

1 *Political Action Programme of the Party of the European Left 2011-2013*
2 *Motion of the EL-ExBoard to the EL 3rd Congress*
3 *Paris*
4 *December 3-5, 2010*

5

6 **Agenda for a social Europe**

7

8 **Joint Action Platform for resistance and alternatives in** 9 **Europe**

10

11 The 3rd Congress of the European Left is taking place as more and more
12 unbearable sacrifices are imposed on European people. Indeed, in the vast
13 majority of European countries, programmes of public spending cuts, of
14 super-austerity, of liberalisation of public services and the labour market are
15 being implemented. To generalise these policies, countries, with the full
16 complicity of their governments are being placed under custody of the
17 European Commission, the European Central Bank (ECB) and other
18 institutions such as the IMF.

19

20 These policies are presented as a necessary response to the financial and
21 economic crisis. But this is a crisis of market supremacy and big capital, a
22 crisis of the current mode of globalised and financial capitalism. This crisis
23 also impacts on the environment, energy, food, cultural and moral values.
24 Therefore this crisis finds expression at all political levels and in all societies
25 marked by the ruling capitalist mode of production and similarly at the EU
26 level with its recent orientations, neoliberal policies and institutions.

27

28 The current debt problem constitutes a new phase of the protracted crisis. It
29 has its roots in the economic and political developments of the last 30 years.
30 Interlinking the multiple causes of the crisis, it is increasingly impacting on
31 people's everyday lives.

32

33 We, the Party of the European Left, together with other socialist, communist
34 and red-green parties and organisations – widely regarded as the current
35 plural European left, oppose these neoliberal policies and structures applied
36 to the EU via successive treaties up to and including the Lisbon treaty.

37

38 The responsibility for these policies lies with the coalition formed by European
39 conservative, liberal and social-democratic parties that has dominated at the
40 European and national level. We seek to present a political alternative to the
41 neoliberal model. Given the widespread use of austerity, new resistance is
42 developing across Europe. The major challenge facing the Left is to set out

43 alternatives, encourage this resistance, and mould from it a movement for an
44 alternative vision of civilisation committed to solidarity. We do this in the name
45 of a social, ecological and peaceful Europe.

46

47 Ever firmer adherence to the Stability Pact and the EU 2020 strategy,
48 modelled on IMF structural adjustment programmes, will not lead to the end of
49 the crisis: on the contrary, it heralds the prospect of aggravated distortions,
50 tensions, authoritarianism and social inequality. There is a risk of economic
51 collapse, massive exacerbation of poverty and precariousness, and the
52 destruction of the social model and European civilisation itself. There is a risk
53 of further depression within the Euro-zone, not to mention the insurmountable
54 problems imposed on other countries, such as the United Kingdom, Hungary,
55 Romania or the Baltic countries. There is a risk of powerlessness in the face
56 of the challenges posed by the ecological question. There is a serious risk of
57 strangulation of democracy, of authoritarian "governance" of member states
58 led by the interests of the market, and the management of national economies
59 by the Commission, the ECB and the IMF.

60

61 There is already a substantial threat that the EU's legitimacy crisis will
62 worsen, that a lack of democratic impetus and of solidarity among the scorned
63 and excluded who are unable to enforce their rights and decide their future
64 will bolster the ascent of the ultranationalist, xenophobic and racist ideas of
65 the extreme right.

66

67 There is a mounting threat to peaceful coexistence and to national minorities
68 within the EU and the possibility of achieving real equality between women
69 and men is facing significant obstacles. This involves the aforementioned
70 tendency towards dramatic cuts, as well as rollbacks on standards in gender
71 democracy and non-discrimination against minorities within the EU and
72 beyond.

73

74 It is not the European people - the working and unemployed, students and
75 those in training, the elderly, women and children, the sick and disabled, the
76 poor and the low and middle-income earners - who should pay for this crisis.
77 No, it is time for radical policy change. This policy change must guarantee that
78 those who are responsible for the crisis will pay for it. Sustainable regulation
79 must be developed, taking the banking and credit system into public control
80 and re-orientating it towards social and ecological aims. Concrete steps can
81 and should be taken to free EU and national government policymaking from
82 the grip of financial markets, to turn the logic of profit into a new logic of
83 human development based on social justice and sustainable ecology.

