

## **10<sup>th</sup> ECOSY CONGRESS - ADOPTED POSITION PAPER**

Except for the passages otherwise marked, the Position Paper has been adopted by the 10<sup>th</sup> ECOSY Congress by a two-thirds majority and is therefore binding for all full member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes.

### **DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES - OUR PRINCIPLES**

#### **1. OUR PRINCIPLES**

ECOSY – Young European Socialists is an organisation working to build a democratic, just and fair society, within a social Europe of sustainable economic growth whose returns are equally shared, guaranteeing the best achievable living and working conditions to all. Our mission is one: to empower and enable every European to have a decent life, a life filled with opportunities for self-determination and self-expression, participation in the democratic life of a society in which knowledge, services, prosperity and power are equally shared. We look forward to a Europe of [democracy, solidarity, equality, justice and freedom]<sup>1</sup>. These values are interconnected. One of them can not be forgotten without other values to lose their meaning.

##### **[1.1 Democracy**

Democracy and the invaluable civil rights we possess are an essential means for ensuring equality, empowerment and the inclusion of all sections of society. We must be ever vigilant in the protection of these freedoms, especially when they are questioned in the face of modern threats and crises. And we must go further and always demand increases in the quality of democracy: increasing transparency, accountability, representation, participation and political inclusion at all levels. The goals of the socialist movement can only be realised when all citizens have equal decision-making power in political matters, and use it fully.

##### **1.2 Solidarity**

Solidarity is the core of the workers movement we come from and are part of. Without solidarity the social achievements our movement struggled for would not have been possible, likewise without solidarity the building of a democratic, just and fair society will not be possible. Solidarity is more than compassion or charity: it is a matter of social justice. Our ideas of a social Europe and a European welfare system are based on solidarity: all should contribute according to their capacity and benefit according to their needs. Thus we build a society that ensures a decent life for everybody. Solidarity does not know any borders, so we are working for a Europe that works for equality, justice and freedom worldwide, a Europe which is based on strong solidarity among its people and member states. A world built upon solidarity, is a world of peace. Peace is more than the absence of war. A culture of peace is one in which human rights are respected, exercised and internationalised: it is a safe environment, where everyone can express him- or herself freely enjoying good social and economic conditions. Solidarity is also a concept of international cooperation in order to develop decent living conditions worldwide, establish a balance between North and South, consolidate human, social and economic rights all over the world, fight against hunger and for access to drinkable water, and eradicate pandemics.

##### **1.3 Equality and justice**

Equality and justice are key principles in our struggle for democracy: a reality in which every person lives in dignity, enjoying equal rights, security and opportunities. This is vital in creating an active civil society, which develops through its social cohesion and the empowerment of its people, who have free, equal and available access to high-quality education, work, social welfare systems and public services. In an individual context equality and justice are vital to ensure for each person the chances for self-expression and self-determination, regardless of economical or social background, ethnic origin, secular convictions or religion, gender or sexual identity, age or health conditions. True freedom and individuality can only be guaranteed in a society built upon solidarity, equality and justice.

##### **1.4 Freedom**

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1 Passage not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes. Alternative formulation: “the citizens, democratic participation, green growth, full employment, real convergence, education, culture and knowledge.”

We define freedom as a right to be able to make choices and follow them, to express opinions and beliefs, and to act in favour of them without confinements, to decide upon one's own destiny. This is why freedom is a crucial value in a struggle for a democratic society and self-fulfilment of all. True freedom is impossible without a society based on solidarity and a fair distribution of wealth. When everyone has equal prosperity, knowledge and power, breaking through suffocating social constructs and constraints, only then can everybody be truly free. Freedom, as also solidarity, equality and justice, means to have rights and to have responsibilities: to be respected in one's decisions and to always respect others, to be accepted and included in society, while making sure that so are the others, in current and future generations.]<sup>2</sup>

## **2. ECOSY: A PROGRESSIVE ORGANISATION**

ECOSY – Young European Socialists has a proud history of gathering and uniting young socialist and social democratic organisations from all over Europe, including countries not currently part of the European Union. It provides a forum of political debate and action for young European socialists and social democrats at the European level. Each year, ECOSY – Young European Socialists organises meetings, seminars and other actions that help young European socialists and social democrats to exchange views, learn from one another, agree on joint positions and shape common tools of activism and influence. ECOSY – Young European Socialists will continue to build an integrated and progressive organisation that stands at the heart of the socialist and social democratic movement in Europe, contributing to and shaping the European debate and policy.

### **2.1 Active to shape the future of Europe**

ECOSY – Young European Socialists actively contributes to the European political scene and participates in the European discourse. For us, the European Union may never be limited to a single market framed by rules to ensure free competition. ECOSY – Young European Socialists demands and works for a democratic, social and federal Europe. A real political union in which the fundamental role stays in the citizenship, in the concept of European demos, where the institutions will reflect the political sense of citizenship majority and where it exists a balance between the political, economic, social and cultural pillars. A social and democratic Europe will continue to be the base of the vision of ECOSY – Young European Socialists for the future of Europe.

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists actively promotes a clear socialist and social democratic vision on the future of Europe. We will combat social injustice and populist agitation by right-wing parties and groups against a united Europe, based on our principles and values.
- The European Union is more than cooperation between its member states. ECOSY – Young European Socialists underlines that the European Union is composed of states ready to give up parts of their sovereignty and work together effectively to tackle social, economic and environmental challenges. The European Union should not be a geographical or religious alliance, but a political community based on common values and political vision and culture. Europe united is stronger than Europe divided. We, young socialists and social democrats believe in and will work for the future of Europe. Reaching out to citizens, especially youth, informing them about and involving them in the European project is of the utmost importance.
- In the international community a strong, unified and globally active Europe is needed. Europe should be a force for the promotion of our principles and values. It has to take its global responsibility by actively and continuously working for the peace and the development of the international community. This must happen in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the basic rules of international law respecting and promoting democracy, human rights and freedom, playing an active role in United Nations-mandated peacemaking and peacekeeping efforts and showing a good example of international solidarity.

### **2.2 Working closely with member organisations**

ECOSY – Young European Socialists is a unique youth organisation with its member organisations in 45 countries in Europe, and still several countries to grow to. Like the European Union, ECOSY – Young European Socialists is more than the sum of its members. It is a vibrant and active political

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2 Order of the paragraphs not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes. Alternative ordering: Solidarity > Equality and justice > Freedom > Democracy.

body of young European socialists and social democrats. By working closely with member organisations, this organisation can help shape Europe's future.

- The ambition of ECOSY – Young European Socialists and its member organisations is to build an ever stronger European socialist and social democratic movement. For that, member organisations and ECOSY – Young European Socialists coordinate common policies and actions, both nationally and internationally.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists is a pioneer for Europe with a sustainable and constructive strategy towards the Balkans, bringing Europe closer to young socialists and social democrats in this region. Furthermore, ECOSY – Young European Socialists is engaged in working with organisations in the Black Sea area, the Mediterranean Sea area, and all neighbouring countries.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists and its member organisations make an effort to spread information about activities and political positions to all members and as broadly as possible in the surroundings of member organisations.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists engages itself to educate its members and activists. Creating political consciousness, discussing society and empowering members to express their opinions are the goals of this educational process. Seminars, trainings and summer camps are the spaces of this educational work, which will be continuously developed, particularly through the ECOSY Pool of Trainers.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists runs campaigns on topical issues with a multi-level approach aiming to influence both national politics through its member organisations and European politics through the Party of European Socialists, the S&D/PES groups and other connections.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists is the representative of all young socialists and social democrats on the European level.

### **2.3 Cooperation with the Party of European Socialists and S&D/PES groups**

The relationship between ECOSY – Young European Socialists and the Party of European Socialists is strong. At the 1997 Party of European Socialists Congress in Malmö, Sweden, ECOSY – Young European Socialists was officially recognised as the youth structure of the Party of European Socialists while its political autonomy was guaranteed. It is involved in all Party of European Socialists bodies and thus has the opportunity to be the voice of young socialists and social democrats there. ECOSY – Young European Socialists' voice has to be progressive, critical and constructive towards our mother parties.

- The Party of European Socialists must be recognised as an indispensable tool for the socialist and social democratic family in Europe. The Party of European Socialists has to become a truly united European party in the foreseeable future, a party that develops common long-term and constructive strategies for Europe. It is a sign of our strength that we can recognise our differences, discuss them and find political syntheses.
- The Party of European Socialists has an important role to play. It should prepare and coordinate common decisions between socialists and social democrats in all European institutions and is the main tool for European socialists and social democrats to take on political and social challenges.
- The Party of European Socialists should coordinate socialist and social democratic leaders, heads of state and government and ministers and at the same time involve all members of its constituent parties so as to create a real European party identity. In order to enable the participation of the members, the member parties must ensure the conversion of the main policy documents of the Party of European Socialists into their languages. It has to organise networks of socialists and social democrats at the European level.
- Within the Party of European Socialists, ECOSY – Young European Socialists's commitment to promote gender equality finds a strong partner in PES Women and in its push to increase participation of women in decision-making processes and in advocating policy recommendations in key areas for the promotion of equality.
- The Party of European Socialists has to maintain close ties with democratic, left-wing and progressive forces in society, notably through the Global Progressive Forum and Social Forums.
- The Party of European Socialists sees the construction of a democratic Europe as one of its guiding principles. Acknowledging the recent progress, we note that the Party of European Socialists must develop further as a party. We must make similar reforms in the Party of

European Socialists as those we demand for the European Union. ECOSY – Young European Socialists therefore demands that transparency and democracy are to be increased in all Party of European Socialists decision-making, as well as the establishment of a system of majority voting on all decisions, in all bodies of the Party of European Socialists. The Party of European Socialists Congress must be strengthened. ECOSY – Young European Socialists therefore demand that all delegates are elected democratically. Furthermore the Party of European Socialists Congress has to debate and decide a political programme and the election manifestos.

- The Party of European Socialists should act as a real party in the European and national public debate. The political program and the election manifesto drafted by the Party of European Socialists should always be the reference and guide for the S&D group in the European Parliament and the PES group in the Committee of the Regions and should be taken into account by the representatives of governments with socialist and social democratic participation in the Council of the European Union and by socialist and social democratic leaders in the European Council.
- As part of the common work towards European elections, the Party of European Socialists will choose a common candidate for the position of President of the European Commission. This candidate must be selected through a transparent and democratic process, in which the voice of all parties and their members, as well as that of the associated organisations, is heard.

## **2.4 Working together with civil society**

The European socialist and social democratic movement is more than an organisation of political parties and their youth organisations. It is a movement of all progressive forces. The World Social Forum was organised with the purpose of analysing the process of globalisation and gather people, providing a constructive opposition to the trend of neo-liberal globalisation and to formulate new alternatives to replace the existing non-democratic neo-liberal governing consensus. In this context too, ECOSY – Young European Socialists has to be a leading factor of the socialist and social democratic movement.

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists, together with the International Union of Socialist Youth and the International Falcon Movement – Socialist Education International, established the Global Progressive Youth Forum. The Global Progressive Youth Forum is an open framework, supported by ECOSY – Young European Socialists, that participates on behalf of its partners inside the World Social Forum and the European Social Forum and will seek to enclose other progressive youth organisations. The Global Progressive Youth Forum will engage with grassroots activists from all over the world.
- The Global Progressive Forum, a cooperation between the Party of European Socialists, the S&D/PES groups, the Socialist International and other partners, has to be strengthened. Active involvement in the World Social Forum and the European Social Forum remains necessary. The Global Progressive Forum has to engage grassroots activists in its work and should organise debates and exchanges between them. We call upon the Party of European Socialists for more support.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists actively seeks to cooperate with progressive partners like the European Trade Union Confederation Youth, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth and Student Organisation, the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association, Rainbow Rose, the European Students' Union, and the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions. ECOSY – Young European Socialists is a committed member of the European Youth Forum and engages with other youth organisations in order to achieve its goals in the European youth policy field.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists is open to work with (international) non-governmental organisations, trade unions and foundations that can help with the education of members and contribute to the strife of ECOSY – Young European Socialists towards a more democratic and social Europe and contribute to ECOSY – Young European Socialists' political objectives.

## **POLICY PAPER**

### **THE FUTURE OF EUROPE**

Our generation faces a world of crises, but also of opportunities. For all that is wrong with Europe, we are the first generation in history to grow up with a European Union of democracy, open borders, harmonisation, cooperation and diplomacy. More and better can be done with Europe, and more and better must be done. It is our task as young people, and as socialists and social democrats, to make a democratic, federal and social Europe the answer to the questions of our time. How can we undertake a complete restructuring of global finance as it is today to reduce the inequality caused by it? How are we to continue improving the living standards for European citizens while preserving our planet's resources for the future generations? How are we to make our differences and diversity a source of strength, and not a source of division? Embarking on a path towards further cooperation and integration, this Europe based on peace, freedom and democracy is now facing new challenges that go far beyond the challenges originally faced.

