



People first

A new direction for Europe

The voters of Europe face a fundamental political choice in these European elections.

At a time when people across Europe are facing unprecedented challenges – an economic recession and rising unemployment resulting from the global financial crisis, high food and fuel costs, decreasing purchasing power and an increasing risk of poverty, climate change, and security threats ranging from terrorism to crime - it is a choice between political parties with very different ideas for the future of the European Union.

It is a choice between our vision of a progressive Europe in which citizens, member states and institutions work together to address the issues of greatest concern to the people of Europe; or a conservative Europe in which the future of our countries and people is left in the hands of the market.

The Party of European Socialists is committed to creating a fairer, safer society, tackling the challenges we all face by putting people first.

In today's increasingly inter-linked world, no one country can solve global problems by acting alone. The financial crisis and subsequent economic recession are demonstrating starkly that events in one part of the world can have a devastating impact on our own doorstep. Concerted European action is vital to deal with the financial crisis. Reactionary opponents of the European Union would have left our countries weaker, fighting a global crisis without partners or institutions to develop a coordinated response.

For us, the European Union is the vital link in the era of globalisation. It puts our countries in a stronger position to solve global problems that have an impact locally. We need more active cooperation in Europe to tackle our common challenges and improve people's lives. The entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, subject to ratification by all EU member states, would make Europe better able to tackle common challenges democratically, transparently and effectively.

It is now 30 years since the first direct elections to the European Parliament, which has a key role to play in realising our vision of a European Union which puts people first. The Party of European Socialists is your voice, promoting your interests and championing your causes. We are committed to:

- 1. Relaunching the economy and preventing new financial crises**
- 2. New social Europe – giving people a fairer deal**
- 3. Transforming Europe into the leading global force against climate change**
- 4. Championing gender equality in Europe**
- 5. Developing an effective European migration policy**
- 6. Enhancing Europe's role as a partner for peace, security and development**

Progressive left and centre-left parties in government at regional or national level are already making a difference to people's lives. Where the left is in power, we can see real evidence of what socialists and social democrats can achieve.

For the past five years, the conservatives have had a majority in Europe - in most EU Member States and in the EU institutions. What have they done with it? Did they tackle the global financial crisis? Did they address rising food and energy prices? Have they fought poverty and inequalities? Is society fairer than it was five years ago? Did they support our initiatives to deliver more and better jobs? *They follow the market. We follow our convictions.*

The conservatives often talk about economic and social crises as if they are unavoidable, a law of nature. But there is nothing inevitable about them. It is about political choices. While we do live in a time of global change and risk, we also live in a time of huge opportunity. We must promote better cooperation in Europe to manage globalisation for the benefit of everyone. *They say adapt to the market. We say shape our future.*

We need a strong progressive majority in Europe to introduce the progressive reforms that are essential to secure the future well-being of European citizens and society as a whole. They are vital to ease the pressures on people across the EU who are facing an everyday struggle to make ends meet because of the economic recession; rising living costs; increasing unemployment, with almost 17 million people in Europe already out of work and many more in precarious jobs who are among the first to be hit by slow growth; the ever-present risk of home repossessions; and social inequalities, with some 78 million people – many of them children – living below the poverty line or at risk of poverty.

The global financial crisis has exposed the weaknesses of the unregulated market. These are very difficult times in the global economy. The past year has seen two unprecedented shocks - the worst credit crunch since the 1930s and a record surge in energy and food prices. We need active co-operation in Europe and globally to co-ordinate action and tackle the problems in national and international financial systems; and we need to take proactive action to transform the economy – through investments in key priorities - to secure a prosperous and sustainable future for everyone in Europe.

Conservatives have pursued a policy of blind faith in the market – serving the interests of the few rather than the general public – and we are now seeing the damage that badly regulated markets can do. But we know we can do something about this. We can relaunch Europe's economy and create a fairer and safer society for all in a new social Europe.

Our comprehensive progressive reform agenda to transform European cooperation - based on our values of equality, democracy, human dignity, solidarity, freedom and justice – can deliver the change which the people of Europe so desperately need.

We socialists, social democrats and democratic progressives, share common values and a common vision. We will work together for a fairer, safer and greener Europe. Together we are a force for change.

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The challenges

Europe is one of the richest regions of the world. Some argue that we can no longer afford high social standards, but Europe is the biggest common economic and labour market in the world and we have the capacity to ensure that it serves people, workers and businesses.