84

85 That is the current path of realism. That is an approach in the interests of
86 European countries and their peoples. With the constructive will to formulate
87 alternatives with which we can enter into a broader dialogue with people –
88 and to organise a common struggle - we present the following proposals.
89 These proposals are not simply to be taken or to be left, but are intended to
90 evolve in an open debate among European people and movements.

91

92

93 **1. It is time for a radical democratisation of European politics**

94

95 This crisis is also a crisis of democracy. Too often crucial decisions are taken
96 without working people. They believe that the EU is a far-off,
97 incomprehensible and interventionist construction that ignores their demands
98 and their hopes. Changing the foreign, environmental, social and economic
99 policies of the EU and of the member states means instigating a new
100 democratic process based on active participation by people, European and
101 national parliaments via new participatory powers and rights. We stand for
102 democratic republics with electoral laws that respect proportional
103 representation. This democratic transformation process has to concern
104 institutions as well as policies at the EU and national levels. We are struggling
105 for a democratic re-structuring of Europe and the EU.

106

107 Many people see growing poverty and inequality as a failure of the EU. If the
108 EU is not able to halt speculation, who is? National or Eurocentric solutions in
109 opposition to the interests of people across Europe and the world do not bring
110 equality. Without solidarity and cooperation across national boundaries, we
111 will not get the opportunity to design the policies of the future. We believe that
112 social responsibility comes about only through cooperation, not competition.

113

114 Demonstrations, strikes and other forms of protest by workers, students,
115 farmers and the retired all over Europe show that there is growing resistance
116 to austerity as more people demand a pro-people, pro jobs and pro-
117 environment way out of the crisis with a view towards social cohesion, full
118 employment, decent wages and pensions, improved education, health and
119 other social services. However, the protests will not be successful in the long
120 term without Europe-wide political action, and deep changes in European
121 policy and institutions – such aims being frequently brought together under
122 the slogan ‘Another Europe is possible’. The European Left will continue to act
123 to broaden the appeal of sensible alternatives for a social, democratic,
124 ecological and peaceful Europe. Many people, including those outside
125 Europe, see a new development path that is cooperative and based on
126 solidarity, ecological principles and gender equality, as a desirable, essential
127 and concrete alternative.

128

129 Humankind depends on careful management of production and natural
130 resources, rather than consuming, exploiting and destroying them. Clean
131 water, quality education, independence, decent work, healthcare, intercultural
132 dialogue, modern communication and mobility are not luxury commodities but
133 social rights which must be guaranteed. Despite this, many people are denied
134 access to basic services.

135

136 The Party of the European Left is campaigning for a democratic political
137 alternative, to change the situation at every level: local, national, European
138 and global. We are seeking partners in this quest: political forces, trade
139 unions and social movements, those who believe that another Europe is
140 possible. That means we want to create a political and social front against
141 neoliberalism at the national as well as at the European level. We want to win
142 over the majority for this aim. For these reasons, the European Left mobilises
143 and engages in a dialogue with political forces, trade unions, the peace
144 movement, consumer associations, environmental groups, activists fighting
145 for equality and against racism, science and technology experts, activists from
146 the Social Forums, education and cultural associations. Together with social
147 actors engaged in industry, agriculture and the defence of public services we
148 work towards contributing to the realisation of all political and social rights,
149 and a Europe open to the world. We work for the common rights of people
150 regardless of their nationality, colour, sex or language.

151

152 The exportation of a model of domination over humankind and nature that
153 sees every song and drop of water in terms of profit has made this world
154 neither safer nor more humane. The freedom of the individual justifies neither
155 the rights of the strongest nor the limitless dictates of the market. The
156 misappropriation of scientific and technological progress in a trend of
157 “innovation” in order to maximize the profits of financial market capitalism has
158 come to endanger the future of us all. The spirit of free competition,
159 privatisation and deregulation has become the determining factor in politics
160 since the collapse of so-called “real socialism”. The discarding of the
161 principles of post-war Europe such as social, economic and political
162 cooperation and a properly consensual and peaceful foreign and security
163 policy was accelerated.

