

Draft manifesto

# Courage to Change



European  
Greens



## *Voters address to be included at time of public launch*

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## **CHAPTER I: The Courage to Put Planet and People First – Our Green and Social Deal for Europe**

Maria's electricity bill had never been as high as the previous winter's. Try paying that on one income with two children to feed. She worked hard – too hard if anything – but it was never enough at the end of the month.

She couldn't have got out of that situation alone, but she wasn't alone. The council finally opened the community childcare centre that they had been promising for years. A Green and Social Deal grant then came through and she renovated her draughty house. The new bus route meant she wasn't using half as much petrol each week.

It turned out that once society treated all our daily struggles as shared problems, together we could solve them. With our Green and Social Deal, together we can turn lives like Marias – like ours – into more secure, happier, and healthier ones, with cheaper energy bills, healthy food at affordable prices, and clean air in our towns and cities.

### **Climate justice and social justice are two sides of the same coin.**

Last year was the hottest year on record. The state of the planet is an emergency. The damage to lives and livelihoods – the homes flooded and farms bankrupted – caused by the climate crisis gets bigger each year.

We hear the urgent calls of scientists and activists. The animals and ecosystems dying off in record numbers cannot wait.

Climate action now will bring benefits across society, making our lives more affordable and pleasant in the years ahead. It will protect the nature that surrounds us.

Doing nothing will only serve the wealthiest profiting from fossil fuels, while leaving the poorest in our societies to bear the costs.

The living standards of people in Europe have been hit hard over the past few years. The cost of living is rising, forcing millions into insecurity with the most vulnerable paying the highest price.

Growing inequalities and burning economic injustice are not new. For decades, the ultra-rich have got away with paying next to no tax, while public services have been cut.

Jobs have become more precarious and too many people have had to leave the place they call home to find decent work.

None of this has to be normal. None of this is inevitable.

### **We have the courage to do what it takes.**

They are our problems and we need to solve them now. We won't put it off for the next generation.

*Draft version – released to member parties*

Fighting the cost of living crisis and economic inequality while protecting the climate and restoring nature will take investment. That is why we are proposing a major investment plan for Europe: the Green and Social Deal.

We will build new green infrastructure and fund quality public services. This economic opportunity will create new jobs and industries.

Everything we put forward combines improving lives with protecting the climate and environment.

We want toxic air pollution and wasteful fossil fuel subsidies to be things of the past. Tax havens for the few have no place in Europe or anywhere.

Affordable housing, renewable energy, and healthy food for all are what we will fight for. A stable climate and restored nature are what we will protect.

**The Green and Social Deal is our plan for a greener, healthier Europe where lives are secure, prosperous, and full of opportunity.**

POLITICO

## **Protecting the Climate and the Environment**

Our Green and Social Deal leads the way on climate and environmental justice. The EU's climate and environmental policies set the pace and ambition of action across Europe and beyond. Much has been put in motion, we are on a path towards the green transition. Now the question is how to accelerate the much-needed action at the same time as protecting living standards, especially for the most vulnerable.

Our societies are only as healthy and secure as the natural world on which they depend. We are facing the consequences of climate change today: more extreme weather events such as storms, droughts, and floods, rising sea levels, desertification, and the melting of arctic ice and glaciers. One million animal and plant species are perilously close to extinction. The future of our planet and our relatively peaceful and prosperous societies depends on us acting now. Protecting the climate and environment is about protecting people.

### *Tackling the climate emergency*

Europe needs to face the climate crisis in its full urgency, reducing its emissions as rapidly as possible in line with scientific recommendations to secure the most liveable future possible for the years and decades ahead. At the same time, investing in a clean European economy and rapidly reducing our dependence on fossil fuels strengthens competitiveness and security.

The EU has committed to the European Green Deal and introduced key policies for climate protection in the past five years. We welcome the progress but continue to push for more ambition and the full implementation of the plans already set in motion. To recognize the climate and environmental crisis, we will push to include the right to a healthy and clean environment in the Charter of Fundamental Rights, which must be directly applicable to all EU citizens.

Europe can and must take steps to go beyond a 55% reduction in emissions by 2030 and achieve full climate neutrality by 2040. These objectives should be set out in a revised EU climate law.

### *Building a community of renewable energy*

We will push the EU to build a community of renewables that connects and powers the continent. Renewables are the economic keys to the future. Cheaper and safer than any other energy source, renewables helped the EU economy save 100 billion euros between 2021 and 2023 and bring down energy bills for households.

We want to transform our energy system to rely 100% on solar, water, wind and geothermal, making it fossil-free by 2040. Only renewables can ensure a habitable planet, geopolitical independence from autocrats, and a resilient and democratically managed energy system.

We want solar panels on every roof possible to put citizens at the heart of the energy transition giving them cheaper energy and control.

Solving the climate crisis will create millions of jobs in sectors from renewable energy and construction to industry and transport. The “shovel ready” projects that we would kick start tomorrow represent 2 million jobs in the short and medium term and our long-term transition up to 10 million.



### *Ending fossil fuels in Europe*

The EU needs a clear plan for the total phaseout of fossil fuels: coal by 2030, fossil gas by 2035, and oil by 2040. The energy crisis of 2022 cost Europe over 1 trillion euros between energy subsidies and inflated prices. We cannot afford this, and neither can the planet.

The acceleration of the transition to renewables will bring economic, health and security benefits, while further delay will only lead to higher costs down the line.

Europe needs a plan to phase out all fossil fuels subsidies by 2025 at the latest, and all other environmentally harmful subsidies by 2027 at the latest. The billions of euros from fossil fuel subsidies must be channelled into renewable energy, energy efficiency and energy savings. No European or member state public money should go towards fossil infrastructure.

Energy-saving measures to reduce demand are essential. Focusing on demand reduction and efficiency means using less and needing less energy – making it easier to green our energy system. The energy efficiency measures set out in recent EU legislation, such as introduction of the “energy efficiency principle”, are major achievements. Now they must be fully implemented.

### *Adapting Europe to an overheating planet*

Decades of climate denial and delay have left us vulnerable to extreme weather and the rising anti-climate backlash will make the situation even worse. Floods and fires have destroyed homes and businesses, while heat waves put lives at risk in homes and workplaces.

To make people and places less vulnerable to climate impacts, we will introduce a climate adaptation law grounded on ecosystem-based solutions.

Nature restoration and climate adaptation efforts will restore water retention in the countryside and urban areas through the revitalisation of rivers and floodplains. To recognize the key role of water, an integrated approach must mainstream water into all relevant EU policies.

The green transformation must go hand in hand with a strong cohesion policy to make sure that all regions of Europe benefit. Our expanded EU Solidarity Fund will focus on climate adaptation and preparedness for natural disasters. Dedicated and direct funding from the EU for climate action can relieve budgetary and political pressure on cities and municipalities and allow the transition to be shaped and led locally, no matter who is in office at the national level.

Based on the principle of European solidarity, we will create a European Natural Disaster Fund. We will also expand and co-fund the European firefighting fleet, including pooled qualified professional and voluntary personnel, firefighting equipment, assets, and firefighting planes, as well as near-real-time monitoring and an emergency coordination centre. Strengthening civil protection will make Europe more resilient to climate disasters.

### *Zero-pollution is about health*

A zero-pollution European Union will be a much healthier place to live. Air pollution is responsible for 300,000 premature deaths each year in the EU with children most vulnerable to the effects of

fine particulate matter. We will push the EU to increase air quality standards for everyone, everywhere in the EU with no exceptions.

By 2030, air quality in the EU must meet World Health Organization guidelines. We will fight for a toxic-free Europe by 2030 by phasing out the use of the most harmful chemicals through a stronger chemicals law.

The climate crisis is also a severe threat to human health, seen in the effects that heat waves, droughts and other extreme weather events have on the general population. Reducing emissions now will help avoid a worsening situation in the years ahead.

### *Bringing nature back*

From the birds to the bees to the moors and wetlands, we need to protect nature that is the basis for life on this planet. One million species are threatened with extinction linked to damaged ecosystems, pesticide use and climate change. This mass extinction must stop.

From 2026, 10% of the EU budget must be spent on biodiversity objectives. Taking action against climate change and restoring healthy, biodiversity-rich ecosystems are two sides of the same coin.

As Greens, we will restore degraded ecosystems across the EU. We want to protect one third of the EU's territory and marine areas, so we can live in harmony with nature, including wetlands, forests, marine, agro-ecosystems, rivers, and lakes. As set out in the Nature Restoration Law that we fought for, we want to restore degraded natural areas. Working with farmers and local communities is key to protecting biodiversity and fighting climate change.

### *Forests as Europe's green lung*

Forests are threatened by deforestation and the consequences of climate change. They are our lungs and life-support system, home to most land-based biodiversity and major carbon sinks. Forests also play a crucial role in providing clean air, regulating the water cycle, and preventing soil erosion. Forest protection and restoration are key for reaching our climate goals.