All Europe's citizens should have decent, quality work that enables them to enjoy a decent life. We must act to enable businesses to grow, and invest in more and better jobs and new technologies. Unlike conservatives, we reject the notion that employment and trade union rights are cost factors that can be neglected and dismantled as far as possible. Quite the opposite: they are vital to our economic success, as they contribute to motivating employees, improving the quality of jobs, promoting social harmony and fostering workforce participation in company decision-making. *Conservatives claim that globalisation makes it necessary for people to work longer and harder. But we progressives know that globalisation does not make this inevitable – only bad politics does. It's about working smarter, not harder.*

The global financial crisis and economic recession have hit people hard. The financial crisis has shown that unregulated global markets can have a direct impact on their lives: greater inequalities between overpaid executives and underpaid workers, and increased risks that people will lose their jobs or homes. We must act to help those who have been hit hardest get back on their feet. And we must prevent future financial crises by establishing better regulation of all financial actors. This crisis marks the end of a conservative era of badly-regulated markets. *Conservatives believe in a market society and letting the rich get richer, to the detriment of everyone else. We believe in a social market economy that enables everyone in society to make the most of the opportunities globalisation offers. We believe in solidarity between generations, not right-wing individualism.*

Climate change is the greatest long-term threat facing the world. It is a global problem that requires a global solution. *Conservatives talk about climate change, but we believe in doing more than just talking. We want concrete and realistic action to protect the environment, and to transform our economy through new smart green growth and jobs.*

Energy is now a fundamental security issue for Europe. We already import 50% of our energy, and this could rise to 70% by 2030. We must work together in Europe to increase our energy independence by developing environmentally friendly energy sources produced in Europe. *Conservatives believe in business as usual, leaving it to the market. Some conservatives even deny the existence of climate change thereby ignoring overwhelming scientific evidence and acting irresponsibly in the face of the seriousness of the threat to our planet and people. We are committed to transforming Europe into the leading global force against climate change.*

The EU is making efforts to manage migration, but we need to do more and better. Migration has brought us undeniable benefits, contributing to our wealth and prosperity. To ensure that we continue to enjoy the benefits of a more productive, prosperous and diverse society, we will work to stop illegal immigration across our borders and combat human trafficking. Legal migrants must have the same rights and duties as other workers. Asylum is a fundamental human right for those fleeing from persecution, which is why we will ensure that it is a firm and fair system which protects the vulnerable and exploited, and is not subject to abuse. Climate change will also provoke new migration from the poorest affected regions, which we must address. We must also enable immigrants to integrate for their benefit and for the benefit of the communities in which they live. *The conservatives have played on the fear factor. We want humane answers to the challenges of legal and illegal migration.*

The threats to democracy and citizens' rights have not gone away. Terrorism, crime and extremism cross European borders. We have to step up European action to prevent these developments from threatening the lives and freedoms of citizens within our borders, without compromising fundamental freedoms such as the freedom of expression or the protection of personal data. The EU must also act outside its borders to promote peace and development. This will increase our security while benefiting people in poorer countries. By acting together in the EU, member states will strengthen their voice and influence on world affairs. *Conservatives talk about these principles of democracy, citizens' rights, security and development. We will invest all our efforts in making them a reality.*

Working together in Europe we are stronger because:

- we share the biggest economy in the world – and can therefore create more and better jobs and reduce poverty by trading with each other on the basis of common standards;
- environmental challenges do not stop at national borders and therefore we can only fight climate change and its effects if we work together with the same goals;
- we can promote solidarity and cohesion, cornerstones of the European project from which we all gain. Free movement of labour should provide all workers with more freedoms and opportunities, benefiting the economies of the countries where these workers are based, while avoiding a brain drain from less prosperous regions. But it should never lead to reduced social standards or wage cuts designed to give one Member State a competitive advantage over others at the expense of workers;
- our police forces and judicial authorities can cooperate to fight crime and terrorism.

We want a strong and progressive Europe. Our people's manifesto for a progressive Europe sets out the policies we need to do this, and turn the challenges we face into progress for all.

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The proposals

1. Relaunching the economy and preventing new financial crises

The global economic and financial crisis is hitting our economies and ordinary people all over Europe hard. Real wages and people's purchasing power are being undermined. We will not stand by and watch these developments passively. The euro has played a very effective role in protecting European economies in the context of the global financial crisis. More must be done now simultaneously to reform the financial markets, counteract the recession and relaunch the economy to create new growth and jobs.

The threat of catastrophic climate change is also growing: if we do not act now, it will further damage the planet and directly affect our lives. We are convinced that fighting climate change can transform the European economy and create new smart green growth, jobs and prosperity for everyone in Europe. We firmly believe in the principles of sustainable development, based on mutually-reinforcing economic, social and environmental policies.

