OUR PRIORITIES
for social progress

Forging a future that is not only social and sustainable but also upholds the principles of the rule of law, human rights, gender equality, solidarity and diversity. Empowering our democracy and society, and every individual in it.

Our journey is an ongoing commitment, demanding unwavering determination as we strive to shape a society marked by shared prosperity and equality. By sending our priorities to the leaders of democratic groups at the European Parliament, we aim to infuse our vision into their campaign manifestos for the pivotal 2024 European Parliament elections and push for real and sustainable social progress for the next EU mandate

SOCIAL CHALLENGES

Too many people are suffering hardship or are excluded from society because of poverty, discrimination, lack of education, or other disadvantages. Jobs and working conditions need to be improved, also to combat the ongoing mental health crisis.

We need a Sustainable Development and Social Progress pact, with quality jobs for everyone. The Social Pillar must be implemented fully and effectively. EU economic governance must have as a goal to reduce inequality and foster wage convergence. A Social Progress Protocol in the EU treaties is necessary. In addition, we need ambitious and binding due diligence and corporate accountability mechanisms.

Social partners must be at the core of policymaking: involving collective bargaining and workers' voice at the workplace, integrating social dialogue into the European Industrial Strategy, protecting and restoring collective bargaining coverage levels, and assisting in the fight against the far right is crucial.

ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

Geopolitical tensions, job insecurity, precarious work, climate change, the cost-of-living crisis and digitalisation provide new economic challenges to European workers. It is vital to reshape the EU economic governance, the European Semester, the MFF and the EU own resources.

The Social Economy Action Plan must be implemented. The Stability and Growth pact must be reformed before it is reintroduced, and a deep reform of taxation with justice and solidarity in mind, and securing the EU own resources for a strong common budget must be a priority.

Sustainability in social, economic, and environmental terms must guide economic policy, ensuring the European semester is tied to the Just Transition goals and the Green Transition policies are carried forward. Investment, finance, and public procurement must also be based on sustainability, which must also guide the idea of competitiveness and drive our economies beyond GDP.

ENVIRONMENTAL CHALLENGES

Climate change poses an existential threat to human civilisation, to our societies. Tackling it, deploying policies to minimise it, the green transition, decarbonisation and the circular economy, along with digitalisation, are all having an impact on the world of work in terms of changing the nature of jobs and tasks, and creating new occupations, while eliminating others. These transitions are interlinked and mutually reinforcing.

The idea of a Just Transition must guide all related policymaking, supporting citizens and workers, reskilling and upskilling, offering quality jobs and involving workers at every stage. The Just Transition Mechanism and the Social Climate Fund must be expanded and accompanied by a directive for a Just Transition.

Regional imbalances and vulnerable groups must be taken into special consideration, and the Green Deal should

be central to trade agreements. The electricity market should also be reformed in depth to ensure stability and affordability, as well as security of supply, diversification and sustainability.

DIGITAL TRANSITION

Digitalisation has brought about economic and societal benefits for employees, such as increased flexibility, autonomy, and opportunities for achieving work-life balance. It has also created an undesirable work culture where workers should be continuously available and connected for work-related requests and has opened the way for increased workers' surveillance. These harmful consequences on workers need to be addressed.

We need to protect working conditions, in particular of platform workers, ensure that digital literacy is accessible and widespread, close the digital gap, provide life-long learning and upskilling opportunities, and make it inclusive for all.

Artificial Intelligence must be used for the common good, preventing the ethical issues it presents. Humans must remain in control, collective bargaining in AI-related work environments must take place, biometric surveillance must be banned, and a reform of the social security system must take place so that robotisation does not hamper our social systems' functioning.

MIGRATION

Mass migration is a massive human challenge, and has become a highly political issue, particularly with the far right. An answer in line with human rights and respect for the value of human life is needed, where solidarity is a guiding principle to ensure the most effective asylum policies, the possibility to find a safe haven, and safe and legal pathways to reach Europe. It must be coupled with support for border EU member states and effective cooperation mechanisms with a long-term plan to provide stability, democracy and prosperity to the EU neighbourhood and beyond.

We need to finalise the Pact on Migration and Asylum to protect people's integrity and rights. We must push for information campaigns showing empirical evidence on migration, and for establishing effective search and rescue systems in the sea and also review the Dublin Agreements on asylum and first countries.

RULE OF LAW AND FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS

Democracy rests not just on the will of the majority, but also on the respect for minorities and political differences, with everyone subject to the rule of law and entitled and protected by fundamental rights. The far right, disinformation campaigns, and the spread of fake news, pose an existential threat to it.

We need to fight against any kind of discrimination, tackle the spread of fake news and disinformation and ensure a working civil and legal framework for the independence of civil society, trade unions and business associations. It's important to combat extremism, monitor social rights, and promote democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights, including economic and social rights.

GLOBAL AGENDA

In the current geopolitical environment, we must defend a global agenda driven by a multilateral approach and multilateral institutions, rather than protectionism and unilateralism, with respect and support of human rights and working for peace and security in the world.

Priority must be given to fair trade agreements, the functioning of EU-UK relations and the protection of social conditions. We also need support for Ukraine and for Russia's withdrawal, long term investment with Africa and Mercosur, and fostering enlargement of the EU.

BETTER POLICYMAKING AND FORESIGHT

Foresight must be an open and pluralist exercise that continuously involves organized civil society, in particular the EESC, at each stage of the foresight process and the definition of reference scenarios. The reference scenario of the foresight exercise should aim at the well-being of European populations through a fair socio-ecological transition giving public health concerns a fair place.