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PES Fundamental Programme

A proud record of achievements

History has shown that socialists and social democrats always strived for quality employment welfare, well-being and better lives for all in just societies. We paved the way for the welfare state, universal access to education and health care and equal rights for all. We have always believed in uniting people on a local, regional, national, European and international level. That's why we have always worked alongside the workers, feminist, youth and civic rights movements and will continue to do so. We strongly believe that we need allies in our fight for just societies and fulfilling lives for all.

Our political action has overcome war, dictatorship and totalitarianism. Not only do we believe in uniting people, we also believe in uniting countries in the European project. We want the European Union to be a true pledge of peace, progress and prosperity for all. Our Europe is a project of hope for every European.

Our values

The Party of European Socialists is a modern progressive European party. In our Declaration of Principles we defined five values as our moral compass for political action. We believe in freedom and democracy, equality and justice, and solidarity. In our Fundamental Programme we want to outline our vision for progressive societies and our common responsibility for Europe's future. To realize sustainable peace, progress and prosperity for all in the 21st century, we have to redesign the European Union as our framework for political action and to build a Social Union.

The challenges of the 21st century

There is no room for complacency when it comes to our values and we should continue to promote them. In today's world, they are at risk. Unbridled capitalism has plunged us into a crisis that threatens peace, prosperity and progress for all. Financial capitalism has produced a huge rise in inequalities in power, in wealth distribution, access to rights, information and knowledge and equal opportunities. It serves the interests of a privileged few, causing economic insecurity, unemployment, dwindling confidence in democracy and in the European project. The crisis undermines the confidence in European institutions. Extremism and xenophobia are on the rise and exacerbate social fragmentation. Unemployment threatens to condemn our youngsters to a future without hope. New challenges such as an increasing world population and ageing European population, climate change and overconsumption of natural resources also put our values under pressure.

The world is changing fast. Technological development and innovation have led to a level of economic, social and cultural interconnection and interdependence as never before. But it also fuels new inequalities. For more and more people the values of freedom, equality,

solidarity, justice and democracy are no longer anchored in the reality of their daily lives. Too many are concerned that they can no longer have aspirations and shape their future.

We, socialists, social democrats, labour and progressive democrats reject the politics of pessimism that claim that nothing can be done. We reject the language of hate that makes people and whole communities the scapegoats for the ills in societies. Instead we want to provide an answer to the challenges people face and restore a sense of hope in the future. Europe is our social and democratic response to the challenges of globalization.

Our progressive pledge for Europe

We pledge to work for a progressive Europe that is built on our values. We want to empower people to lead a fulfilling life in inclusive and just societies. Our commitment to full employment remains at the heart of our progressive pledge and political action. Together, we work on developing a sense of belonging for all inhabitants in the European Union. We want to restore the European Union as a project of hope, progress and prosperity for all. We will focus on three fields of action: a new democratic political economy, a new definition of social justice for all and a new progressive model for the European Union.

We need a **new political economy** so that all **stakeholders**, citizens and society alike, hold **democratic control** over the **social market economy**. The rise in prominence and over-reliance of financial capitalism has led to excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of a few and to power imbalances that threaten political and democratic processes. All inhabitants must be empowered to exercise democratic control. It also implies that all European economic decision making processes should be democratically accountable to people, and result in fast and responsible actions. The European Union is perceived as technocratic and has become far removed from the reality of people's lives. It is a matter of political responsibility to develop a European public sphere and democratic accountability. Constantly we need to consider which level of government is best equipped to deal with policies, taking into account their effectiveness as well as the ideal to keep policymaking close to people.

We want to **deliver social justice for all**. We want to reverse the trend of societal fragmentation, impoverishment and all growing inequalities. Inequalities erode the promise of a better life and the possibility for people to take part in society. Our commitment to **economic, social and political empowerment** leads to a new definition of social justice. Everyone has the inviolable right to lead a fulfilling life in a just society. This society is a society where women and men equally share power, responsibilities and rights. This also means that everyone has the responsibility to live well, on a personal level, towards one another and in society. **Quality education and a meaningful job**, embedded into strong welfare states, are at the heart of our **new Social Deal for Europe**.

We want to **redesign the European Union** so that it becomes a **Union of Solidarity**. This implies that **cooperation inside the European Union** creates a European society and a European democracy in which people, communities and countries act responsibly towards one another and for the rest of the world. It shapes the way we live and work together. We express solidarity towards countries in which the economy is in financial trouble and in which people are faced with unemployment and poverty. Strengthening internal economic, social and territorial cohesion will increase the **European Union's capacity to act at the international level for peace, prosperity and progress**. We live in a world of economic, social and cultural interconnection. We cannot develop in isolation from other regions of the world; and we cannot develop at the detriment of other regions of the world. A progressive, democratic European Union, with solidarity between European people and countries will guarantee that each and every person's life is more secure in the global, multi-polar age.