## **A democratic Europe**

With the enlargement of the European Union to 27 member states and beyond and insights into the destructive logic of various forms of competition between member states it becomes of the utmost importance to engage in a new step forward. The continued existence of the current institutions and budgetary concerns will paralyse Europe, fuelling only more euro-scepticism. A less integrated Europe cannot answer the social and economic needs of the European people. A more integrated Europe, on the other hand, will provide us with a solid and concrete strategy for the future. ECOSY - Young European Socialists demands that the European Union receive the necessary capacity to act for the benefit and through the active consent of its people. It is essential that the European institutions have the necessary material and human resources at their disposal, with sufficient budgets to guarantee the financial autonomy of the European Union and secure the implementation of policies to guarantee extended rights to the European citizens.

## **A social Europe**

Today, the challenges of Europe have shifted from building a Europe of peace towards a more demanding challenge. After the Second World War, governments led by the socialist, social democratic and labour family in Europe have been working on its welfare states, working towards social protection and prosperity for everyone. New challenges like globalisation and an ageing society as well as the ever more apparent limits of market mechanisms open a new chapter for Europe, a chapter of building and strengthening the European welfare state. Not at the expense of people, but with the goal of enabling everyone to have a decent life, decent work and a decent livelihood. ECOSY - Young European Socialists demands the political will and corresponding action to make the European project a true political and social project.

## **A Europe speaking with one voice**

Today, sustainable peace and stability have been achieved on most of the European continent. Further enlargements of the European Union, decided on the basis of democratic criteria, will continue to mark the European Union's ability to bring sustainable and lasting peace to all Europeans. Next to that, building sustainable relationships with the countries of the Black Sea area, the Mediterranean Sea area and the Middle East, will open a new chapter for Europe. For that reason, it's time for Europe to claim its global responsibility towards its direct neighbours as well as the rest of the world. ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls for a Europe that has a strong and common foreign policy.

In this policy paper ECOSY - Young European Socialists elaborates its vision on the future of Europe. Young socialists and social democrats from all over Europe make proposals for the further development of Europe, based on our analysis of the world we all live in. This world can become a different and better world. This world can provide a safe and secure environment. ECOSY - Young European Socialists has been advocating this in the last 19 years and will continue to do so in the times to come.

## **A DEMOCRATIC EUROPE**

### **1. FOR A MORE DEMOCRATIC AND FEDERAL EUROPE**

According to the principle of subsidiarity, any political issue should be dealt with at the political level which is best suited in order to solve the problem. Therefore ECOSY - Young European Socialists demands that challenges that require a Europe-wide approach be dealt with at the European level. With 27 member states it has become of the utmost importance to reform the

existing institutional framework. ECOSY – Young European Socialists stands for a federal and democratic Europe that allows the European Union to be a strong political actor and calls for a new[, left-wing]<sup>3</sup> consensus for Europe and its immediate implementation.

## 1.1 Democratise the European institutions

ECOSY – Young European Socialists believes that the European Union should not be the Europe of the member states only. For member states and European citizens the European Union is the level of strong and active cooperation to which competences have to be delegated in order to tackle and solve problems the European society and people are facing today. For ECOSY – Young European Socialists, pursuing a democratic and federal Europe is both an ideal and an ambitious agenda to reform the current institutional framework. In order to reach this, the legitimacy and the capacity of the European institutions have to be improved.

- The reform of the European Parliament is for ECOSY – Young European Socialists a necessary start. It needs to have the power to co-decide on all European Union legislation, full budgetary powers and the right of initiative. The European Parliament is the only institution directly elected by the citizens of the European Union. In order to increase its legitimate representation the levels of proportionality need to be improved, without jeopardising adequate representation of all member states.
- The Council of the European Union should be transformed into a truly representative upper house of the European Union's bicameral system, representing the member states and consisting of delegates nominated for fixed terms of national legislature. The European Parliament should share the legislative power with this upper house.
- [The European Commission should be developed into the government of the European Union, as the main executive power. This European Commission promotes the interests of all European citizens. In order for the European Commission to efficiently function as a European government, it is essential that the European Commission be appointed as such, based on a joint government policy paper adopted by a majority in the European Parliament. The European Commission must be formed as a coalition between political groups, without interference from member state governments or parliaments. The composition of the European Commission must follow the results of the European elections. Every European Commissioner should be appointed to a concrete portfolio, and the number of European Commissioners should be fixed accordingly. European political parties have to name their candidates for the European Commission posts in the electoral campaign.]<sup>4</sup>
- The European Union's administration has to be thoroughly reformed in order to improve its effectiveness and transparency.
- The Lisbon Treaty needs to be fully implemented and its provisions fully exploited, especially those referring to the citizens' initiative.
- The European Commission and its members have to be individually accountable to the European Parliament.
- [The time has come for the employment conditions and wages of European Union officials to be re-evaluated.]<sup>5</sup>

## 1.2 Justice for all

The European Union has to become an area of "justice for all", supported by an effective judiciary system. For that purpose, further European integration in the field of police and judiciary cooperation in criminal matters is necessary. Approximation of criminal laws, the Tampere Conclusions that created the concept of mutual recognition in this area and the building of judiciary institutions must be consolidated and made more coherent.

- The European Union should join the European Convention on Human Rights as soon as possible. The jurisdiction of the European Court of Human Rights would then cover the European Union's institutions. This would be an important step in promoting fundamental and human rights within the European Union.

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3 Term not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes.

4 Bullet point not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes.

Alternative formulation: "The European Commission should develop into a properly appointed government of the European Union. In order for it to effectively function as such, it is essential that it be appointed based on a governmental policy paper adopted by a majority of the European Parliament, following the results of the European elections, rather than by indication by member states."

5 Bullet point not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes

- All existing exemptions from the Charter of Fundamental Rights' binding character should be removed from the treaties, allowing it to become fully applicable all over the European Union and allowing for a truly uniform application by the courts, and especially the European Court of Justice, to take place. The European Court of Justice has to have the power to review its interpretation and application.
- Cooperation between judiciary authorities has to be encouraged and measures put in place to speed up the provision of information, facilitate decision-making and raise awareness of each others' judiciary and legal systems. A high level of personal data protection has to be ensured.
- The principle of mutual recognition has to be further implemented and developed so that it becomes an effective "cornerstone" of judiciary cooperation in civil and criminal matters in the European Union.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls for the gradual adoption of minimum rules relating to the constituting elements of criminal acts and the adaptation of penal facilities in accordance with the minimum requirements set by United Nations and European Union regulations.
- Without prejudice to the established role of the European [ombudsman]<sup>6</sup>, the role of the Court of First Instance should be as the appellate court for every citizen and legal person against the European institutions.
- Common standards to ensure uniform protection of individual rights throughout the European Union have to be established, including access to legal advice, both before and during trial, access to interpretation and translation, protection of persons who cannot understand or follow the proceedings, a letter of rights and more.
- In line with the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty, the office of the European Public Prosecutor needs to be effectively implemented, allowing for an independent judiciary authority to set proceedings in place against the violation of the Union's interests.
- We consider that the tools in the justice cooperation should advance with the will of the European Union, but also with the unequivocal will of the Member States, specially relating to the interstate persecution of crimes related with terrorism, gender violence and crimes against humanity.

### **1.3 Citizens need to be actively involved**

The involvement of the civil society in European decision-making is crucial for the participation of citizens and the legitimacy of its institutions. During the recent years, criticism of the European Union over its democratic deficit has been growing. People feel a distance between the European Union and its purpose. ECOSY - Young European Socialists welcomes the citizens' agenda of the European Commission, but underline that more has to be done.

- Citizens of the European Union need to be empowered to follow, scrutinise and participate in the work of the European Union. The principle of openness and public access to official records must be realised. All proceedings of the Council of the European Union and the European Council should be open to the public.
- Civil society has to be engaged into the decision-making process. The involvement of the Economic and Social Committee needs to be increased.
- Moreover, lobbying at the European level should be organised according to transparent and democratic mechanisms, and information about all funding and donations, public as well as private, to parties and candidates must be made easily accessible to the public, and has to include all stakeholders. We must strengthen the protection of citizens' activism throughout Europe, especially in areas where participatory democracy and citizens' freedoms of association are threatened.
- We want to give the European elections a true European dimension. As recommended in the European Parliament report on the future of the European political parties' statutes, we believe that a political party statute should be adopted at the European Union level. What is more, ECOSY - Young European Socialists fully supports the idea of common electoral manifestos and campaigns. We want members of European Parliamentary groups to be accountable to the European parties and their programs. This is why we call as the first step all the candidates in European elections to state which political group they intend to join in the assembly and which party electoral manifesto they run on. The European foundations, created by the European political parties in 2007, have to be further developed and lead the mission of research and citizens' education.

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6 Term not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes. Alternative formulation: "ombudsman, which should be renamed into European ombudsperson,"

- The common European identity of all Europe's citizens has to be promoted. This is why, ECOSY - Young European Socialists strongly demands that the European Union develop policies enabling every European citizen to personally experience the European Union. Additionally, to increase citizens' participation ECOSY - Young European Socialists promotes the idea of European debates across the continent, legal tools like the right of "citizens' initiative" for one million citizens to initiate a legislative process, and the establishment of real European media.

#### **1.4 Deepen integration to continue enlargement**

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007 the European Union enlarged to 27 member states, uniting different states with different cultures, political realities, and perception of civic processes, procedural habits, development levels, social welfare states and economies. ECOSY - Young European Socialists is proud of this unique diversity of the European Union, and is at the same time not blinded by the difficulties that emerge from it. The ambition to deepen integration in order to continue with the enlargement process is one of the main challenges of the European Union.

- Deeper integration is necessary in order to ensure that further enlargement remains possible. Institutional reform, increased cooperation on several policies and extending competences of the European Union are necessary.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists believes that it is of great importance to continue the process of integration and that the scepticism of a few member states should not prevent it. Therefore, it is necessary to allow and encourage enhanced cooperation between those who are willing and able. However this should not result in a permanent structure of a multi-tiered European Union, but should always be considered as a temporary phase, clearing the path for integration to resume in a united manner.
- It is a collective responsibility of all member states when one is unable to follow political integration. In the European Union's budget, extra financial means have to be made available and expertise has to be offered to these countries, with the aim of allowing integration to proceed at the same pace for all.
- The European Union's enlargement has to continue. The *acquis communautaire* entails all objective criteria (respect for human rights, rule of law, economic policy, financial accountability...) accessing member states have the responsibility to comply with. The European Union has to offer sufficient financial means and expertise to enable these states to comply with the European Union's criteria and has to work on reforming itself so as to be fully able to welcome the candidate countries properly whilst ensuring the continuation of its political project.

#### **1.5 A constitution for Europe**

Since its foundation, ECOSY - Young European Socialists has worked towards a European Union of citizens that has a strong political role to play. For this reason ECOSY - Young European Socialists strives for a federal and democratic European Union. The Lisbon treaty took some steps in this direction, although other demands of ECOSY - Young European Socialists were not reflected. Repeated votes against constitutional treaties in several member states have been the expression of a deep mistrust towards the European Union's current functioning and policies and the European project will not be able to progress unless changes are achieved and a proper response is given to citizens' legitimate concerns. ECOSY - Young European Socialists demands political leadership to bring the necessary institutional reforms forward, in combination with strengthening the social dimension of the European Union.

- The direction for institutional reforms in the constitutional treaties have to be upheld. This "substance" of the constitution has to be maintained and preferably strengthened amongst others by developing the field of majority voting, changing the modification procedure and making the enhanced cooperation mechanism more flexible.
- Any new constitutional treaty should be based on the separation of the institutional reforms and the policy reforms. In particular, a treaty should put more emphasis on: social policy agenda, the European social model, employment, tackling climate change, energy policy, disarmament, enlargement policy and reforming the financial system.
- We propose that any European constitutional framework should contain measures to protect public services, should not provide for increased European militarization and should not be inspired by the neo-liberal thinking.
- We call for the members of the next European Parliament to be elected also with a constituent mandate for a precise term, at the end of which a constitutional text to be

drafted shall be submitted to the European citizens for approval in the process of a Europe-wide referendum.