As Greens, we see old-growth forests, closer-to-nature management, and biodiversity-friendly afforestation and restoration as key for healthy forests in Europe. We need a common forest fire strategy through near-natural mixed forests. We are determined to avoid clear cutting and establish protection corridors. Emergency measures are needed to protect forests from poor management, pollution, and climate change.

### *Caring for our soils with sustainable food and agriculture*

Europe needs a Common Food Policy to support changes in what we eat, how we produce food and where we get it from. We need a fundamental shift away from subsidies for industrial agriculture based on pesticides and monocultures and towards massive investment into organic farming and agroecological production. Years of misguided subsidies have concentrated landholdings and driven small and medium-sized farmers into the ground.

This green and social transition for agriculture, supported by retargeted EU funds, is an opportunity for secure and sustainable business models that will benefit millions of European farmers.

The Common Food Policy will condition EU agricultural funding on social and environmental criteria to provide quality jobs and increase food security. This means that one third of the EU budget will be dedicated to sustainable food systems that improve soil quality, cut emissions, and reduce food waste, while addressing the economic situation of farmers. The EU needs to take action to strengthen the plant-based protein sector.

Healthy food also means pesticide-free food. We must reduce the use of chemical pesticides to save ecosystems, keep soil healthy and protect human health. We will fight for a 50% reduction in pesticide use by 2030. Glyphosate is not necessary for productive farming, nor for weed control. Glyphosate can and must be banned, with economic support for farmers to make this shift.

### *GMO-free Europe*

We will keep genetically modified crops out of our fields and off our plates. We want animal feed to be free from genetically modified crops in the EU. As Greens, we are committed to the precautionary principle and will maintain the existing regulatory regime for all new genetically modified and new genomic techniques. New techniques must not be excluded from the protections already set out in EU law.

Farmers must be protected from agroindustry's use of intellectual property law to enforce economic dependency. All products that contain genetically modified products must be traceable and labelled. National governments must retain the right to ban the cultivation of genetically modified crops.

### *Making animal welfare a priority*

We will make animal welfare a priority at the EU level, with strict rules on farming conditions, use of antibiotics and animal transportation. Zoonotic spillover and anti-microbial resistance risk another devastating pandemic.

We want to ban animal mega-farms and animal cruelty in industrial farming. While the European Commission did nothing with the historic European Citizens' Initiative on ending the cage age, we will take up the citizens' fight so that cage farming is finally banned. We will continue to fight for a maximum of 8-hour (with 4 hours for certain species) or 300-kilometre transport time and distance. We fully support the European Citizens' Initiative on a fur-free Europe.

Our Common Food Policy will take the funds currently used to support unsustainable industrial animal farming and redirect them to improving housing systems and management practices in the interest of animal welfare.

### *Clean seas and oceans*

From the Baltic Sea to the Atlantic Ocean, Europe's marine regions need protection. To safeguard our shared oceans and seas, we will introduce a Seas and Oceans Law to establish the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable seas and oceans in a fair and equitable way. We demand a strategy that leads to a clean and pollution-free ocean by 2030.

To protect access for local communities and protect marine ecosystems, overfishing practices need to be stopped and alternative sustainable economic models for coastal communities developed. It is not just about the amount of fish we are catching but how we catch it, we will put an end to bottom trawling practices that damage everything in their wake.

We will fight against deep-sea mining and call for a global moratorium. It is high time to protect deep sea marine ecosystems. We will oppose any and all expansion of offshore oil and gas exploration.

## **Securing Livelihoods for All**

Our Green and Social Deal protects everyone's, including and especially the most vulnerable, right to life's essentials: renewable energy and green transport, decent housing and nutritious food, and quality education and care.

### *Renewable energy for all*

Everyone should have access to sufficient, affordable, and renewable energy as a basic right. 125 million people in the EU struggle to heat their homes with women and older people disproportionately affected. Eliminating energy poverty is an essential priority for the EU.

We support an Energy Guarantee to provide all households with a sufficient amount of energy at an affordable price. Vulnerable groups will benefit from targeted support, including for energy-saving investments, and no vulnerable household will be cut off from their energy needs because of their inability to pay. Consuming one's own energy, sharing it with neighbours, and joining an energy community must become an opportunity that all can benefit from.

### *Affordable housing for all*

Housing is a right, not a commodity. Decent, comfortable housing that is warm in winter and cool in summer should be accessible for all. On any given night, there are 900,000 homeless people in the EU, while millions struggle with rising rents in big cities and energy poverty linked to poor-quality housing – all symptoms of chronic underinvestment in quality, well-insulated affordable and social housing.

We must encourage and increase public and private investment in affordable housing, including social housing. We support the introduction of rent control in cities and regions where rents have exploded to become out of reach. As achieved by several Green cities across the EU, we advocate limits on short-term tourist rentals to keep rents down. We will keep fighting for the right of young people to live in full independence.

We must take a European approach towards public housing policy, defining housing as a basic right and protecting those who rent properties from exploitation. EU funding for public housing must continue after the current Resilient and Recovery Fund expires.

### *Warm in winter, cool in summer*

We need an EU programme to renovate the homes of people facing the highest energy bills on low incomes. A large-scale social energy renovation programme can make sure everyone lives in a healthy and fossil-free home by 2040. 75% of buildings are energy inefficient in Europe, responsible for 36% of carbon emissions – a huge opportunity for improvement through renovation and retrofitting.

Support needs to be available for all, with the bulk of financing targeting the most vulnerable, and renovation must be cost-neutral for tenants. EU, member state and private investment in rapid renovation will provide nicer, greener places to live and create quality jobs. Our fiscal proposals will incentivize public investment in green housing at the level of member states as well as unlock private money to renovate Europe's housing stock.

### *Healthy food for all*

A shift to a sustainable, climate-friendly food system is imperative for people in Europe to enjoy affordable, nutritious food for which producers are properly remunerated. Many key risk factors of non-communicable diseases like cancer are dietary. Our vision is that of connecting consumers and producers, empowering people to make informed choices, and ensuring farmers get a fair price.

We will establish the right to food as a legal principle in EU legislation, leading to dedicated social security mechanisms at national level that guarantee access to healthy food while supporting local supply chains.

We will support small and ecological farming with massive investment. Millions of Europeans have struggled with soaring food prices in recent years. No one should go without healthy and sustainably produced food because it is too expensive.

It is time to stop the speculation on food driving hunger globally. Our financial transactions and windfall tax proposals will curb the speculation driving up food prices for households.

### *Water is a right*

Access to clean water should be guaranteed as a basic right. Water scarcity is already costing billions each year, with farmers and low-income households among the worst affected and the Mediterranean region particularly vulnerable. Urgent action is needed to protect the right to water. We will take action using existing EU legislation to protect vulnerable reserves and prioritize drinking water over other uses.

### *Mobility justice for all*

We want people to be able to get around easily and cheaply on sustainable public transport. Mobility is crucial to everyone, every day. It connects people, communities, and businesses, while traveling to see friends and family or for leisure should be one of life's pleasures.

Today, transport systems are stacked in favour of the wealthy and against people and the planet. Working-class neighbourhoods suffer most from air and noise pollution and poorly connected rural

and suburban communities often have no choice other than the car. High-emission transport is perversely subsidized, and private jets are pushing emissions ever higher.

We will introduce a European Climate Ticket framework, so that every part of Europe offers an affordable public transport pass easily used across different modes of public transport. Young people, single-parent families and the elderly should benefit from reduced fares.

Europe must invest in better public transport, safe and sustainable cycling networks, and people-centric urban planning, for cities as well as rural communities. As Europe phases out internal combustion engines, electric cars will be part of reducing transport emissions, but a real response makes much more room for public transport. To make electric cars affordable and create a second-hand market, the EU should mandate their uptake in corporate fleets.

### *Connecting Europe with an Infrastructure Union*

We need to massively increase investment in rail transport to literally connect Europe as part of our Infrastructure Union. Rail infrastructure in many European regions is in a state of disrepair and there is no high-speed rail coverage whatsoever in much of Central and Eastern Europe. The EU must therefore prioritize investment in the modernization and convergence of under-served regions.

To promote sustainable long-distance travel, we will invest in night train infrastructure and create a European Ticketing Platform to make booking cross-border journeys on sustainable transport straightforward. Rural areas and poorly connected regions will be prioritized in transport investments, including car-sharing initiatives and ferries.

We will make sure that fairer prices show the real cost of polluting transport, taxing air travel and fuel properly where efficient climate-friendly alternatives cannot be put in place. We will reduce demand for flights, introducing a frequent flyer levy, with exceptions for island regions, and banning short-haul where alternatives are available. We will fight to introduce a ban on private jets. We defend a just transition for all transport workers and will protect workers and passengers through road safety measures and an EU-wide speed limit.