The EU is the biggest economic and labour market in the world. By working together, we will be in a stronger position to relaunch the economy through our smart green growth and jobs plan. Trade unions and employers have an important role to play in contributing to the realisation of smart green growth across Europe.

People must be helped through this transformation of our economies. It is imperative that our citizens – of all ages - have the opportunity to develop their skills, find new and better jobs as well as being able to work and study abroad. We believe that action at local, regional, national and European levels should be geared towards supporting people through transition and opening up new and better opportunities.

The European budget should be refocused on smart green growth and meeting future challenges. Because it is a budget of solidarity, it should serve to improve living standards and foster social cohesion and growth throughout Europe as well as supporting convergence of the least-developed EU regions, not least in the new member states.

Reforming the financial markets to serve the real economy, jobs and growth:

The turmoil in the financial markets revealed the true importance of European cooperation to prevent a collapse of the banking system and stabilise the markets. Coordinated action in the EU has helped to protect people's savings, pensions and homes. But the financial crisis has revealed deep-seated flaws in the market system that need to be tackled to prevent such crises happening again. All financial players should have clear responsibilities when they operate in our countries.

We will ensure that in future, the financial markets serve the real economy, jobs and growth.

1. Building on talks that have already taken place in the EU and at global level, we propose to reform the financial markets. Regulation should cover all financial players. We need a new standard for transparency and disclosure. There should be rigorous capital requirements for all financial players, and limits on excessive borrowing and bad loans to prevent excessive risk-taking and debt. Limits are also needed on top executive pay and bonuses, notably so that earnings reflect losses as well as profits. New rules are needed to prevent conflicts of interest. We must ensure that workers have full rights to information and consultation during all takeovers and that employees paying into pension funds know where and how their money is being invested. The European system of supervision must also be further improved. Financial institutions must state all risks on their balance sheets. Detrimental short-selling made the crisis worse and should be curbed by regulatory authorities. Hedge funds and private equity funds must be monitored and regulated more effectively. The key issues are obligations to disclose asset and regulatory structures, more stringent requirements to inform investors about risks, the limitation of excess debt financing and restrictions on investments.
2. We propose to put an end to tax havens, tax avoidance scams and tax evasion, and step up the fight against money laundering in the European Union and globally so that all market actors pay their fair share of tax to the countries in which they operate.
3. We propose to work with all our global partners towards reform of global financial architecture in order to prevent the recurrence of a financial crisis and to make the power of financial institutions subject to democratic scrutiny.

A European strategy for Smart Green Growth and Jobs:

We propose a European strategy for smart green growth and jobs which will create 10 million new jobs by 2020 – with two million in the renewable energies sector alone – and help make Europe a world leader in innovation, new green technologies and products. This would build upon the EU's existing Lisbon Strategy to make Europe into the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. In the EU, all levels of government can work together to stimulate smart green growth, notably through structural reform and fiscal policies. EU-funded investment projects should be swiftly implemented to help achieve these goals. The following proposals are core elements of our strategy:

4. Transforming transport in Europe into the most efficient, affordable and 'clean' for people and businesses. This includes building a more competitive and affordable high-speed rail network between major European cities and regions, and focusing on making it easier to switch between rail and other types of transport; creating an integrated airspace to shorten flying times by allowing aircraft to take more direct routes; making maritime and inland waterway transport cleaner, more efficient and safer for workers and passengers; and transforming our city transport systems. Social democrat mayors are leading the way with their 2008 Urban Mobility manifesto: new schemes to save time and costs, and reduce pollution. We propose European cooperation to exchange these best practices and promote sustainable urban mobility across Europe, and will continue work to improve safety on all types of transport.
5. We propose a European initiative to expand energy and broadband infrastructure for the purposes of economic modernisation. Offshore wind farms, for example, require new, cross-border grids. The development of rural areas depends on

access to broadband in every corner of Europe. Multi-billion investments in developing networks are needed throughout Europe. The European Investment Bank is already involved in the financing of energy as well as telecoms infrastructure and could step up its commitment. Greater use of European Structural Funds should also be considered.

