies and retailers.
- Because of the risks of climate change, we suggest Europe commits to protecting the bio-activities related to land, waters and forests with a "Natural Disasters Mutual Insurance".

ENCOURAGING SMALL-SCALE FISHING

All over the world, structural adjustment plans of the IMF are forcing States to undersell their fishing licences at the cost of their own food sovereignty. Already, investment funds are speculating on Northern Europe fishery. In Europe, the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) reform

allows fisherman to sell their individual quotas on the condition that they cease fishing altogether. This is particularly cruel given that charity organizations struggle to gain access to unsold fishery. These are the terrible results of the liberal policies led in Europe by the right wing parties, dismantling small-scale fishery. Eight out of ten fish that end up in our European plates are imported, when the 1983 CFP objectives had claimed to set a course for full food autonomy. We stand for small-scale, relocated and profitable fishing. Which is why the CFP's objectives should be:

- Steering new public policies aimed at maintaining a relocated activity profitable for fishermen, opposing dumping-rate imports and regulating the behaviours of giant ship owning companies and retailers.
- Protecting small-scale fishing and fighting looting of fisheries resources. France must commit to a worldwide struggle against ocean pollution whilst supporting small-scale fishing profitable for sustainable both for the environment and the fisherman.
- States need to take control of a public, global and non-commercial management by opposing transferable fishing concessions. With the help of the public banking sector, we can fund public research to develop programs on better managing our fisheries resources, on training and protecting new generations of fishermen and ocean-related workers.

THE RIGHT TO FOOD

Agricultural policies must guarantee food sovereignty. On a world and European scale we need to organize production, regulate markets and usher a real transition towards sustainable agriculture, favouring local circuits, the organic sector and seafood. Stock management, food security and banning food-crop speculating are absolute priorities. A new agricultural model, economically sustainable for all farmers thanks to regulated prices, must be designed by promoting relocated sectors and bringing processing and retailing closer to the consumer.



We need to rethink the European agricultural and food sector. All over Europe, austerity policies are threatening our liberties, endangering peace and spreading hunger. Thus, we believe it is essential to fight against divisions and nationalism and to build solidarity between people on a European level to free the continent from the grip of unregulated markets. To initiate European alternatives requires bigger left wing dynamics within the Party of the European Left. By establishing a common platform, the Berlin congress will promote a European Food and Agricultural Policy (EFAP). Thus, *feeding humanity* is the audacious and exhilarating challenge that we have set for ourselves.

Balkans Network

The establishment of a lasting peace and social security in the Balkans constitutes a top priority for the region. Mutually acceptable solutions are needed for the outstanding problems and for overcoming tensions between countries in the region, steering clear of the “divide and rule” logic and nationalist hatreds. Together with the forces of the left, ecology, peace, social and feminist movements in the Balkans, we should work towards a comprehensive multifaceted concept of security (political, economic, social, ecological, human), rejecting options which lead to war and to violence, to the undermining of international law and to violations of human and minority rights.

The fight for peace is of central importance for the Balkan left and progressive forces. We oppose the escalating militarization of our region. Balkan people have bitterly experienced the cruelty and the multiple destructive consequences of imperialist interventions by NATO, the US and its allies, but also of civil wars and paramilitary operations. We are fighting against the installation of the US anti-missile shield, the expansion of NATO in the Balkans and the militarization of space. We fight for the region to become free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and we demand the immediate closure of all NATO, US and other foreign military bases that exist on our territory and for the dissolution of NATO. We call for the immediate return of all troops of Balkan countries that participate in military deployments in the Near and Middle East and in other areas of the planet. We also call for the immediate reduction of all military budgets, as another step for the demilitarization of the region.

People in the Balkans are suffering from extreme forms of exploitation by neoliberal national governments, the local owners of big capital and the big multinational companies that move there in order to maximize their profits, by violating all fundamental principles of labor rights and legislations. Poverty and unemployment are increasing, while growing numbers of Balkan populations are deprived of access to basic resources and goods. Neoliberal austerity policies and privatizations of public services are leading the Balkans and Europe into deeper recession, while serving the interests of financial speculators, private banks and the big capital. We are fighting for a social way-out from the crisis, through public investments for the creation of jobs, the protection and the improvement of public services and infrastructures, decent salaries and pensions and the promotion of a socially and ecologically beneficial development.

Social, political and constitutional rights are constantly violated, electoral laws and mainstream media turn against the freedom of expression. Nationalist, racist, populist and neofascist forces are reinforced by exploiting social insecurity and fear for the present and future. We fight against all forms of nationalism, racism, sexism, homophobia and repression, including the repression against minorities and refugees. We commit ourselves to the fight against patriarchy. We fight for guaranteed civil and political liberties and for the freedom of political, cultural and religious expression. We oppose historical revisionism and anti-communism. We believe that all existing unresolved “national issues” must be resolved through peaceful, democratic, mutually acceptable

solutions, based on international law and promoting solidarity, co-existence and cooperation.

Migrants are severe victims of wars, exploitation, exclusion, poverty. They are left unprotected against racist violence and they are facing extreme repression by state and EU authorities. We mobilize against the xenophobic national and European policies against migrants; we reject the concept of Fortress-Europe, expressed through the Dublin 3 Regulation and applied through the Frontex force, the existence of concentration camps and the construction of walls at the borders. We call for immediate measures in the direction of improving migrants' housing, healthcare, assistance and education for a better integration.

The environmental problems cannot be stopped by borders. The consequences of these problems are bigger and harder for the poorer countries and regions. The Balkan region is under heavy pressure, because of the installation of multiple polluting activities. This is happening because of the cheap labour costs in the region and the lack of strict institutional frameworks and controls concerning the environment. We fight for a socially orientated, sustainable development and we call for interregional and cross-border cooperation for energy policies, biological diversity and the protection of natural resources. We want the Balkans to be free of GMOs. We are very concerned on the whole issue of nuclear energy plants and we promote the use of renewable energy sources.