### *Quality education for all*

Accessible quality public education, training and lifelong learning should be available to everyone in Europe, regardless of where they live or their wealth. Education can equip our societies so they can overcome inequality, make progress on the green transition, and stay at the forefront of science and culture. Jobs in new green industries can only be filled if we have the people trained to do them.

We have been ardent supporters of Erasmus+ since its inception and will introduce an Erasmus Equality principle to make sure that learners who could not otherwise afford Erasmus receive enough money to fully fund their time abroad. Erasmus+ must be equally accessible for all, regardless of one's country or economic background.

Our Green and Social Deal will introduce a shared green education and training project that helps connect schools, universities, and training centres to connect learning institutions across Europe. Citizenship education about the EU, including anti-extremism, anti-hate and anti-racism education, should be part of curricula and non-formal education learning recognized at the EU level. Education

investments are a critical part of our proposals to finance the transition, and need to give everybody the chance to learn and provide the skills we need for the future.

### *Access to healthcare for all*

Health is a public good to which everyone has a right. The pandemic was tragic evidence that underinvestment, privatization, and the neglect of preventative approaches put patients and health workers at risk, physically and mentally.

A European Health Union should make sure member states provide everyone in Europe with universal health coverage. We will push to eliminate health inequities and guarantee access to affordable medicines and treatment, including for cancer and rare diseases, in ways that are inclusive to all parts of society, especially the most vulnerable and racialized communities. No one in Europe should feel forced to move to a different country because of unmet healthcare needs. European legislation on universal health coverage will require all member states to provide this essential social right.

The European Union should create an EU Health Force for cooperation on health emergencies and disaster response. All policies should be looked at from a health perspective.

### *A green society is a caring society*

Society runs on care. It is our overlooked, undervalued and often unpaid foundation. As Greens, we want to build a caring society and understand care as an overarching priority and concept. As European societies get older, the importance of care will grow, especially in those European countries that have recently experienced major emigration.

Our Green and Social Deal is also a Care Deal. We will push to improve working conditions for care workers, while protecting everyone's right to proper care. We will invest in comprehensive, life-long approaches, such as universal access to early childhood education and care and deinstitutionalized care for disabled people and the elderly. Early childhood education and care must be counted as social investment in the EU fiscal framework.

### *Mental health is political*

Our Universal Health Coverage will go beyond physical health and make sure that public healthcare systems include mental health care with no additional costs for individuals. Mental and physical health must have parity of esteem. To tackle the mental health crisis, we recognize the need for inclusive, comprehensive, preventive, and healing strategies that include culture and sport as well as social and creative activities.

### *Legalize it – Time to rethink Europe's drug policy*

Drug policy must be based on evidence, not prejudice. We advocate for drug policies based on harm reduction, health, and help for people who suffer from drug abuse, not punishment. As Greens, we work towards decriminalizing cannabis for adult use with the goal of legalization and regulation whilst protecting minors.

## **Building a Europe of Social Rights**

Our Green and Social Deal will put people and their wellbeing at the centre of Europe's green transformation and economy. The social welfare state was one of Europe's biggest successes. Rebuilding that welfare state for the 21st century is the only way to protect and extend social rights for everyone in Europe. A Europe of Social Rights must empower and protect workers and communities in transition and be inclusive to all. It must protect the people who face multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination in their daily lives.

### *Decent jobs for all*

European workers deserve a fair wage, especially after years of price rises. We fight to end in-work poverty. In the last EU mandate, we won an EU-wide living minimum wage framework that sets minimum wages at a decent level and indexes them to the cost of living. We won measures on pay transparency that will help end the huge pay discrepancies that exist within companies and institutions.

We are fighting for legislation that will recognize platform workers as workers, with all the rights to minimum wages, collective bargaining, and employment conditions and protection that workers are legally entitled to.

The jobs in the key sectors for the future from construction to care and from energy to education must be well-paid jobs. We support the role of trade unions in ensuring that workers get their fair share of profits. Our tax proposals will increase take-home pay by shifting the tax burden to polluters and the ultra-rich.

### *Fighting poverty comprehensively*

Everyone has the right to a decent income. A strong social safety net should protect people in employment transitions and those who cannot work. We call for an EU framework directive on minimum income to establish an adequate level of support (60% of the median income) in each EU country for people between jobs or who cannot work and guarantee its coverage and take-up.

The short-term SURE unemployment insurance programme should be made permanent to protect the livelihoods of workers affected by transition. We continue to demand an integrated anti-poverty strategy for the EU to end homelessness and halve child poverty by 2030.

### *Nothing about workers without workers*

Our Green and Social Deal protects workers and their rights. We want to build a Union where people are properly treated and paid for their work, especially the essential workers who keep society running and everyone building the infrastructure necessary for a green tomorrow.

There should be nothing about workers without workers. We will fight for the rights of trade unions to organize, collective bargaining and strike. Workers affected by the twin green and digital transitions should have guaranteed rights to information, involvement through collective bargaining and social dialogue, and training. Unionizing for new or non-standard forms of work should be supported to



guarantee the rights of all workers. These rights and standards should be protected by a Just Transition Law. A Lifelong Learning Directive should protect the right to paid training leave.

### *Fair labour mobility for all*

Europe must enable and protect fair mobility of workers across borders, so no one falls through the cracks of nationally fragmented social systems. To avoid social dumping, social rights and access to the labour market must be ensured. Administrative tasks should be possible in different languages, social services should be open to mobile workers, and social coordination on EU level should be fostered. The recognition of professional qualifications should be made easier.

Many EU countries are suffering from the consequences of massive emigration. The economic and social convergence of EU countries must be a priority for EU policymaking and investments to improve the quality of life and opportunity for people across Europe.

### *New rights for the future of work*

Work should take place on decent terms and in safe conditions. We will dismantle the current system that exploits interns and trainees. We will end the practice of unpaid internships so that young people are guaranteed proper pay and safe working conditions. Mobile and migrant work should be properly regulated with all such workers receiving decent and affordable accommodation.

Occupational health and safety measures must be updated for the reality of climate change and enforced, such as rules on heatwaves and working in extreme temperatures. Too much work causes stress and ill health. We will introduce measures that reduce working time and improve work-life balance, including an EU Right to Disconnect, Right to Remote Work, and flexibility in working hours. We support the efforts across the EU to introduce a four-day working week. We will not let workers be monitored by artificial intelligence-based surveillance tools.

### *Equal pay for equal work*

We will fight for equal pay for equal work and equal opportunities for all at work. It is long overdue to fully eliminate the gender pay gap through binding measures for all employers. The gender pay gap depends on factors such as ethnicity, disability, access to education, and age. Different groups of women experience very different gaps in pay. The fair mobility of workers should be ensured to protect social rights, access to the labour market, and avoid social dumping. Universal and equal access to childcare and long-term care facilities and the revision of the Work-Life Balance Directive and the Maternity Leave Directive can move Europe towards fully paid parental leave of equal and sufficient duration.

### *Equal opportunities from the start*

As the start of life is decisive, we demand adequate funding for the European Child Guarantee giving time to care and resources to parents. At the same time, we want to support parents' participation in the labour market. All children have the right to participate in play, recreation, sport and culture.

All children in the EU should have guaranteed access to high-quality care and education – no matter their passport. We want to work with member states to ensure that the direly needed investment in education and care infrastructure is finally taken up.

## **An Economy that Works for All**

The European Union is the key level for climate and environmental policy where we make those crucial, shared decisions that steer European societies on a greener path.

Thanks to the mobilisation of the climate movement, we Greens managed to push for a European Green Deal in 2019 and put the climate crisis at the top of the agenda. But progress is too little and too slow. The quicker Europe moves forward with its green transition, the sooner our investments and efforts will pay off. The climate will not wait for other crises to pass.

Our Green and Social Deal envisions a major investment plan to build a prosperous and dynamic society based on climate neutrality, green industries and technologies, and sustainable digitalisation.

### *Investing in a green and better future*

Europe's economic and fiscal policies need to focus on improving people's wellbeing and quality of life and maintaining a stable climate and a healthy environment. In a break with the austerity of the past, Europe must enable investment to fix the problems of the present and future. We will revise the arbitrary limits of the Maastricht Criteria and the Stability and Growth Pact. They have left Europe exposed to crises and cut public services and public investments to the bone.

Instead, we will introduce a new wellbeing-based macroeconomic governance that prioritizes quality investment in public goods and the green transition to avoid further crises and their social consequences.

We call for the introduction of a Green Golden Rule and a reformed European Semester to create space for future-oriented green and social investment.

We will revise the European Central Bank's mandate to include employment, climate, and environmental protection, alongside price stability. As fossil fuels are vulnerable to price hikes and drive inflation, interest rates should be lower for green investments.

### *Greening industry for our future competitiveness*

The green transition is the challenge of our generation, and it will not be achieved without active industrial policy. Greening industries through investment in Europe is a huge opportunity in terms of both competitiveness and climate neutrality.