164

165 With the Single Market, the Maastricht Treaty and the Stability and Growth
166 Pact, wage and social dumping took precedence over public services from the
167 late 80s 90s onwards.

168

169 Our public institutions are the backbone of democracy, be they for education,
170 healthcare, transport or culture, to extend credit to regional economies or to
171 ensure access to energy at the local level. At the same time – even with the
172 expansion of the EU – the problems of unemployment, poverty, inequality and
173 of the European agricultural economy remain unsolved.

174

175 Likewise, critical issues such as energy security, climate change, and free
176 access to communication and information networks remain problematic. It is
177 time to upgrade the role of parliaments, European as well as national, in
178 legislative policymaking and democratic supervision.

179

180 The crisis of capitalism, its neoliberal management, its imperialist system,
181 militarisation and its related ultra-sectarian strategies profoundly mark
182 international relations and push the limits of a system of exploitation,
183 predation and domination that requires radical, large-scale democratic
184 transformations.

185

186 On the other hand, the multi-faceted crisis is playing a catalytic role in
187 changing the international balance of power with US hegemony being
188 increasingly challenged as countries outside the so-called developed world
189 acquire a pivotal role (China, India, Brazil, etc). Independent of the US, the
190 EU needs to become a self-confident international actor in a world of mutual
191 respect and cooperation.

192

193

194 **2. We are not paying for your crisis**

195

196 The international financial and economic crisis washed like a wave over
197 humanity's unsolved problems. In the last two years, the governments of the
198 dominating powers, headed by the G 8, have kept the global financial system
199 alive with enormous sums of public money. They have taken up their role as
200 the rescuers of a collapsing global financial market. At the same time, they
201 remain indifferent to growing poverty and the challenges of climate change.
202 Public budget debts have reached record levels. The most serious financial
203 and economic crisis for decades is nowhere near being tackled. Those in
204 government have questioned neither the international financial markets, which
205 are out of control, nor the global economic order. There are no effective
206 regulations to prohibit speculation on currencies, foodstuffs or essential
207 goods. The undefeated financial and economic crisis is a growing security
208 risk: this is true both for daily life and for the peaceful coexistence of
209 countries.

210

211 Europe and the EU are mired in crisis too. Millions of jobs have been lost or
212 are under threat. Meanwhile more people are being forced to take more than
213 one job in order to get by. Precariousness and flexicurity are more than ever a
214 bitter reality. Social problems are growing. The EU has yet to employ effective
215 measures to make those who caused the crisis financially accountable.
216 National governments are also reluctant to involve financial speculators in the
217 solving of the crisis, via creaming off capital gains yields. Thus, their answer is
218 loud and clear: the costs of the financial crisis should be borne by the
219 taxpayer, particularly those of the poorest Euro-zone countries. However, the
220 roots of dramatic national debts, particularly in Eastern and Southern Europe,
221 but also in Ireland, Great Britain, Iceland and the Baltic countries can also be
222 found in European policy. Now those countries are supposed to bear the
223 consequences alone. Moreover, they are forced to forego urgently needed
224 investment in education, health and social protection and to make further cuts
225 to their welfare services and public sectors. The renovation of public
226 infrastructure will have to wait. This sows the seeds of tomorrow's social
227 problems. Thus a veil is drawn over the fact that catastrophic wage dumping
228 in the richer member states has, for years, brought pressure and political
229 errors in its wake. The failing policies of the most vulnerable countries are a
230 mirror image of the larger countries' exclusive orientation towards relocation
231 and export. Higher wages would also protect the large countries from the
232 maelstrom of financial instability and tomorrow's national deficits; they are an
233 essential condition for anti-dumping social clauses in international trade deals.
234 However, the prevailing policy of low wages continues to favour the dogma of
235 competition based on cutting social expenditure.

236

237 Today, people are forced to pay for aid measures for banks whereas those
238 who caused the crisis are spared. The belief that nationalisation of the banks
239 is some kind of socialist profanity has been shaken. States have taken
240 financial institutions under their wings, and some of them are already trading
241 again and making respectable profits. However, government influence goes
242 only so far as to rescue the banks, the bankers and their incomes. Equitably
243 redistributing the wealth is not part of the programme. Governments are
244 "nationalising" without ensuring democratic influence and control. They are
245 therefore only nationalising losses by increasing national debt, insufficient
246 investment and higher charges. Thus they are already responsible for all
247 kinds of unsolved social problems.