6. Energy efficiency is one of the best ways to lower people's fuel bills and create new jobs, for example in the building-insulation sector. We propose active cooperation between the EU, governments, regional and local authorities to help people cope with rising fuel prices by reducing their energy consumption, funding energy efficiency improvements in homes, and ensuring that energy companies' pricing and customer policies are fair and responsible.
7. Substantially raising investment in research, development and innovation will be essential for new smart green growth and our long-term prosperity. Currently, the US is spending one and a half times more than the whole of the EU put together. Europe must catch up and take the lead.
8. We propose a European Pact for the Future of Employment. All European programmes should be examined to see how employability and employment opportunities can be safeguarded and improved. EU-funded investment projects should be swiftly implemented. Advantage should be taken of the possibilities offered by the European Social Fund for integrating the unemployed into the labour market and for training workers. In a global economy, investments in education are fundamental for growth and creating better-paid and better-quality jobs. We propose to fund a Skills Programme through the current EU budget, to train workers across Europe for, amongst other things, the 'green' jobs of the future, such as in the renewable energy sector. We will also work towards full and equal access to lifelong learning, with special attention paid to 'second-chance' education and training for those who have not completed their formal education. This can be supported by European, national and regional policies. We propose to expand funding, within the current European budget, for education and training exchanges to include, for example, apprentices and older people, building on the success of the ERASMUS programme, and giving as many young people as possible the chance to study abroad. Mobility should be the rule not the exception. Every young European should have the chance to enjoy it.
9. The EU's Internal Market should be completed – and the red tape facing businesses reduced - to generate more European trade and jobs, based on high environmental and social standards. Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are the backbone of the European economy and the biggest employer of workers. We should simplify the legal framework for SMEs through a statute for European Private Companies, together with easier access to the Internal Market and to financial and innovation resources. The capital base and credit volumes of the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development should be increased and the granting of credits simplified for SMEs.
10. The European Central Bank must encourage growth and employment while maintaining price stability.

Ensuring workers and businesses benefit from economic transformation:

11. We propose to support businesses to anticipate changes caused by climate change and technological shifts – thereby safeguarding existing and creating new jobs – while also helping workers retrain if they lose their jobs because of these changes. This could be done, notably, through the EU's Globalisation Adjustment Fund. We will also promote dialogue with Europe's employers to ensure that they live up to their responsibility to anticipate change and re-skill their workforces.
12. We will support job creation by ensuring that businesses have access to credit to invest and grow, for example through the European Investment Bank. We will also support the development of the social economy in Europe, which currently employs over 5 million people in cooperatives for example – by introducing a European statute for associations, mutual societies and foundations.

A new European progressive reform agenda is essential to extend the opportunities of globalisation to all citizens and make a positive difference to people's lives.

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2. New social Europe - giving people a fairer deal

No matter who we are or where we were born, people in Europe share the same basic values about the kind of society we want to live in: a safer Europe, with high living standards, decent and stable work, and a safe and clean environment.

Existing inequalities and new global challenges are placing new pressures on people and creating a risk of permanent social divides within our societies: between the children of poor and rich families; between those with stable, well-paid jobs and those in precarious, low-quality jobs; between the low-skilled and the highly-educated; between those with access to the Internet and those without; between immigrants and native-born Europeans; between women and men.

We can tackle these inequalities by focusing European cooperation on improving the lives of people in Europe. We must promote better policies to protect the most vulnerable people during the economic recession and beyond. We want to build a new social Europe together with the social partners, working particularly closely with the trade unions, who share our commitment to putting people first.

We believe democracy and citizens' rights in the European Union are crucial to ensure a fairer deal for people. Citizenship should be inclusive, based on rights and responsibilities, as part of a shared future on our continent. We want everyone living and working in Europe to participate in deciding their future. We believe in empowering future generations, and in doing what we can to encourage political and societal engagement. We pay close attention to the views of young Europeans, not least on issues such as building a new social Europe, improving inter-cultural dialogue, climate change, Europe's role in the world and globalization. We believe in active democratic consultation and participation, as we have shown by consulting the public on the priorities for this manifesto.

The EU is based on human rights, non-discrimination and respect for all. We view diversity in its many forms – cultural, linguistic and religious – as one of Europe's greatest assets.

The European economy has also brought many benefits for consumers. We will continue to champion consumer rights in Europe following our success in securing safer food and toys, and cheaper travel and phone calls. By improving consumer rights and protection, we can help to build a safer and fairer Europe for our citizens.

Ensuring a fairer deal for people:

13. We propose to seek agreement on a European Social Progress Pact, proposing goals and standards for national social, health and education policy to contribute to the fight against poverty and inequalities as well as the social and economic development of the EU. We demand needs-based social welfare benefits for all those who are retired, unemployed or unable to work in all European countries, to guarantee a life of dignity.
14. We propose to include a social progress clause in every piece of European legislation, and to take into account social and environmental impact assessments when developing European legislation. The process of liberalisation must be assessed. We propose that the EU carries out a social audit of its environmental and energy policies to develop measures to prevent these policies hitting the poorest hardest.
15. We propose to establish a European framework for public services, guaranteeing universal and equal access for citizens, quality, local autonomy and transparency in public services, maintaining their integrity as defined at national level, so that European competition and business rules do not run counter to citizens' rights.

