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EUROPE FOR THE PEOPLE

4TH OF APRIL

LES ATELIERS DES TANNEURS
RUE DES TANNEURS 58-62 1000 BRUXELLES BELGIQUE

18:00-21:30

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Master of Ceremony: Alison Stoecker, socio-political activist, lecturer and writer, United Kingdom

Opening remarks: Marc Botenga, MEP, PVDA-PTB/
The Left in the European Parliament, Belgium



EUROPE FOR THE PEOPLE *Program*

Session 3

A socially just climate
and energy transition

Session 2

Peace, security and
international law

Introduction:

Stefanos Stefanou
General Secretary AKEL,
Cyprus

Speakers:

Maha Abdallah
PhD researcher at the Faculty
of Law, University of Antwerp,
Palestine

Jeremy Corbyn

MP and former Labour leader,
United Kingdom

Florian Eblenkamp

Advocacy Officer for
International Campaign to
Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)
Sweden

Tokozile Xasa

Ambassador to the EU, Belgium
and Luxemburg, South Africa

Session 1

Cost-of-living,
austerity, and social-
economic rights

Introduction:

Pernando Barrena
EH Bildu, Basque Country

Speakers:

Fátima Aguado
Head of Europe Sector of
CS-CCOO, Spain

Valentina Škafar
Head of International
Relations, Levica,
Slovenia

Video messages:

Elke Kahr, KPÖ Mayor of Graz,
Austria

18:00 - 18:30 (UTC+1) Registration, Meet-and-Greet with finger food buffet

18:30 - 20:55 (UTC+1) Main Programme

20:55 - 21:30 (UTC+1) Meet-and-Greet with finger food buffet

Introduction:

Lynn Boylan
MP and former MEP, Sinn Féin,
Ireland

Speakers:

Tea Jarc
Confederal Secretary of ETUC,
Slovenia

Jeremy Corbyn

MP and former Labour leader,
United Kingdom

Video message:

Anuna De Wever
Climate activist, Belgium

Closing remarks:

Walter Baier
President of the Party of the
European Left, Austria



Introduction

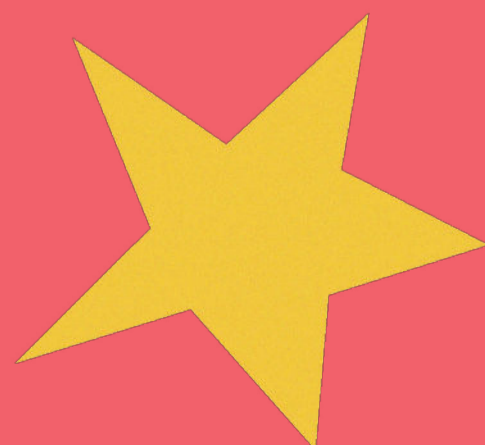
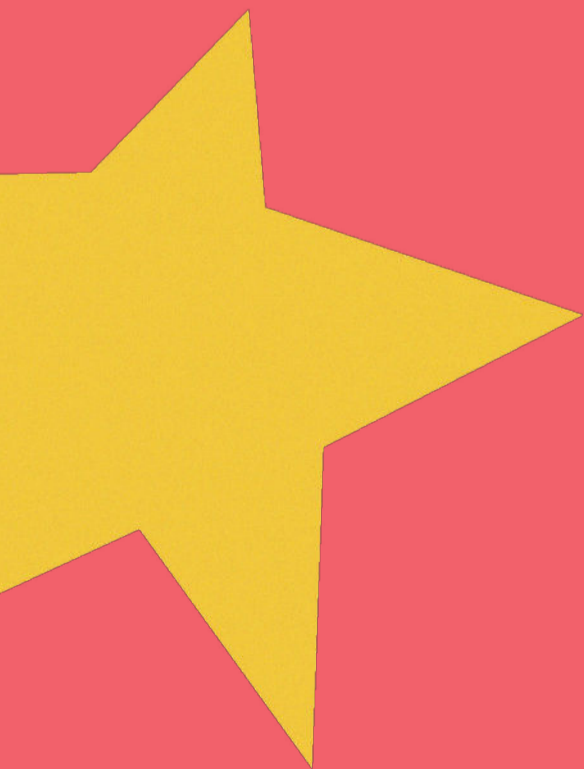
The 'Europe for the People' meeting takes place against the backdrop of the Belgian presidency of the Council of the EU and in the run-up to the forthcoming European Parliament elections. Europe is facing a complex period of poly crisis, war, and conflict. Yet there are hopeful signs of a growing determination to resist, to struggle and to change course.