Regional cooperation must contribute to create the necessary conditions for the protection of social rights, the equality of all people living in the countries including migrants, combat organized crime and trafficking. In particular, the struggle against violence on women, protection of the rights of children, should be consistently on the agenda. Our common aim should be to overcome isolation, to exchange ideas and experiences, to find the widest possible convergences and to start working together for further actions, initiatives and campaigns for the improvement of our life today, but also for the opening of a radically different, alternative, left strategic perspective for the Balkans.

Central and Eastern Europe Working Group

The events in the recent months smashed all previous visions and ideas for the development of Europe. This situation is valid to a certain extent for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), although in this region there are some historical, socio-economic and political specifics that should be taken into account. The development of this part of the continent has been not following the one of the majority of the European states. In the countries of CEE the real socialism collapsed getting significantly discredited as an alternative to capitalism. For this reason the opportunities for open agitation on left policy are limited and the ideas for social justice, antimilitarism and another pattern of economic policy are confronted with ever increasing scepticism. The rightwing parties attempt with their one-sided NATO orientation and idealisation of the actual condition in the EU to convince the people that the liberal market economy is the only possible positive approach. In the West could be noticed the fragmentation and weakening of the Left, while in the CEE we are witnessing its practical disappearance with no offset structures. The CEE region is not and has never been homogenous neither from a geopolitical point of view nor in terms of history, although the former socialist countries have many things in common and share many common problems concerning the social-economic development, similarities in the development of left political structures, as well as the common challenges in view of the future development of the left policy. We should be able to take into consideration the historical experience of the region's population and to articulate the social and political aspirations of CEE citizens within Europe being its integral and equal-value part.

Currently CEE region is facing a greater awareness of other countries about its role in Europe and its impact on European affairs. The countries of this region account for 21% of the EU population and for 26.5% of the EU Parliament MEPs seats. The fact of Brexit will further increase its importance caused by the growth of its relative weight. Practically all countries of the CEE region are located on the line of growing political and in some terms military tensions - while being the members of NATO. All these states went through so-called transformation that was based on the principles of the Washington Consensus and all of them have remained at the European semi-periphery with minimal chances to move closer to the EU averages within the reasonable timeframe. One of the consequences of the transformation processes was the loss of relevant representation of leftwing parties in the politics, significant suppression of leftist views at all levels, and the loss of populous support - often in favor of populist and radical rightwing parties and movements. Various nationalist and even fascist groupings began to emerge on the stage, enticing the citizens through their promises for themselves. The absence of real and strong left-wing concept based on the realities of the CEE societies opens the way to the further promotion of right-wing populist ideas by strongly-nationalistic European players even among the traditional supporters and voters of the Left.

Nowadays we increasingly face the question of how to proceed considering the absence of the real strong radical left-wing forces in the most countries of CEE. As the first step it is necessary to define the radically leftist regional concept of action in finding solutions to the crisis of the

European integration. Our common goal should be to create in the CEE region the conditions for the real European unity and reasonable integration. To do this it is necessary to define a strategic goal while disregarding some differences in the approaches of individual national left-wing structures to certain issues like, for example, migration, ecological concepts and lesser emphasis on the promotion of multiculturalism. The radical left in CEE represents primarily those who see the hope in the fundamental systemic changes in European society, respectively have strong reservations to the modern neoliberal capitalism. The common interest shall rest with overcoming the neoliberal European project and securing reliable support for the Left in CEE.

Today, a struggle for peace is the priority. In order to ensure its supremacy above global economy, the capital needs more and more wars and conflicts. Once again, the war in Ukraine has shown what imperialism can do. We should explain that we do not accept the continuous expansion of military conflicts and the involvement of more and more states and people in war, because the war could not and should not be means of policy. We have to show with our work that the main reason of the crisis is the system and aggressive policy of NATO and that we demand PEACE, humanitarian aid for refugees and stop trading with weapons in countries of regions. Our primary task is to present the facts about nonsense of war rampage and about a rise of fascist forces to the general public.

We have to make clear that we do not agree with the dominating foreign policy of the EU that will result in reinforced militarization of the external borders of the EU and Frontex strengthening. We have to show that we insist on running policy of solidarity and humanity towards the refugees as we oppose the continuing construction of walls along the borders and closing refugees in camps. We call for immediate measures in the direction of improving refugees' housing, healthcare, assistance and education for a better integration. We have to fight against all forms of nationalism, racism, sexism, homophobia and repression, including the repression against minorities and refugees in many CEE countries. We should commit ourselves to the fight against patriarchy. With our political work we should establish guarantees for the civil and political liberties and for the freedom of political, cultural and religious expression.

Neoliberal austerity policies and privatizations of public services, exercised by national governments and promoted by the EU, are leading the CEE countries into deeper recession. This is one of the reasons for more and more increased migration of people of EU members' countries, especially of CEE countries who are moving to West Europe. We shall fight for a social way-out from the crisis, through public investments for the creation of jobs, the protection and improvement of public services and infrastructures, the introduction of a differentiated progressive tax rate, decent salaries and pensions and the promotion of a socially and ecologically beneficial development. Namely in this way we could also win working people and fight against fascism and extreme right in Europe.

Our goal should be to get in cooperation with those who would consider us as an equal partner, to be close to each other in our agendas - civil initiatives, movements, trade unions, NGOs, and so

on. There is a wide range of images of Europe's Left-wing forces. We should take care about stopping the destruction of the leftist movement by restoring its credibility in the region. Just like those of Left-wing parties or movements in CEE as an integral part of the continent. Modern times require rather joint efforts than various discussions on the topics of who is more on the left or even too much left-wing. We presume that in current strained times, it is important to use every possibility to address people and to work amongst them. Especially, it concerns young people. We should give them opportunities to gain ground within Left-wing movement and to make them ready in political way.

We have to prepare and create conditions to achieve an outcome that will bring at least a slightly stronger representation of the radically leftist CEE movements in the European structures. It's necessary the Left within our geo-political area would mobilize more in common, to get ahead more within the European Left Party. European Left, it means not only the European Left Party members. It means our parties as well. Only all of us together have a chance to start changing something on this continent.