I. A new political economy

Our mission is to construct and redefine the European economic, social and political project. For that we have to enhance further integration in order to build stronger economic and political union. It derives from our belief that the European Union must become instrumental in reinstating economic stability, prosperity and social progress. A new political economy, based on interlinking our core values of freedom and democracy has to restore democratic control over economic decision making. This will pave the way towards an economy in which all stakeholders, citizens and society alike, hold democratic control over the social market economy. The economy should be at the service of people and societies. This should be a core task of the European and national institutions. The main goal of the economy is to create full quality employment and prosperity. Quality jobs have to guarantee economic security and well-being for workers now and for generations to come. Full and quality employment will be the basis for fair and sustainable growth that respects people and the environment and reinforces social cohesion. We want to restore the primacy of people and society over politics, the primacy of politics over the economy and the primacy of the real economy over financial capitalism. This implies democratically legitimized political institutions to counter-balance market forces. Democratic control and democratic participation on supranational level has to be enhanced.

For a European public sphere and true democracy

True European democracy is our ideal. It embodies our understanding of rights and mutual responsibilities, defined in our belief that together we can achieve more. Deliberative democracy is how we shape mutual relations between people within a society, whereas politics remains at their service and on their behalf steers socio-economic processes. This process must be framed within a sound European public sphere that serves as a space for continuous dialogue. We need to improve European democracy. The core European institutions need to be democratised. The role of the only directly elected institution, the European Parliament, needs to be strengthened. The European Commission needs to reflect the result of the European Parliament elections. We as a movement have a responsibility to democratise our parties and ensure equal representation within the parties.

The European public sphere must be a permanent feature of the European Union. The work of the European political parties is a resolute step in the right direction. Furthermore, it must function continuously, during European elections as well as through different forms of civic participation. The European Citizens Initiative is one example. Strengthening social dialogue and the role of the trade unions is also essential. Their valuable input on behalf of all working women and men should be complemented by contributions of civil society organizations, which among others, also foster participation of all those who remain outside of the scope of organized labour. The European Union must regain its wounded credibility if it wants to restore stability and be once again a vehicle for progress and prosperity for all. It was tarnished by the elitist nature of its decision-making processes and further undermined by its casual neglect of declining public support and the primacy of the single market over social issues that it advocated. Future European Union treaty reforms to strengthen the European democracy should be elaborated by a Convention in which parliaments and governments cooperate on an equal footing and in which civil society can participate. To enhance the European Union's credibility, we need to strengthen the democratic rights of European citizens. Thus, the right to vote on the regional level should be opened to every European citizen in the Member State he or she resides.

We live in a society, not in an economy

The economy must serve society. It must be subordinated to the primacy of democratically legitimized politics that determine the rules within which the economy and financial markets work. A reformed political economy must empower people to exercise democratic control and to frame the political mandate of all the European institutions. This mandate must be executed through a new economic, social and democratic institutional setup. Based on rules that abide by the principles of accountability and transparency, it must govern towards a social market economy.

Economic governance of the European Union must become a tool to commonly and decisively shape economic policies in a spirit of solidarity. It must become anchored in a process of democratic deliberation at all levels of governance. Economic governance should not only take into account budgetary and market considerations, but also social effects and the necessity of a well-functioning welfare state. Our framework of reference is the European Union of twenty eight Member States even though the economic challenges we face are global. Economic forces ask for a strong societal and political counter power. European institutions have to bridge national interests. Only then will truly democratic control over economic decision making be realized, and will all stakeholders be made accountable to one another. As the directly elected body, the European parliament should be able to propose laws. Furthermore, it should be part of the decision making process for the Annual Growth Survey and play a key role in the European semester. We acknowledge that the European Central Bank plays a crucial role in the resolution of the current crisis, notably starting to buy sovereign bonds. Price stability cannot be the only goal of the European Central Bank. Future orientation of the European Central Bank should equally include the level of employment and economic growth.

For a stakeholder economy

We strive to build a European social market economy. The economy must become a servant of citizens' interests and a tool to improve the living conditions of all Europeans. People must be empowered stakeholders of our economies instead of being subjected to the interest of few share-holders. This democratic principle is at the heart of our new political economy. Every woman and man has a stake in the real economy, either as a worker or as an entrepreneur, investor, and consumer or as an end-user of public services. The public sector, social enterprises, and small and large businesses are stakeholders too. We must strive to empower all stakeholders equally to have a say in shaping the social market economy. This way we will fight power gaps produced by unregulated markets.