## **A SOCIAL EUROPE FOR EVERYONE**

### **2. EUROPEAN YOUTH: A POLITICAL ACTOR**

The future of Europe depends on the ability to foster a European society that is child- and youth-friendly. This society must enable young people to acquire knowledge and skills to take up future possibilities and challenges. It must ensure equal autonomy for all and secure every young person a future. For ECOSY – Young European Socialists, young people, who, especially due to the financial crisis, are a most vulnerable social group, stand at the core of the future European project ensuring a social Europe. Therefore, youth policies have to be mainstreamed into all policy areas of the European Union, with the general aim to improve and develop the living, learning and working conditions and the participation of young people, encompassing the whole range of social, cultural, economic, democratic and environmental issues. ECOSY – Young European Socialists believe that the European Union must continue to promote and to support partnerships between young people from the European Union and from outside.

#### **2.1 For a European youth policy on a new basis**

ECOSY – Young European Socialists welcomed the Youth on the Move flagship initiative launched by the European Commission in 2010 as we did with the European Youth Pact in 2005. Unfortunately both initiatives lack the ambition needed to achieve a lasting impact on the lives of European youth. The 2005 European Youth Pact stressed the importance of securing employment, integration and social advancement as well as the reconciliation of family life and working life. While the current proposal for the Youth on the Move flagship initiative connects education to employment, it fails to incorporate all other dimensions. ECOSY – Young European Socialists believes that the agenda to improve young people's chances in the knowledge economy through education must go hand in hand with a legislative process to ensure that jobs and educational placements provide for a decent living: therefore a widened youth pact is necessary.

- In order to mainstream youth objectives into all policies of the European Union, one European Commissioner for child and youth policies has to be elected with a widened political mandate, enabling this European Commissioner to advocate youth policies on all matters. This mandate must include the obligation to organise consultations and a real dialogue between young people and decision-makers.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists advocates a youth policy that considers young people as the future of Europe, being citizens with full capacities and with the same rights, regardless of their cultural, ethnic, geographical or economic background. Young people must have full citizens' rights and should be able to participate in political and governmental decision-making processes, including the right to vote from the age of 16.
- More ambitious and precise actions must be taken to promote the employment and social inclusion of young people. For that a European youth employment strategy has to be deployed and active labour market policies for young people developed, with a special emphasis on disadvantaged young people, and especially young women.
- Clearer targets for education and training have to be implemented, including reducing the number of drop-outs, improving access to vocational education and a single unified framework for the recognition of qualifications.
- A clear framework must be established for non-formal education and its complementary role to formal education practices.
- In all areas of European policies, and especially in the field of sustainable development strategy, social policy and foreign affairs, young people have to be incorporated in the decision-making process.
- Young people's empowerment and participation at the national and European levels are lacking. We expect a clear message from the European Commission that it values the consultation and contribution of young people on the European level, for example through the European Youth Forum, as well as through the young Europeans' civil society and the open national consultation processes, the European Students' Union which represents Europe's student population, and of course the European party political youth organizations. Our role cannot be restricted to accepting and criticising: young Europeans deserve to actively participate in the decision-making and policy-formulating processes themselves.

- We strongly believe in the role of youth councils as the voice of young people expressed towards institutions. We claim an adequate financial support for them and the European Youth Forum, with respect for their independence.
- We are also convinced that in order to reach as many young people as possible and not only the most politicised ones, we need to meet them in the places where they live, study, work or socialise and to create direct and innovative forms of consultation and expression.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists calls for all young people to receive a “mobility card” by which they are entitled to free technical and financial support from the European Commission, ensuring opportunities for everyone to work and study abroad.

## **2.2 Put children’s rights at the heart**

The European Union should maintain and develop legislation on children. The European Union should urge its member states to ratify the United Nations convention on the rights of the child. All relevant European Union legislation must be evaluated on the basis of this convention. Control mechanisms must be developed including granting the European Court of Justice jurisdiction over the implementation of the convention. It is also necessary to offer children opportunities to demand their rights. Therefore ECOSY – Young European Socialists requests a European Union children’s ombudsperson.

- The role of the European Union children’s ombudsperson will be to coordinate work of mutual benefit between offices of children’s ombudspersons in different states in Europe, and also to work with children’s rights NGOs on developing shadow reports to the United Nations on the progress made by states who have signed up to the United Nations convention on the rights of the child.

## **3. EDUCATION FOR ALL**

For ECOSY – Young European Socialists education is the key to sustainable progress for Europe. Education can in a time of decline ensure the self-fulfilment of all by promoting equality, active citizenship, high-quality employment and better cultural understanding. Education empowers young and old to take on the challenges of the future. Education must be connected with the values and the integrity of young people, as well as the European values and principles in order to provide young citizens with a European identity, respect and understanding of the history and traditions of all peoples. Teaching methods should be adapted to each one’s abilities and needs and encourage young people to learn to think independently and critically, evaluate, trust in their own powers rather than be told what to think and follow orders. Therefore, the accessibility of education all across Europe needs to be improved, regardless of students’ country of origin and age. ECOSY – Young European Socialists strives for quality education for all, free of charge and free of discrimination. We envisage the educational process as one that should accompany people throughout their lives.

### **3.1 Free and equal access to education**

Public, secular, high-quality education, starting from the earliest age, should be guaranteed for free for every child, adolescent and adult in Europe. The trends to privatise education, leading to lower or non-existent grants and increased and differentiated tuition fees, mean excluding the less affluent from education. In the perspective of ECOSY – Young European Socialists education is a public good and can never be treated as a commodity. It constitutes one of the key means of ensuring equality of opportunity in society, and guarantees the rights of individuals to self-development and fulfilment.

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists underlines the necessity to improve the accessibility of higher education. All forms of higher education have to be free for everyone. Costs in education, like prices of books and readers or the costs of accommodation and food, should be reduced. A system of student grants should be in place to finance the individual student’s living costs. [Other, non-financial, access barriers to education like knock-out exams, and numerus clausus systems have to be eradicated.]<sup>7</sup>

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7 Passage not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes. Alternative formulations: “We should eradicate any barrier not justified that prevents an access to education with equal opportunities.” and “Other, non-financial, access barriers to education like entry exams, knock-out exams, and numerus clausus systems have to be eradicated.” Minority statement by SJÖ Austria, VSStÖ Austria, Animo Belgium, Jusos Germany, SJD-Die Falken Germany and JS in de PvdA Netherlands: “We consider entry exams as unjust access barriers and will continue fighting them.”

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists fights for comprehensive schools in the whole of Europe. Comprehensive schools are essential for equal chances in the educational system.
- Special attention is needed for people from economically and socially disadvantaged backgrounds to break through the generational poverty cycle. It is unacceptable that people with disadvantaged backgrounds are still less present in education, in particular higher education, despite the huge increase of participation in education systems during the last few decades. Special attention is also required in achieving integration, which can be reached through adoption of the principles and methodology of intercultural education which is linked with the abolition of discrimination, the equality of law and mutual understanding.
- Personal counselling and pupil-oriented programmes such as dual education should be strengthened to prevent drop-outs. According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, one out of five young people over 16 years old having left school unqualified is left without any option. In a society where professional destiny is largely determined by the curriculum achieved, it is therefore necessary to provide active support for those who have or are about to leave education prematurely. Moreover people who have left education prematurely should be able and encouraged to get back at any time during their life.
- Education has to be accessible at all levels for people with disabilities. Special programmes and teaching methods meeting their particular skills and needs have to be developed, and they must be encouraged to participate in education, training and life-long learning schemes.
- Ensuring accessibility includes sufficient financial support for students, also those in research or doctoral programmes.
- Self-organization, democratisation and co-decision of student unions at all levels of education are essential for the concept of active citizenship. At every educational level these independent bodies have to be established.
- Gender-sensitive subjects together with gender-sensitive teachers' and learners' tools and anti-discrimination programmes have to become standard in all schools. Gender sensitivity should be mainstreamed into all teacher training, including nursery and pre-school teachers' training. The gendered segregation between studies should be fought by active policies stimulating women to enter into traditionally more male-dominated fields of study and vice-versa. Programmes promoting choosing untraditional fields of study are an example of this policy. Public investments need to ensure elementary and higher education for everyone. In the perspective of ECOSY – Young European Socialists sufficient educational funding has to be ensured through a progressive tax system which taxes high income and capital income and discharges low and middle labour incomes. Charging students or levying an additional tax from graduates can never be an option.
- Yearly investment of at least 6% of the national GDP of all European states as well as 1% of the European Commission budget into education have to become effective guidelines. Budget lines for education and research have to be separated to ensure that extra investments are not at the expense of one another. Sufficient extra funding to train and employ enough teachers and academic staff is necessary.
- Pressures to privatise education at any level have to be counterbalanced and a prohibition for private companies to buy themselves into educational institutions developed.

### **3.2 For a real European education area**

ECOSY – Young European Socialists welcomes the basic principles of the Bologna process: it is necessary to ensure student mobility, promote better intercultural understanding and multilingualism, and improve the personal development of European students. ECOSY – Young European Socialists is, however, increasingly worried about the course of events. The Bologna process is often misused to implement other reforms like the introduction or raising of tuition fees that limit study opportunities, cuts in financing or staff numbers or the introduction of less flexible education systems. ECOSY – Young European Socialists strives for a real European education area, based on the principle of free and equal access for all.

- The Bologna process should be about real diploma recognition, including vocational training, European Credit Transfer System credits and parts of study. The Bologna process should be about increased mobility of all students and not just of the richest ones. A more integrated and more controllable approach in the Bologna process, involving students and higher education institutions themselves has to be established.

- The upcoming second decade of Bologna will and must be used for evaluation and for continuing the process in order to reach better standards. But not only: if evaluation shows that social rigidity has not been reduced, that free and equal access to higher education is in danger and that national implementations of the Bologna process rather serve market than students' needs, it must be allowed to question not only national policies but also to re-think the process. Therefore a critical evaluation will also have to examine which elements in the process and its implementation led to the undesirable results and where the core of impacts can be found: in this critical consideration there should be no taboos.
- Increased spending in the Bologna process to enhance student and academic staff mobility is necessary, including more attention for the increased participation of students from less advantaged financial backgrounds.
- Diplomas and credits from both formal and non-formal education need to be recognised by all European educational, state and professional institutions.
- The European education area has to become open for students from third countries, under at least the same beneficial conditions as European students.

### **3.3 Life-long learning for everyone**

Education and life-long learning constituted the most important pillars of the Lisbon strategy, however, in the Europe 2020 flagship initiatives "Youth on the Move" and "New Skills, New Jobs" this has been reduced to the employability of youth and retraining of older workers at risk of lay-offs. Citizens must be continuously facilitated in every way to participate in life-long learning. The success of the life-long learning initiative depends on not confining it to middle and higher management or to a market-based logic, but applying it to all workers according to their choices for self-fulfilment. It must embrace different elements including vocational training in order to prepare people for the labour market and cooperate closely with the private sector whilst remaining independent of it. The private sector has an important role to fulfil in the life-long learning agenda in that it must take on its responsibilities to keep on training its employees, however cannot interfere with autonomous education itself.

- The budget for life-long learning programmes has to be increased and a comprehensive strategy at the European level to implement life-long learning as promised in the Lisbon strategy has to be developed.
- It is important that everyone has the right to receive the additional schooling of their choice free of charge, especially the disadvantaged.
- A minimum of 3% of national GDP has to be invested in research and life-long learning in every member state.

### **3.4 Full recognition of non-formal education**

Non-formal education and voluntary work are important means of personal development and training for many young people. ECOSY - Young European Socialists sees non-formal education as extremely valuable for both the individual and for society as a whole and therefore calls for its full Europe-wide recognition in the academic, state and professional spheres. ECOSY - Young European Socialists stresses that this value must be additional: it can never replace formal education or perform tasks that should be the state's or a company's responsibility, and voluntary work can never replace a decent, paid job.

- Non-formal education and prior learning have to be fully recognised in the European Union as a tool to empower people and give them the opportunities to reach self-fulfilment. The received credentials from it should be a base to enrol in higher education.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists welcomes the increased funding of the European Voluntary Service. Other European and national programmes for voluntary work and non-formal education have to follow. The accessibility of the voluntary programmes for disadvantaged groups in society has to be increased.
- All volunteers should enjoy full social rights.
- A yearly audit has to be undertaken by the European Commission, accountable to the European Parliament, to ensure that voluntary workers have not been burdened with state responsibilities. Misuse of voluntary work as cheap or even free labour has to be prevented.

## **4. ALL EQUAL, ALL DIFFERENT**

Our welfare states are based on an understanding of society as a community of solidarity with a common responsibility to let everyone share equally in prosperity. For ECOSY - Young European Socialists rights come before obligations. Everyone has the social right to receive the appropriate

benefits for the sake of inclusion and social cohesion. It is essential to ensure everybody makes a decent living and can fully participate in civil society.