248

249 As previously, this "regulation" serves the interests of financial capital but not
250 the interests of the majority. The prevailing political line knows only one
251 answer to the crisis: plunder the public coffers and increase the exploitation of
252 the workers. It participates in this class struggle from above and does not shy

253 away from pitting low earners, against people reliant on social welfare
254 contributions and both against immigrants and refugees.

255

256 We are convinced that the majority of people can be won over to the
257 campaign for socially fair, ecologically sustainable, democratic and peaceful
258 European policies based on solidarity, and so we are publicising alternative
259 solutions to the financial crisis.

260

261

262 **2.1. Fight the crisis effectively – now!**

263

264 The EU and European countries must move towards cooperation, and
265 contribute to reforming the European and international monetary systems.
266 Important strategic sectors, like the banking system, should be organised
267 based on social ownership, democratic control and public access. In the
268 neoliberal Europe, we have seen a generalised process of attacks on the
269 rights of workers and wages. The European Left is fighting against social
270 dumping. We want to support all movements that are active against the
271 strategy of pitting the poor against the poor. We support workers across
272 Europe, the redistribution of income, and the fight against mass
273 unemployment and job insecurity. In order to defend social and workers'
274 rights, we must restore our capacity to tackle social and class conflict in
275 Europe. To counter social and fiscal dumping, a European fiscal policy must
276 be built based on the principle of progressive taxation. We fight for the
277 principle of equal pay for equal work at the same place all over Europe.”

278

279 The European Left proposes the following measures to reduce the power and
280 influence of financial markets:

281

282 • Transformation of the mission of the European Central Bank. Through
283 cash generation and based on social criteria, the ECB should extend
284 low interest credit to member states to finance social development.
285 Regarding the banks, the ECB should introduce selective credits,
286 favouring investment intended to create employment and discouraging
287 financial operations;

288 • Taxation of all speculative transactions. EU institutions and member
289 states should overhaul the architecture of global financial markets;

290 • New public revenues should be generated by taxing the income from
291 financial assets and big capital, by means of a socially just tax reform
292 aimed at stimulating the real economy. Domestic economies should be
293 revitalised through structural policies and higher gross income;

- 294 • Abolition of tax havens established inside and outside European
295 territory; banning – not only registration - of hedge funds and junk
296 bonds;
- 297 • Creation of a European public rating agency. Countries can no longer
298 be hostages to private rating agencies, which serve speculative
299 interests;
- 300 • Issue of Eurobonds to allow member states to borrow at reasonable
301 interest rates.

302

303 To fight wage and social dumping, and to strengthen social and ecological
304 requirements, the following measures must be introduced or tested in all
305 countries in coordination:

306

- 307 • Macroeconomic balance between states and a strong internal market;
- 308 • The introduction of standards which secure in all EU-countries – by law
309 or by collective agreements – minimum wages at the level of at least
310 60% of the national average wage and always above the poverty
311 threshold, with a high quality of social security for all;
- 312 • Restrictive regulation of subcontracted labour and the limiting of the
313 number of short-term contracts. New regulations that make it illegal to
314 employ foreign workers on a lower wage or worse conditions than
315 those existing in the country where the work is done. The so-called
316 Laval verdict and other rulings undermining the right to strike and work
317 for better wages and working conditions must be annulled;
- 318 • Strengthened and binding collective agreements on working conditions
319 and compliancy with required standards in the case of “posted
320 workers”;
- 321 • Modernise public services and infrastructure with an investment
322 programme for the key areas of education, health and social care,
323 research, transport and environmental technology. This will guarantee
324 millions of new jobs in the future.

325

326 We want to lead the campaign for a global tax on financial transactions, for
327 higher incomes, more protected and good jobs and humane working hours,
328 secure pensions and better public infrastructure. We will do this together with
329 trade unionists, social forums, women’s, environmental and youth
330 movements, migrant organisations and local authorities. We want to lead this
331 campaign in our countries, and at the European level. We assume that this
332 campaign must be carried through as a global demand.