The European social market economy must be shaped by transparent rules. We cannot allow such high concentration of income, wealth and power accumulation in the hands of the few. This has enabled some to gain huge assets, which magnitude may even put democratic states at the edge of bankruptcy. Improved coordination and cooperation at all levels of governance with in-built democratic checks and balances is needed, both to tackle the excesses of financial capitalism and to improve transparency in the allocation and use of public funds. What is more, we need to combine budgetary discipline with European forms of mutualisation of risks. Moreover, better engagement and protection of consumers and end-users in product development and services provision can secure better quality and smarter consumption patterns. In order to better distribute power among the stakeholders we want to encourage codetermination and workers participation. Through support for cooperatives and mutual organizations we seek to stimulate democratic entrepreneurship models.

Taming financial capitalism and restoring the Real Economy

The predominance of the real economy over financial sector has to be restored. Financial markets must be made accountable to people, societies and elected representatives. Greed, speculations and lack of transparency in the financial sector has had profoundly damaging effects on people's lives. It led to power imbalances and growing inequalities. Global financial capitalism must be checked by adequate coordination, regulation and control at international, European and national levels. We are in favour of the Financial Transaction Tax as one of the tools to tame financial capitalism. Social Democrats are fighting against tax-havens, tax fraud, tax evasion and aggressive tax planning. Tax havens must be closed.

The financial sector must ensure liquidity and protect deposits, while providing credit for investment by lending to stakeholders in the real economy. The European Union must become part of a framework for coordination of efforts to establish rules of transparency in financial markets and for the banking sector. Separating retail and investment banking activities, making full use of corporate governance rules and new pay systems will tackle irresponsible behaviour. Consumer protection laws need to be strengthened to safeguard people's savings. Capital requirements and resolution funds set at European and international level will help to guarantee a more resilient financial system and banking sector. At the same time it is important that the rights, duties and the voice of non-eurozone members are respected."

For sustainable growth that brings prosperity for all

Prosperity results from economic development that combines sustainable growth and social progress for all. Full employment based on ensuring quality jobs, well-being and welfare, high living standards and social cohesion, preservation of natural resources and improving the environment – these criteria are indicators of fair and sustainable growth. We will achieve it by investment in research, innovation, infrastructure and human potential. To achieve sustainable and fair growth, we need new ways of measuring economic performance, with a series of qualitative indicators that complement GDP.

The European Union needs a new sustainable development and prosperity strategy. It must enable all regions to develop to their best potential, while increasing social, economic and territorial cohesion throughout the Union. A new European industrial agenda should encourage regional specialization and boost comparative advantages of industrial growth sectors. It must be built on the European Union's local and regional authorities' grassroots knowledge of the structure of industry in each region. Europe needs a strong and healthy industry, providing decent work for the European citizens and contributing to sustainable growth. A European industrial policy needs to be developed, supporting the industry and providing the necessary infrastructure, especially to Small and Medium Enterprises, while social and environmental standards are protected. Instead of competing for the lowest prices, Europe's products and services need to offer the best quality and must be the most innovative. Member States, the local and regional authorities' as well as social partners need to be fully involved in developing a European industrial policy. Europe must be strongly connected to the World. EU must have a comprehensive strategy that includes high social, environment and human rights standards, in full respect of cultural diversity, to reach trade agreements with third countries. There is an urgency to create significant number of decent jobs to face the high level of unemployment and poverty.

Fighting inequalities

Our commitment to full employment and high quality jobs remains at the heart of our progressive pledge and political action. We need a new equilibrium between the value of labour and the value of capital. Generating sustainable growth and ensuring a fair distribution of income, wealth and power will create more equal societies with higher levels

of social mobility. This requires strong labour market institutions and social protection provisions – acting as automatic stabilizers. These are a unique comparative advantage for Europe in the global economy.

The European Union and the Member States will increase their capacity to act in favour of growth by making full use of the European budget's resources and potential. The European Union must be equipped with a well-balanced and fair European Budget. It must be reformed so that the budgetary lines and allocation of means to better serve economic prosperity, technological innovation and social justice. We must strive for radical reform to ensure that the European Budget is an investor in jobs, growth and future industry. "This will reflect the clear political choice to invest in the welfare of all European citizens. Furthermore, increasing democratic control and transparency of European budget policy is essential to achieve these goals. In the long run, we should therefore consider a synchronisation of the European budget cycle and political mandates, especially, the mandate of the European Parliament. The debate on the European Union financial architecture must go beyond the technocratic discourse focused on power shifts and the 'subsidiarity principle'. Structural and cohesion funds are the tools to enhance political actions at local, regional and national levels.