#### **4.1 Civil, political, social and economic rights for everyone**

Integration is a natural process. Therefore the challenge is not to speak of an immigrants' issue, but to create political, economic and social conditions for an open society in which everybody can fully participate, regardless of income, health condition, ethnic or social origin, age, gender, sexual orientation or other identities, religious or political orientation and citizenship. It is a society where everybody's human and fundamental rights are guaranteed, where everyone has the right to decent work, receives social benefits and follows education. It is necessary to overcome exclusion and discrimination of groups and individuals, caused by racism, homophobia, sexism and the lack of attention for persisting gender inequality.

- ECOSY - Young European Socialists advocates an inclusive approach of society, where differences are valued, but where common fundamental values like respect for human rights are shared.
- We demand anti-discrimination policies combined with a Europe-wide awareness-raising campaign. Comprehensive integration programmes and free language courses for immigrants aiming at empowerment and integration have to be developed.
- Equality means not only civil and political equality. ECOSY- Young European Socialists fights for full political, civil, social and economic equality for everyone.
- Social cohesion and integration must be a priority: therefore we demand actions combating poverty. A necessary action to fight poverty and create an inclusive society is to guarantee free and equal access to education for everyone at every age. Also adult education must be accessible to really include disadvantaged groups.

#### **4.2 Real gender equality**

Just like young people and immigrants, women are the first victims of neo-liberal and conservative policies in our societies. Also the economic crisis affects women much more than men in the long run. Cuts target branches like public services where mainly women are employed. Services like childcare and care for the elderly and ill are pushed back into the responsibility of the families, which, in the absence of effective policies to eradicate gender stereotypes and to promote the role of men in family life, leads to an overburdening of women. The model of a patriarchal society is re-established and strengthened using the economic crisis as an excuse. ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls for an inclusive society which guarantees women equal rights, also economic equal rights. Women still lag behind in terms of economic independence, taking on the vast majority of reproductive labour, as well as facing structural inequalities in the labour markets and even welfare systems. Gender equality in Europe is far from achieved. Additionally, violence against women, domestic and otherwise, mobbing, trafficking and forced prostitution are a reality. ECOSY - Young European Socialists commits itself to the eradication of all forms of gender inequality and the consolidation of women's civil, political, social and economic rights.

- ECOSY - Young European Socialists welcomes the reaffirming of the Beijing + 15 declaration and platform for action, though emphasises that the general political commitment to their implementation, as also to the millennium development goals and the United Nations convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, has to be strengthened in order to proceed faster and more efficiently. We must struggle globally for a global right to gender equality.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists welcomes the introduction of the gender equality dialogue and the European Equal Pay Day announced in the European Commission strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015. However, ECOSY - Young European Socialists demands increased funding for the implementation of the strategy and for the European Institute for Gender Equality. Furthermore, ECOSY - Young European Socialists laments the absence of references to women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, as well as the lack of measures to improve the quality of women's employment.
- The gender pay gap is a fact in Europe, not just with regards to equal pay for equal work, but also in the gendered segregation of the labour market by industry and permanence of contract. Women take on the bulk of part-time and unpaid jobs and perform the bulk of domestic labour. Women's labour market participation must be increased, but this cannot happen through more part-time employment. Much further work is needed to realise equal career, wage and pension perspectives for women and men. We call for a reform of social security systems to incorporate the specific needs of women.

- Statistics show women remain unemployed for longer than men. Gender-sensitive policies of the active labour market must be developed.
- Social benefits cannot depend only on working hours in paid employment.
- Public services must be expanded to cover [care work traditionally done by women]<sup>8</sup>, and day care must be made an accessible and affordable option for all families.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists strongly advocates high-quality gender-sensitive health care. By that we demand the right to decide and plan family life, which is possible only when adequate information, free artificial insemination, adequate support for adoption, free contraceptives and legal safe abortion, are available. The immediate creation of a women’s information service network to deal with awareness-raising activities and public information is also necessary. We regard women’s right to decide over their own bodies as a fundamental right that has to be integrated into the *acquis communautaire*. Respect of this condition has to be one of the criteria for accession. What is more, taking into account rising numbers of breast cancer cases, we demand free mammographies for all women in Europe.
- Sufficient maternity and paternity leaves must be available with no distinction in payments, as reconciliation of professional and family life is an important issue in the emancipation of women both in the house and in the labour market. Both women and men must be encouraged to follow untraditional paths: the system must be open to the working woman as well as the caring man. Parental leave should be equally distributed between both parents. The role and right of fathers to care for their children should be encouraged. This must be supported by state-funded and high-quality child care systems which allow both mothers and fathers to return to work or studies at the end of the parental leave.
- The “glass ceiling” is still a reality, as the number of women in any higher position, in labour and in politics, especially in elected positions at international, national, local or even organisational level is too low. Gender quotas are a good means to elevate women’s representation in politics as a short-term measure. The “zipper system”, both by electoral lists and by speakers’ lists, has to be implemented. Women should be empowered by targeted training, and the creation of meaningful opportunities at all levels.
- We consider necessary a specific focus on employment measures to support groups of women who face discrimination. Private and public enterprises should have a duty of at least 40% women in executive board positions. Any quota implemented in the private sector has to be enforced by strict regulation of penalties.
- We demand the swift transposition and effective implementation of the European protection order as adopted by the European Parliament.
- Comprehensive, coordinated action is needed by all European Union member states in cooperation with third countries to fight against trafficking of women.
- We demand for the European Parliament’s report and special directive abolishing promotion of gender stereotypes and gender-based violence in media and advertisement to be introduced Europe-wide.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists calls upon all European countries to accept gender-based violence like female genital mutilation as a reason to accord asylum.
- The role of men in promoting gender equality has to be enhanced, closely associated to mainstreamed policies designed for breaking gender stereotypes.

### 4.3 The right to be queer

The struggle for equal rights for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders and transsexuals (LGBT) is in many ways a symbolic struggle for the right to be different and equal. LGBT people face discrimination in society, the labour market, education and politics. In fact, homophobia and cases of civil rights denial are rising. A considerable amount of member states still haven’t introduced same-sex partnership or marriage, and even fewer have granted same-sex couples the right to adopt children. Furthermore, LGBT people are seriously disadvantaged in our social security systems when it comes to receiving benefits or proper treatments. In many countries they are denied the right to be blood and organ donors.

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists demands complete freedom of gender identity and sexual orientation, guaranteed by the state, and more and better anti-discrimination legislation to be implemented.

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8 Passage not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes.  
Alternative formulation: “tasks done traditionally by women in the household”

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists calls upon the European Commission to include active policies against the discrimination of LGBTT people in the strategy for equality between women and men. Additionally, the European Commission should start an awareness-raising campaign against homophobia in the European Union and its member states and for a better approach in school curricula.
- Same-sex marriages and same-sex partnerships must have the same legal status as marriages and partnerships between women and men, including equal social security benefits for same-sex couples.
- LGBTT people should have the same rights in terms of family planning. The right to adopt children for same-sex couples, equal access to artificial insemination for LGBTT people and the right to unite families for same-sex couples have to be ensured.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists calls upon all European countries, to give asylum to LGBTT people who come from countries that consider their sexual orientation to be a crime, and to apply pressure to these countries to adhere to international human rights law.

#### **4.4 For an open Europe**

ECOSY – Young European Socialists sees migration as a positive phenomenon in a globalised world where capital is already highly mobile. Closing borders, named as the “Fortress Europe” project, doesn’t stop migration from taking place: it just worsens immigrants’ conditions. Most migration stems from poverty and consists of long and dangerous travels from poor countries to richer regions, particularly to southern European countries.

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists stands for a rational, solidarity-based approach to immigration which offers safety to those who seek asylum and deals with economic migrants in a respectful and responsible manner.
- To address mass migration we need to tackle its causes: poverty, repression and armed conflicts. The European Union and its member states have to take the lead in this process, whilst at the same time taking a common responsibility to accommodate immigrants in our societies. Uniform standards for the recognition of different immigrant statuses have to be implemented across the European Union, and all member states must adhere to minimum standards governing the reception and stay conditions of all new immigrants. The Schengen information system should be reformed to be more transparent and open. Everyone should have the right to access their personal information contained in the system.
- Any quotas for immigration on the basis of nationality, religion, profession or level of education have to be abolished. ECOSY – Young European Socialists rejects both the principle and the implementation of the European Union Blue Card.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists strongly denounces the hostile and emotional tone of the immigration debate in most European Union member states and the abuse of public insecurity by far-right and populist parties.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists believes that no person is illegal. The Hague programme to develop a common European Union policy on immigration and asylum has to be implemented, including equal sharing of the costs of accepting and integrating immigrants in member states, full civil, political and social rights for immigrants with or without legal status, the right to unite families, to soil and to multiple nationalities. In this dimension, and as a sign of solidarity among European Union member states and viability of their societies, it is necessary to re-examine and reform the Dublin II Regulation, which poses excessive burdens to those member states which are at the borders of the European Union and are the main receivers of increased immigrant flows. A general amnesty for all “illegal” migrants in Europe has to be applied, giving them a citizenship, including all rights and responsibilities. Every resident should have the right to vote in local, regional, national and European elections.
- The right of unrestricted stay after divorce from a national or anyone on whose residence permit the divorcee is dependent has to be anchored in national laws.
- Within attempts to reform the social model, serious consideration of the social security benefits for migrants, especially those arriving in the new country while being older or with no insurance, has to be included. Access to public services, especially health care, education and free language courses has to be the basis aiming at empowerment and integration. Together with the immigrants, better integration policies to target both migrants and society as a whole have to be developed.

## **5. MORE AND BETTER JOBS**

19 million people in the European Union are currently unemployed and more than 65 million people live below the poverty line. Economic growth is essential to achieve the goal of full employment, but it is not sufficient to create more and better jobs and to reduce poverty. We need a Europe that invests in its people, invests in skills and opportunities, especially of young people. For ECOSY – Young European Socialists full employment remains a central part in our vision to create a high-quality European social welfare state. Unlike the conservatives, who treat employment as unimportant or irrelevant and blame unemployed persons for lacking willpower or simply not fitting the system, we still believe in full employment and consider it as a political priority. Giving up the goal of full employment means to accept that some people are excluded from participation in the labour market and in society, for a long time or the rest of their life. It means to accept segregation in the society between people who are in and those who are out. Everybody has the right to have a decent job. Therefore, ECOSY – Young European Socialists advocates more and better jobs for everyone. In its history, the European Union has predominantly focused on creating a single market, including increasing possibilities for labour mobility, although the new member states are still partially excluded from this right. Now it is high time that the European Union enters into a new path towards a social Europe. For that ECOSY – Young European Socialists demands that a new social treaty be developed, based on the lines set out in the Delors white paper on social progress, and a new European pact on employment and growth with measurable and binding targets for employment. The three pillars in this social treaty are active labour market policies (Luxembourg process), microeconomic and structural reforms (Cardiff process) and macroeconomic and budgetary measures (Cologne process) that have to unite in order to achieve the aim of more and better jobs for everyone. ECOSY – Young European Socialists rejects any calls for wage moderation as outlined in the Delors white paper and more recently in the so-called “Pact for Competitiveness” proposed by Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy, as this is anathema to the pursuit of better jobs.

## **5.1 Social justice for all**

A social Europe begins with equal social rights for everyone. Active labour market policies, which not only ensure inclusivity, but also eliminate existing injustice, like the working poor phenomenon or exploitation over unpaid internships hidden under the slogan of “transition between education and labour market”. ECOSY – Young European Socialists demands that, within the new approach towards working in the life-cycle concept, social justice and equality be maintained and improved. ECOSY – Young European Socialists therefore demands that combating all forms of discrimination stated in article 13 of the Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice treaties, and in article 19 of the Lisbon treaty, be included in all member states’ legislation and policies.

- Work has to pay. This simple principle is for ECOSY – Young European Socialists more than eradicating the occurrence of working poor. It includes the guarantee for everyone to have decent work, a decent life and a decent livelihood. Because of that it is necessary that a European minimum wage or collective agreements with equal purchasing power be applied based on a long-term vision of social convergence with the exception of those countries, where a minimum income is secured by collective agreements.
- Recognition of qualifications, labour standards in combination with minimum wages shall also be a way to ensure equal labour financial conditions and the same possibilities across the continent. It is also a step in finding a strategy to eliminate brain drain phenomena that endanger economies and social progress of less developed countries.
- The gender pay gap is persistent and stands at 17,8%. For ECOSY – Young European Socialists the principle of equal pay for equal work is guiding. The execution of the European pact for gender equality is necessary. Very few member states have developed concrete policies to tackle it: the powers of the European Commission have to be increased to enforce the implementation of both.
- It is imperative to improve the safety and health at work of all workers, and especially workers having particularly onerous jobs, pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth.
- All member states have to implement rules establishing paid maternity/paternity leave following the birth or adoption of a child. ECOSY – Young European Socialists promotes parental leave that is equally shared between parents so that both parents are accorded an equal quota of the leave that the other cannot use. The same rights must be extended to same-sex couples, and single parents should be accorded the entire leave period.
- High quality free child care is a social right. We should universalize the education, in a public system basics, for the education between 3 and 6 years old and the 0 to 3 years old.
- Equal access to social security and services has to be realised for everyone, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, socio-economic or ethnic background or

disability. ECOSY – Young European Socialists condemns practices such as a lower minimum wage or lower benefits for specific groups in society as discriminatory.