Education Working Group

Education plays an important role for training citizens and consequently for the society's collective consciousness.

Nowadays, the neo-liberal objective is to shape women and men interested only by themselves. Education is strongly utilitarian, subjected to free-market imperatives, and above all centred on skills allowing for a quick adaptation to new situations in a competitive economy.

While public education is getting poorer, not only in terms of budget but also in terms of content, schools for elite are being created. Students' specific needs are not respected: class differences are getting bigger.

Institutions management is more and more following the rules of the new public management and market rules, rather than pedagogy, are becoming a priority. Private financing is accepted and this is a serious change: State is no longer the only one to finance the school institutions. Parents are asked to contribute to the costs and high school registration fees are increasing. As a consequence, some youth are giving up education or families have to get into debt. The right to education is no longer accessible to everybody.

The education politics we want

We demand compulsory education up to the age of 18 and we refuse subjection of education to the rules of neo-liberalism and markets. We demand that State budget is dedicated totally and solely to public education. We want free access to education for each and everyone, at all levels of training and education. We demand that the State dedicates 7% of the GDP to education and eliminate any private financing. This is a fundamental objective.

University and research have to be free from market pressures and from any external constraints. Only in that way can they respond to the needs of society.

We want a free access to all levels of education, to life long training for those who want it.

The education we want

For the EL, education and its emancipatory nature, its accessibility to everyone as well as its democratic characteristics is one of the essential battles.

We are in favour of a lay school subjected to no religious influence.

We want a public, free, democratic and high-level teaching for each and everyone. To meet the new challenges it is important to overcome the dichotomy between knowledge and know-how. Education has to prepare future citizens to become responsible of their life choices, showing solidarity in their involvement in society and respecting environment. While respecting each student's autonomy, school has to develop the youth's critical mind and to create a sense of community.

Nowadays, education for peace is essential.

School has to put down gender stereotypes as well as homophobia through an education for equality: a pedagogy which educates the youth to live together with reciprocal respect and the valorisation of cultural differences. Children's and young migrants' status must no be an obstacle to their immediate schooling.

We are in favour of alternatives to individualism and competitiveness and we share the principles of the “resistance pedagogy” which makes learning, research, and teaching a process resulting from cooperative work. We are in favour of a school that wants to become a democratic laboratory. The school institutions management, at all levels, has to be under the collective responsibility of all the actors: teachers, students, staff. For us, parents and students are not clients.

The institution’s whole staff has to benefit from working conditions including job and salary security, social benefits and the abolition of meritocracy.

Proposal

We are fighting and we call to fight for a public, free, democratic, high level and accessible to all education. We have to overcome a defensive attitude and denounce the commodification of education.

We propose that in 2017, on the occasion of an EL forum, there will be a day of reflection and mobilisation on education organised in collaboration with all the concerned forces.

School is the main instrument to fight against social inequalities. We cannot remain silent and inactive.

Environment Working Group

Sustainable human development: not the people but the capital must pay!

The neoliberal economic system, as the current dominant mode of global capitalism, has spread its tentacles in every area of the planet causing considerable damage to the environment and human lives. The confiscation and concentration of the world's wealth into the hands of a very small minority of people is catastrophic for humanity and nature. It places an unfair burden on many, deprives a constantly increasing population the right to a decent quality of life and depletes natural resources at a greater rate and degree than has ever been experienced in human history.

Climate change and an increasing number of wars, resulting in increased numbers of refugees and migrants are obvious results of these policies.

The political choices of the European Commission and major governments favour so-called “free economic competition” to the detriment of the common social and ecological interests of citizens. An overwhelming majority no longer recognize themselves in the current undemocratic, unequal and antisocial modern Europe. These choices are now reinforced by fiscal rules based on austerity policies and voting directives such as the directive on *business confidentiality*. Moreover, the EU contributes to the development of these policies at the international level, in consultation with undemocratic organisations like NATO.

For the Party of the European Left (EL) global neoliberalism is responsible for new armed conflicts, new forms of imperialism and socio-economic imbalances, with the intent of establishing the geopolitical control of all natural resources. Peace, democracy, human emancipation, solidarity between peoples and the principle of an egalitarian redistribution of wealth and resources are nowadays inconceivable without a resolute and concerted action to protect the environment. This is a systemic issue of great importance to our European political project of transformation. Concurrently, the struggle against poverty, social and environmental inequalities affecting the poorest populations should remain paramount. We affirm that the future of Europe can be envisaged only in the perspective of a new construction which provides, in all circumstances and in the same movement, the priority on human development and respect for the environment based on criteria not dependent on financial profit.

A "low carbon" Europe is urgently required, which should set an example with new public policies on energy, transports, housing and agriculture. This calls for deep changes that the current political constellation in Europe today is unable to lead. With ecology at the heart of its political project, the EL is the only group to present this as an alternative in a fair and socially sustainable way.

Progressive forces in connection with the mobilization of the civil society do propose a realistic left alternative to the current system and aim at social, ecological, sustainable and inclusive development. They work for the emergence of new modes of development, production and

consumption likely to generate a political, economic and social transition which respects the environment and would serve to emancipate humans and enhance international solidarity (especially North-South). This is what we call sustainable human development.