The social and environmental criteria for awarding European public contracts should be extended and strengthened.

16. We propose a European pact on wages, guaranteeing equal pay for equal work and setting out the need for decent minimum wages in all EU member states, agreed either by law or through collective bargaining and applying both to citizens and migrant workers. Social rights include the right to a fair level playing field for workers.
17. We will address the problems related to brain drain created by the migration of highly-qualified professionals and skilled workers within Europe and from third countries into Europe.
18. We will act in all EU member states to promote fair tax policies, which will guarantee the financing of Europe's welfare states.
19. We will act to prevent the exploitation of workers and strengthen their rights to collective bargaining. Recent European Court judgements have created uncertainty about workers' rights and collective agreements. Together with the social partners we will examine the impact of the Viking, Laval and other judgements to ensure that rights are not undermined. A review of the EU Posting of Workers Directive is essential. To encourage collective bargaining at European level, we want to develop a European framework for cross-border collective bargaining and collective agreements. In addition, we will work to promote decent working time, meeting health and safety standards, and a fair work-life balance.
20. We propose to strengthen workers' rights to information and consultation. Employee participation at European and global level is a key issue for the future - a vital element of a more social Europe and a precondition for decent work. We will seek to enhance participation in economic decision-making processes at European level. To do this, workers' rights to information and consultation must be anchored in company law directives using the European Company Statute model and the rights of European Works Councils must be extended. We also want to foster greater social dialogue between unions and employers at European level and extend it to more sectors.
21. We propose to develop an EU strategy on children's rights to help eradicate child poverty and guarantee access to education, including pre-school child care.
22. We propose to establish a European Charter for Internships, to give young people seeking work experience better rights and ensure they benefit from a good start to their working lives.
23. We propose to strengthen individual and collective consumers' rights and ensure these are properly enforced in the European Union.
24. We propose setting EU targets for providing care for the elderly, modelled on those already in place for childcare, in light of our ageing population and the need to reach the goals of full employment and gender equality.

Protecting citizens' rights:

25. We will ensure that democracy, transparency and accountability are cornerstones of all reforms of the European institutions. For example, we propose to strengthen transparency by obliging all lobbyists and lobby agencies to register themselves, their clients, and their activities, including all contacts with elected representatives, as well as with civil servants and other officials.
26. We are committed to ensuring that EU legislation respects citizens' rights as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. We will strengthen anti-discrimination legislation to ensure equal treatment on grounds of gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief.
27. We propose to ensure equal treatment for all EU citizens, without discrimination, when they move around the Union by moving towards recognition in all EU countries of marriages, partnerships and parental rights legally recognised in one of the Member States.
28. We advocate giving regions and local authorities a greater role in European affairs, reflecting their growing role in implementing European policies and promoting discussion of European questions at the sub-national level. We support

the recognition and fostering of Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity, as one of its richest assets and a key part of its identity.

A new European progressive reform agenda is essential to build a new social Europe, giving people a fairer deal.

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3. Transforming Europe into the leading global force against climate change

We must tackle climate change now for the sake of our children and grandchildren. Taking action now will enable Europe to take the global lead in developing new, efficient green technologies and reduce the risk of a future loss of prosperity due to climate change. Not doing anything will put life on earth at risk. Europe must therefore break its dependence on oil and coal and take the lead in achieving a new global climate agreement for the post-2012 period to follow on from the Kyoto Treaty.

Successfully leading international negotiations for a global climate deal:

29. The EU should take the lead in international negotiations to get agreement on a 30% global target for emission reductions by 2020 at the United Nations summit at the end of 2009. It is our common goal to ensure that all developed and emerging economies, including the US, China and India, should sign up to this. We are committed to a global approach based on solidarity, and with developed countries taking the lead.
30. We propose to increase EU support for developing countries to fight as well as adapt to climate change. The EU should ensure massive technology transfers to ensure that these countries can fight poverty and develop economically without worsening global warming. Furthermore, we must ensure that EU policies will not lead to higher greenhouse gas emissions in third countries, by taking steps to avoid the risk that energy-intensive industries will move to other parts of the world where the climate change requirements are less strict.
31. Following on from the initiatives taken by Europe's social democratic governments, the EU should take the lead in establishing a global energy and development forum, bringing all the world's nations together to define a long-term vision for energy and the sustainable development of the planet.