- Unemployment among people with disabilities remains unacceptably high. There is a need to provide a broad spectrum of employment opportunities, including protected and assisted employment, the possibility to obtain and constantly renew qualifications and representation of disabled people. The European Parliament report on the situation of people with disabilities in the enlarged European Union, including the European Action Plan 2006-2007, and the United Nations convention on the rights of people with disabilities have to be implemented throughout the European Union.

## **5.2 Full youth employment in Europe**

The ten-year-old Lisbon strategy has been replaced by the Europe 2020 strategy. Although the Lisbon strategy has not been a success story, the new Europe 2020 strategy is no more than a continuation of the old agenda. Social aspects are still not at the heart of the strategy. Only with a shift towards a clear social agenda more and better jobs can be realised.

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists advocates full employment, combined with more and better jobs.
- Youth unemployment and young people working in poverty have to be effectively tackled throughout the European Union. The provisions in the European Youth Pact regarding fighting youth unemployment, sustained integration of young people into the labour market, national social inclusion policies to improve the situation of the most vulnerable young people, prevention of educational failure, stimulating the vocational integration of young people and easing the transition from education to work, must be fulfilled. They should become the guiding principles in implementing the Europe 2020 strategy.
- The position of young people and women in trade unions has to be strengthened, to give them the possibility to fight for their rights.
- The links between higher education institutions, research and technological centres and enterprises have to be strengthened, in particular through networking activities and joint actions, from this innovation and new jobs can be realised.
- The knowledge-based society is one of the answers to deliver more and better jobs. But it will only work with a wider approach, not only focusing on elite research. The Europe 2020 strategy has to take this into account. But the knowledge-based society has to be seen also as a chance for society as a whole.
- The strategy's objective of increasing the participation rate of women in the labour market to 70% by 2020 has to be achieved.
- Labour market modernisation strategies have to be put in place for the anticipation of gradual changes throughout the European Union in diminishing sectors, alongside active measures to reinforce the economic well-being of regions. Specific employment, training and support services for workers in the context of company and sector restructuring have to be developed, such as rapid-response schemes and access to supplementary education in the case of collective lay-offs. We should also aim at preventing such lay-offs by measures such as the conditioning of public subsidies on guaranteed terms of employment.
- Active labour market policies should enable young people to enter the labour market more easily, at the same time protecting them from exploitation within the framework of unpaid internships or short-term contracts without proper social security. This can only be counterbalanced by strong contractual legislation, trade unions and member states providing the right to employment. This has to include a reduction of working time and action against the long-hours culture and ensuring equal rights for temporary workers. ECOSY – Young European Socialists also calls for the adoption of a framework directive for internships: internships should be decently paid, not exceed 6 months each and not represent more than 10% of the workforce of the company or administration concerned. Moreover, trainees should be recognised the same rights as people employed under a short-term contract and internships should be taken into account in the calculation of pension rights. The European institutions, as well as the Party of European Socialists, the S&D/PES groups and their associated organizations should set the example and immediately stop hiring unpaid interns. At the same time, an active labour market has to ease the transition between jobs to ensure labour market development and individuals' self-fulfilment.
- The open method of coordination in the Europe 2020 strategy has to be changed into a mechanism giving the European Commission and European Parliament more possibilities to implement its objectives. With this new mechanism a better balance between the

responsibility of the European Commission and member states is realised. The review of national action plans will therefore become more effective.

- Special attention has to be given to small and medium enterprises and to women's and young entrepreneurship and innovative businesses. The community program for competitiveness and innovation should invest in these specific groups.
- Even as the service sector has risen, the industrial sector is still an important part of the European economy, so we need a European industrial policy strategy, which is not based on competition between states, but has a Europe-wide political approach and takes into consideration the effects on neighbouring countries.
- The "New skills, new jobs" initiative contained in the Europe 2020 strategy should be amended in order to make sure employment protection for young people is not reduced.

### **5.3 Our European social model**

The European social model is far from being reached and its boundaries and responsibilities have yet to be agreed. This debate will take generations to come. ECOSY - Young European Socialists takes a first step in this debate, not only by defining common objectives for the different social models in Europe, but also by designing further-reaching policy objectives. In the light of the increasing social consciousness of European citizens this will be the most comprehensive strategy for Europe's future.

- Europe should not give up its ambitious social policies, but should make use of their potential contribution to economic performance and quality of life. For that throughout Europe the efficiency of social policies has to be enhanced, poverty eliminated, investments in education and life-long learning increased. This ensures that financing social policies contribute to the objective of full employment.
- The European social model for the future has to be a synthesis of what is best in each national system. Therefore, it is the opposite of the lowest common denominator of all national social models.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists opposes easy and low-cost hiring and firing. Labour market reforms have to be embedded in a framework that enhances flexibility while upholding high levels of social security. There have to be clear limits to flexibility by law. Flexibility furthermore has to offer an option and has to be attractive for the employee and not only for the employer, e.g. offering possibilities for a better work-family life balance.
- So-called flexicurity has to aim at providing adequate social security during periods of labour market transitions. It can only be realised when four preconditions are available: contractual arrangements providing adequate flexibility for both workers and employers to shape their relation according to their needs; active labour market policies effectively supporting transitions between jobs as well as from unemployment and inactivity to jobs; empowering life-long learning systems enabling workers to remain employable throughout their career; and modern social security systems ensuring that all workers are adequately supported during absences from the labour market and to facilitate labour market mobility and transition. On the basis of these four pillars a European flexicurity directive has to be developed that is part of the new social treaty.
- Common and universally acceptable European definitions of concepts such as workers, minimum salary, and subcontracting have to be developed in cooperation with social partners. The European Foundation for Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, in dialogue with youth organisations and the European Parliament, has initiated a debate on this with the aim of developing further guidelines, based on best practices in all member states including guaranteed implementation and effective supervision.
- Part-time employment should not mean working in poverty. The share of people in part-time employment is around 18%. And recently, rises in involuntary part-time employment have been observed for both men and women. Decent living conditions and opportunities have to be guaranteed in part-time employment just as in full-time employment. Therefore the working time directive on part-time work has to include strong social security provisions.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists advocates the youth guarantee, as proposed by the European Parliament, which caps youth unemployment at four months and ensures that all young people under the age of 25 are in a job, in a paid traineeship or in education.
- The redistribution of work must be achieved through the reduction of working time, with the aim to reduce unemployment and achieve a higher quality of life. Our goal is a 32-hour working week, without loss of purchasing power. Working time reduction should be implemented at the national level, but stated within the working time directive. Still we

think that the reduction of working time should be a matter for the trade unions and the employers' associations. ECOSY – Young European Socialists is in favour of a responsible reduction in working time over a period of time.

- The working time directive has to be adopted ensuring a maximum of 40 hours working time per week for all workers without opt-out clauses in the European Union. A special provision has to be drafted to guarantee existing shorter working times in several member states of the European Union.
- The reconciliation of working life and family life has to be promoted, including sharing the responsibility between partners, expanding the child care network and developing innovative forms of work organisation.
- Regional employment disparities have to be targeted via specific policies focusing on the quality of education and training, investment in skills, education and life-long learning and partnerships at local and regional level to promote job creation and addressing the skills gap.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists welcomes the creation of a globalisation adjustment fund as complement to the European Social Fund to provide specific support for workers for job conversion and seeking new employment. This fund must not be misused by companies to get rid of their social responsibility and to resort to cheap collective lay-offs.
- Undeclared work has to be transformed into regular employment by increasing awareness of the negative effects of undeclared work, simplifying procedures and legislation, and developing effective surveillance and sanctions.
- Health care is a fundamental part of the social model. We demand it to be of high quality and free of charge. Taking into account the rising mobility of workers, a number of common health care problems on the European Union's labour market due to the same health-endangering technologies, as well as a general demand for improvements coming from the fact of an ageing society, we urge the European Union to design policies aimed at coordinating the European healthcare system better.

#### **5.4 A social labour mobility directive**

Earnings' disparities in old member states are between two to four times larger than in new member states, and the standards of labour market and social models differ overall due to their distinct histories. Those are challenges in creating a single European labour market, which has to become reality if Europe is to be for the people, not for the profit.

- The free mobility of workers must be a real mobility of the people, not only of labour forces. Therefore it has to go hand in hand with the free movement of workers from some new member states that are still excluded from it in a number of old member states. The trans-national arrangements to limit the free movement of workers have to be abolished.
- Convergence of labour market regulations throughout the European Union, not towards the lowest common denominator but towards high standards, has to be realised. Workers have to work under national legislation limiting possibilities for wage dumping and unfair working conditions. Existing directives relating to this matter have to be replaced by a new, legally binding social labour mobility directive.
- The social progress clause introduced by the Lisbon treaty has to be used to reverse previous European Court of Justice interpretations of the posting of workers directive. Instead it must be implemented as the progressive social legislation the original legislators intended it to be.
- The free mobility of workers has to go hand in hand with the free movement of social benefits. The mobility of pension schemes, health care benefits, unemployment benefits and other social benefits of collective agreements have to be ensured. This demands a new European perspective laid down in the new directive.

#### **5.5 Solidarity between generations**

Between 2005 and 2030 the number of persons above 65 years of age will rise by 40 million, while the number of young people will decrease by 21 million, with the consequence that the ratio between inactive persons (young, old and other dependent persons) and persons in working age will rise from 49% in 2005 to 66% in 2030. This provides an enormous challenge for Europe. ECOSY – Young European Socialists welcomes the European Commission green paper on confronting demographic change and calls for a new solidarity between generations.

- Older workers have to be encouraged and enabled to re-enter the labour market, not by increasing the minimum retirement age, which is useless and unfair as in a large majority of cases, older workers do not choose to leave the labour market early but are forced to do so

because of redundancies or health problems, but by stimulating measures for older people to continue to participate in society, both in a job and in voluntary work. Career length and hardness of work in some sector have to be acknowledged in the definition of retirement age and the possibility to benefit from early retirement.

- Access to life-long learning with the aim to stimulate older people to remain active within the labour market has to be improved, and member states have to be encouraged to remove all disincentives for older people to continue working especially in regard to more flexible working opportunities such as part-time work.
- Equal access to pension and retirement schemes has to be realised. Existing laws against age discrimination have to be implemented and reinforced.
- The importance of knowledge capture for retiring employees has to be highlighted, particularly in the public sector. This can include a European public service knowledge portal open to younger workers and measures to link students and pupils with pensioners: providing career guidance, assistance in completing education, access to appropriate training and apprenticeship.
- Special measures, including child care, housing and social protection, are needed to support single parents to enter the labour market.
- The responsibility for children cannot be put only on parents: the society has to take its responsibilities, instead of single payments for children as the only measures.
- The intergenerational solidarity, which is a fundamental principle of the European welfare states, must be reinforced. All attempts to reverse it have to be clearly rejected. It is not acceptable that the young generation bears both the responsibility for caring for and financing the older generations and at the same time is burdened with more and more costs concerning their current period of life.

## **5.6 More power to the trade unions!**

Better involvement and firm commitment of the social partners is a necessary condition for the success of policies aimed at improving labour market transitions for employees, in particular moving from temporary to permanent contracts, and for better income and career development. Yet, trade union membership rates greatly differ from one member state to another with the result that all trade unions cannot claim the same representativeness; hence the necessity, in those member states where the percentage of trade unionists is low, to take initiatives aimed at encouraging workers to join a union. With capital and workers' mobility it is also high time to reform and empower international trade unionism, to ensure proper representation of workers and social dialogue.

- The role of the Economic and Social Committee has to be strengthened on social, economic, financial and budgetary matters.
- We believe that collective agreements are the best way to strengthen the rights of workers or to bargain wages. There needs to be an environment in all European Union member states that supports collective agreements.
- The informal economy must be reduced, and finally abolished, in cooperation with social partners.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls for a revision of the Council directive on European work councils aiming at expanding the scope of, enhancing the right to information and consultations and improving working facilities for representatives of employees in European work councils.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists welcomes the European Commission's proposal regarding the trans-national social dialogue as a first step towards the strong involvement of social partners.
- The European Network of Employment Agencies, EURES, should be further developed and more strongly supported.
- Trade unions should focus on international solidarity and on better and more adequate representation of young people and women whilst also defending unemployed people's rights, and fighting against the black labour market.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists demands the right to engage in neutrality agreements, meaning that the trade union has the right to go into the workplace and speak to the workers, as well as absolute respect for the right to strike in all member states and Europe-wide, including the right to establish picket lines. ECOSY - Young European Socialists strongly denounces all attempts to introduce a "minimum service requirement" in non-vital public services and demands the abolition of such requirements in those member states where they exist.