333 Without immediate action, there will be no effective change in the response to
334 the crisis. A sustainable political change must go beyond this; alternative
335 political courses of action and a European action plan to fight poverty must be
336 agreed. Together with trade unions, we will lead the campaign for the
337 establishment of a social clause in European primary law. The consistent
338 combination of economic and monetary union with a social and environmental
339 policy is essential. Working for a social clause in European primary law and
340 new orientations for social and environmental policy requires more than
341 merely an EU-centric political approach. These demands are to be found in
342 the trade unions and so they provide a link to social movements.

343

344

345 **2.2. Action plan against unemployment, poverty and social** 346 **exclusion**

347

348 80 million people in Europe live below the poverty line. Almost the same
349 number again is acutely at risk of poverty. Rampant unemployment is a major
350 contributing factor. This affects more and more people in meagre and
351 insecure jobs, the working poor. It is a political failure across the board when,
352 in one of the most productive economic areas in the world, one in five children
353 in the EU is threatened by poverty.

354

355 Marginalisation by poverty, disadvantage in education, public and universal
356 health, in living environments, the insufficient share of social, cultural and
357 financial services are growing threats to social peace. The majority of the
358 population expect politicians to introduce measures to counter poverty, and
359 limit wasteful concentrations of wealth. The EU declared 2010 the “European
360 Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion”. The EU’s 2020 strategy
361 also called for “poverty prevention”. However, rising poverty and inequality are
362 products of neoliberal policies implemented in the EU.

363

364 The logic of the current strategic decisions and the measures being taken to
365 deal with the consequences of the economic and financial crisis still put
366 competition, profitability and competitiveness at the top of the agenda. Just as
367 the European elites provide so few coherent and intelligible answers to the
368 current economic problems, they do nothing to prevent increasing inequalities.
369 The consequences of poverty have not been reduced, because the causes of
370 growing poverty remain unaddressed. The Party of the European Left is
371 committed to achieving social justice. Wealth can no longer be concentrated
372 in the hands of a few. Europe must recognise that property has duties and
373 must serve the interests of society as a whole.

374 Common goods like water, health, culture, land, natural resources and means
375 of production must not be privatised but, on the contrary, they must be
376 deemed common property and socialised.

377

378 The Left sees the fight against poverty as a social and political problem. We
379 need development that places people in the foreground. For this reason, the
380 fight against poverty will only be successful when this aim is the key
381 component in all areas of EU and national policy. Europe needs a
382 comprehensive safety net of high social standards. Homelessness and child
383 poverty must end by 2015. Overcoming poverty is closely linked to solving all
384 other social and environmental problems in our society.

385

386 With these aims in mind, a Europe-wide action plan is urgently needed. The
387 European Left proposes the following goals, which expand on the main
388 aspects of the immediate battle against the crisis:

389

- 390 • A European-wide minimum wage of at least of 60% of the national
391 average wage and the strengthening of collective agreements;
- 392 • An appropriate guaranteed minimum income for the unemployed, and
393 those who do not have the means to sustain their livelihood;
- 394 • A decent wage for students and people in professional training;
- 395 • A decent pension guaranteed for everyone at the age of 60 years;
- 396 • Concrete, regular working conditions and decent jobs;
- 397 • Shorter working hours without a drop in income;
- 398 • Higher investment in social security, health, public services, public
399 housing and the public environment;
- 400 • Implementation of a programme for increased energy efficiency in
401 private buildings using existing technology to guarantee warm
402 accommodation to everyone - the problem of “energy poverty” is
403 considerable as energy bills swallow up 10% of average household
404 income.

405

406 The taxing of capital gains and speculation businesses, the progressive
407 taxation of incomes and a developed public sector represent the financial
408 means for the implementation of this action plan. European policies that force
409 national tax dumping on companies and demands higher contributions from
410 the employed and socially disadvantaged must end. The European Left
411 underlined in its platform for the 2009 European elections that the Stability
412 and Growth Pact must be replaced by a new solidarity pact, focusing on
413 growth, full employment, social justice and environmental protection.