The broad left forces in Europe have a responsibility to respond to these challenges with alternatives that put the needs of the workers and the people above the profiteering of the wealthy and powerful.

The speakers from civil society organisations, social movements, trade unions and the left political parties come together at this meeting representing relevant struggles and campaigns, exchanging of the opinion and sharing concrete experiences on three themes of major importance:

- (1) Cost of living, Austerity, and Social and Economic Rights;
- (2) Peace, Security, and International Law;
- (3) A Socially Just Climate and Energy Transition.

Event dedicated YouTube channel will offer even more statements to those topics from the broad left political family and other organisations as well as the event recording



Master of Ceremony:

Alison Stoecker, socio-political activist, lecturer and writer



Alison is a former political advisor and EA to the Shadow Chancellor of the Labour Party, a therapist, lecturer and writer. She works closely with Jeremy Corbyn and is one of the organisers of the first Peace and Justice Project International Conference held at the ITF HQ in London in November 2023. Alison also assisted in the Memorial Event for the 50th Anniversary of Bloody Sunday held in Derry, N.I in 2022. She currently consults and lectures on Ethical Leadership for Just Governance at the Initiatives of Change charity based in Westminster, London where she is also setting up their first Gala event in June for RRB (Refugees as Re-Builders). Her professional career spans the worlds of sport, music, education and politics. Currently writing a book about her Camino travels; Alison is excited to join the Europe for the People team to help open up safe conversation space.

Opening remarks:

Marc Botenga, MEP, PVDA-PTB

The Left in the European Parliament Parliament



Marc Botenga is the MEP of the Workers' Party of Belgium. Affiliated with The Left parliamentary group, he is a member of the committee for Industry, Research and Energy, and substitute member of the Employment and Foreign Affairs committees. He focused his parliamentary activity on defending workers' rights, fighting austerity, and was particularly active for peace and Palestine.

Session 1

Cost-of-living, austerity, and social-economic rights

Europe is experiencing a serious and continuous worsening of the situation in terms of social justice. Austerity policies and measures imposed by the European Union and its member states are once again raising their ugly head. Both the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have contributed to the rise of inflation, an increased cost of living and a diminished purchasing power. Especially energy and food prices have augmented, while a handful of big multinationals and banks have “never wasted a good crisis” to obtain windfall profits. Employers and governments connive to render wage increases near to impossible, while plant closures and disinvestment in public sectors and infrastructure lead to mass unemployment.

We mobilize for higher wages, salaries, and pensions, and for lower consumer prices. We reject the new austerity plan of the EU, bringing budget cuts, deregulation, and privatization. We demand higher investments in public and social services.



Session 1 *Speakers*

Cost-of-living, austerity, and social-economic rights

Pernando Barrena



Barrena is a prominent figure in the Basque political landscape and gained widespread recognition for his role as a spokesperson for Batasuna, before serving as a Member of the European Parliament. His tenure in the European Parliament was marked by a relentless commitment to environmental sustainability, economic equality, and international cooperation. Barrena has dedicated his career to championing the rights of workers and marginalized communities. His high ethical principles and ability to bridge diverse perspectives make him a respected figure in European politics. Beyond his parliamentary role, he remains a tireless activist, continuing to contribute to progressive causes and shaping a more inclusive, peaceful and equitable society. Barrena's legacy endures as a symbol of principled, transformative leadership.