For fiscal justice

Fiscal policies are fundamental to reduce inequalities and to generate fair and sustainable economic growth. We need strong actions against tax evasion. We can no longer allow this race to the bottom. In order to install more social justice in the European Union, we need fiscal convergence. Tax systems must be progressive and fair. The fiscal burden must be shifted from labour onto capital, by introducing fair corporate tax systems. In addition, full use must be made of fiscal incentives as a source for investment in job creation, education, research and innovation. Fiscal competition leading to social dumping has to be ended.

The European Union and Member States have to take a leading role in ensuring fiscal justice. We must promote policies that prioritize growth and investment while ensuring a fairer distribution of income, wealth and power based on the respect of national differences. A just fiscal agenda is fundamental tool to create a virtuous circle for growth in the European Union and to ensure long-term sustainability of the European Monetary Union. It will help balance public debt management and stimulate investment. The European Union has to actively work to close loopholes and distortions in tax policies and regulations and to tackle tax havens. It must tackle any other mechanisms that enable owners and controllers of wealth to escape their responsibilities to society.

II. A new Social Deal for Europe

All people are born equal. That's why everyone's human, economic, social and cultural rights are guaranteed and respected. All have equal rights to be empowered to lead fulfilling lives in just societies, in which gender equality is promoted and implemented at levels and in all spheres. Our political mission is about continuous emancipation for every woman and man regardless of their age, sexual orientation, ethnic or social background, origin and religious beliefs, disabilities, gender identity or mental and physical ability. All people are entitled to progress, climbing the social ladder without being hindered by any forms of discrimination or inherited privileges. Every woman and man has a responsibility to live well, contributing to society, according to his or her abilities. This embodies our principle of social justice.

The responsibility to live well in a just society

Just societies are societies in which women and men work together, on an equal footing, for equal pay, to create the circumstances for a secure and fulfilling life. Furthermore, these are inclusive societies that draw strength from the diversity of all people. An inclusive society means that nobody is left behind. Everyone should be empowered to build inclusive and just societies, to share responsibility for their development and to benefit from the security and opportunities we create together. They have a richness that goes beyond material wealth, so that each person's fulfillment is also part of a collective endeavour.

To enable all people to lead a fulfilling and promising life, everyone must be equally empowered to exercise all rights and opportunities at every stage of one's life. This is the goal of the new Social Deal for Europe. It reflects our determination to provide economic security and protection against the risks in life. It also embodies our belief that well-being and quality of life are essential for leading a fulfilling and promising life. We will empower all people thanks to meaningful employment, quality education, health, access to culture and a sustainable living, and by enabling all to take part in society.

For gender equality

Women and men must equally share work, share power, share time and share roles, both in the public and in the private realms. Gender equality is one of the founding principles of our movement and one key value of the European Union. Our goals are to empower women in society, in the work place, in political and economic decision-making, and in the private sphere as well as fighting stereotyped gender role models, detrimental to the self-fulfillment of both women and men.

The European Union should invest in strategies to promote the equal representation of women and men, such as quotas in politics and business. These should be seen as an intermediate step towards parity. Women's economic independence has to be strengthened, notably through gender budgeting, with the aim to close the gender pay gap and consequently the gender pension gap. Guaranteeing women's sexual and reproductive health rights is embodied in our belief that women have the right to choose and decide for themselves. The European Union should work to eliminate violence against women as well as all forms of gender-based stereotypes. Furthermore, the European Union has a duty to ensure women's rights and gender equality are included in all agreements with third countries

Strengthening and modernizing our welfare states

The modern welfare states are built upon the values of equality, justice and solidarity. Rights and duties for everybody must be the guiding principle to ensure the cohesion and coherence of our societies. We are committed to safeguarding, reforming and strengthening welfare states. Welfare states are a prerequisite to ensure fair and sustainable economic growth and to reduce inequalities based on cultural and socio-economic background, and inequalities between women and men. We must reinstate a dynamic understanding of our welfare states. They must provide an adequate, socially just and economically fair response to demographic change, transformation of labour market structures and new social risks. Continuous reform must enable our valuable welfare states to better deal with the dynamics of changing societies and a world in transition.