This ambition is registered in opposition to the logic of immediate economic benefits and added value "at all costs". It aims to put, as quickly as possible, an end to the rule of globalized financial markets over people. The alternative proposed by the EL is based on the refusal of the commodification of natural resources by a minority of people, shareholders and multinationals. These are common goods that must serve the development and be used to meet the needs of the majority. As such, they belong to the community which alone can define the way and the pace of their exploitation. Thus, we reject any privatization of natural resources essential to human life. For instance:

- The right to water and sanitation, decreed by the UN, as a human right as well as a universal good. Their public governance should be guaranteed for everyone, including people in Europe. We fight against its appropriation by corporations.
- Adequate food shall be guaranteed to every citizen on the planet, both qualitatively and quantitatively. The EL supports the regulation of food international markets, fair income for farmers and calls to end negotiations between the US and Europe like those concerning TTIP; the EL argues for the development of mutually beneficial exchanges which promote fair trade.
- The choice of production and investment should be made according to criteria of preservation of local ecosystems and protection of biodiversity. We reject the currently dominant production schemes as well as consumerism, which are both capitalistic. The EL argues for different forms of production arising from industrial policies which favour the development of clean technologies, hence are environmentally friendly. Public research should support progress in this direction. To promote the rational use of resources is crucial to reconfigure the production system and the circular economies, relocate productions and develop recycling processes. This would boost the creation of jobs.
- Without energy, life is not possible. We stand for public ownership of energy production and distribution. In Europe, we therefore argue for the right and the real access to energy for all at real needs, at low price, to struggle against energy precariousness. Progressive energy fees for high energy consumption should reduce energy wasted and promote a higher energy performance. To protect the climate, the use of fossil fuels should be reduced progressively and substantially. Therefore at least the 80% of the world oil and gas reserves should be kept in the ground. The decisions of the Paris climate agreement should be implemented quickly both financially (Green Fund) and on the technology transfer level with associated patents for developing countries. Energy mix should be

composed to be as carbon-free as possible with increasing emphasis on renewable sources. The EL rejects any speculation on the carbon quota system - as we have seen in Europe; such a system fails.

A global financial transaction tax system would limit speculations, reduce inequalities through a fair distribution of wealth as well as the development of public services and infrastructures. Creating a European Fund for Social and Ecological Development is essential for solidary human development, in Europe and worldwide. To give priority to the interests of the peoples and that of the planet a systemic change is needed!

Latin America and the Caribbean Working Group

The processes of change started Latin America and the Caribbean in the last 15 years by governments of the Left in a significant number of countries have resulted in major transformations and new democratic practices, made inroads against poverty and destitution, and given millions of people access to education and health care. These sweeping changes have taken place thanks to the mobilization and struggles of the people, who have installed their own governments and given them the power necessary to bring about unheard-of change in their power relations with the historical hegemony of the United States.

It is a new era, which has paved the way for not subordinated regional integration with the foundation of the Union of South American Nations (USAN), the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA-TCP) and the birth of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Cooperation, political consensus and the prevention of conflict are the bedrock of these processes which have made the region a peaceful one, free of weapons of mass destruction. The peace talks in Colombia, too, have been made possible by this new environment. Still the old Organization of American States (OEA) plays a harmful role as a tool of the United States against the new integration regional architecture.

Following more than half a century of resistance, Cuba is now in talks with the US Government, based on a relationship of respect and tolerance. A permanent end to the embargo of Cuba and the EU's common position vis-à-vis the country remain an obstacle to full normalization of relations. Washington's stance constitutes recognition that the policies of harassment and embargo have failed to end the revolution that gave Cuba its independence, even as a new society was being built.

The ruling classes – the old parties that had, for decades, implemented policies dictated by the IMF, the World Bank and the big multinationals – can no longer, as they used to, organize bloody military interventions, coups d'état or repression to bring down democratic governments and crush the forces struggling for emancipation.

The forces of reaction have reorganized, adapting their strategy to these new conditions. In some countries, new forms of coup d'état have been used, among others means, the institutional frameworks to overthrow governments, for example in Honduras (2009) and Paraguay (2012), in Brazil (2016) and currently in Venezuela. The Right is exploiting the problems – which mainly result from the systemic crisis of capitalism in the US and Europe – to plan the destabilization of governments, using extremely violent demonstrations, and, in collusion with big business, to organize shortages of essential goods caused by speculation.

In Venezuela, the problems caused by the 'economic war' which the ruling classes are waging against the Bolivarian Revolution caused part of the electorate to abstain or cast a vote of desperation, which handed the opposition forces a parliamentary majority. The parties of the

Venezuelan Left have gone on the attack by organizing the defense of their achievements over the last 15 years. Washington's meddling has focused on material and financial aid for the opposition, and on attempts to isolate on the international level the Bolivarian Revolution with campaigns to create the image of a quasi-dictatorial country in which the opposition – which resorted to a coup d'état in 2002 and is now organizing to sabotage the economy – would represent a return to democracy. In this context, it is important and a positive fact that the dialogue between the government and the opposition has resume again to find solutions for the countries' problems.

In Brazil, the Right is seeking to exploit problems, with the complicity of the United States, the collusion of part of the judiciary, the support of the oligarchs who control the media, and the extensive funds of agri-business, industry and the financial sector has achieved its goal to bring down President Rousseff and try to block any chance of the Left returning to government.

In Argentina, despite the victory of the candidate of the Right, progressive forces retain significant power in Congress and the popular movement continues its struggle in the streets.

In Ecuador, the Left has gone back to the practice of consulting the people before implementing new laws and measures and is preparing for the presidential elections of the spring of 2017. Supported by other countries, the Ecuadorian Government has presented an initiative to the UN to introduce a control mechanism over multinationals and to create instruments that would make it possible to penalize big companies for violations of human rights.

Significant progress has been made in countries where the Left has not managed to form a national government or is still in a position of resistance, as is the case, for example, in Honduras or Peru. The forces of the Left are gathering strength through their struggles and thus offer true political alternatives.

In Colombia, the peace talks started in 2012 between the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the Santos government has led to agreements on key issues: agrarian policy, political participation, alternatives to drug production and victims' rights as well as some others. In despite of the negative result of the confirmative referendum, the EL hopes that an agreement will be implemented founded on peace with social justice.

The Party of the European Left has offered the Latin American peoples its support in their struggles, working to forge bonds of friendship and cooperation with the São Paulo Forum, as well as with the Leftist social movements of Latin America and the Caribbean. Together, we are building new forums for reflection and exchange and finding common political ground which will enable us to meet the challenges of the times in which we live.