We will push for a Green Transition Fund equivalent to 1% of EU GDP per year. The backbone of our Infrastructure Union, it will fund green infrastructure projects such as public transport and energy grid connections as well as emerging green industries.

A key lever to fight deindustrialisation across the EU, this fund will support member states with fewer economic resources and sectors affected by the transition. EU-level investment is needed to protect the single market and win political backing for the green transition in all EU countries.

EU industrial policy must be designed with the participation of citizens, trade unions and businesses and not become a way of socializing the costs while privatizing the profits. We will make sure that the public purse benefits from the proceeds of investments in industries, for example through equity stakes. Industrial policy should not be introduced at the expense of emissions reductions and regulation. European support for research and development can also contribute towards scientific and technological development, as well as other societal goals, and should be increased.

### *Financing the Green and Social Deal*

The money to finance this much-needed investment is there. We are convinced that the EU can help channel it towards green and social investment. A mix of fiscal policy, public investment, and private initiative will drive this change. A fairer economic system requires a greater redistribution, a better use of public funds, and that all actors in society play their part.

### *Creating a fair tax system*

Europe needs a just tax system that takes the burden off workers and small businesses and makes polluters, multinationals, and the ultra-rich pay their fair share.

We will establish a minimum level for capital gains tax in the EU to rebalance the tax burden away from employees. We will close the loopholes in the OECD corporate minimum tax agreement and push EU member states to implement the agreement at a higher level. Loopholes that leave room for tax avoidance and evasion inside and outside the EU as well as fraud and money laundering will be closed. We will fight against tax havens, be them in the EU or anywhere else in the world.

The European Union requires greater budgetary resources to face our common challenges. Europe must extend the carbon border tax to new polluting sectors, apply the polluter pays principle across all sectors, and abolish free quotas ahead of the current 2034 date. We will increase the scope of existing taxes on plastics.

We will push to increase the size of the EU Social Climate Fund to ensure a just transition for low-income households.

We call for an EU-wide wealth tax to fight inequality and finance the green transition. In addition, we will push for a European Financial Transactions Tax to generate revenue while curbing speculation. We will make the EU windfall tax on energy companies permanent to prevent profiteering in future energy crises and apply it to commodity traders and banks too.

### *Greening finance for real*

We will regulate financial services to promote long-term investment in a green and social future over short-term speculation. We will fight to revise the Green Taxonomy to make sure that gas and nuclear are not greenwashed as “sustainable”.

Financial services for coal, oil and gas extraction, coal-fired energy projects, and the companies that develop them must be prohibited with a Brown Taxonomy. The continued development of high-emission activities jeopardizes the EU's climate and environmental commitments and increases financial risks.

We will oblige financial actors to adopt robust climate transition plans to support their economic transition and enable a gradual transformation. Their content and implementation must be regulated, with sectoral policies for the highest-emitting activities and methods for setting decarbonization targets.

### *Stable and inclusive banking for Europe*

Households should no longer end up lining the pockets of financial players speculating on food, energy and housing or bear the fallout of financial crashes. The EU needs to complete its much overdue banking union and introduce a common deposit insurance system.

The European Central Bank should offer a public digital euro to offer an alternative to private payment systems, crypto-currency markets should be properly regulated, including their environmental impacts, and the right of people to access and use cash should be protected as a matter of inclusion.

### *Closing the loop with a circular economy*

Produce, consume, and throw away – the economy of our society leads to the exploitation of resources beyond the limits of our planet. If we do nothing to change this, we will need three Earths by 2050 to satisfy our need for raw materials. This linear model fuels the climate crisis, environmental destruction, and human rights violations in resource extraction. It leaves our supply chains vulnerable to crises and our economies and businesses dependent on imports.

Waste must become a design flaw. We want to build a fully renewable, fully circular, and non-toxic economy by 2040 with clear and binding targets and transition pathways to reduce consumption and resource use by 2030.

As the green transition requires growing amounts of metals, we must adopt a sufficiency approach and prioritize the development of processing and recycling capacities for strategic materials.

If extraction in the EU proves to be unavoidable despite demand curbs, we must impose the highest environmental and social standards. There should be no ground for exemption of any EU legislation or human and environmental rights conditions, strict and irreversible “no-mining” areas, and continuous effort to improve mining techniques and corresponding working conditions (including safety and health coverage) and ban of most harmful ones. Affected communities – particularly Europe's last indigenous community, the Sami people – must receive early information, participation, consent, and fair compensation.

### *Zero waste is the business model of the future*

Our vision is a fully circular economy where we reuse, upcycle, share, and recycle our products to keep the materials in a closed loop. This approach protects resources and the climate and saves

money for consumers as products last longer. Environmental and consumer protection go hand in hand. As Greens, we will push for the fast implementation of the mandatory sustainability requirements for our products and for EU action to ensure industry compliance.

We will fight the planned obsolescence that is devastating to the planet as well as the budget of households. We will make sure that an effective and affordable right to repair, including an EU-wide repair score and an open repair market for independent repairers and consumers, is properly introduced so it makes a real difference. We will support the creation of an internal market for second hand goods and refurbishment. We want new technical standards such as the common charger incentivizing our product's durability, paving the way to our vision of a zero-waste society, and ending waste exports to third countries.

### *Building a social and collaborative economy*

This vision of our economy is dynamic and circular where the small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) that form the backbone of Europe's economy thrive alongside new models of community, social and collaborative economies.

SMEs should operate on a level playing field with large companies. We will facilitate their access to EU funding and investment programmes through simplified application procedures. With fixed quotas, we ensure that SMEs also benefit from these programmes.

The power of sustainable public procurement should be unlocked to foster high ecological and social standards. European regulation should enable alternative economic models such as cooperatives, crowdfunding, social entrepreneurship, and the commons.

### *Sustainable digitization for the people and the planet*

Digital technologies are an ever-more important part of our lives; they should protect the rights of individuals and serve the common good, not private corporations. Caught between US surveillance capitalism and China-style state control, Europe needs a rights-based, decentralized approach to digitalization to reap its benefits.

We will introduce a European Data Space that opens anonymized social data for non-commercial uses that serve the common good, including the fight against climate change.

Interoperability is key to successful digital policy. The European Interoperability Framework is a good starting point, but it does not yet create a level-playing field. We will push to open standardization to developers, civil society and small and medium-sized enterprises. Their involvement must be paid so that everyone can equally participate in this process on an equal footing.

If truly open and with rights protected by legislation, digitalization will be an opportunity for people in Europe. Recent EU legislation will provide greater choice and transparency online, protecting against violations of rights and freedoms. However, the EU needs to introduce a Digital Fairness Act to protect people from intrusive online advertising practices.

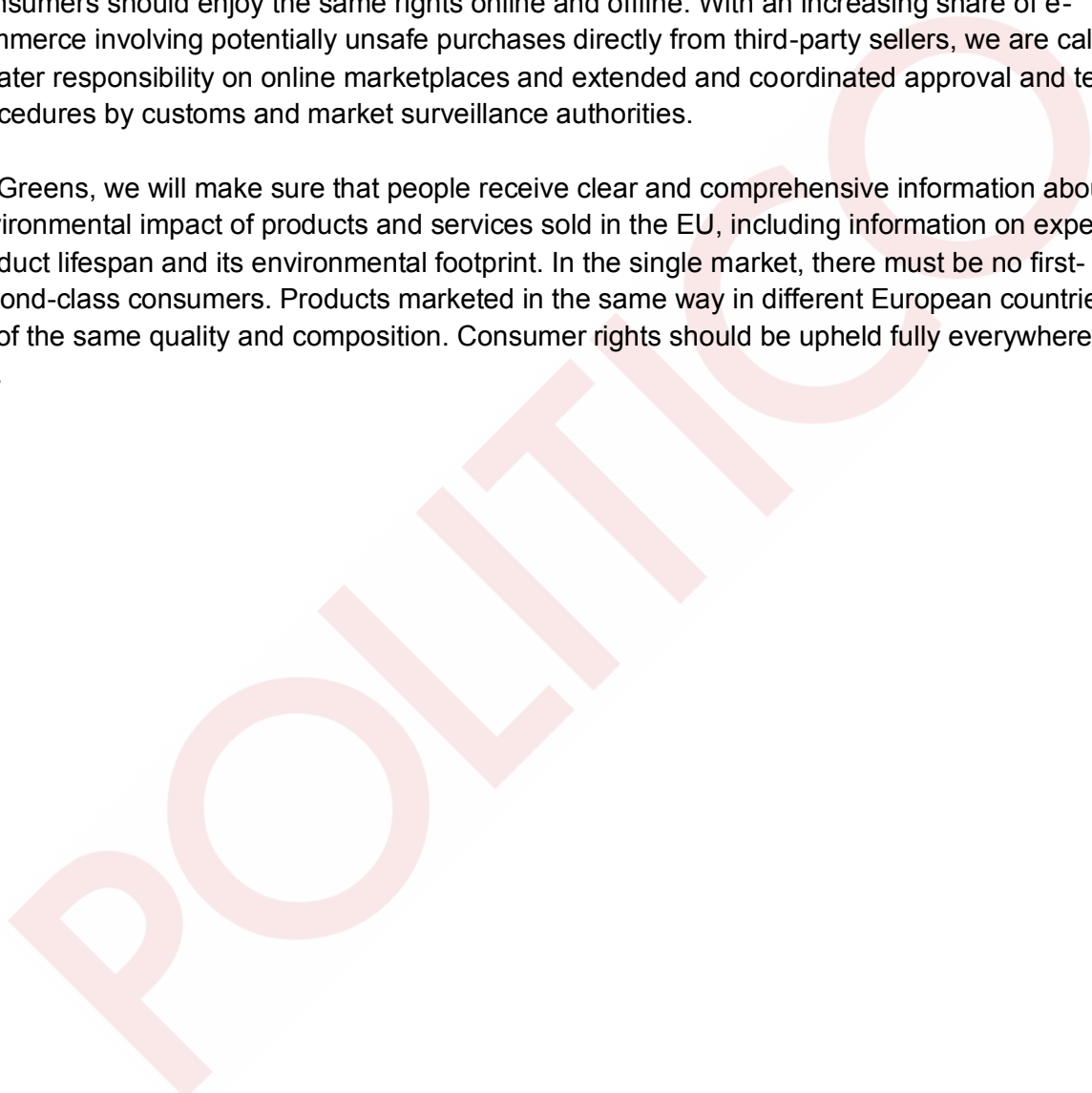
As well as reuse and recycling of digital devices, we will cut the energy consumption linked to data processing and cryptocurrency by regulation to massively reduce the internet's material footprint.

