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PROTECT THE PEOPLE NOT THE SYSTEM

The Corona crisis and the consequences for European politics

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PREAMBLE

The health crisis that the world is facing reveals a structural crisis that already existed and that the EL has consistently exposed. The EL took on the task of proposing an alternative model for this Europe following the explosion of Covid-19. For this, a Platform has been created and we are working very actively to develop it focusing not only on solutions for the actual crisis, but also, more in the long term, for a public, social and ecological transformation of the economy. It is important to rethink the role of European and global institutions, to ensure investments that go in the direction of a Social Green New Deal, and to protect workers: for a tomorrow focused on human needs and not just on profit.

The situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is a shock for all humanity. Drastic measures have been taken in almost all countries to prevent people from contracting the disease and to contain the pandemic. While, indeed, every effort must be made to protect the population, these measures must be coordinated, but an effective European coordination by its institutions is still absent as well as a global response. In this way, the countries most affected are left on their own. The risk is therefore that the politics in general, with the Stability Pact in particular, will limit solidarity among countries in coping with economic crisis by leading to the dichotomy privileged countries - countries already hit by austerity in the past.

The spread of the COVID-19 virus also has significant consequences for the economy: it is accelerating the crisis of neoliberal globalisation as a hegemonic model of society, accelerating the restructuring process of capitalism.

The coronavirus pandemic clearly shows the failure of the prevailing neoliberal economic and social model. As a consequence of the neoliberal austerity policy of privatising public services, healthcare systems are not able to cope with the public needs in a pandemic.

The Party of the European Left (EL) demands immediate measures to combat the consequences of the crisis and a radical change of policy, opening a new path for the development of the society, placing the people at its core.

Some measures at national level to protect the most vulnerable people, like in Spain, are going in a good direction, but comprehensive activities concerning five poles are necessary. First and foremost, everything must be done to protect the people. A public, social, and ecological transformation of the economy is urgently needed. Democratic institutions and rights must not be questioned by the measures undertaken in order to combat the crisis: on the contrary, in difficult times like these, democracy and civil rights have to be defended and expanded. There is no other answer than international solidarity to the global dimension of the crisis: now it's the time for a new initiative for disarmament and a policy of détente.

Democracy

EL recognizes that COVID-19 crisis can threaten democracies and the risk that irresponsible action lead to the emergence of extreme right and its complete unsolidaristic rhetoric. Against the attempts to take advantage of the emergency situation in order to limit or suspend our rights, the EL defends democracy and its institutions. For example, the parliaments should remain in function and not suspended, as it was the case in Hungary.

We know that very stringent measures are needed to contain the pandemic. **But we have to be vigilant and make sure that restrictions of freedom deemed necessary to stop the progress of the pandemic must remain exceptional measures.**

The EL also firmly rejects any attempt to misuse the corona pandemic for xenophobic or nationalist demagoguery.

NO-ONE IS LEFT BEHIND

The Covid-19 pandemic shows that our society needs a new social and ecological transformation. The idea that the market can solve this crisis is an illusion, and the rhetoric of the state of emergency is used as a pretext for dismantling democratic and social rights.

We need a Social Green New Deal that goes beyond capitalist limits.

Through a Platform, the Party of the European Left took the task of proposing an alternative model for this Europe: we not only have to rethink the role of European and global institutions, but we are called now to working very actively to protect people.

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