Our ties of solidarity are being called on to play a very important role in the battles we will have to fight on both sides of the ocean. Whether in Europe in he struggle against structural

adjustments, against authoritarianism and against attacks on democracy by creating new policies for progressive change, or in Latin America in the confrontation taking place at this new stage of the Right's offensive against the democratic and social achievements of the peoples of Latin America. Alongside the parties and forces of the Latin American Left, the PEL will defend democracy and the achievements of the people; we will remain committed to the goal of peace in Colombia and we will take decisive action to have the embargo against Cuba lifted once and for all.

LGBT Working Group

Respect and Equal Rights for Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgender, Intersex and Queers Persons

In the current context in which, on a European level, LGBTIQ people are being targeted under the premise of conservative discourses about health and family models reinforcing submissions to the patriarchy and the heteronormative system of dominations, denied different health treatments, as well as being physically attacked with the complacency of the authorities, the European Left needs to react. The European Left strives for equal rights for everybody regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. We refuse every form of homo- or transphobia and actively work for equality of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender, intersex and queer people (LGBTIQ). The member parties are asked to support and initiate every necessary initiative to promote these aims.

That means in particular:

- **Protection of life and physical integrity.**

LGBTIQ people must be efficiently protected against homophobic and transphobic attacks. Authorities must prosecute and try every kind of hate crimes against LGBTIQ people. It is not acceptable that offenders do go unpunished.

- **Protection against discrimination.**

Any kind of discrimination against LGBTIQ is not acceptable for us, be it in penal or civil law or personal status. Stop special laws targeting LGBTIQ people and especially laws prohibiting so called “gay propaganda”!

We demand not only the abolishing of all these laws but the explicit prohibition of discrimination, and the implementation of plans to prevent it from happening. We are not alien to all other issues which affect discrimination in the heterosexual and/or cisgender population. In the case of migrant LGBTIQ people or lesbian or bisexual women we have cases of double or triple discrimination we have to abolish.

- **Freedom of assembly and freedom of association.**

We support the self-organisation of LGBTIQ people and their commitment for their rights. We will stand against any attempt to ban LGBTIQ organisations or demonstrations.

- **Freedom of speech.**

We refuse any attempt to hinder information and education about LGBTIQ issues. The protection of children must not serve as pretext for such attempts, children must be educated in the value of equality, not of hate.

- **The right to gender self-determination.**

We struggle to end the compulsory assignation of a binary and normative gender identity and against gender stereotypes dictated by the patriarchy domination in the society. We demand the immediate de-pathologization of transsexual and transgender identities and the right to free gender self-determination without compulsory sterilization, as recommended by the European Council's Resolution N° 2048 (2015). We demand the end of the mutilation of intersex children by surgeons and the respect of their physical integrity as recommended by the European Council's resolution N° 1952 (2013).

- **The right to freely choose a partner and the way of living together without discrimination and the right to start a family.**

We want every institution of living together, including marriage, to be open for everybody and no way of living together to have more or less rights than another. We want the right to adopt children for everybody under the same conditions regardless marital status and sexual orientation. This permits also to protect the legal rights of the children, regardless the marital status and the sexual orientation of their parents We want the right of artificial insemination for women regardless marital status and sexual orientation.

- **The inclusion of our realities in public programmes.**

We demand that all public services and programmes, whether they be related to education, health or working rights, include an LGBTIQ perspective and deal specifically with discrimination. Special attention must be paid to sexual health, and we demand the end of discrimination against gay men as a "risk group". We demand special programmes against STDs and the end of the stigma HIV+ people suffer. The implementation of such public programs needs public subsidies which are reduced because of the economic austerity and budgetary cuts dictated in all the European Union.

Respect and equal rights for lesbians, gays, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer people are about love and about the universal rights of everybody in our human diversity.

The struggles for civil rights equality and those for socio-economic equality are linked in the same project of the emancipation of the working class in the society. **It is a Left issue.**

Middle East and North Africa Working Group

The main activity of the Middle East working group of the European Left for the past three years has been to develop and strengthen the contact to and discussions with Arab left parties, and in this connection to prepare and organize the Mediterranean conferences. Two Mediterranean conferences have been held - one before the last EL Congress, in Palermo in October 2012; and the second in Istanbul in February 2015. With increasing violence and dictatorships in the Southern and Eastern part of the Mediterranean it has been extremely difficult to find venues to hold conferences in these areas. We were extremely grateful that the ÖDP - with the assistance of Kurdish comrades - offered to be hosts for the Second Mediterranean Conference in Istanbul.

Because of the difficulties to find good venues for conferences and the delays that this has caused a number of extended (i.e. with extra participants from the Arab/southern parties) Coordination group meetings have been held during the period since the last EL Congress to facilitate the political discussions and exchange of views and prepare the next conference. The focus of these Mediterranean conferences as well as well as of the preparatory Coordination group meetings has been to follow up on and analyze current developments in the Mediterranean area and discuss and propose the policies of the Arab and European left in the area.

These past three years since the last European Left Congress have seen a marked worsening of the situation in the whole of the Mediterranean area into one of increasing chaos, conflict and war (especially Libya, Syria, Iraq, Yemen) - with an increasing power and influence of rightwing, suppressive Islamist regimes (Saudi Arabia, Qatar) or Islamist forces like ISIS; or just rightwing regimes like the military dictatorship in Egypt, the developing dictatorship in Turkey, and the marked turn to the right of the Israeli government leaving no doubt as to its intentions to fully colonize Palestine. The Palestinian people is thus in a more or less stalemate situation with the Palestinian Authority governing the West Bank with its rule long expired, and more or less the same with Hamas in the impoverished Gaza. A more belligerent Israeli government already shows itself and new (military) attacks on Palestinians can be expected.

In general, there is increasing poverty and despair of huge parts of the populations in the Mediterranean area.

We therefore find this Mediterranean work undertaken by the Middle East working group to be of the utmost importance to the European Left and the most challenging, also taking into account the risk of extended conflict and war, which could easily spill over into parts of Europe.

These developments in the Mediterranean area are a carnival of reaction seen on the background of the hopeful situation in 2011 when there were democratic risings in many countries with thousands of people, especially the youth, taking to the streets.

