

CONTEXT

- European elections in 2019 are not just any elections for European socialists and social democratic families. They present big risks but are also a great opportunity for change.
- Far right ideology has never had such a high support since end of WW2
- Brexit has proven that European disintegration is now a possibility and questions the ability of European citizens to have an impact on the European Union and its policies.
- Past election results of social democrats in Europe highlight increasing disappointment regarding the policies led by our mother parties, especially among young people.
- Having grand coalitions has proven to be disastrous for many parties. Policies made have not been able to achieve the changes we deem necessary for the European people. We need to critically evaluate current strategies in our mother parties and in the future focus more on co-operating with our partners on the left and creating new alliances.
- New political trends show us there are an opportunity and a need for left and progressive forces to unite around a common project and a common strategy to change Europe before it's too late.

WHAT DO WE WANT?

1. Alternative economic policies for must be possible in Europe

Social and fiscal dumping are endangering the very existence of the EU. We need to overcome the absence of an institutional framework to allow the Commission and the Parliament to move forward. We must develop European policies and stop unfair fiscal and social practises in Europe.

- Fiscal and social gaps must be closed through binding mechanisms of gradual social and fiscal harmonisation
- Companies should pay their taxes: the EU should have stricter legislation on tax havens and tax evasion
- A New Green Deal: massive investment plan including housing insulation, development of renewable energies and of infrastructures for public transportation. The plan needs to be financed through Eurobonds and European Union fund resources.
- Core values of EU's trade policies should be quality of goods, working conditions of production, environmental footprint, health risks and the protection of public services
- Today new imperatives emerge such as climate change and environment degradation. We cannot act as if it weren't there. We want the EU to be able to protect itself from social, fiscal and environmental dumping to preserve our model which is envied all over the world today. The quality of goods, working conditions of production, environmental footprint, health risks, the protection of public services and the general interest should be at the core of the value the EU carries in our trade policies. Therefore all new trade agreements negotiated by EU need to be evaluated through these criteria. If they are not fulfilled, we need to oppose agreements and put forward our own alternatives even stronger.

2. Social Europe: no more words, action!

The current economic model is based on indicators and numbers which do not reflect the reality of the lives of Europeans. Unemployment rates hide poverty rates: an increasing number of working people live in poverty. Workers are pushed to work abroad but are not guaranteed adequate social rights and living standards. Social dumping is harming working people in the whole of Europe. Economic freedoms are useless if they only serve the profits of companies and result in worse living conditions. Everyone must have a right to a decent livelihood, income and welfare. We need a social Europe that guarantees the level of welfare and services the economy needs to help provide, not another way around.

- Social cohesion must prevail on economic freedoms
- Income and wealth divides need to decrease through redistributive policies within and among EU countries
- Gender-sensitive labour market policies must be developed including more equal family policies
- One European Commissioner for child and youth policies has to be elected

3. A union big on values

The Commission is tougher on member states which go over a deficit rate than they are in a member state that violates women's rights, fundamental freedoms or the rule of law. We want clear sanctions for member states which violate the rule of law and the fundamental values of the EU.

Citizens need to have a voice and democracy is one the core principles of socialism. We must strengthen democracy in the European Union and give more power to people.

- The anti-discrimination directive must be voted and implemented to guarantee equal rights to women, LGTIA*, people of colour, etc.
- The Eurozone must be democratized so that economic decisions regarding the Eurozone countries are controlled by the Parliament and transparent
- We need to strengthen democracy by increasing power of Parliament: pan-European lists, full budget power and a Commission fully accountable to European Parliament
- Asylum protection is a human right and EU needs to promote solidarity

HOW DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE IT

1. A common campaign for common objectives

As so much is at stake for our generation at the European level, our European activism must be strengthened. The EU 2019 elections will be an opportunity to show the power and unity of our

socialist and social democratic family as well as to develop new activist experiences in Europe. We need a common campaign to engage with young people, gain visibility and influence.

- We will determine together common goals that are promoted through member organisations and parties
- We will open spaces of cooperation and contribution for activists to participate in the making of the campaign
- We will develop a concrete series of field actions in cooperation with our mother parties and PES.
- A common strategy to achieve our goals. Good declarations are not enough to change people's lives. We also need brave political decision-makers who will stand up for their ideas in all circumstances, including under the pressure of markets and conservative forces. We call on our parties to enhance their cooperation with other left and progressive forces, and we support all initiatives which share our willingness to change the path of European integration, especially in the run up to the 2019 elections.
- We suggest holding a European conference of the European left and progressive forces to build common priorities for the next years to come. We will take a leading role in organizing and mobilizing Youth activists. This dialogue should result in a common platform that we commit to defending during and after the election.

2. A massive presence on social media

We will spread our own and clear political message with an aim to dominate the political discussions. Social media and other digital platforms are one of the best ways to promote our common values and goals. These channels are also a direct possibility for European citizens to get their voices heard. We must be able to put forward our own proposals and change both topics and tone of political discussions online. We need to fight against hate speech and promote better positive options.

- We will launch a quality media campaign with a common visual identity that is easy to share all over the European Union
- We will create an online platform for activists to share ideas, create and comment on political content
- We will establish a YES campaigning task force, which will bring together activists and young people from all over Europe and allow them to share their experience, create effective campaign tools for YES and train them in the field of political communication.

3. An open and democratic process inside our political family

Open primaries are a great way to enable real debate and empowerment within political parties. Citizens want a voice not only on the day of the vote but also on who will represent our political family. The path towards more democracy requires social democrats to organise people, encourage them, and enable more involvement of citizens and party

members, including when it means being challenged in our habits and practices. At the European level, we call for a more open and democratic process regarding the EU institutions. In particular concerning the selection of the common candidate we ask for solutions that enable a larger pool of candidates to compete. Recent primary campaigns in progressive parties have shown that when they have a real choice, young people get involved. Therefore we commit to campaigning for a democratic primary process involving the members of all parties in PES in order to choose the common candidate.

We also encourage all member parties to develop such open processes to designate their MEP candidates in order to fuel mobilisation and bring more diversity into the representatives of our political families in Europe.

Young people are under-represented in European elections and especially among MEPs elected. We need more young candidates and more MEPs:

- At least 20% of candidates on PES member party's list must be under 35 years old
- In countries with list elections, at least one candidate under 35 years must be on position where this person will be certainly elected
- YES will increase young candidates by promoting them especially on social media, and by offering them specific volunteer help and visibility through events on their field campaign.