### *Continuing a success story: protecting European consumers*

Strong consumer protections such as roaming rights and passengers' rights and product safety measures are major successes of the single market. But with the economy changing fast, the EU's high standards need an urgent update to protect people, especially online.

Consumers should enjoy the same rights online and offline. With an increasing share of e-commerce involving potentially unsafe purchases directly from third-party sellers, we are calling for greater responsibility on online marketplaces and extended and coordinated approval and testing procedures by customs and market surveillance authorities.

As Greens, we will make sure that people receive clear and comprehensive information about the environmental impact of products and services sold in the EU, including information on expected product lifespan and its environmental footprint. In the single market, there must be no first- or second-class consumers. Products marketed in the same way in different European countries must be of the same quality and composition. Consumer rights should be upheld fully everywhere in the EU.



## **CHAPTER II: The Courage to Stand Up Against the Far Right – For a Europe of Democracy, Feminism and Human Rights**

Charlie just wants to be Charlie. Nothing more. Why is their gender so difficult for the world around them to accept?

Zara knows what she wants: end the horrible pain of endometriosis. Find a drug that could help so many women. But sometimes it seems like people can't see any further than her skin colour, her last name, or her choice of clothing.

Daniel wants to scream it out to the world. He is in love with a man. He wants to go out at night, walk the streets of Sofia with his partner, and bring his partner to the company Christmas party.

Prejudice and discrimination continue to hold our societies back. But we can change this. It must change.

**The European Union of democracy, freedom and fundamental rights is ours to build.**

Racism never went away. Today, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and anti-Gypsyism are all on the rise. Discrimination and exclusion remain far too common for people living with disabilities, people living in poverty and other vulnerable groups.

At Europe's borders, people are dying. Mediterranean migration routes are the deadliest in the world. People seeking safety and protection increasingly face detention, brutal and illegal pushbacks, and violence at the hands of smugglers and border authorities. The far right exploits and deepens their suffering, dragging mainstream parties to the right and normalizing migration policies that are both dysfunctional and unsustainable.

Far-right parties are gaining ground with their tried and trusted tactics of spinning half-truths and scapegoating minorities. This conservative backlash is working strategically to roll back our rights and freedoms. Once firm believers in the European project, even mainstream Conservatives are opening the door for anti-democratic forces who threaten the rule of law.

**We have the courage to stand up to the far right to protect everyone's rights and freedoms.**

Greens will safeguard democracy and the rule of law and demand a different European Union. We are convinced that the European Union needs to be more united to tackle our shared problems. We call for a federal European Union with increased powers, deep democracy, and real transparency and accountability.

We will fight racism and exclusion in all its forms. We will make sure that nobody can make decisions about your body. We demand a fair asylum system that defends human rights and dignity. We work towards a migration policy that recognizes the immense contribution that migrants make to our societies. We believe that policies work best when shaped by the people concerned. We are certain that democracy cannot flourish without vibrant civic space and empowered civil society actors.

*Draft version – released to member parties*

The European Union was founded to protect peace and democracy and uphold freedom, rights, and justice.

**We will make that founding promise a reality for all.**

POLITICO



## **The Necessary Next Step: A United Europe Ready for Enlargement**

To face the great challenges of our century, from the green transition to fighting growing inequalities and protecting democracy, the European Union needs to reform its treaties, move forward towards a federal Europe, and ensure its ability to act when welcoming new members.

At the Conference on the Future of Europe, European citizens gave a clear message that they support new treaties giving the EU greater competences. They called for deepened European democracy, with more power for the European Parliament, an end to national vetoes, a larger EU budget, and stronger EU competences on key issues such as health, tax, and social protection. As Greens, we stand behind their proposals.

### *Extending democracy at the heart of Europe*

We stand for a federal Europe, for a fully fledged supranational democracy able to deliver.

The need for unanimity between European member states on matters from tax and foreign policy to anti-discrimination and Article 7 procedures to protect democracy prevents the EU from taking decisions for the common good.

The European Parliament must have the right to propose legislation and equal budgetary power. The Council of the European Union should act as a second chamber for EU law making, not the venue for late-night haggling over inter-governmental deals. The President of the European Commission should be proposed by the European Parliament. The current budget of the EU is patently insufficient to address the challenges Europe faces. Supported by its own resources, the EU budget should be raised significantly, with an expanded role of the European Parliament and civil society in monitoring EU spending. EU competences should be expanded to ensure the EU can deliver. This truly transnational democracy must also ensure a residence-based European citizenship.

For Europe to take this much needed step, a democratic mandate from citizens is vital. That is why an EU-wide inclusive constituent process should lead to these treaty changes.

Treaty changes should then be ratified through a European-wide referendum according to a double majority system: a qualified majority of states and a majority of European citizens.

### *Bringing Europe to life with citizens' participation*

Public participation and engagement strengthen the European Union. The EU institutions should take steps to make voting in EU elections more accessible, including for people with disabilities. To increase democratic participation, we want to champion internet-voting at least for mobile European citizens to be piloted for the 2029 EU election. Transnational lists for the European Parliament should be introduced alongside national lists, creating an additional single EU-wide constituency to which citizens will elect a large number of MEPs.

As democracy is about more than elections, the Greens will push for the introduction of standing citizens' agoras to make EU policy more inclusive. The framework for petitions and specifically the

European Citizens Initiative must be strengthened to open more channels for citizens to influence EU policy and to oblige the European institutions to respond with legislative proposals. A framework for EU-wide referenda should be introduced.

### *Stronger together: enlarging the Union*

Many people in the European neighbourhood long to become EU citizens, first and foremost with Ukraine fighting for our values and European security. Our Union holds the promise of peace, justice, shared values and prosperity and each member, old and new, is responsible for upholding these principles and objectives.

A new push for enlargement is long overdue. The EU has always been a project with geopolitical implications. As the EU is built on shared rules and values, it helps make borders less important. The EU's enlargement is therefore the best prospect for lasting peace and security in Europe.

All countries who strive to be part of or re-join the EU and who share our values must be welcomed on the path to EU membership and given all the required support in fulfilling the criteria.

### *Keeping our promises: A pathway to joining the European Union*

The European Union must keep its promises to candidate countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Ukraine. We support Georgia and Kosovo's efforts to become candidates for EU membership. We will support these countries on their paths to meet the Copenhagen Criteria. Accessing the single market and EU budget requires meeting these criteria and progress in the process must be based on merit. As Greens, we believe that the EU must work more closely with civil society in the accession process. We will work towards overcoming unanimity in the Council that is currently hindering accession.

The future of Ukraine lies in the European Union. We will support Ukrainian authorities in introducing the reforms required for EU membership. EU assistance to Ukraine should, insofar as possible, enable a climate-resilient reconstruction and recovery, built on renewable energy, modern infrastructure, and a sustainable and inclusive economy.

Welcoming new members must serve as a vital push for internal reforms to make it easier for the EU to make decisions efficiently and effectively.

### *Taking rapid action for democracy and the rule of law*

One of the biggest blows to European progress in recent years has been the development of authoritarian tendencies in the heart of Europe. Citizens of these countries are EU citizens, and the EU must defend their rights against government power grabs. We want rapid action to put an end to EU law's violations by member states through infringement procedures. This needs a clear timeframe, including for the Article 7 procedure.