It is important here to underline the responsibility of Western imperialism, EU and the USA, of the deteriorating situation. Western countries and NATO have fed the disintegration of countries and rising conflicts in the area by military intervention (Iraq - spilling into Syria), and by contributing to the rise of Islamist forces like ISIS via their alliances with Saudi Arabia, Qatar

and Turkey.

Rightwing regimes in the Middle East and Northern Africa have been supported for decades by the USA and the EU - just as we see at the moment.

Since 1995 the EU has developed a Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (also Union for the Mediterranean) founded on imposed neoliberal integration in the Mediterranean area and further on the creation of a deep Euro-Mediterranean Free Trade Area (modelled on TTIP etc.).

The neoliberal reforms have led to a high increase in unemployment - especially among the young - and labour market reforms leading to a reduction of wages and living standards of the working classes. In this way the reforms contributed to the social and democratic revolutions that were seen in 2011.

What is seen today is a backlash to these revolutions. They have either been smothered by reactionary regimes (Egypt) or declined into chaos and conflict after being suppressed (Syria), or by the military interventions of NATO and Western imperialism (Libya).

The only place where the democratic revolution of 2011 has seemed to endure in a limited kind of way is Tunisia. But still, Tunisia has not escaped IS terror bombings.

As a consequence of these developments the number of refugees and migrants has risen dramatically, in particular in the surrounding countries of the areas of conflict: Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey; but also from Libya; not to mention a huge number of refugees internally in the war-torn areas.

During the past year this led to a huge surge of refugees seeking to escape to Europe, with a great number of these losing their lives at sea during their flight. These huge numbers of refugees created in Europe what is termed a "refugee crisis". Actually the crisis during the past year mostly happened in Greece and Italy.

The responses by NATO and EU have the potential to increase the tensions and danger in and around the Mediterranean area. The EU has signed a dirty deal with Turkey. In return for limiting the movement of refugees from Turkey to Greece, the EU turns a blind eye to massacres in the Kurdish regions of Turkey and refugees being returned to Syria or shot down at the border.

At the same time EU and NATO naval missions in the Aegean as well as at the Libyan coast are trying to control the access to the EU and are preparing another military intervention into Libya.

In Yemen a coalition of Gulf states, which are heavily armed and supported by the US and EU member states, is continuing its military intervention and thereby killing thousands of people, prolonging the civil war and making the supply of millions of starving people nearly impossible.

In an effort to get rid of as many refugees as possible, the EU has also made dirty deals with a number other countries like Sudan or Morocco. This will encourage Morocco to continue their uncompromising denial of an end to the occupation of the Western Sahara. Meanwhile the humanitarian situation in the refugee camps deteriorates and the danger of a military confrontation is rising again. Consequently we support the call for a referendum in order to find a peaceful solution in accordance with the relevant decisions of the UN.

The exceptions to this picture of a fast deteriorating situation have been few:

- There was and is for some time an upsurge of the Kurdish democratic forces in Rojava, northern Syria, who are fighting ISIS and struggling to develop a democracy for all in northern Syria.
- The fact that the Kurdish HDP in an alliance with Turkish democratic and socialist forces managed to gain over 10% of the votes in Turkish parliamentary elections. These forces, however, are under attack by Turkish government (Erdogan) suppression, as well as a violent semi-war conducted by the Turkish authorities against the Kurdish population.
- Attempts to establish peace negotiations in Geneva - but not very successful - as both the US and Russia were involved in bombing campaigns in Syria, strengthening on one hand the Assad regime (Russia) and the non-Islamist opposition forces (USA). However, PYD - the Kurdish forces in Rojava - were not invited to participate.
- A door has been opened to Iran by the USA and the EU - acknowledging that the accusations against Iran for preparing to become a nuclear nation were of the same kind as the accusations against Iraq for producing weapons of mass destruction. The sanctions on Iran have been partially lifted, and another possible escalation of war with an Israeli attack on Iran has been reduced. This also calls for raising again the demand for a nuclear free zone in the Middle East, including Israel.
- The Danish Parliament voted unanimously on 2 June 2016 to urge both Danish companies and the Danish public sector not to trade with Moroccan occupied Western Sahara. A motion to be copied by parliaments elsewhere internationally.
The Danish government also pledged to support and act on one of the other issues mentioned in the motion, that of the UN peacekeeping mission in Western Sahara, MINURSO, being given a mandate to monitor and protect human rights in Western Sahara.

Migration Working Group

Immigration emergency or failure of the EU elites?

The scenarios that are emerging in Europe, caused by wars, dictatorships, climatic and environmental disasters, economic crises that affect most of the country from which people emigrate, they are constantly changing, aggravating an already critical situation and increasing the number of victimized migratory population, both migrants and refugees.

Nevertheless, the European political and social reflexes towards this major issue are often oriented according to older misjudgements and mistakes.

In the past decades, people were migrating to Europe in order to ameliorate their life standards, seeking jobs and life improvement opportunities. European Union responded by homogeneous restrictions on freedom of entry and circulation, leaving the legislative initiatives concerning reception, social inclusion and civil rights to the member states.

Today EU itself promotes agreements in the direction of making European borders practically inaccessible, by granting billions of euro to countries such as Turkey in order to restrain the migrating flow, launching initiatives (ex the Khartoum process) aiming to set up barriers - even in the form of detention - in Sub Saharan Africa. At the same time E.U leaves on their own the countries of the South Europe to deal with the arrivals of people who, against all barriers, continue to move in order to save their lives.

The decision of several European governments to build walls and fences outside as well as within the "Schengen Area", imposing at the same time social, religious, work capacity and origin criteria according to which they select the lucky few to enter their territory an acceptable procedure, though it consists an immediate violation of the European law and regulations signed by every EU member state.

At the same time, the economic crisis, which is still aggravating, favoured these political forces that - regardless of how much vital resources are available, today more than ever, in surplus - they target migrant citizens blaming them for every trouble.

It is evident that in many European countries,(France, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia and Eastern Europe), xenophobic populism also gains consensus among working classes.