Fátima Aguado



Fátima Aguado is currently responsible for Europe and European Institutions in the CCOO Trade Union Confederation. She has been involved in the trade union movement for 18 years. She holds a Master's degree in European Union Law, specialising in European Union social rights. Within the trade union, she has held various positions of responsibility in the trade union leadership, first as youth secretary and then as international secretary of the CCOO Federation of Citizen Services. During all these years she has maintained close links with the European and international trade union sector, both with the European Institutions and with European trade union organisations focusing on transport, logistics and public services. She was also active in the creation of the Amazon workers' network and in multiple international networks giving a voice to the working class and citizens.

Session 1 *Speakers*

Elke Kahr



Austrian politician and the Mayor of Graz (KPÖ) was recently awarded the World Mayor Prize out of 92 entries. With a career rooted in social activism, Kahr has been a driving force for progressive change in Graz, Austria's second-largest city. Known for her commitment to social justice, environmental sustainability, and urban development, she has played a pivotal role in shaping Graz's inclusive policies. As Mayor, Kahr focuses on fostering a vibrant and sustainable community. Her leadership reflects a dedication to creating a city that values equality, cultural diversity, and environmental responsibility, making Elke Kahr a respected figure in Austrian local governance.

Valentina Škafar



Valentina Škafar is a passionate lifelong activist who stepped into active politics a decade ago with the inception of Levica, the distinguished left party in Slovenia. She currently holds key roles within the party as the Head of International Relations and a Council Member. Valentina is also a valued member of the Political Secretariat and Executive Board of the European Left Party. Her extensive background encompasses various sectors, ranging from her engagement in NGOs to her diplomatic endeavors. Valentina has amassed a wealth of diplomatic experience, having worked at the Embassy of Venezuela in Slovenia and currently supporting the Ambassador of Palestine in Vienna. Furthermore, she utilizes her expertise as an advisor to a Member of the European Parliament, specializing in environmental protection and animal rights advocacy.

Session 2

Peace, security and international law

Europe needs a political agenda for peace, security, and disarmament. If we want to achieve a sustainable peace in Europe, we need to confront and have an open discussion on today's major and burning issues that form an obstacle to peace. How to stop the increasing militarization and the rise of military expenditures by the EU, NATO and their Member States?

A horrible war is once again taking place on European territory. We need to put an end to the war in Ukraine and work for a just and sustainable peace based on international law. The cruel and inhuman war on Gaza, right at Europe's doorstep, demands not only an end to the current bloodletting, but also a structural solution to end the occupation of Palestine, based on the relevant UN resolutions. Weapons of mass destruction have no place in a Europe for the people. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is yet another call and concrete occasion to work with more urgency for a nuclear-weapons free Europe. Finally, we support the aspirations of the Irish people to reunite their nation divided by British colonialism, and the efforts to resolve the Cyprus problem by reuniting the country and its people.



Session 2 *Speakers*

Peace, security and international law



Stefanos Stefanou



Stefanos Stefanou a prominent Cypriot politician, widely recognized for his significant contributions to the political landscape as a member of the Progressive Party of Working People (AKEL). Stefanou's journey in public service began as a dedicated activist, advocating for social justice and workers' rights. His commitment led him to various leadership roles within AKEL, where he became a key figure in shaping the party's policies. Known for his eloquence and strategic thinking, Stefanou has played a pivotal role in fostering dialogue and addressing pressing issues in Cyprus. As a seasoned politician, he continues to influence positive change and promote AKEL's progressive agenda.

Maha Abdallah



Maha Abdallah was born and raised in occupied Jerusalem. She is a teaching assistant and PhD researcher at the Faculty of Law, University of Antwerp. She obtained her LL.M. in International Human Rights Law from the Irish Centre for Human Rights in Galway, Ireland. Maha's research investigates genocide in relation to Zionism, settler-colonialism and the Palestinian people. She has authored and co-authored academic papers, reports, and articles on international law and human rights. Her legal research and human rights advocacy at UN and EU levels with Palestinian, Regional and International Civil Society organisations have a primary focus on Palestine and corporate accountability. Maha continues to be active with civil society in Palestine and beyond in the pursuit of human rights and justice.