We will introduce a Fundamental Values Annual Review to monitor, enforce and sanction the infringement of fundamental values across the EU.

We must ensure that EU funds strengthen prosperity, democracy and the rule of law and do not disappear into the pockets of autocrats and their friends. We have made important progress in equipping the EU with better tools to do so, but they need to be fully implemented.

Access to justice must become a reality for all people in the European Union. It is essential that vulnerable groups, such as people on low incomes and from marginalized communities, can access their right to seek responses and remedies for injustice.

### ***Fighting corruption! Politics need to be transparent and accountable***

Citizens' trust in democracy rests on political integrity. Transparency and accountability are vital for democratic scrutiny and public oversight. When the trust in politicians and democratic institutions is under serious threat, we must act.

The Qatargate scandal showed that the EU institutions are not equipped to prevent corruption and massive misconduct. Rather than another advisory body, the EU institutions need an independent Ethics Authority with the power and resources to investigate and sanction unethical conduct and abuse of office. We need comprehensive legislation on lobbying activities at EU level, including a mandatory EU transparency register.

It remains virtually impossible for citizens to understand how decisions are made in the Council of the EU. This must change. Corruption and misuse of the EU budget undermines the entire European project. We support the bodies responsible for protecting the EU's financial interest, OLAF and the European Public Prosecutors Office, and call for greater resources for anti-corruption efforts.

### **A Union of Rights and Freedoms: For a Truly Feminist and Anti-Racist Future**

As Greens, we want to build a world where we all live free from violence, racism, sexism, queerphobia and coercion. We fight for a world where we get to decide over our bodies, where we can love who we want to love, and where racial justice becomes a reality at last. This world is possible, and we will not stop fighting for it. The harder the attacks, the more convinced, compassionate, and determined we will be.

### ***Equal rights for all***

We fight for equal rights for all. This is why we want the Charter of Fundamental Rights to be directly applicable to European citizens and fundamental rights to be direct EU competences.

We call for an overall assessment of the EU Anti-Discrimination framework, acknowledging the need for an intersectional and comprehensive approach. To effectively counter discrimination against racialized communities and ensure equal rights and equal treatment for all, the Horizontal Anti-discrimination directive needs a major update. It has been 15 years since it was first brought forward.

### ***Smash patriarchy!***

Women are not all the same and understanding their diversity is key to fighting inequality and discrimination.

A feminist Europe must guarantee policies that ensure financial independence for women, notably by abolishing tax regimes that discriminate against women and ending the gender pay gap via binding measures for companies and public authorities.

We demand universal and equal access to childcare. We call for the revision of the Work Life Balance Directive and the Maternity Leave Directive to advance towards fully paid maternity and paternity leaves of equal length.

Gender mainstreaming must make sure that European money benefits men and women equally. We defend a binding parity mechanism for the lists in the European elections and gender balance in EU decision-making, including for the top-jobs. The EU Commission and the Council need specific portfolios for women's rights and gender equality.

### ***Your body, your rights***

We fight to expand reproductive freedom. Sexual and reproductive health and rights, including the right to safe abortion, are fundamental rights. They belong in the EU treaties - as core principles and competences of the EU and in the directly applicable Charter of Fundamental Rights. Safe and legal abortion must be available in all EU member states. Abortion care is an essential health service.

We stand up against the devastating regression on reproductive rights all over the world. No one should be criminalized for seeking or accessing abortion services. Women must have access to medical abortions. As Greens, we advocate the provision of free, high-quality contraceptives for all. Young people have the right to comprehensive sexuality education.

### ***End gender-based violence***

All women and girls across Europe have the right to live a life free from violence. Gender-based violence is a brutal human rights violation and an expression of the unequal power relations in our societies. We continue our unswerving fight for comprehensive EU legislation that prevents, responds to, and ends gender-based violence online and offline across the EU. Greens strengthen victims' rights with specialized support, access to justice and protection for victims with special attention to marginalized communities. All EU member states must ratify the Istanbul Convention.

### ***Pride, respect and equality for LGBTQIA+***

A renewed LGBTQIA+ Equality Strategy should ensure that trans, intersex, and non-binary people are also protected under the EU legal framework, closing legislative gaps in the areas of non-discrimination and hate crime. We want to end intersex genital mutilation. We push for legal gender recognition based on self-determination and access to trans-specific healthcare. The European Union should act politically for an EU-wide ban on so-called "conversion therapy" and forced

sterilisation of transgender people. Rainbow families and their rights must be protected in all of the EU, including the full application of the freedom of movement with no loss of rights.

### *Fight racism and exclusion*

Racism in Europe is not just a problem of individual attitudes, it is a structural and systemic challenge that must be addressed as such. Racial justice should be mainstreamed in all EU policies, based on meaningful participation of all ethnic and racialized communities to ensure their lived experiences are considered.

Anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim racism are on the rise. The EU must be safe for everybody to live. We will protect Jewish and Muslim communities and demand an end to all forms of discrimination.

We will ensure that the EU Action Plan Against Racism is implemented, and work towards its renewal for 2025 with appropriate funding and a civil society advisory body. National Action Plans must be mandatory for all member states.

It is a democratic problem that 96% of Members of the European Parliament are white. As Greens, we work towards having candidates from racialized communities on electable spots. We actively encourage racialized and ethnic-minoritized Greens to run for the European Parliament.

### *Young voices matter: more rights, more representation*

We fight for votes from 16 for all elections in Europe and the right to stand as a candidate from 18, starting with the European elections. As European Greens, we work towards having young candidates in electable spots on party lists.

EU legislation must work for young people. The European Union needs to support the adoption of an International Convention on the Rights of Young People. Consultation methods such as annual dialogues with youth representative organizations and youth citizens' agora should be institutionalized and legislative impact assessments should systematically include young people. EU funds must properly finance youth organizations.

### *No to ageism*

Age must not be a barrier to a full and active life, but too often older people are held back by aged-based discrimination and exclusion. Older people are among the social groups most at risk of poverty as well as digital exclusion. As Greens, we will take a stand against ageism in European policies and support measures that promote the inclusion of older people.

We demand fair pensions for all seniors in the EU. We believe that the mandatory retirement age should be a concept of the past. We want to have strong long-term care services that benefit the wellbeing of people with long-term care needs, as well as their families and communities. Intergenerational justice is not just a concept: exchange between generations should be anchored in our educational systems, but also more broadly in our community activities.

*For a Europe that is accessible for all*

People with disabilities in the European Union must be able to pursue a full participation in political, social, and public life, including employment. We will push for the effective monitoring and enforcement of European accessibility legislation and the introduction of Disability Card recognized across the EU. The EU should begin collecting disaggregated data by gender, age, and type of disability to assess the impact of EU policies and monitor progress on the inclusion of people with disabilities generally.

**A Union of Rights and Freedoms: Protecting the Rights of All**

Protecting the rights of all is a key battle against the far right. All over Europe, the far right is instrumentalizing migration to spread fear and resentment. They wish to roll-back the rights and freedoms of women and people from the LGBTQIA+ community as well as racialised people. We are fighting against this backlash, standing resolutely for democracy, freedom, and human rights.

*Upholding human rights with a humane asylum system*

We uphold a fair asylum system that defends human rights and dignity, based on solidarity and responsibility sharing. We are convinced that when the political will is there the European Union can tackle humanitarian challenges and protect the people seeking safety with humanity. As we uphold the fundamental principles of the European Union, the right to asylum is not up for negotiation.

We want to work towards a human asylum system with fast and decentralized procedures. Member states must fairly share the responsibility for asylum applications. For us, it is clear that we need a mandatory relocation mechanism. Parties across the political spectrum let themselves be dragged towards far-right migration policies, as the EU's new Migration and Asylum Pact sadly reflects. The successful use of the Temporary Protection Directive in response to the refugee situation caused by the war in Ukraine should be replicated.

We call for EU visas for Human Rights and Environmental Defenders. New climate visas should be created to allow victims of natural disasters to seek protection and security in the European Union. The specific vulnerability of LGBTQIA+ asylum seekers must be addressed.

*End the criminalisation of people on the move*

There has been an intolerable escalation of violence against people seeking protection. We must stop violence, torture, and inhuman and degrading treatment at Europe's borders. Illegal pushbacks at the borders of the EU must end.

EU laws to harmonize standards on asylum procedures, reception conditions and safeguards must be enforced. We cannot accept imprisonment, mistreatment and abuse towards people seeking protection and a better life in the EU.

*Rescue is not a crime*

We call for an EU-funded and EU-led Search and Rescue Mission in the Mediterranean and strengthen the humanitarian mandate and responsibility of Frontex. We want to end the criminalisation of humanitarian assistance, and prolific use of state of emergency to limit access to asylum and legitimate rights of oversight by civil society and media. People do not belong in prison simply for seeking asylum. Asylum seekers should be guaranteed access to legal help.