There is an urgent need for the European people to realise that the real conflict is not the one between the exploited classes of diverse nationalities but among the exploited and exploiters. As European Left, we have the data, the tools, the skills to prove to all citizens that it is not the new comers who put at stake their rights, but the political and economic elites who are fuelling wars and nationalistic divisions, according to their own interests. All across Europe the deep

economic crisis creates bigger profits for the rich few ones, while the poor and excluded from the production process and private welfare, both migrants and natives, are bearing the consequences.

Walls, barbed wires, militarization of borders, forced deportations, denial of the right to asylum, are choices made by the political elites to continue the oppression while fuelling the illusion that they are defending the natives' prosperity.

Although European policies have had in recent years a "welcome" phase towards migrants, with specific characteristics that were altering according to the mere interests of each country, nowadays the picture has been radically changed. Even for countries such as Germany and Italy (mainly because of the demographic decline) need to maintain a positive trend in new workforce inputs, specific causes resulted in an abrupt change of policy:

- The fact of the outgrowing arrival of people has not received adequate responses from EU institutions. The idea that those who came from Syria, Iraq or African "critical" countries, could be relocated, according to the needs of the host country has been proved to be an illusion. Such relocation policies failed: out of 120 thousand people who were supposed to find a decent accommodation, less than a 10% have actually found it.

- Social majority alarming factors such as terrorist attempts, job losses, welfare reductions, have been connected to the arrival of refugees, as a factor of political instability. Now this new scenario it is expected to be overcome with purely repressive responses that are not going to produce positive effects.

Within this framework, EU member states that have become the main European entrance (mainly Greece and the southern part of Italy), are struggling to assure human conditions of accommodation, health care and support for the increasing refugee and migratory populations, displaying a high degree of solidarity, despite the deep social wounds due by the neoliberal political and economic suffocation.

On the other hand, the Migration Compact is supposed to convince African countries to retain all those attempting to flee to Europe, while countries are seeking stronger economic and military incentives, even in disagreement with the Geneva Convention. All the same, the Declaration of New York is likely to remain just a useless document of positive intentions.

Nowadays, the "hotspot" approach aims to separate those who are entitled to forms of international protection or asylum from economic migrants which are going to be repatriated, throughout a practice of restriction that so far has not produced other effects than disperse those who have been interned.

The establishment of European border guards and the military naval operations are also supposed to effectively repel the fleeing populations to unstable countries (ex. Libya).

These are choices unlikely to produce any positive impact, especially after the results of the US presidential elections that are most likely to aggravate the international political scenery and enforce the xenophobic, racist and undemocratic rhetoric and social reactions within the EU member states as well, while favouring the strengthening of the far right and fascist political forces already raising in Europe.

Taking under consideration this dangerously escalating situation, the Party of the European Left should demand a radical paradigm approach to these key issues:

1. Repeal of the Dublin Regulation and offer the asylum seekers, the environmental and economic refugees a real European care program instead of different national approaches.
2. Effective protection of people fleeing from the criminal market of human trafficking, through institutionalized paths of reception and social inclusion shared by all 27 EU member states.
3. Support of local economies of the countries of origin, in order to facilitate the road of return and simultaneously boycotting of the governments that force people to flee (breaking bilateral readmission agreements signed by individual EU member states).
4. Sanctioning policies toward the EU member states that opt for internal or external barriers against refugees and migrants, on the basis of so called national interests, trying to stop or divert their arrival. It is imperative not to allow labour exploitation to be used as a tool of conflict between migrant and ingenious working people.
5. Exclusion of the expenses due to acceptance and social inclusion planning from the calculation of deficits of individual member states.
6. Suppression of Frontex and other law enforcement agencies, in favour of the strengthening of SAR operations.
7. Creation of legal, regular and secure entrance channels approachable to all simply by presenting their identity documents.

Public Services Working Group

The Party of the European Left (EL) considers social, democratic and economic services as a part of its DNA. Therefore, public services are not only necessary but they constitute the core of our challenges and goals in order to maintain and develop the response to social needs.

Nowadays the threat against public services is brutal. This is the time to conceive a strategy to regain and improve these public services which enable European people to cover their basic needs and benefit from collective goods beyond the logic of profit.

Premise and concept

This is a historical time for the European Left to change direction, to be in the vanguard and move onto the offensive for a re-appropriation of public services. They represent our right as citizens; we refuse to regard them as merchandises for ‘clients’.

Our vision of public services

When we talk about the concept of public services, or its equivalent in different languages, we do not refer merely to certain services addressed to the public. By public service we understand a political option implying the ownership, the funding, the management and the democratic control are public. In our societies public services still exist outside the rules of the market. Public services are intended as a response to social needs that are not covered by the market.

We consider the following as public goods: education, health, housing, food supply, environment, culture, water, energy, transports, and communication...

Public services have been the result of hard working class and social struggles. They have been built step by step. All the European countries have experienced struggles to construct the means to meet the needs of women and men without distinction during their history.

European countries are not exempt from this process of demolition of public services, even if the implementation rhythms are different. Our Europe is not the Europe of budgetary cuts and austerity policies.

We are going to redefine *a new culture of public services* thanks to the social involvement and mobilization. It is absolutely appropriate, legitimate and necessary.

Building public services for the future

National public services should be financed by the State or by national social security systems, and should be managed and controlled democratically outside the rules of the market.

Meanwhile, in parallel with the construction of Europe, a territory is emerging and new needs, such as a proper energy supply and environment, arise for the people of Europe. A global

approach to the European continent in order to build new European public services is now becoming essential to cope with challenges throughout this territory.

The re-appropriation

The re-appropriation of high-quality, universal and equal public services, has nowadays become almost a revolutionary act and so it is perceived. We must fight together against daily resignation.

Public services should be financed by the budget of States and public administrations. This investment should be a priority for public authorities. Therefore, we demand public funding for public services; and not for private companies making profits, military equipment or saving banks.