Leading by example - a more ambitious climate and energy policy for the EU:

32. We propose to introduce a comprehensive EU climate directive that would ensure that targets and actions in all those sectors not already covered by existing law – energy, agriculture, food, building and transport – are combined to enable the Union to reach its overall emission targets. All other climate legislation should also be adapted to meet the 30% emissions reduction target. Action is needed in every sector if we are to reduce emissions in an efficient way.
33. We propose to develop a European Common Energy Policy based on sustainability, energy security and independence, diversity of energy sources and solidarity between member states in the event of energy crises. The EU should, for example, increase its renewable energy supply by taking the lead in building a High Voltage Electricity Transmission Network for the transportation of offshore wind energy from Northwest Europe and solar energy from southern Europe and North Africa.
34. We will support a modern Common Agricultural Policy that promotes comprehensive rural development and values the fundamental role of farmers, recognising the role of agriculture in protecting the environment, ensuring food quality and security of supply, preserving the landscape, and protecting animal welfare and plant health. Biofuels can help to lower emissions in transport, but this should not come at the expense of European and global food production,

environmental protection or biodiversity. The EU's Biofuels Directive should be revised to ensure respect of this principle.

35. It is for each Member State to decide on whether to use nuclear power. However, given the importance of nuclear safety for all European countries, the monitoring of existing and new nuclear power plants should be coordinated at the European level.

A new European progressive reform agenda is essential to lead the global fight against climate change.

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4. Championing gender equality in Europe

Significant progress has been made towards achieving genuine equality between women and men in recent years, largely thanks to the efforts of socialists, social democrats and democratic progressives in partnership with progressive women's organisations.

There are, however, lingering inequalities: women still earn, on average, 15% less than men for doing the same work; they are much more likely to be unemployed, discouraged from entering the labour market by the lack of decent jobs, or in lower-paid, low-quality or part-time jobs.

Millions of women around the world still face exploitation and rights violations, in the form of human trafficking, domestic violence and other abuses.

There are still too few women in politics over half a century after gaining the right to vote and stand for election across Europe.

In some parts of Europe, men have hardly any rights to parental leave when their children are born. Women often have to choose between having children and pursuing the career they want. Working families find it hard to balance their professional and personal responsibilities. We can change this: those European countries which have done most to increase women's rights and opportunities now have the highest proportion of women in the workforce *and* the highest birth rates. We have also campaigned relentlessly at local, regional and national levels to increase childcare places.

We will continue to fight gender stereotypes and believe that strengthening women's rights and opportunities will bring significant economic, social and democratic benefits for all Europe's citizens.

Making gender equality a reality for all:

36. We propose to create a European Women's Rights Charter, to improve women's rights and opportunities and to promote mechanisms to achieve gender equality in all aspects of social, economic and political life.
37. We propose to introduce improved parental leave rights for men and women across Europe up to the highest standards in Europe.
38. We will campaign for equal political representation of women and men in all decision-making bodies at European level. We will campaign for a gender-equal European Commission and a gender-equal European Parliament, and will call for the creation of a European Commissioner for Gender Equality.
39. We will work to support parents so that they can balance their caring responsibilities with their professional responsibilities. To support this goal, we propose that member states achieve the existing EU target of 33% childcare coverage for 0-3 year olds and 90% coverage for children from 3-school age, and adopt complementary EU qualitative targets for childcare.
40. We will lead the fight to close the gender pay gap, which is vital to improve living standards, fight poverty and increase economic growth.
41. We will encourage and support women entrepreneurs, scientists and researchers to broaden their opportunities.

42. We will ensure and promote women's sexual and reproductive health rights throughout the EU.
43. We propose to step up European efforts to eradicate human trafficking and sexual exploitation through closer judicial and police cooperation.
44. We propose to encourage and support the EU and its Member States in their efforts to stop domestic and gender-specific violence, including that perpetrated against women of ethnic minorities, through all appropriate EU programmes and funds.

A new European progressive reform agenda is essential to continue the work we have already done in spearheading gender equality initiatives that help both women and men.

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5. Developing an effective European migration policy

Migration is one of the key challenges facing member states of the European Union. Europe's progressives are committed to addressing this issue on the basis of our values of fairness, democracy, human rights and solidarity.

Key challenges include the fight against illegal migration and human trafficking, ensuring a just asylum policy for those fleeing persecution, achieving fair and responsible legal migration – based on Europe's needs for labour and on migrants' rights – and enabling migrants to integrate into their new communities with equal rights and responsibilities.

We understand people's concerns about migration. That is also why we want reforms. The answer is not ghettos or xenophobia, but real reforms to ensure integration, fight illegal migration, illegal work and human trafficking, and work to create a better life for people in poorer countries outside Europe while preventing brain drain from developing countries.