This is why Europe needs a fundamental progressive shift towards strengthening and modernizing welfare states. Member States should be encouraged and supported to develop active welfare states, providing education, training and active labour market policies. Everyone in the European Union should have access to social protection and health care. Reforming our welfare states must focus on providing autonomy in life as opposed to

dependence. It must overcome the divides between the insiders and outsiders of labour markets. It also entails investing in quality public and social services. It must respond to demographic change by developing childcare and public pension schemes. Modern welfare states must ensure legal recognition of domestic work, which is crucial in coping with ageing societies and changing labour market structures. The goal is to reverse the consequences of austerity, which erode social cohesion, gender equality and jeopardize people's opportunities in life.

For quality education

Access to free, quality education for all is a cornerstone of a just society. The new Social Deal must guarantee equal opportunities to learn and progress for all women and men throughout their lives. Quality education embodies our pledge that everyone is guaranteed equal opportunities throughout life, whatever the socio-economic, cultural background, gender, the place they live in or their position in society. Quality education empowers people, as citizens and as workers to influence societies they live in. Our commitment to the principle of individual empowerment translates to our demand for equal access to quality education and sound learning for all, while knowledge and information should be seen as a public good accessible for all. Starting from early years, individuals must have possibilities to acquire knowledge, skills and abilities, education must equip people to overcome all the challenge in life. Equal access to quality education starting at the earliest stages in life, through high quality and affordable childcare for all, is the first and essential building block for a fulfilling life. It is a tool also to fight stereotypes, prejudices and stigmatisation.

Formal and informal learning are all important. Further efforts to properly assess education and skills on the European Union level are desired in order to ensure that the principle of equality and social justice apply for all. Assessing education and skills across the European Union is necessary to ensure that equal opportunities apply to all and in the same way on the European labour market. Common quality standards for dual education, for apprenticeships and for internships should apply, to ensure the best possible education and training, while avoiding that young people are exploited. European exchange programmes foster inter-cultural understanding and the sense of a European identity. They should be further developed.

For quality and meaningful employment

We believe in the unalienable right of everyone to a quality and meaningful job. This derives from our commitment to full employment. Every woman and man, young or old, must be given the opportunity to have a job that matches their knowledge, skills and abilities, while providing opportunities to flourish and to advance professionally. Meaningful jobs must guarantee economic security and independence as well as offer the opportunity of personal development. Quality employment must be anchored in our welfare states. Adequate social, health, education and insurance policies must enable people to feel secure and to lead fulfilling lives.

A Social Union must be implemented alongside the Economic Union in order to overcome inequalities, ensure social progress and to deliver on full and quality employment. At the heart of a Social Union should be a Social Progress Pact, consisting of binding social progress targets in the fields of employment, education, innovation and social cohesion, agreed on by the Member States, the European Union and the Social Partners. To achieve social convergence to the highest levels, new and more ambitious Europe-wide common social standards must be introduced. A new European Employment and Social Investment Programme will outline an answer to the scandalous rise of poverty, social injustices, unemployment and the high rates of youth unemployment in some Member States. Effective

tools at local, regional, national and European level – such as the youth guarantee and redistribution of working time – need to be put in place to fight against this tragedy. On the path towards social progress and social justice, the role of social partners in the European Union and on the national level should be strengthened. Social partners must be included in designing agreements concerning Europe’s labour markets regulations. Work-related risks should be continuously supervised. Stress, over-burdening and isolation leading to consequent burnouts should be seen as societal and not individual-only issues. Employers should have an obligation to provide ways to prevent exposing employees to them. We also want to pay strong attention to how working life fits into the other social and personal activities and to the quality of working environments because it has an impact on productivity and on personal well-being. Work should be strongly anchored in our welfare states. It is only one dimension of a person’s life. That’s why reconciliation of private and professional life for women and men must underpin both labour market and welfare state reforms. Having a family, enjoying leisure time and taking part in voluntary and civic engagement can be equally important to a fulfilling life.

For a living wage and equal pay for equal work

Work must pay sufficiently to enable economic security. A sufficient living wage for all must be framed by fair, legally binding contracts designed according to the labour law and the decisions taken through social dialogue. Minimum wages should be introduced in each member state, taking into account the existing labour market conditions and in full respect of the social dialogue. Work should also guarantee social security provision and is therefore always anchored in our welfare states. Workers must be entitled to have a meaningful say regarding wage settlements. This should enable fairer distribution of company profits with all employees. Bonuses should also be subjected to increased scrutiny. Labour market regulations and institutions, at national, European and international levels are tools to achieve more equality and efficiency. Better regulation of the financial sector and greater workplace representation on company boards would ensure greater equality and efficiency in the workplace.