414

415

416 **3. For a new Development Model**

417

418 The notion that ambitious and coordinated policies are necessary to face the
419 challenges to humanity and the planet has spread. Nevertheless, the capitalist
420 logic represents a major obstacle. The financial crisis, whose systemic nature
421 has become obvious, reveals the extent of the waste generated by the current
422 development approach. This is why all of the proposals that this document
423 sets out reflect an alternative logic, of a new social development model,
424 sustainable and humane. These three dimensions are indissoluble: the social
425 evidently includes the economic sphere, which should primarily be used to
426 serve the needs and the aspirations of every individual. It is a question of
427 creating a new era of human civilisation, based on a progressive process
428 founded on multiple systemic reforms, transforming daily routines, without
429 losing sight of the ambition and the stakes.

430

431 Action to achieve such a transformation requires a common movement:

432

- 433 • The Party of the European Left will continue its struggle for a consistent
434 peaceful external and security policy for a world without weapons of
435 mass destruction. We take part in all campaigns for solidarity and
436 peace, in particular in the Middle East, for a fair and just settlement of
437 the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on UN resolutions, with the
438 founding of a viable Palestinian state with East Jerusalem as its capital.
439 We demand the end of the war led by NATO in Afghanistan and the
440 withdrawal of all foreign troops. We also demand the withdrawal of the
441 remaining troops and other military contractors from Iraq and call for
442 the international community to assume its responsibility for civil
443 reconstruction in Iraq. The right to self-determination of the Iraqi people
444 and their sovereign choices in the reconstruction and the future of the
445 country must be guaranteed. Progressive and reciprocal disarmament
446 with third countries is essential. We want peaceful and mutually
447 beneficial cooperation and dialogue with our neighbours, and stability
448 in Europe including Russia. The EU's military strategic collaboration
449 with NATO must be stopped.
- 450 • The European Left reaffirms its demand for the dissolution of NATO
451 and calls for an international cooperative security system conforming to
452 international law and to the principles of a reformed and democratised
453 UN system. We strongly oppose any move towards further
454 militarisation in EU external relations and campaign for a peaceful role

- 455 for Europe in the world. The EU also has to respect the rights of neutral
456 countries to continue their policy of non-alignment.
- 457 • The transfer of people from Turkey to the occupied part of Cyprus
458 should be stopped immediately because it seeks to conquer and
459 cement Turkey's occupation of the island. Turkish occupation of the
460 37% of the territory of the Republic of Cyprus should end. The Turkish
461 government should contribute in practical terms, in order to lead the
462 ongoing negotiation process to a just and viable solution of the Cyprus
463 problem based on the relevant UN resolutions, international and
464 European law.
 - 465 • The EL expresses its solidarity and support for political processes
466 taking place in Latin America that seek broader democracy and higher
467 citizenship participation. We consider it very important to continue the
468 joint meetings of the Sao Paulo Forum and the EL in order to exchange
469 experiences on dealing with crucial issues. In particular, we stress the
470 need to end the blockade against Cuba.
 - 471 • We believe that the EU - Latin America agreements that have been
472 signed and those currently under negotiation are trying to impose
473 neoliberal policies in the interests of multinational enterprises, mainly
474 those with the worst environmental records, seeking to establish
475 patents in the fields of health and biodiversity.
 - 476 • European development policy must oblige all EU member states to fulfil
477 the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 by fulfilling the
478 commitment reserve 0.7% of GDP for development aid. This requires a
479 reorientation of the mode of production and consumption, which does
480 not threaten the capacity of nature and where commodities and money
481 are not the basis of appreciation. With this aim, we are struggling for
482 EU trade agreements that emphasise respect for all core criteria of the
483 International Labour Organisation, labour and human rights standards
484 in all partner countries. They should not be benefiting transnational
485 companies that seek to gain access to natural resources and maximise
486 their profits.
 - 487 • The European Left works together with other forces for an energy
488 revolution based on genuine renewable energy resources and energy
489 savings. We do not consider biomass for energy to be a genuine
490 renewable energy source on a large scale, especially when it replaces
491 food crops. Climate change mitigations and energy production should
492 no longer be a question of profit making. Natural resources should not
493 be wasted on rearmament and wars. The development and foreign
494 trade policies of the EU must break with the current logic of land
495 grabbing and exploitation of natural resources. We support debt

496 cancellation for the poorest countries and the payment of ecological
497 debt by industrialised countries to developing countries.