Managing migration effectively:

45. We propose to establish common standards for legal migration into the European Union, based on solidarity and burden-sharing, while fully respecting member states' competences in this field.
46. We propose to establish a European Charter for the Integration of Migrants, based on equal rights and responsibilities and mutual respect, which should be coordinated closely with policies governing the admission of migrants. We want an integration policy that establishes an ongoing process to achieve inclusive citizenship and representation, as well as rights and duties for all citizens. Special attention should be paid to integrating women, young people and the European Roma population. We therefore propose to promote action at the appropriate levels (local, regional, national or European), such as language or cultural training, which supports the full integration of migrants in their new communities.
47. We propose to step up European efforts to combat illegal migration through a common External Border Control Policy, improved cooperation to fight human trafficking by criminal networks, and partnership agreements with third countries, including readmission procedures.
48. We are committed to strengthening cooperation with third countries (including on readmission procedures) in order to manage migration more effectively while promoting the economic and social development of those countries. We propose to deepen existing mechanisms, and create new ones, to address the consequences for developing countries of the loss of skilled workers in key sectors due to migration into the EU.
49. We support the further development of the Common European Asylum System, based on fair asylum rules for those fleeing persecution and on international human rights rules and burden-sharing amongst EU member states.

European cooperation is essential for an effective migration policy. This can only be achieved with a strong progressive majority in Europe.

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6. Enhancing Europe's role as a partner for peace, security and development

The EU should be a frontrunner in advancing peace and sustainable social and economic development worldwide, as a cornerstone for human security. Citizens still face threats in today's uncertain world. EU member states must work more closely together to ensure the security of our countries and our peoples. We believe that Europe needs a stronger common voice in the world to shape a better future for our citizens and the planet. We must work together for peace and partnership, and to eradicate poverty, in solidarity with people across the world.

Europe is already an active global player, but we must increase our influence and impact by coordinating our positions and speaking as much as possible with a single voice. Strengthening the role of the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security policy will be an important step forward in this respect. If we fail, the EU and its member states will become less and less relevant in world affairs. Today's global governance institutions have proved themselves to be ill-adapted to new global challenges. Therefore, we must take the lead in reforming global governance – in partnership with the new Democratic administration in the US - on the basis of a strengthened cooperative and multilateral approach.

The EU must step up its conflict-resolution, peace-keeping, and humanitarian efforts in crisis zones, and develop capacities to assist countries after civil or environmental crises. We must remove the root causes of conflict and terrorism in the world. Development policy towards poor, developing countries must be targeted, innovative and based on the involvement of people at grassroots level. It should notably support the important role of women as motors for development in these countries, for example by extending access to microcredit schemes.

Promoting peace and security:

50. We propose that the EU should increasingly work on conflict prevention, resolution and post-crisis management abroad, by improving European countries' joint capacities and sharing the burden of peace-keeping missions in crisis zones, within the framework of the United Nations.
51. We propose to strengthen police, judicial and security cooperation in combating drug trafficking, crime and terrorism. Fighting against terrorism should be a top priority and needs to be further strengthened as an EU objective, within the rule of law and without compromising fundamental freedoms. We will continue to promote a common European policy in this area, including the full implementation of the European strategy against terrorism and support for the EU Special Representative.
52. We propose to ensure that the EU establishes coherent disaster prevention tools.
53. We propose to step up European efforts to support international disarmament, including strengthening international agreements on arms control and non-proliferation, and making the EU Code of Conduct on weapons exports more restrictive and transparent. We want a world without nuclear weapons.
54. We propose that the EU actively promotes an Alliance of Civilisations through the United Nations, strengthening dialogue and partnership between peoples and cultures as a means to enhance world peace and security.
55. We propose to increase defence cooperation amongst European member states, without affecting the characteristics of individual Member States' defence and security policies. The new European defence initiative should be developed in coordination with NATO.
56. We support the reform of the United Nations, particularly the UN Security Council, as well as the revision of the decision-making process, mandate and functioning of the World Trade Organization, the World Bank and the regional banks, and the

International Monetary Fund. The allocation of voting rights in the IMF must better reflect the interests of developing countries, particularly the poorest amongst them.