*No dirty deals with dictators*

We fiercely oppose so-called “migration deals”, such as that with Tunisia, where the EU pays off countries to keep out migrants. Any cooperation with third countries on migration needs a human rights assessment. Making development cooperation with third countries conditional on “migration management” is unethical. We cannot accept that refugees and migrants are exploited for geopolitical gain. Human trafficking can never be a weapon of hybrid warfare.

*A fair migration policy for the benefit of all*

Throughout history, people have always moved from place to place. Migration is as old as history, and we must return to this pragmatism. Migration can benefit all. It can fill labour shortages – today a key economic challenge. Migrants make an essential contribution to the European economy and enrich our culture, communities, and daily lives.

The establishment of legal and accessible channels for migration is a necessary precondition for ending human trafficking and exploitation. We want to develop a new, comprehensive Migration Code, providing for visa opportunities for families to be reunited and for work at different skills levels. It should also allow migrants already in the EU to change their status, for instance from student to employee. We want to make it easier for newcomers to start working and integrate into our societies, by offering them access to education, language support and job opportunities.

To prevent exploitation of migrant workers, access to justice needs to be ensured in all EU countries. We call for a comprehensive campaign to regularize long-term “sans-papiers”, living in EU countries. Whatever their status, people coming to the European Union to build a life should enjoy equal social, cultural, economic, and civic rights including freedom of movement, the right to work and to social protection, and access to healthcare and education.

*For a fair and safe digital world*

As the digital world has become an integral part of our lives, the same freedoms and protections that exist offline should exist in online spaces. Preventing the spread of online hate is key to making sure that certain groups are not excluded from the political arena. Countering disinformation is essential for functioning and trusted democratic institutions.

The EU has made progress on the fight against disinformation and the regulation of online platforms with the Digital Services Act. Now its provisions must be enforced. Online platforms must protect legal content and be subject to public scrutiny and transparency on the removal of illegal content.

The EU should use its powers to make particularly harmful manifestations of hate chargeable as EU crimes with minimum rules regarding their definition and related sanctions. Women and racialized people suffer from disproportionate amounts of online hate. The internet must be free from illegal hate speech and discrimination. We want to give support to platforms, civil society organizations, and media initiatives promoting media literacy and anti-hate strategies.

We will push for the right not to be tracked. The EU must lead in the global battle against mass surveillance. Adequate EU legislation must protect citizens against the abuse of spyware and stop member states from evading accountability by evoking national security.

### *Putting humans at the centre in artificial intelligence*

Artificial intelligence has enormous potential. It can lead to both incredible developments as well as tremendous risks for humanity. Artificial Intelligence must work for people, society, and the planet, not for surveillance states or tech capitalism.

Strict limits should therefore be enforced. The most unethical and undemocratic practices in the EU, such as biometric mass surveillance, AI systems used to recognize emotions, gender or sexual orientation and AI used for predictive policing should not be permitted. Non-discrimination laws and data protection laws must be strengthened and enforced to guarantee that AI systems do not discriminate against racialized communities.

We also want to ensure AI promotes, not hampers, the Green Deal with key environmental provisions. In the workplace, workers should always have the possibility to disconnect from AI systems. Copyright legislation should be properly enforced in the context of AI models to fully protect content creators.

### *For a strong and dynamic civic space*

Civil society organizations (CSO) are at the heart of every democracy. This is why we want to make them strong and truly European. We call for an EU mechanism to protect civil society, activists, and defenders from all forms of attacks, discrimination, and harassment. An EU mechanism should allow CSOs to report these attacks, including through an early warning system. Adequate funding should also be guaranteed, both at EU and national levels.

Measures to support a regular, meaningful, and structured dialogue with civil society during legislative procedures are essential. We will introduce a statute for European cross-border associations and non-profit organisations. We advocate for an EU-level civil dialogue, modelled on the social dialogue, between CSOs and EU Institutions.

### *Free and independent media for Europe*

Media concentration has reached alarming levels, threatening their editorial and economic independence. The protection of journalistic sources is hampered by sweeping anti-terrorism laws and far-reaching mass surveillance measures. Defamation suits and abusive judicial proceedings have become key methods to gag investigative journalists.



We need an EU framework to prevent media concentration and enable journalists to work freely. Investigative journalism needs dedicated safeguards. Free and independent journalism can never be a question of the necessary finances. We want to closely monitor the application of EU law, in particular EU laws such as copyright, trade secrets, the data protection regulation, the Audio-visual Media Services Directive to ensure they are not abused. We will work towards the proper implementation of the future Media Freedom Act and anti-SLAPPs (Strategic Lawsuits against Public Participation) directive.

We support the emergence of pan-European media outlets and quality content on European affairs, European citizenship, and European identity, as core elements for a shared European civic and information space, dispelling EU-related myths and building a sense of European belonging.

### *Culture as the spark of change*

Art and culture are some of society's most powerful tools to tell stories, change minds, and build solidarity. As Greens, we believe that the worlds of culture and creativity can play an important political role in helping us imagine solutions to the challenges of our time.

The ability to produce together is a truly transformative aspect of the Creative Europe programme. Continued support for the production and distribution of art and culture produced across Europe, particularly supporting experimentation and diversity of expressions and organizational forms, is essential.

We will push for an EU strategy to engage the cultural sectors in our Green and Social Deal and in any constituent process on the future of Europe. Cultural diplomacy and exchange should form part of the accession process for all countries looking to join the EU. Learning the difficult lessons of the pandemic, we call for common European standards on employment, social guarantees and working conditions in the cultural and creative sectors.

### *Defending Schengen, enjoying free movement*

Freedom of movement – the right of people to travel and move around the European Union freely and without hindrance – has touched and shaped the lives of EU citizens like no other achievement. Millions of people have built lives and relationships in EU countries other than their own and millions more regularly cross national borders for professional opportunities and leisure.

As the border checks in the pandemic reminded us, the days of queuing at the border are thankfully behind us. We intend to keep it that way. The European institutions should act to reverse the steady re-emergence and illegally unlimited maintenance of border checks within the Schengen area, especially based on the justification of migration. As full EU members who have met all the requirements for Schengen membership, Bulgaria and Romania should be welcomed so their citizens can enjoy their full rights as EU citizens.

### *Policing without prejudice*

No one in the European Union is above the law, including police and security agencies. This core principle that protects everybody's fundamental rights is regularly undermined, seen in all too often cases of police brutality.

To protect the rights of racialized groups disproportionately at risk of police violence and profiling, the EU's Race Equality Directive should be updated to explicitly cover policing and institutional violence. With the right to protest increasingly under threat, we will defend the right to assembly and peacefully demonstrate in line with international and European law.

### *A European fight against organized crime*

Organized crime harms our democracies, puts lives at risk, and destroys local environments. As organized crime is transnational, it can only be fought through European cooperation. We support policies that improve exchange and information flows between European police and intelligence services and create a Europe-wide exchange programme for police officers.

## **Chapter III: Courage to Take Responsibility – Building a Union of Security, Peace and Global Justice**

Yulia left her farm four months into the fighting. The harvest had always been the best time of year, but this year it was too dangerous. There was nowhere for the grain to go anyway.

The Russian blockade was a tragedy for Yulia as it was for the millions who depended on Ukrainian food exports around the world. Just as Ukraine's economy has been shaped by Russian needs over centuries, unjust trade and the afterlives of colonialism mean that entire regions do not provide for their own food needs. Heat waves and droughts make this bad situation worse.

**It is why we need a global just transition, because our future is everyone's future and everyone's future is our future.**

Peace, prosperity, and sustainability go hand in hand. The world cannot have one, while it ignores another. The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine was a turning point in the history of our continent and the world. It violates the rule of international law, peace, and security.

As Greens, we stand firm in our undivided solidarity with and support for Ukraine, as long as it takes. The struggle of the people of Ukraine for freedom, peace and joining the European Union is our struggle.

It is not only Ukraine. Globally, peace and security are under threat. Painful conflicts are raging in the Middle East, the Caucasus, and the Sahel.

Growing tensions and shrinking space for democracy and civil society threaten the integrity of the international system and the hope for a better world. Europe's dependence on authoritarian regimes blinded us to this reality for too long.

The accelerating climate crisis, natural disasters, and the race for resources sit alongside the global inequality that remains baked into economic relations, trade deals, and multilateral institutions. The legacy of colonialism is still with us.

In today's world, we believe the European Union must be a strong player. The EU is and has always been a peace project. We must be able to stand up for the EU's security as well as peace and universal values in our neighbourhood and the world.

Human rights and economic prosperity cannot be a luxury for the world's richest. Global justice and development are the cornerstone of a secure, cooperative, and peaceful world.

A global just transition from which all countries and regions can benefit is key to that future.

Our answer starts with the EU achieving greater security in geopolitical and economic terms and acting as one internationally. For the EU, our security also depends on our support for Ukraine.