The equal pay for equal work principle is essential for providing social justice, equal rights to autonomy and for reducing the gender pay gap. Closing the gender pay gap goes beyond only ensuring equal pay for equal work between women and men, but should also tackle the other contributing aspects such as part-time work, the glass ceiling, poverty, vertical and horizontal segregation and better work-life balances for all women and men. We also clearly oppose wage discrimination of any sort, such as discrimination against ethnic minorities, immigrants or people with disabilities. It must be further reinforced by making all employers obey the same obligations for all employees according to the standards of the work place and regardless of the origin of the firm, the type of contract of the employee, or whether the employer is a sub-contractor. The fight against social dumping, which continues to take place through legal loopholes and lack of enforcement, must be a priority for socialists and social-democrats. Internships that facilitate the entry of young women and men into the labour market must be considered both as educational experiences, and as work to which social security and salary provisions apply. Interns must be treated with economic fairness, and in no case should internships serve as an opportunity for employers to exploit young people. The entitlements to pension benefits must abide by the standards of social justice and human dignity. This embodies our commitment to actively prevent exploitation, discrimination, impoverishment and social dumping.

For sustaining public goods and public services

Public goods are essential for societies to function and to achieve social justice. They fulfill the fundamental role of generating a sense of collective responsibility and a sense of

belonging in society. They are the link between individual and collective responsibility. Safeguarding public goods is based on reciprocity between a person's rights to benefit from a public good and his or her responsibility to sustain the public good. This means that others, including future generations, may also be able to enjoy its use and its benefits. Furthermore, to ensure equal access to public services, they should be provided universally to all.

Strong and accountable public authorities all along the democratic chain, from the local, regional and national levels to the European level of government, are essential to guarantee both reciprocity and universal provision over time. Public authorities must ensure the delivery and sustainability of public goods by creating a modern framework of equally accessible, high quality and affordable public services. These goals must be common to all Member States. The European Union must provide a framework for the provision of public goods and public services that guarantees the autonomy of the relevant organisation and public authorities at national, regional or local level in ensuring an efficient provision of these goods and services. Our welfare states depend on the provision of public services. Social services are a form of public services that must be provided with a combination of universalised and individualised provision. Services of general interests must be safeguarded from profit driven competition. They should be considered as public entitlements and tools of empowerment for fulfilling lives, which prove that equality and efficiency are two sides of the same coin. Besides from safeguarding cultural exception and artists and creators rights, the European Union must develop a cultural policy that aims at guaranteeing diversity and accessibility to all forms of cultural and artistic expression.

III. A Union of solidarity

We need to become a Union of solidarity. Our political mission is to fight it in the name of our beliefs that solidarity makes progressive change possible, since only united people can achieve more. A Union of Solidarity would guide the way we live and work together. The Union of Solidarity would shape the manner in which Europe meets its responsibilities to deliver peace progress and prosperity inside and outside of the European Union. Reducing inequalities inside the European Union will strengthen the Union's capacity to act in the world. People must be empowered to take responsibility for one another and for the way we live together. Through enhanced solidarity we can restore people's sense of belonging to the European Union.

Together we are stronger

We strive towards a European society in which all people define themselves not only as members of a national, regional or local community but also as Europeans and in which people, countries and regions share responsibility for one another. We believe that we are stronger when we work together. Solidarity means uniting for a common cause. People must be empowered to assume responsibilities for one another, between women and men, between communities and between generations. Our renewed vision of solidarity is a joint investment in our common future. It means lasting justice and solidarity between generations. We have to ensure that pensions, health care and social protection systems are accessible for elderly people. Access to universal and free education is crucial to ensure our children and grandchildren have the means for emancipation.

Within our Union we jointly strive for developing our communities, our rural areas, towns, cities and regions. Initiatives that organize life within our communities and foster volunteering must be supported. They allow people to get together and work together to make the progressive change we all long for. To that end, we must develop new strategies to strengthen social cohesion and exchanges between communities and people. We will

prevent exclusion and stigmatization by building new links. These efforts can restore the sense of belonging to the European Union.

Fighting extremism, discrimination and xenophobia

Respect for democracy and the rule of law in Europe are fundamental values that must be enforced with clear sanctions and reinforcement mechanisms whenever nationalism, anti-democratic propaganda, discrimination, xenophobia and homophobia gain ground. The crisis led to spread of influence of far-right nationalist populism. These trends lead to a lack of democratic standards and undermine constitutional provisions, which is why it is important that anti-discrimination legislation and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights are forcefully implemented and rightfully respected by all Member States.