57. We will promote a moratorium in the application of the death penalty in the United Nations.

Promoting partnership:

58. We believe the future of the Western Balkans lies within the EU, with stability bringing prosperity and security. We welcome membership talks with Croatia and support the start of EU membership negotiations with all other Western Balkans countries once all the criteria have been met. We believe that the EU should respect the fundamental rights of all peoples as well as supporting the multicultural and multi-religious nature of European societies. We support an open-ended process of negotiations with Turkey towards EU accession, based on clear criteria, and that both Turkey and the EU should fulfill their respective commitments.
59. Stability in countries neighbouring the EU is as important as enlargement. We want to strengthen the EU's neighbourhood partnerships. We propose the creation of a Black Sea Union and an Eastern Partnership to strengthen cooperation with our Eastern neighbours. The EU must also hold a structured dialogue with Russia, on issues including democracy, human rights, energy security and closer cooperation, including a new Baltic Sea regional initiative.
60. We will continue to support the strengthening of Euro-Mediterranean relations. The Union for the Mediterranean is the key instrument and framework for promoting democracy, economic and social development and human rights. Furthermore, we want the EU to play an active role in resolving conflict in the Middle East – with the aim of achieving a two-state solution between Israel and Palestine – not least by harnessing the efforts of the international community.
61. We propose that the EU develops its relations with the Latin American continent in order to create a real and comprehensive partnership on all the relevant issues and support its regional processes of integration.
62. We will continue to build a strong transatlantic partnership with the new Democratic leadership of the United States of America.
63. The EU must deepen its relations with China, encouraging improved human rights, and social and environmental standards, alongside a deepening of trade relations.
64. We strongly support closer ties with India as an emerging global actor, based on mutual respect and open dialogue.
65. We will work to fully implement and consolidate the Africa-EU Strategy to strengthen relations, solve common challenges, conclude Economic Partnership Agreements, and support the long-term development of Africa.

Eradicating poverty:

66. The new European Parliament's 2009-2014 term virtually coincides with the remaining timeframe for reaching the 2015 United Nations Millennium Goals. Progress to date has so far been primarily noted in the high-growth areas of Asia, notably China, whereas Africa is still suffering from the detrimental effects of extreme poverty. Rising food and fuel prices are also undermining the progress made so far in many places. We will use this Parliamentary term to push for efforts to reach the goals by 2015. We therefore propose to put international development goals at the heart of EU policies on aid, trade and the reform of global governance. New, innovative sources of financing are needed in addition to delivering existing European aid commitments - notably, attributing at least 0.7% of Gross National Income to development policy - in a more coordinated, efficient and targeted way. We support decentralised cooperation in European development policy, including the contribution that can be made by Europe's local

authorities. We will support the establishment of a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps.

67. The EU must support the multilateral trading system, to the benefit of developing countries in the WTO Doha Development Round, and to ensure a fairer domestic distribution of the benefits of trade opening, as well as guaranteeing better social and environmental standards.
68. We propose to address the global food crisis by working to prevent further speculation on food prices, and to promote food security by developing a new generation of aid and agricultural production policies.
69. We shall work to ensure that all EU trade agreements include appropriate, enforceable human, environmental and social rights clauses and that all trade agreements with developing countries - such as Economic Partnership Agreements - serve as a real tool for the economic and social development of the countries and regions concerned.
70. We will work to promote the expansion of fair trade goods across Europe. Promoting and raising awareness of fair trade measures will encourage sustainable development and help to guarantee decent wages for those in the developing world, contributing to improving the lives of millions of people worldwide.
71. Decent work must become a global objective to which all countries as well as international institutions and organisations are committed. This new global agenda must uphold core labour standards as well as promoting decent working conditions, adequate wages, social security and strengthened social dialogue.

A new European progressive reform agenda is essential to enhance the EU's role as a partner for peace, security and development, for the sake of our own future development and security as well as solidarity with other countries and peoples.

***We can build a fairer society by putting people first.
Let's take Europe in a new direction in June 2009.***

Make your vote count in Europe in June 2009

In these European elections, every citizen's vote will count. Men and women across Europe face a choice between a progressive European Union in which member states work together to tackle the challenges we face in the interests of all the people of Europe, or a conservative European Union which leaves the future of our countries and people in the hands of the market.

But to introduce the wide-ranging progressive reforms that put people first and are essential to secure the future well-being of European citizens and society as a whole, we need a strong progressive majority in the European Parliament. We socialist, social democrat, labour and democratic progressive parties are working to create that majority, in order to achieve our people's manifesto - our six reform priorities for a progressive Europe:

1. **Relaunching the economy and preventing new financial crises**
2. **New social Europe - giving people a fairer deal**
3. **Transforming Europe into the leading global force against climate change**
4. **Championing gender equality in Europe**
5. **Developing an effective European migration policy**
6. **Enhancing Europe's role as a partner for peace, security and development**

We have listened to people by holding a wide-ranging public consultation on our priorities. We now intend to act on what we have heard on the basis of the proposals set out in this people's manifesto. Together we are a force for change, and we can make a difference.

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