498 • We call for international cooperation to combat global warming. To
499 prevent the most severe impacts of climate change, action needs to be
500 taken by 2020. EL proposes to strive for 40% reduction of CO2
501 emission by 2020 in developed countries (compared to the level of
502 1990). In Europe, this particularly affects sectors like energy innovation
503 technologies, agriculture and forestry dedicated to the preservation of
504 biodiversity and carbon sequestration, construction engineering, traffic
505 and regulations by public investment. There should be huge investment
506 in the European energy sector in the years to come. The Kyoto
507 Protocol cannot be reduced to a system of emission quotas; each new
508 attempt for an international treaty (Kyoto II) must form a new paradigm
509 based on cooperation and not competition. The European Left fully
510 supports the Cochabamba declaration. Time is short.

511 • We fight for individual civil liberties and the fundamental social and
512 political rights of all EU citizens and immigrants based on the Charter
513 of Principles. The European Left welcomes the EU's joining of the
514 European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR). We are campaigning
515 for the further development of fundamental rights in Europe based on
516 the ECHR, including all legal instruments both at national and
517 European level. We defend the rights of those discriminated against on
518 grounds of ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, ideology,
519 disability or age. We demand equality between men and women. The
520 European Left defends the respect for the principle of secularism. We
521 seek strategies against racism, xenophobia, chauvinism, fascism, anti-
522 communism, homophobia and all other forms of discrimination. We are
523 working for a refugee policy in accordance with the Geneva
524 Convention. Those who must flee on account of their political activities,
525 religion, ideology, sexual orientation or gender identity must be able to
526 find acceptance and safety in Europe. We demand the recognition of
527 gender-specific and non-national persecution as grounds for asylum,
528 as well as particular protection for child refugees. For this reason we
529 reject the current FRONTEX border control system. The EL strongly
530 opposes any attempts to make migrants "scapegoats" for any kind of
531 social problems. We struggle for a strong social dimension to
532 integration policies.

533 • Universal access to education, culture, media and the possibility to use
534 one's own cultural forms of expression are essential for democratic
535 dialogue in Europe and worldwide. Intercultural exchange and the
536 neutrality of digital networks should be of public - European and
537 national - responsibility. Free education, freedom of information,

538 modern copyright rules including the rights of users and an appropriate
539 recognition of creativity are overdue. Privatisation of public education
540 must be stopped. This is why we reject the Bologna Process. Good
541 working conditions for teachers, journalists, those working in the news
542 sector, and the film, entertainment and software industry must be
543 fought for daily. Europe needs true pluralism in the media, public or
544 private; it is an essential condition for democracy.

545 • We want to fight the financial crisis by regulating the markets, creating
546 a consistent macro-economic orientation towards a social, ecological
547 model of development and fighting against poverty. To develop political
548 alternatives towards a new model of development, which we can then
549 introduce into the political discourse, we put forward the following
550 strategic focal points in our political struggles.

551 • The development of public services that serve the essential collective
552 needs, their bringing together on the European level, a concerted and
553 cooperative management of the world's public goods, and a
554 development of the social and interdependent economy on a truly
555 democratic basis. This means stopping the processes of liberalisation
556 and privatisation of public services and the massive private investment
557 plans in these sectors.

558 • An active policy of job creation, accompanied by life-long learning
559 systems.

560 • A new era of democracy on all levels, with new powers for employees
561 and the elected representatives over the public funds allotted to large
562 companies.

563

564 With these proposals, the European Left is turning to the population of
565 Europe, to men and women, regardless of which country, regardless of
566 worldview or religion, regardless of whether they were born inside or outside
567 the EU. The sharpening of the socio-economic and ecological crises demands
568 immediate, radical action. We want Europe and the world to become better
569 places to live for everyone. But for this to happen, we must safeguard them
570 from threats. We cannot improve the world if we do not save it, but we can
571 save the world by improving it. The European Left stands for a vision of a
572 radically different world, for democracy and socialism. The European Left is
573 open to everybody who wants to support this agenda. We aspire to a world of
574 freedom, justice, and equality, without repression, exploitation, hunger or
575 need. We want to make this project a reality.