## 6. INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF PEOPLE

To secure the future of Europe, the monetary, financial and fiscal strategy of the European Union has to be progressive, innovative, active, socially responsible and open to new perspectives. It has to invest in the future of people, in cohesion, in solidarity, in quality, in mobility, in growth and employment, in education, in new technologies and in enlargement. And it has to invest in a fair and just society. Member states have to ensure that the European Union has sufficient means corresponding to these economic and social aims.

### 6.1 Pact for growth and full employment

The current stability and growth pact has proven to be inefficient. In times of economic downturn, when anti-cyclical investments in education and growth are necessary in order to create the necessary employment and to ensure the social security of all, states are discouraged. To promote economic and financial integration it is necessary to develop a new pact: a pact for growth and full employment. Uniting objectives such as full employment, social security, economic growth and financial stability can be the only way to ensure a sustainable future for Europe.

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists has always criticised the stability and growth pact. The 2010 revised stability and growth pact has worsened the situation, paying no attention to a range of macroeconomic indicators such as the unemployment rate, and allowing less instead of more flexibility. ECOSY – Young European Socialists demands it be replaced with a pact for growth and full employment.
- The new pact has to change the current guidelines on financial stability: the maximum deficit should vary across countries, according to three indicators: their overall debt situation, the severity of the recession or economical growth the country faces and the reference value, used to judge the budgetary situation of countries, and should be based on the structural deficit.
- Budgetary flexibility has to be allowed to the member states especially where it concerns anti-cyclical fiscal policy, which is very effective on the national level in the monetary union. As deficit spending without any limitations is not useful, rules like a ceiling of debts equal to new investments and a long-term expenditure growth limit should be implemented. The investments have to be linked to a clear social and sustainable development strategy.
- The new pact should also take account of current account balances. Both excessive deficits and excessive surpluses of current account balances destabilise European economies. The new pact should support the rebalancing of European current balances by mutual measures.
- The eurozone crisis of 2010/2011 has shown that the European Union does not have the right measures in place to tackle financial market speculation against the eurozone as a whole or against single countries in the eurozone. Sound macroeconomic coordination is still missing to make use of the euro as an economic tool for the benefit of the people. Next to regulatory provisions, a better mechanism for cooperating on macroeconomic policies has to be established, leading to a convergence of member states' individual policies, based on the principles of the new pact. This is the only way to overcome social dumping practices now undertaken by several member states and make the European Monetary Union a social and political project.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists calls for the implementation of eurobonds in order to make speculation against a single country in the eurozone inefficient.
- [The recent history of the European Monetary Union has proved that individual member states are extremely vulnerable to asymmetric shocks. In order to avoid vicious spirals of unemployment and debt the European Monetary Union should organise fiscal transfers between its member states. More precisely the European Union budget should take care of a part of the unemployment benefits of the short-term unemployed, taking into account the different unemployment benefit systems used in member states. This part should be fixed to a European standard.]<sup>9</sup>
- The Maastricht treaty has given the European Central Bank a vague mandate and complete independence, with the result that the central bank has not been responsive to recessions. Therefore, not only should fighting inflation not be the European Central Bank's only

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9 Bullet point not binding for SSF Sweden and SSU Sweden in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes. Minority statement: "We oppose the fact that the European Union should take care of the unemployment benefits. This has to be carried out by the Member States."

concern<sup>10</sup>. Inflation targets should be flexible and aligned with other macroeconomic goals such as sustainable growth, full employment and stability in foreign trade and payments.

- The already existing framework of the European Investment Bank and the European Investment Fund should be further developed.

## 6.2 Effective financial institutions

The recent global financial and economic crisis has shown that Europe is lacking effective institutions and regulation to tackle the challenges of the financial markets. The European Union has to become a more active player in the financial markets by regulating, supervising and controlling financial market products, banks and other financial institutions.

- ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls for a restriction of speculative and non-transparent financial market products. An authorisation of new financial market products is necessary. Over-the-counter trades have to be registered and they have to go through a central clearing point.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists demands that all financial institutions, not just banks, be brought under the regulation of the banking and financial market institutions supervision.
- The coordination of national and European supervision institutions has to be improved. The three new European supervision institutions which have started their work in 2011 are still lacking elements of efficient cooperation and coordination.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls for a public rating agency. Privately owned rating agencies should be further regulated and subject to a more intense scrutiny on the part of public financial and securities regulators and further provisions on conflict of interest set in place, so that their information does not contribute to distortions of the markets and speculation on the financial products of member states for the benefit of a private entity or another state.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists demands the implementation of a financial transaction tax. This tax has to be implemented at the European Union level (as a preliminary step towards implementation at the global level) and the revenue will benefit the European Union's budget.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls for the abolition of provisions prohibiting fiscal authorities from accessing banking data in those member states where they still exist.

## 6.3 New fiscal coordination

Tax competition must not exist in the European Union. Taxation systems must be coordinated and respect a clear regulatory framework with the aim of harmonisation, starting with harmonisation of the corporate tax base and value added tax rates. Tax havens must have no space within the European Union, nor in its overseas countries and territories. A fair and effective fiscal system that encourages investments and taxes capital will increase the trust of citizens and will help redistribution, by financing social welfare. A European tax on capital movement and a European green tax can increase the European Union's own financial resources. At the same time a minimum taxation of companies is needed. This minimum rate will also increase financial resources and help to suppress flat taxation in the European Union.

## 6.4 A budget for the people

In order to fulfil our ambitions for the future of Europe the European budget has to be changed. The European Union has to increase its own resources (which have been stagnant for 20 years now) and reform and expand its budget, with a strong political will and clear political choices for investment in the welfare of all its citizens.

- A ceiling concept of 1% of member states' GDP for the European budget can be applied only when Europe has a new clear fiscal strategy with its own tax sphere. Otherwise a 1,5% ceiling has to be applied.
- Over 40% is spent on the common agricultural policy, while the spending on research and innovation is limited and almost no money for social objectives is set out. Research and development, innovation, new technologies and the information society must gain the attention and funds they deserve in order to reach economic growth and competitiveness.

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<sup>10</sup> Deletion of passage "as the Bank should be accountable before the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union for its management of the eurozone economy" not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes.

- Research and development must be a fundamental tool to improve economic growth and thus social cohesion policies. Public administrations and enterprises, implementing the social responsibility that they have to hold, must together reach spending of 3% of the GDP.
- The focus on research and education has to improve when the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy are taken seriously.
- Social funds must be oriented towards cohesion among member states, regions and citizens, and provide the tools for growth in solidarity.
- Good-quality and free access to public goods has to become a guiding principle for the European Union's budget and fully reflected in the structure of the budget. By that, the role of the European Union in promoting full employment, social security and economic growth can be truly achieved.

## **6.5 More dynamic regional development**

We must make solidarity and cohesion the two words that sum up our vision for the new regional policy in the European Union. Solidarity, because our policy should aim to benefit citizens and regions that are economically and socially deprived compared to others. And cohesion, because there are positive benefits for all in narrowing the gaps of income and wealth between the poorer countries and regions and those which are better off. More power to local administration can mean more power to the citizens, and sometimes a more effective facing of social problems. More infrastructure and regional programs of development, with full respect to each area's cultural, social and environmental conditions, abolishes disparities and creates the real conditions for true growth. Regional development concerns rural and urban areas equally. In that sense, the development of the Europe 2020 agenda at both regional and local level must become a reality if we want our measures to have a real impact on social cohesion. Enlargement must be an important parameter when designing relative policies, in order to bridge disparities among regions.

## **6.6 Services to strengthen and unite**

Throughout its history, the EU has predominantly promoted the single market, in part by bringing public services and goods into its sphere, often with disastrous effects alienating citizens from their social rights. It is important to promote the competitiveness of the European economy, in the public and private sector, but this philosophy can no longer be based on privatisation and continuing liberalisation. Europe can never compete on low wages or the lack of a welfare state, it is the quality and knowledge it has which have to be combined with a profound welfare system. In order to attract international investments the welfare state has to be nurtured.

- ECOSY - Young European Socialists underlines the importance of public services in general and in particular of public services that guarantee everyone everywhere equal quality and access to their essential needs.
- With public services we have the possibility to democratically control and adopt sensible answers to our needs, so that when it comes to services of general interest public ownership is the most efficient.
- A new and clear definition of services of general interest and services of general economic interest is needed. Services of general economic interest are a key component of the European welfare state, essential for ensuring social and territorial cohesion, and contribute to competitiveness. We demand guidance on this matter according to the principle of non-exclusion.
- The sectors that must fall under the concept of services of general interest and services of general economic interest include: security, justice, health care, education, water, energy, public transport, post and telecommunication, public media and information, culture, sports, child care and social security.
- The European Union and member states must have the right to impose public service requirements on private companies, and to establish publicly owned market actors in certain sectors.
- Furthermore, we call for a European charter of public services in order to ensure that the European Union respects the principles of these services, which have an important role in the territorial set up. Furthermore, we have to resist further dismantling of social services through the World Trade Organisation negotiations.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls on member states to invest more in the exploitation of the potential of information and communication technologies in public sector services, such as health, education and government, in which ICT can make it easier to respond to future social service needs and to cooperate in order to develop pan-European services.

- Public information services should work.
- It is vital that every person living in the European Union has free access to good-quality, public and solidarity-based health care systems, and to low-cost medical care, regardless of their age or employment status.
- A European housing directive has to be developed. This should exclude social housing from the scope of the market economy, include improving accessibility to decent housing and housing conditions, especially for students, working youth and those less-favoured groups which are particularly affected by poverty, such as disadvantaged people and the elderly. More attention should be paid to the issue of homelessness, by providing care, imparting basic skills, and promoting social integration.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists promotes Europe-wide public services, owned by European public enterprises, like a European railway system or European air traffic control.
- Health and medicine research should be adequately financed, especially at the European level. Furthermore, ECOSY - Young European Socialists advocates the generalisation of the use of generic drugs.

## **7. PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT**

Protecting the environment is essential for the quality of life of current and future generations. The challenge for both developed and developing countries is to combine this with continuing economic growth and improving living standards in a way which is sustainable in the long run. In other words economic, social and environmental policies must be closely integrated. Sustainable development has economic, social and environmental components, and a proper balance needs to be realised between these components. Social, environmental, public health and development objectives are not contradictory but instead involve important synergies. The young generation of the European Union has to be involved in designing policies that combine the environment, society and culture in a progressive and sustainable manner.

### **7.1 Innovative environmental policies**

Our Europe has to be environmentally sustainable. It is our responsibility towards the next generations, and it is part of the concept of international solidarity to implement those commitments in Europe and the rest of the world. Ecological progress and protection is one of our main goals in approaching other European policies. Europe has the technology and infrastructure to implement renewable energy policies, sustainable water management, safe waste management, and a new environmentally responsible agricultural policy. Green growth must be at the heart of the economic recovery of Europe. The investment in environmental policies is an investment in the present and in the future, and provides a basis for innovative possibilities for business and economical development. The European Union has the international standing and political capital to push for international agreement on sustainable development. ECOSY - Young European Socialists believes that it is necessary for the European Union to use these capabilities in order to build a sustainable future for everyone.

- ECOSY - Young European Socialists is committed to building a Europe on a sustainable basis. The single market and national economic interests can not obstruct the resolution of environmental problems. The European Environmental Agency should become the actual environmental control body ensuring the respect and implementation of European Union environmental legislation. The agency must be supplied with sufficient financial means and legal sanctions in order to bring countries and companies to justice if they infringe legislation.
- The implementation of the existing European environmental rules is an important but imperfect process, and a strong regulatory framework alone is not enough for an effective environmental policy. The creation of public support through environmental information and education, especially focused on young people, should be one of the cornerstones of the European environmental policy.
- Energy efficiency must be emphasised at all levels of domestic and commercial life across Europe. Energy policy, production and infrastructure must all take account of the need to reduce energy consumption whilst maintaining living standards and economic competitiveness. Passive and active houses should become the building standard in all newly built houses in Europe, and this development should be encouraged by both incentives and tighter regulation.
- The principle of “the polluter pays” has to be the guiding principle in establishing green taxes. These taxes have to be invested in financing the European Environmental Agency,

research and education and related environmental strategies, realising a European environmental fund.