Our vision of public services is not under the banner of financial engineering or markets. We measure goals according to quality, equality, justice and universal welfare. To ensure the quality of public services, it is necessary that public employees have a status that protects them from pressures, recognizing their qualifications, professional career, job security, adequate retirement and remuneration. The idea that public services could be financed and managed more effectively by the market and by private firms has clearly collapsed. This liberalization is a real destructive poison for the quality of the service given to the population and for the right to obtain new services.

We demand citizens' democratic control and we reject the private participation, as provided by the Juncker plan, giving a public-private mix which undermines the services. These perverse privatizations will strengthen a favourable environment for the markets' outrageous corruption at the expense of the quality and universality of services. It is not possible to manage a public good according to the logic and laws of the private sector: the goals are different. When something public becomes private the democratic control is challenged.

Democracy

The impoverishment of public services is completely linked to the anti-democratic drift imposed by neoliberalism.

No limits to people's rights and no resignation related to gender, class and origin inequalities.

Equal access and social appropriation are fundamental. This reality is, unfortunately, flagrant considering for example the scarcity of means provided by Europe for the reception of refugees and migrants.

Democratic struggle against corruption will result in the development of funding policies more transparent and adjusted to the situation.

TTIP and TISA

Neoliberalism is imposing its rules and goals on us in a deeper and deeper way which is affecting public services in our countries, thus, anticipating the implementation of the TTIP and CETA objectives. Our alternatives have nothing in common with those of these treaties. A total confrontation against the threat of the TTIP and the TISA and its irreversible consequences is needed. The protection of public services and employment at a European level should not be affected by commercial agreements related to transatlantic trade.

Common, collective and public goods

The public good is financed, managed, controlled and developed through State funds. It is impossible to manage public service following the logic of private business.

Public money provided by our taxes must be systematically sent to the public sector. As citizens we are co-owners, not customers or simple users: We are entitled to all services.

The re-appropriation of the language is also necessary. We suggest the use of a clear and simple language. We recover our discourse; we do not resign: we need pedagogy and struggle. We condemn the role of powerful and submissive Mass Media which explain and justify privatizations and commodification.

We do not want the private profit to be nourished out of public goods. We believe that public investments should be for public services. We stand for *building together a new culture of public services*.

Some proposals for a strategy to defend and conquer public services in Europe

1) To analyse by ourselves the degradation of public services:

We need to produce a status update. It is necessary to define a certain number of indicators, the expenditure of public service, or the number of public servants per inhabitant; but also indicators related for example to maintenance security within the transportation system, to health, including a data collection on the average life expectancy, on perinatal health; also in the field of teaching such as the number of pupils per class and the success rate in school subjects.

We have data regarding poverty, unemployment and precariousness, and we need to show how these have evolved in order to be on the offensive when defending public services. The fundamental measure of the outcome of public services is not based on economy but on the quality and effectiveness which allow us to move forward against gender, class, territory, and origin based inequalities.

Privatizations have to be stopped. An observatory needs to be initiated in order to register the degradation of those public services delivered to the European population and measure the evolution of school, transportation, health, water access or housing systems.

To identify public services concerning the European territory and even the whole Planet. Beware of Eurocentrism!

2) To break down the borders:

We must fight together in a single and comprehensive claim for all public services and coordinate our struggles and action for public services in Europe to avoid competition and dumping and to construct convergences in solidarity. Our aim is the construction of ambitious public services everywhere in Europe, using the best experiences to ensure a high-quality service based on solidarity and fraternity.

Showing the impact of assignments on culture as a public good is decisive for the society but especially considering working conditions, unemployment, the closing down of departments and the perpetuation of privileges and inequalities.

A public control is needed in strategic areas such as energy, transportation, digital media and communication, food security. European public tools with a transparent and democratic control should be established to provide the European population with the same level of secured and high-quality public service.

3) To bring the struggles together:

On three component levels that are concerned with the defence of this facility of public service: the capitalist system itself and the State, employees in this sector and their trade unions, and finally customers, all those requiring a high-quality service given to the population.

We need to develop contacts with networks of social movements and trade unions dealing with public services, learning from resistances and actions that have succeeded against attacks throughout Europe.

Also, we must collect our experiences in local governments and spread them and defend subsidiarity as a principle of action.

4) The Europe we are struggling for is different.

It opposes the private appropriation of public resources. • It opposes the public-private partnership in order to make profits. • It considers people as actors who control the direction and management of public services. • It declares itself in favour of an adequate funding of public budgets as well as in favour of a progressive taxation system. • It is committed to an equal access to public goods and to their expansion. • It demands the creation of a European social fund based on solidarity and ecology regarding public investments.

We should identify the public services that are necessary for the European population and which cannot be covered by the national public services. These are especially the major international infrastructures, as well as these concerning global approaches to water, energy, mass transportation and travel networks, inter-university research and training cooperation, environmental, food security and public health issues.

We cannot construct Europe within a globalized world and at the same time fail to construct a parallel public service with a European dimension but open to the World and prepared to deal with problems at whatever levels they may take place. The European public service has to be financed by the ECB and within the framework of our demands based on social and environmental development funds.

Our strategy is to unite struggles, to call for a social and political mobilization against the resignation and the liquidation of public services.

A SECTOR THAT WE HAVE DEVELOPED WITHIN THE EL:

HEALTH

Public health and health care: a social right to be protected as a public service

International, European and national laws assert the right to health as a universal right that governments and public authorities must ensure according to the following criteria: universality, equality, quality and a sufficient budgetary investment.

But the situation becomes more and more unsustainable; so health care as a right is currently undergoing ferocious and sustained attacks to weaken protection systems and it is being deprived of its public character in order to benefit private firms and the market. Elsewhere, this process is known as privatization. It is the law of the market and the final deregulation, -its objective- aimed at the appropriation of the health “sector”. Major data-indicators of health are in a permanent and alarming decline. We must react urgently.

It is necessary to reverse this lethal aggression towards a situation where 100% of public economic resources are given to the public system, and nothing else but public.

All this drift supported by the legislative development of the EC/EU is taking place in the sights of an EU that is seriously threatened in a sustained way, by the TTIP and the CETA, against whom we must frontally and urgently fight if we wish to aim at a future with a “public health system”.