Social integration has to be based on the understanding that all people enjoy the same rights and responsibilities. To ensure that integration is a success, an inclusive approach through education for children from an early age, knowledge of language, access to employment, housing, social services and community life has to be adopted, whilst demanding respect for responsibilities. Human rights prevail in our approach to migration as opposed to the security discourse that makes migrants the scapegoats for ills in society and in the economy. Strengthening our approach on the common external borders, with burden sharing, will help prevent human trafficking, in particular of women, and criminal networks. Integration is the other major component to our approach to migration.

For a union of convergence and cohesion

The future of the European Union depends on a renewed commitment to solidarity. The gap between regions and countries in the European Union is too wide and is undermining democratic legitimacy and trust in European decision making processes. Stronger coordination and cooperation is needed to tame financial capitalism, reduce inequalities between Europe's regions, overcome trade imbalances within the European Monetary Union, improve public finances, and ensure necessary investment in sustainable economic growth to overcome the crisis.

We must reinforce the unity in the European Union. The structural weaknesses of the Eurozone are hindering Europe's ability to act in the face of the challenges of today. We reject the approach that endorses the European project as one of different pace and levels of integration only. In the long term it does not provide an answer to recovery. Solidarity - convergence and coherence – are the only alternatives to the vicious circle of subordination of governments to capital markets. Whenever applicable, we support uniting within the framework of enhanced cooperation that is a tool to pave the path forward for integration in specific areas as long as it does not undermine the democratic legitimacy of European institutions. Furthermore, fighting organized crime, corruption and money laundering must be a clear political priority in the European Union and its Member States. These crimes are a serious threat to cohesion, economic development and people's welfare. Corruption eats away the legitimacy and trust in democratic institutions and erodes ethics and integrity. Transparency in public procurement, business practices, in the banking and financial system must be guaranteed.

For common European social standards

A Union of solidarity must guarantee minimum European social standards. This commitment reflects an ambition to progress altogether. They should guarantee the human, social, economic, political and cultural rights of all women and men. At the same time, we perceive

those minimum standards as tools and not as final goals. They are and will always be only benchmarks on the way towards the realisation of an inclusive and just society, which we never stop striving for. In that sense they are indicative in helping assessing and enhancing political actions on local, regional, national and European levels.

Common European social standards and minimum income have to be ensured throughout the European Union. Exploitation, discrimination, impoverishment and social dumping have to be actively prevented. The Social Progress Protocol has to be implemented to give fundamental social rights dominance over economic freedoms. This will end the erosion of the labour market standards allowed by unfair practices that abuse workers. More action has to be undertaken to promote the improvement of living and working conditions. Within a Union of Solidarity, the European Union should encourage Member States and local and regional authorities to provide decent and affordable social housing.

For sustainable development

Our strong commitment to the principles of sustainable development underpins the Union of Solidarity. We work to preserve the planet's resources rather than exhaust them. Environmental sustainability means that we safeguard nature for present and future generations, not only in European cities and countries but across the globe. The logic of shared responsibility for the environment we live in must guide our production and consumption behaviours. Our policies must be socially responsible and environmentally friendly. We believe that the European Union is able to restore its ability to generate prosperity, wealth and wellbeing, and that it must be done through ecological awareness and consideration.

Everyone has a right to live in a healthy environment, and everyone is equally entitled to secure access to food and clean water. These are the global public goods that must be guaranteed for all people, such as water, food security, ecosystems. The environment is a public good because everyone is equally responsible for its preservation and future generations must benefit from the same environmental quality as we do now. Fighting climate change is also crucial for the preservation of global ecosystems, which are vital for the welfare of people now and in the future. We must tackle climate change and exhaustion of natural resources to sustain the quality of the world we live in and to prevent future dramatic consequences for the world's population, for our development and for the global economy. The European Union must become a global leader in the transition to a low carbon economy and resource-efficient economy and work towards establishing extensive global rules to reduce green-house gas emissions and for a sustainable and responsible use of natural resources. A credible European roadmap to a sustainable world where global social justice prevails and our ecosystems flourish must include both mitigation and adaptation. The European Union is the appropriate level to deal with upcoming energy challenges. A common European energy policy must become a crucial building block of the European integration in the future.

For a values based foreign policy

We believe that we can only have viable and durable peace and stability if a government provides to its own inhabitants, security, freedom (meaning democracy, the rule of law and respect of human rights), economic prosperity, social progress and equality, including gender equality. We hold this to be true in the European Union and for all societies across the globe. Our economic interests must not be achieved at the expense of democratic and human rights in the regions and countries we engage with across the world. We must make full use of the European Union's special experience of close cooperation between states to

guarantee peace and prosperity to support our partners in neighbouring regions and across the globe.