- It must be an absolute priority to intensify the research on new, alternative energy resources. The VII framework program for research, innovation and development already sets this as a priority, endorsed by a generous budget. The European energy strategy has to be based on clean and sustainable forms of energy production and distribution, not as currently based on highly polluting and insecure fossil and nuclear forms of energy production and distribution. Energy security must be an integral part of the European energy policy. It must be achieved through a diversification in energy sources, the development of new technologies, and through international cooperation in already existing energy markets.
- Sustainable water management must be one of the main concerns of the European Union. The implementation of the European water directive has to be secured and member states have to address their lack of commitment.
- We must protect biodiversity, by opposing the release of genetically engineered crops and animals into the environment. We must promote measures like the labelling of genetically engineered foods and the segregation of genetically engineered crops and seeds from conventional and organic seeds, in order to give citizens the opportunity to make informed choices and responsible decisions about their future.
- Special attention should be brought to animal rights. Common European laws and regulations should be implemented for the protection of laboratory animals. Common laws should be passed against the hunting or fishing of endangered species, and animal welfare must be protected more robustly within agriculture, particularly with regards to intensive factory farming techniques.

## **7.2 Fighting climate change globally**

Environmental problems are not limited to national borders: they form a global challenge. Many developed and developing countries prefer economic growth over sustainable development, leading to deforestation, soil degradation, water and air pollution. Europe has a global responsibility in addressing these states on their destructive behaviour which leads to climate change. The European environmental policy can only be effective when embedded in a global strategy. The European Union must work towards a progressive global consensus on addressing climate change. European Union member states must accept their own responsibility and aim at ambitious targets, followed by the use of Europe's strength in global negotiations pressuring states like the United States, China and India to adopt sustainable policies.

- A safe global livelihood is a human right, including a safe and healthy environment. The European Union must use its authority to promote a better environment for all.
- The Kyoto protocol was an important first step in the struggle to control climate change. Future negotiations within the United Nations framework convention on climate change must seek solutions to involve the United States, other industrialised countries and developing countries in the efforts to tackle climate change effectively. The starting point must be to limit any global warming to +1,5°C in comparison to pre-industrial times. This can only be reached through measures started immediately, not in few or ten years time when the necessary cuts will be even greater. The European Union must commit to a 40% decrease in carbon dioxide emissions (with respect to the 1990 levels) by 2020 and to a 90% decrease by 2050.
- The European Union must commit to increase the share of renewables in its total energy mix to 30% by 2020 and to 100% in 2050.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists calls for real international environmental governance starting with a merger of the United Nations commission for sustainable development with the United Nations Environment Programme, and with this body being given greater weight amongst international organisations. This new commission should be entitled to impose financial sanctions.
- The establishment of a council for environmental issues within the United Nations system has to be part of Europe's global strategy. This council should function as an organ that secures common environmental demands and is entitled to impose financial sanctions.
- The European Union must design environmental initiatives, introduced on a worldwide basis, fundamentally dealing with the former principles which have characterised international trade. The European Union must use its position in the World Trade Organisation to push to mainstream environmental aspects into the trade agreements.

- Europe-based multinationals and members of the European Union involved in waste dumping in developing countries should be sanctioned.
- Any proposed green taxes must be designed in a way they directly influence the behaviour causing emissions, i.e. the polluter pays. No industry should be protected in the name of national interests or for any other non-environmental reasons, and where environmental funds are used to preserve industries we must take great care to ensure that the environmental benefits are real. The aim of the green taxes must be to change behaviour and therefore eventually make themselves redundant. They must be implemented at a level high enough to deter and compensate for the harms of pollution, but steps must be taken to ensure that costs are not simply passed on to consumers, particularly those with low incomes, in a socially unjust way.
- Excessive profits from price rises caused by the rapid depletion of natural resources should be subject to windfall taxation.

### **7.3 Sustainable transport networks**

Today, the vast majority of personal transport is still based on the use of fossil fuels. A radical change in mentality is crucial, and the use of other more environment-friendly alternatives should be encouraged. ECOSY - Young European Socialists supports personal freedom of movement, but prefers it to be executed in more sustainable ways in the future. The member states, in cooperation with regions and local partners should improve the availability and accessibility of public transport based on sustainable strategies, as well as making sustainability a central concern of urban and transport planning.

- The European Union has to establish a legally binding certification system for both imported and domestic biological fuels. The certification system must be based on enhancing the potential of biological fuels to cut greenhouse gas emissions, while avoiding the wider environmental impacts of biological fuel production.
- To reduce the environmental damage of road and air transport and to address its increasing congestion problems, the European Union needs to promote alternative modes of transport.
- The position of rail travel has to be improved. Public transport has to be free of charge and one European (high-speed) rail network developed. Passengers' rights have to be strengthened. Continental transport of all kinds of goods has to be moved from the roads onto the railways and water which are more efficient and sustainable. In order to achieve this, we must invest more in railways and in waterways by improving and increasing track infrastructure, railway stations, port services and maritime safety standards.
- Road safety must be increased and emphasis must be placed on reducing the number of deaths on the roads across Europe.
- Cars represent 10% of all European Union carbon dioxide emissions. Up till now, the European Commission's strategy for reducing carbon dioxide emissions has mainly been based on voluntary commitments from the car industry. A directive for clean cars has to be developed and implemented.
- Improving public transport networks across Europe, both in urban and rural areas has to be made a priority in Europe, both nationally and in European Union policies.
- Carpooling should be actively promoted in areas where public transport is insufficiently developed. This system combined with a directive for clean cars reduces pollution, traffic density and driver stress.
- Air traffic has increased dramatically in the last 15 years, leading to a 73% increase in greenhouse gas emissions from international aviation. Planes have to become cleaner and the number of short distance flights should be decreased by increased incentives to use rail travel and by higher taxes on short-haul and domestic flights. A European tax on flights within 500km should be imposed.
- Local authorities have to be encouraged to provide investments in clean and efficient public transport in their region. The European Commission has to develop a green paper on urban transport, combining the use of bicycles, the establishment of high environmental standards to be met by all vehicles, creating pedestrian zones and car-less days in order to raise awareness and compulsory measures of cutting the traffic in areas where the recording of concentrations of carbon dioxide exceeds a standard level.

### **7.4 Reform the common agricultural policy**

The common agricultural policy uses up 40% of the European Union's annual budget. In a globalising world and an enlarging European Union the original goal of food security has to be redefined. Bringing other priorities such as sustainability, efficient water management, production

of food on the basis of quality and not quantity, environmental and animal-friendly ways of production, and the focus on rural populations with high standards of quality of life and welfare. This model can empower small farmers and producers on one hand, and would be much more coherent with the European policy regarding the development of the poorest countries on the other hand. Nowadays, the importance of agriculture should not be underestimated. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization, by 2050, the Earth will probably have to feed 9 billion people. Thus, food security and volatility of food prices will remain one of the crucial challenges that our society has to tackle.

- ECOSY – Young European Socialists underlines that the expenditure on the common agricultural policy must be substantially reduced and must also be reformed into a social rural development fund and an innovative rural environmental and forestation initiative. The focus of both shifts from general agricultural production into protecting and strengthening the natural value of the landscape, stimulating environment-friendly production patterns of small farmers and stimulating the production of renewable energy.
- Co-decision by the European Parliament on all matters of reforming the common agricultural policy has to be implemented.
- Payments of agricultural subsidies should be re-nationalised whilst the decision-making and coordination of the policy should remain at the European Union level. This would increase the transparency of the common agricultural policy as well as reveal the expenditure at national level without risking unfair competition.

## **A EUROPE SPEAKING WITH ONE VOICE**

### **[8. STRONG AND COHERENT FOREIGN POLICY**

A large share of the world's power lies today in Europe. The European Union must use this power to make our world fairer, to make human rights respected, to strengthen international law, to support peace and prevent conflicts, to promote international democracy, and to create a fair distribution of the world's wealth. Security and development are closely inter-dependent. This strong, common and coherent foreign policy should be the doctrine of the European common foreign and security policy and the association agreements. Its most important instrument in the next years will be the new European External Action Service, directed by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy: we want it to work for a well-functioning multilateral system built on the basis of the United Nations, a strong labour movement, disarmament, fair trade, an enlarged international development cooperation based on engagement, and a serious neighbourhood policy. Europe must become a highly relevant political actor on the international arena in order to achieve these goals. The High Representative has to foster policy coordination and coherence between institutions, being Vice-President of the European Commission and chairperson of the foreign affairs Council. Effectiveness and transparency through accountability to the European Parliament have to lead the activity of the European External Action Service. The challenge of European foreign policy lies in making the European common foreign and security policy a tool of international solidarity by both increasing the actual importance of the common foreign and security policy and by changing the current content of it.

#### **8.1 The United Nations – a protector of peace and human beings**

ECOSY – Young European Socialists believes in cooperation, international law and multilateralism as the best way to reach peace and international democracy. Therefore the United Nations is the most relevant global body the European Union must invest time and energy in, and the European Union must improve its coordination within the United Nations to enable the European Union's common foreign and security policy to reach some effect. The United Nations also needs to be reformed, especially in order to increase the effectiveness of its decision-making process, to protect human beings instead of borders and to implement more effectively its own decisions.

- The United Nations must be reformed in order to become more democratic and representative of the world's population. The aim is to enable the United Nations General Assembly to function as the parliament of the world.
- The United Nations Security Council needs reform aiming at abolishing the system of permanent members' vetoes. This is a long process and one initial step should be to have only one permanent member from Europe, a seat that should be taken by the European Union. Permanent seats made available in the process of reform should be attributed to emerging countries from under-represented regions of the globe such as Africa, the South American continent and the Indian sub-continent.

- The United Nations should strengthen its cooperation with civil society and especially globally organized youth organizations.
- The United Nations' possibilities and human and financial resources to execute humanitarian interventions must be improved.
- The United Nations charter must be revised in order to enable the United Nations to effectively stop genocide and other crimes against humanity and human rights, no matter whether they are perpetrated due to domestic, regional or international conflicts.
- In parallel the cooperation and coordination among the various international institutions, both political and financial, must be strengthened in order to make international politics more effective and transparent.

## **8.2 Improve international law**

Societies without laws are left to the solemn arbitrary decision-making of the strongest, leaving the smaller and weaker with no rights and only few opportunities to affect their development. This also applies to our international society. Therefore, international law is crucial to build international democracy and a fair world order. We see the urgent need to develop and strengthen it, especially in a direction where human rights and democracy are at the core of it.

- The International Court of Justice has to become the independent judiciary part of the new global governance system. The International Criminal Court, the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda have to become an integral part of this judicial system. There should be no option for states to exempt themselves or their citizens from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. All countries should sign and ratify the statutes of the International Criminal Court, which mandate should be strengthened by replacing the present ruling principle of complementarity binding the hands of the International Criminal Court with the principle of universal jurisdiction. The regional tribunals should be merged into the International Criminal Court.
- International law must be improved in order to not only regulate the behaviour of states at international level, but everyone including individuals, associations and corporations.
- To fight terrorism a fair distribution of the world's wealth is also needed. The causes of terrorism can never be fought with the weapons of terrorism. Instead, respect of human rights, international law and the principles of democracy and a fairer distribution of wealth and opportunities are required in order to meet and fight the causes of terrorism.
- It is of great concern when states violate international law since it unbalances the world and makes it a more insecure place. With respect to this we strongly condemn any so-called pre-emptive strikes or wars.
- Moreover, an independent and unique international prosecutor's authority should be established being responsible for the coordination and the management of the impartial investigation necessary for the court procedure.

## **8.3 Promoting Human Rights**

The universal declaration on Human Rights and its 30 articles must be respected by everyone, states and associations as well as corporations and individuals. They must be integrated into all international, national and regional legal systems and treaties. Nothing can stand above the human rights. Human Rights include civil and political rights as well as economic and social rights. To implement these rights, such as the rights to water, food, education and health care, ECOSY - Young European Socialists welcomes all progressive initiatives aiming at building democracy and welfare.

- Some groups of the population are in need of support and protection since they are more frequently targets of injustices (women, children, people with disabilities, LGBTT people and different minorities). Respect for the human rights of these groups should be specifically enforced.
- ECOSY - Young European Socialists actively advocates against torture and the death penalty. Neither can be accepted in a society built on respect of human rights, democracy and the rule of law.
- The United Nations Human Rights Council should be reformed into a body with the true ability to enforce respect of human rights: the European Union and its member states should not support countries with poor human rights records to take seats in this body.
- Many diseases pose a great threat to humans and society, one of them is HIV/AIDS, another is malaria. The consequences are to be seen in economically weak countries that lack the opportunity to fight them alone. Research into the causes, prevention and treatment must

be developed and enabled for all countries to take part in so that all individuals in need are catered for. The political fight against prejudices about the diseases and in favour of preventive measures must be fought in parallel. Trade conventions such as the anti-counterfeiting trade agreement and the agreement on trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights should not interfere with the global availability of drugs.