Jeremy Corbyn



Jeremy Corbyn

MP, Founder & Director of PJP (Peace & Justice Project) Twice elected Leader of the Labour Party and 40 yrs. MP for Islington North, in London Jeremy Corbyn serves as a Parliamentary Member of the Council of Europe. His expansive and lifelong campaigning for Peace, Justice and Human Rights including the Israel/Palestine conflict, has taken him across the world advocating in senior roles for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, the Palestinian Solidarity Committee, Stop the War, UN Human Rights Council in New York (review of the Geneva Convention), Nuclear Non-Proliferation, UN Observer of the East Timorese Independence Referendum, the resettlement & sovereignty of the Chagos Islands, Trade Unions, Employment Rights, Indigenous Rights and many social movements. Jeremy has twice been awarded prizes for promoting peace, including the Seán MacBride Peace Prize for his sustained and powerful political work for disarmament and peace. He founded the Peace and Justice Project in 2020.

Session 2 *Speakers*

Ambassador Tokozile Xasa

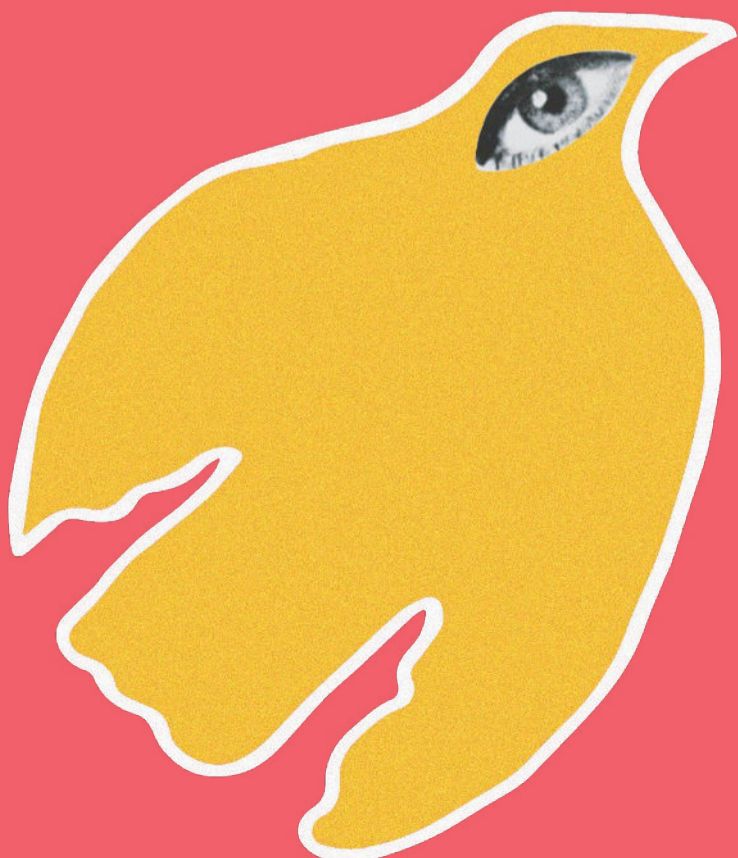


Ambassador Tokozile Xasa is a distinguished South African diplomat, recognized for her exceptional leadership and commitment to global cooperation. Born in the Eastern Cape, she has played pivotal roles in advancing South Africa's diplomatic relations, serving as the country's ambassador to various nations. Xasa, with her extensive experience, has been a fervent advocate for human rights, gender equality, and socio-economic development. Her diplomatic finesse and dedication have earned her widespread respect, contributing significantly to fostering positive international relations. Ambassador Xasa remains an influential figure, embodying the principles of diplomacy and promoting South Africa's interests on the world stage.

Florian Eblenkamp



Florian Eblenkamp supports ICANs work in Nuclear Umbrella states and works with partner organisations across the world. His work centers around leveraging political processes and extending the support for the TPNW in countries whose governments are not yet supportive of the treaty. As such, he focuses on strengthening the ICAN Parliamentary Pledge and the ICAN Cities Appeal and ensuring good relationships with parliamentarians and civil-society organisations.