There can be no 'one size fits all' solution. Only in full cooperation with locally driven reform processes and without imposing any specific model can we truly reach the goals we set for an effective foreign policy. Our expertise and knowledge must support democratic, social and economic transition processes enhancing life opportunities regardless of where a person is born and in full respect of women's rights. By addressing the root causes of insecurity and instability outside of the European Union we will increase security inside the European Union.

Europe must stand for openness, transparency and fairness in its enlargement processes to promote Europe's core values of respect for human dignity, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights. These allow to jointly advance the agenda of peace, prosperity and progress for all. These guidelines must also underpin European Neighborhood policies, to build together democratic societies that are able to provide new opportunities. Europe must assume its responsibility to support people Middle East and North Africa and in Eastern countries in their struggle for a better future; the European Union should contribute actively to democratic transition, socio-economic development and guaranteeing social justice. All countries with membership perspective shall become full members of the European Union once they meet the conditions.

The European Union as a frontrunner for peace and global social justice

We believe that Europe must assume its international responsibilities and play an important role in shaping the new, post-crisis, multi-polar global order with strong emerging political and economic blocks. This task must be carried out within an enhanced institutional architecture that remains accountable to people and pave the way towards more stability. Through its joint international activities, the European Union should redefine the global approach towards the international security. Furthermore, participation and accountability are important. Citizens' involvement must be central to define and implement policies to fight poverty and to create a new legitimate human development framework.

The commitment to international solidarity means that the European Union must never give up on its development and aid policies. These are under pressure because of the cuts due to austerity. Our profound promise for Europe to humanity is to reach beyond Europe in our global fight against poverty, social exclusion and rising inequalities, and to promote sustainable human development and fair trade underpinned with a human rights approach. It reflects our responsibility to ensure the equal distribution of knowledge, income and power that can enable fair and sustainable growth. Aid efficiency, quality and transparency, as well as international and bilateral trade agreements constitute one of the ways for the European Union to promote binding commitments to core labour and environmental standards and our conduct must reflect that promise to humanity. Hence, we will not give up on our struggle for an economy that will serve the people and the planet, for decent work and decent living standards, for equality between women and men, for empowerment through education and access to adequate social protection for all. Coherence within European Union policy is paramount to achieving progress in the fight against global inequalities.

In addition, Europe has to maintain its humanitarian commitment to people suffering because of armed conflict – especially women and children – while providing peace building support for reconstruction after the conflict is resolved. Women should not only be considered as victims but also as decision-makers and active actors of change, development, peace-building and democratization processes. Being an actor for peace also entails using first all diplomatic tools to end conflicts – including imposing severe sanctions

against perpetrators – before considering armed conflict. Our actions are also guided by the principle of multilateralism. We reaffirm the United Nations' primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. In the event of an intervention, the approval within the United Nations has to be sought. Hence, the European Member States have to act in the United Nations in a more concerted way and speak with one voice. We should request a permanent seat for the European Union in the United Nations Security Council. We fight for a world without nuclear and chemical weapons. Besides, we strongly support steps towards gradual disarmament and stricter rules for non-proliferation as an integral part of our peace policy. In alignment with UN and International treaties and covenants, the European Union has to be an actor for peace by actively campaigning for non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and against cluster munitions, chemical or biological weapons and landmines, by using all its available policy tools to do so. We are committed to strengthen the European Foreign and Security Policy in order to make Europe a frontrunner for an active and responsible peace policy.

A progressive alternative for the future of Europe

We believe in the European Union as a project that brings people, societies, regions and states together in the name of peace, prosperity and progress for all. We believe that our political mission provides an alternative vision for the future of Europe so that it can develop and thrive carrying once again a message of hope for all men and women.

A new political economy aims at full employment and empowering all stakeholders, to restore democratic control over economic decision making. This will pave the way towards a social market economy that is accountable to people and society.

A new Social Deal for Europe embodies our commitment to equality and justice. We believe that European Union must deliver social justice by protecting and empowering people to lead fulfilling lives in just societies and face the challenges of the evolving world.

The Union of Solidarity is the way we want to build relations among individuals, societies and countries. It reflects our commitment to take responsibility for one another and to stand together in a common mission for a peaceful and just world. PES will work together with progressive movements all over the world.

To that end, the European Union, its institutions and policies must become instrumental in realising this political mission outlined in our Fundamental Programme. As PES – the Party of European Socialists together with all its members, elected representatives, activists, partners and supporters – we will strive to engage people in a dialogue, to gain public trust and to deliver on this pledge. A common manifesto and a common candidate for European Commission President that we will present during the European elections will symbolise our political unity for progressive change in Europe.