- As consumers, we also have good opportunities to promote fair trade and to support human rights and democracy by choosing products produced with the respect of these values. For that it is important to develop and coordinate labelling showing how a product has been produced and with values. Products not reaching these standards must be banned from the European market.
- ECOSY – Young European Socialists fights for the right for everyone to have access to technologies and infrastructure that will improve their lives, with special emphasis on developing countries and communities.

#### **8.4 Fair distribution of wealth**

The wealth of the world is extremely unfairly distributed. If everyone would live according to the average European standards this globe would not be enough. The European standards of living conditions are often secured at the expense of people in other parts of the world. This is unacceptable. The United Nations must promote a fairer distribution of wealth, prevent corruption, tax evasion and economic crimes through coordination with international judiciary systems.

- United Nations development aid should be sustained by a share of the proceeds from the financial transaction tax we want to implement both at international and European level.
- The world's natural resources must be used in a sustainable way to ensure the fair distribution of wealth. Most natural resources are exploited by a smaller but richer part of the population. Therefore ECOSY – Young European Socialists strives for taxation of natural resources consumption. The fund which will be generated by this taxation will be used to fight poverty and for the sustainable development of the world.
- Until this is feasible the European Union must take a special responsibility to increase the money invested into international aid. All European Union member states should finally meet the objective of 0,7% of GDP dedicated to international aid already agreed upon. Those cannot take into consideration the budget affected to immigration policies, debt relief, investments to combat climate change or any form of military investment.
- European international aid must be coordinated among the member states in order to support democracy and human rights and not contribute to corruption or bad governance. The aid must also be given and managed in close cooperation with the recipient countries and regions, in order to be international development cooperation rather than pure aid.
- The international development cooperation must not be linked to commercial preconditions of any kind. The development cooperation must be closely followed and evaluated in order to be useful and also improved.
- Not only money must be fairly distributed, also knowledge and technology must be shared among humanity. Research results and other human scientific victories must be shared to make all humanity profit from them.
- A fair distribution of the world's wealth demands fair trade. This requires a strong regulation of international exchanges. This requires free trade in a fair regulatory framework. Economically poor countries benefit since they get the possibility of economic development and growth since they are no longer kept outside expansive and profit making markets. Everyone wins, including the economically rich countries of today, because the world becomes fairer and the production more efficient. The European Union can no longer demand from its economical partners to open their borders while at the same time raising tariffs and granting domestic subsidies.
- However, free trade cannot be implemented overnight. Developing countries must be able to protect their markets. Industrialized countries must take greater responsibility to implement free trade and immediately abolish commodity subsidies and tariffs. The European Union must reform its common agricultural policy.
- Moreover, we have to continue our fight for economic partnership agreements that are tools for the economic development of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries instead of instruments of liberalization. The cooperation between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries should follow the aim of food sovereignty and maintain the possibility of non-reciprocal trade preferences.
- Welfare services and social security systems must be protected from free trade. They are not commodities.

- To reach a more democratic world, human rights and democracy must penetrate all spheres of our global society, including international trade and the global financial system. The World Trade Organisation, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund should be targets for these concerns since they today are steered more through a purely economic approach by mainly the richest countries, than by the people of the world. They failed to curb the crisis and even contributed to aggravating its social consequences for citizens by imposing pro-cyclical economic policies when the priority should have been to boost the economy and sustain demand. This crisis shows the necessity to reform the monetary system and establish an efficient macro-economic and financial regulation. The World Trade Organisation, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund should be reformed and incorporated into the reformed United Nations system, in order to become efficient tools of international solidarity respecting human rights.

## 8.5 Engage and disarm

Real security is based on multilateralism, trust, respect and solidarity. The European Union supports security for the European Union through contributing to conflict prevention and conflict management. This must be done through active diplomacy and wealth redistribution, and also through aiming at being the mediator supporting sustainable solutions. [ECOSY - Young European Socialists sees the European Union as a civil society and an example for the possibility of peaceable cohabitation of nations. We ask the European Union to concentrate its work in the sector of civil aid.

- Europe has to use its power to implement true multilateralism and a new worldwide disarmament movement. The European Union's member states no longer need national armies to fight against each other. ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls for national forces to be reduced step by step. A European defense army can be implemented to replace national defense sources. Any use of European armed forces must be mandated by the European Parliament.<sup>11</sup> [ECOSY - Young European Socialists calls for the complete abolition of military conscription in all member states.]<sup>12</sup>
- Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction pose a grave threat to humanity, independently of in which hands they are. To achieve disarmament serious multilateral initiatives are needed with the aim of total international disarmament as the final goal. The European Union must invest more time in advocating international disarmament through all its channels and relations with international partners. The European Union should also set the example by starting to disarm its own arsenals that are in the hands of different member states. All nuclear weapons present in Europe under the terms of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation nuclear sharing programme must be dismantled immediately. ECOSY - Young European Socialists asks the European Union to eliminate all exclusive defense systems. Security cooperation needs to be open and dialogue-based in order to be a good basis for improved involvement of and cooperation between all states, without causing new conflicts through exclusion.

## 8.6 Sound Neighbourhood policies

The European neighbourhood policies must be shaped with the same values we use to build our own society: democracy, human rights, respect of international law and the rule of law. It must be aimed at building co-operations, to fight dictatorships, to support peace agreements and to eradicate poverty. In that sense we support the United Nations initiative of the alliance of civilizations and the newly established United Nations International University Institute linked to it, as good tools for building understanding, conflict resolution and peace.

- Close co-operations must be built with Balkan countries in order to facilitate their accession to the European Union. Visa-free regimes must be expanded to allow young people to study and work abroad more easily.

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11 Passage not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes. Alternative formulation: "Nevertheless, in some situations neither diplomacy nor wealth redistribution are sufficient and the hard facts on the ground pose difficult choices. Then the European Union must be able to meet needs asking for military cooperation and activities. (bullet point) The European Union must be able to act with military force when required by the international society manifested in the authorisation of the United Nations Security Council. The creation of a European military must be a process including larger integration of the member states and participation of the European Parliament." Minority statement by SSF Sweden and SSU Sweden: "The decision to form a European army is not in line with SSU and SSF vision of how to develop the European cooperation."

12 Passage not binding for member organisations in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes.

- The European Union must foster and develop a better relationship with Turkey and its citizens. A Turkish European Union membership is desirable in order to strengthen the European Union, multiculturalism and peace. However, Turkish accession cannot happen before Turkey fulfils the European Union's accession criteria: implement the acquis communautaire, human rights, democratic values, rule of law, good neighbourhood relations, economic policy and social standards.
- Europe must improve its relationship with its biggest and close neighbour, Russia. The European Union must advocate democratic development and the rule of law, with special attention to human rights.
- There is a need to bridge the Atlantic gap through an improved and constructive cooperation between the European Union and the United States on the basis of common and democratic values. The European Union must build alliances to succeed in its struggle for human rights, democracy and peace.
- The Euro-Mediterranean cooperation is of great importance for the whole European Union and the world, and must be further developed and deepened, as well as continue to go from word to action. The Union for the Mediterranean has not yet succeeded in enhancing the relations and cooperation between the Mediterranean countries and the European Union. Instead, it risks of fading out completely. The European Union has to assume its responsibilities for the past and the present, carefully contributing to a democratic transition, to peace and to the exit from poverty for the Mediterranean peoples.
- The European Union must fight all dictatorships and use all peaceful means to support democracy. The situation in the last dictatorship of Europe, Belarus, is pressing. The European Union must support the citizens' work for democracy both by supporting grassroots activities such as youth exchanges, programmes facilitating for the Belarusian youth to study within the European Union, and by applying high-level pressure through different political and economic means.
- This also applies to other dictatorships in the close neighbourhood of Europe. The European Union should use its association agreements in order to do so. If a partner country does not respect human rights, and therefore is not respecting the articles of the association agreements, the agreements should be suspended to enable the partner to change policies. If no changes are done and human rights are still not respected the European Union must follow the association agreements and terminate them.
- Europe must support peace agreements to be reached and implemented. The conditions of the United Nations-brokered cease-fire between Morocco and the Western Sahara's Polisario Front must be implemented, and the referendum on self-determination must be held as soon as possible, under the auspices of the United Nations. The European Union must use its diplomatic leverage to guarantee respect for human rights and civil liberties in the Western Sahara, and it must abstain from entering into agreements with Morocco that allow the access to Western Saharan natural resources. The European Union cannot allow Morocco to continue destroying the process. The Moroccan occupation of Western Sahara must end.
- The European Union must be actively involved in supporting a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The solution of two peoples and two states must be realised. The Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory must end, the expansion of Israeli settlements must be frozen and the borders of 1967, or others agreed upon by the parties under a principle of equivalent territorial exchanges, respected by all sides. Both parties must respect each other, follow international law, come back to the peace process and stop all violent actions, especially towards civilians. The European Union can and must support this.
- At the same time, the European Union has to be an active and credible partner for peace and stability in the whole wider Middle East area, supporting the efforts of Lebanon against internal and external armed conflicts, clarifying to Iran and Syria that it will be their partner only in peaceful procedures, and helping the people of Iraq to reconstruct their country, and helping the establishment of a peaceful transition to effective democracy in North Africa.
- The European Union should develop a sound partnership with the African Union in order to fight poverty and develop democracy on the continent with all different approaches needed in the different countries on the continent.

## **8.7 A strong global labour movement**

To build a fairer world requires an active, democratic and global labour movement. ECOSY – Young European Socialists, works together with the International Union of Socialist Youth and the International Falcon Movement – Socialist Education International for this and we want to find other

global partners that share our same concerns on the workers' future. We demand that the Party of European Socialists and the Socialist International do the same, as well as the European Trade Union Confederation and the International Trade Union Confederation. The political branch of the labour movement must also cooperate more closely together with the trade union branch. The International Trade Union Confederation must have the right to participate in all United Nations bodies concerning labour and trade in order to represent the world's workers. The International Trade Union Confederation must also develop its work with international collective agreements. International acts of solidarity, such as solidarity strikes, must also be permitted. We must be in solidarity with workers here and elsewhere. ECOSY - Young European Socialists joins the fight to end the exploitation of workers and the intimidation of their representatives around the world. Governments should be made responsible for the effects of their actions in other parts of the world: state institutions should subscribe to fair trade, and any company performing works for public institutions should have to prove they honour the principle of chain responsibility.]<sup>13</sup>

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13 Chapter 8 not binding for SJÖ Austria, VSStÖ Austria and SJD-Die Falken Germany in accordance with article 5.1.8 of the ECOSY Statutes. Minority statement: "We are opposing every form of militarization. We stand for disarmament and for abolishing armies all over the world."

# OUR FUTURE FOR EUROPE

In this policy paper ECOSY – Young European Socialists elaborates its vision on the future of Europe. Young socialists and social democrats from all over Europe propose not only the further development of Europe, but analyse the world we all live in. This world can become a different and better world. This world can provide a safe and secure environment. ECOSY – Young European Socialists has been advocating for this in the last 19 years and will continue to do so in the times to come. **A democratic Europe, a social Europe for everyone and a Europe speaking with one voice** stand at the heart of our common message.

THIS IS OUR FUTURE FOR EUROPE:

## **More democratic and federal Europe**

- Democratise the EU institutions
- Justice for all
- Citizens need to be actively involved
- Deepen integration to continue enlargement
- A constitution for Europe

## **European youth: a political actor**

- For a European Youth Pact on a new basis
- Youth mobility card for all
- Put Children's rights at the heart

## **Education for all**

- Free and equal access to education
- For a real European education area
- Life long learning for everyone
- Full recognition of non-formal education

## **All equal, all different**

- Civil, political and social rights for everyone
- Real gender equality
- The right to be queer
- For an open Europe

## **More and better jobs**

- Social justice for all
- Full youth employment in Europe
- Our European social model
- A social labour mobility directive
- Solidarity between generations
- More power to the trade unions!

## **Investing in the future of people**

- Pact for growth and full employment
- Effective financial institutions
- New fiscal coordination
- A budget for the people
- More dynamic regional development
- Services to strengthen and unite

## **Protect the environment**

- Innovative environmental policies
- Fighting climate change globally
- Sustainable transport networks
- Reform the Common Agricultural policy

## **Strong and coherent foreign policy**

- UN - a protector of peace and human beings
- Improve international law
- Promoting human rights
- Fair distribution of wealth
- Fair and equal access to technology
- Engage and disarm
- Sound neighbourhood policies
- A strong global labour movement