Session 3

A socially just climate and energy transition

The disastrous impact of climate change and the global environmental crisis are there for all to see. The half-hearted policies agreed at the Dubai COP 28 climate summit will not stop the trend, let alone reverse it. Most proposed climate measures put the blame one-sidedly on the common consumer, even as the big polluters continue to be protected and even subsidized. It is unfair to burden the workers and the people with so-called green taxes. What they need are more public investments to offer them affordable alternatives for mobility and housing, to protect them from the effects of climate change, and to advance towards a climate-neutral society. The funds needed to efficiently combat climate change must come from the main polluters: big industry, in the first place the fossil fuel industry.

An ambitious and socially just climate policy will mainly be the result of climate action from the grassroots up, by the working class, the youth, the consumers and commuters, the people.



Session 3 *Speakers*

A socially just climate and energy transition

**Senator
Lynn Boylan,**



Senator Lynn Boylan, a leading voice in Irish politics, who serves as the Sinn Féin Spokesperson on Climate Justice. Elected to the Seanad in 2020, she holds pivotal roles as the Seanad spokesperson for Communications, Climate Action & Environment, Social Protection, and Employment Affairs. Raised in Tallaght, Dublin, she developed a passion for social justice early on and continues to champion citizens' rights through her roles on key Oireachtas Committees. Lynn's diverse academic background in Journalism, Environmental Resource Management, and Environmental Impact Assessment reflects her commitment to addressing complex issues. A staunch advocate for climate justice, she fights against fossil fuel reliance, ensuring an inclusive transition. Lynn's activism extends to campaigning for the Stardust Tragedy victims and advocating for fair tax reform.

Tea Jarc



Tea Jarc is a Confederal Secretary of the ETUC, elected in May 2023 at the ETUC Congress in Berlin. Her responsibilities at ETUC include dossiers collective bargaining, wage coordination, and implementation of Adequate minimum wage directive; employment, non-standards forms of employment and labour market policies; implementation of the European pillar of social rights; youth, youth employment policies; trade union renewal and digital trade unionism; EU enlargement; changes of the EU treaties; regional, economic and social cohesion policies as well as working with Eurofound. Before being elected Confederal Secretary of the ETUC, Tea was President of the ETUC Youth Committee (2019-2022).

Session 3 *Speakers*

A socially just climate and energy transition

Anuna de Wever



Anuna De Wever holds a commanding presence in the global climate movement. From Belgium she rose to prominence as a passionate advocate for environmental sustainability. She co-founded the Youth for Climate movement - mobilizing thousands of young activists to demand urgent action on climate change. De Wever's unwavering commitment to raising awareness and holding policymakers to account has inspired countless individuals worldwide to join the fight for a more sustainable future. Through her activism, speeches, and grassroots organizing, she continues to galvanize youth and communities to push for bold climate policies and systemic change. De Wever remains a beacon of hope and determination in the fight against climate crisis.

Jeremy Corbyn



Jeremy Corbyn MP, Founder & Director of PJP (Peace & Justice Project) Twice elected Leader of the Labour Party and 40 yrs. MP for Islington North, in London Jeremy Corbyn serves as a Parliamentary Member of the Council of Europe.



Closing remarks

Walter Baier

President of the Party of the European Left, Austria



Walter Baier (Vienna, 1954) is the President of the European Left and Spitzenkandidat (lead candidate) for 2024 European election.

He holds a Doctorate in Economy from the University of Vienna. Baier was National Chairman of the Communist Party of Austria (KPÖ) from 1994 to 2006 and was the editor of the Austrian magazine Volksstimme.

Since 2000, he has worked on dialogue between atheists and Catholics through the project DIALOP, leading in the last years to meetings with Pope Ratzinger and Pope Francis.

From 2007 to 2022, he was political coordinator and board member of the transform! europe network.

He is author of publications such as: 'The principle of deception: from grand narratives to the new language of politics' (2007), 'The Short Century – Communism in Austria' (2009) and 'Marxism: History and Topics of a Practical Theory' (2023).

He is working for unity and alliances between progressive and democratic forces, and defending the need to transform European politics to address societal and ecological challenges in favour of the majority.

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