We will make values, peace, and reconciliation priorities for the EU's international policies, building a more stable world through human security, diplomacy and conflict prevention. The EU must be ready to work with all friends of peace, human rights, and multilateralism to these ends.

**We have the courage to make the EU a force for a different, more just world.**

Europe's green transition is both a geopolitical tool and a global responsibility. Climate diplomacy and cooperation on green technology and investment are key to how we will deal with the world.

We will fight for global justice. The EU can rewrite unjust trade rules to make the world fairer and more equal. All countries must have a stake in the new decarbonized global economy.

A secure and peaceful world, where Europe works with partners to put people and planet before war and exploitation.

**This is the future we want, and that Europe can help build.**

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## **A Union for Peace, Cooperation and Human Rights**

Security policy is at and will stay at the centre of the EU agenda. As Greens, we are convinced that the EU needs a new mindset and a clear willingness to act.

It is time to rejuvenate multilateralism and values-based foreign policy. The European Union has grown strong through integration, sharing and connection – not decoupling or building walls. What we endeavoured to do with the European project must also guide our international relations. We need to stand in solidarity with our partners and knit an expanded network of ties and strategic partnerships working together in an ever-more complex and interconnected world.

The green transition has always also been a question of security. For us Greens, it is clear that with more control over our energy system, crucial technologies, and vital supply chains, the EU can make a greater impact in foreign policy and towards a globally just transition. It is an opportunity for the EU to become a more effective actor alongside its partners and multilateral institutions, advancing peace and security as well as universal values, human rights, and democracy around the world.

### *Cooperation based on universal values and principles*

The EU must prioritize cooperation and alliance building with democratic partners to defend human rights, universal values, and norms. We need to act with our allies and like-minded partners wherever possible while retaining the ability to act independently when needed.

As Greens, we envisage a European Union that works closely with democracies and like-minded partners to stand up to aggressors worldwide and create new ties for multilateral cooperation outside the Global North. The EU must be ready to work with all parties committed to peace, human rights, multilateralism, and international law.

### *Multilateralism and cooperation for global security*

Peace and freedom are built through values-based and fair dealings with our partners. We believe in international solidarity and multilateralism. The United Nations upholds our shared global values, and we will defend it against attacks and advocate for reforms to enhance transparency, accountability, and effectiveness.

In these challenging times, the EU must actively seek out all opportunities for international cooperation and use all channels of cooperation to preserve peace, also within the OSCE. The multilateral system must be strengthened through fair representation for the Global South, for example on the UN Security Council and in international financial institutions. This engagement is the best way to achieve multilateralism based on the strength of international law, not might is right.

For the EU, a multilateral approach also includes strengthening and deepening cooperation with NATO, while respecting a clear division of competences and without setting precedence. Member states decide for themselves about NATO membership. The EU has a collective duty to safeguard its security from the oscillations of US politics and create the conditions to allow the EU to freely determine its engagement in the rapidly shifting geopolitical environment.

### *A new peace contract for Europe*

With increasing conflicts around the world, including in the European neighbourhood, the EU must work with international partners to build peace and reduce the risk of conflicts. We will take a transformational approach to tackle the root causes of conflict, strengthening civilian conflict prevention, mediation, and reconciliation as well as crisis management beyond borders, including peacebuilding, peacekeeping, and enforcement.

The climate-security nexus is about more than the EU's own stability. Climate and environmental initiatives as well as efforts that strengthen the political, social, and economic participation of women are essential to building peace and providing security through development. Their funding must rise in step with any increase in military spending.

Military interventions must only ever be the last resort. They must be based on long-term political strategies, comply with international law, and have European Parliament approval.

Regarding the Middle East conflict, we will push for the EU to relaunch political negotiations towards a two-state solution, based on secure and agreed borders. Lasting peace in the region requires negotiated outcomes that respect the right of both Israel and Palestine to exist as democratic and sovereign states and the Palestinian people to a home of their own.

### *A European Security Union*

As no country can face the threats to security alone, the EU must develop a Security Union that centres human security and people's needs. This approach is essential to protect human rights, prevent conflict, and create and maintain peace.

Security is about strong civil societies, the global just transition and long-term preventative strategies and not only about defence. Not only the short but the long term is our horizon of action, not only conventional conflicts but hybrid threats are our targets, not only states but civil societies. We advocate for a strong European External Action Service as a force for truly transnational diplomacy that can fight impunity and build reconciliation and lasting peace.

Within the European Union, we demand a credible policy of solidarity and mutual assistance in line with article 42(7) of the Treaty of the European Union. This means cooperation on military capabilities and creating synergies, for example through promoting interoperability and coordinating procurement, maintenance, and supply systems. The increasing threat of disinformation and interference in sovereign democracies must be met by cybersecurity efforts.

### *No longer relying on authoritarian regimes*

We must not repeat mistakes of the past. For too long, the European Union and its members were complacent about economic dependence on authoritarian regimes. Lulled by fossil fuels, the EU ignored Putin's rising authoritarianism, human rights violations, and the threat his regime posed to international security. We Greens will make sure that Europe does not make the same mistake again with other war-mongering regimes around the world.

We recognize the threat posed by China towards Taiwan that puts international peace and security in jeopardy. We advocate for an active, clear-eyed, and common EU policy on China. The EU must implement a robust human rights policy that starts with de-risking our supply chains, while acknowledging that interdependence remains a starting point for a peaceful international system and a global just transition.

### *Fighting for global human rights*

Civil society organizations are crucial for human rights, democracy and self-determination and fighting corruption and discrimination. They are the EU's natural allies who can change the world for the better. However, human rights around the world are too often not safe. Environmentalists, investigative journalists, women, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, land and indigenous rights defenders, trade unionists and progressive politicians around the world are intimidated, subjected to smear campaigns, imprisoned on trumped-up charges, and, in the worst cases, murdered.

As Greens, we will fully implement the EU guidelines on human rights defenders and provide easier access to visas. We want the EU to provide more support to civil society generally, for example through sustainable funding. Transnational repression by authoritarian regimes must be a priority for human rights protection.

### *No peace without women: for a feminist foreign policy*

Women and marginalized groups continue to have limited access to power across the world. A feminist foreign policy will put gender equality and human security at the core of our foreign and security policy. Societies will be more peaceful and prosperous when everyone plays an equal part in political, social, and economic life.

As Greens, we will push for a feminist foreign policy at EU level that implements intersectional strategies. We need to ensure political and civic participation of girls, women, and marginalized groups as well as an inclusive quality education for girls and young women. We must promote the economic empowerment of girls, women, and marginalized groups as a key foreign policy objective.

### *No arms exports to dictators and authoritarian regimes*

Global arms spending is higher than ever and has increased every year since 2015. We advocate for arms control and disarmament, including a ban on autonomous lethal weapons and the nuclear ban treaty. We call for an EU-level arms export policy that prohibits arms exports to authoritarian regimes, dictatorships and human rights abusers while supporting countries defending themselves against aggressors. Comprehensive monitoring mechanisms for arms exports to all partners must be introduced.

## **Justice and Development through the Global Green Deal**

The European Union must use its influence, power, and resources to build global justice and enable a Global Green Deal. The accelerating climate crisis is undermining peace and prosperity the world over. The future of the climate depends on every country in the world taking action and stopping fossil fuels.

For centuries, we have been exploiting the Global South, hindering development by imposing economic structures and exploiting people, land, and resources. Global justice, in action and not just words, is an ethical responsibility but also a geopolitical need.

Our proposals combine international partnerships and trade reform with development and humanitarian initiatives. They are rooted in our commitment to global justice and sustainability, as well as our awareness of colonialism's persistent legacy.

### *Recognizing our responsibilities through climate diplomacy*

We want climate diplomacy to be central to the EU's relations with its global partners. The EU must recognize the role European countries have made in contributing to placing the Global South at the front line of the climate crisis. As set out in the Paris Agreement, the EU must honour commitments to providing international climate finance for mitigation and adaptation in line with its fair share and make multi-year pledges to the new Loss and Damage Fund. The EU can lead the way by building high-ambition climate coalitions on investment, sectoral and technological priorities for decarbonisation.

We will fight for policy coherence across all internal policies to reflect their global implications with a legislative check for how they will help reach the Global Sustainability Goals. As Greens, we go beyond the do-no-harm-principle. We will use all tools at hand to engage with partners to jointly change people's lives for the better and take action against the climate crisis, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation. We will continue our push for the international recognition of the crime of ecocide.

### *Green Deal partnerships for global justice*

We want the EU to make Green Deal Partnerships with countries, regions, and civil society actors to support the necessary Global Green Deal with investment, access to technology, and expertise. We want the EU to shape and share the technological development and economic frameworks of the decarbonized world, including by facilitating technology transfer to the Global South.

Initiatives such as the Global Gateway and Just Energy Transition Partnerships must become key vehicles for opening green and resilient development pathways with partners and regions. The EU should seek to unlock as much investment in the green transition globally as it spends in the EU.

### *For resource justice, against extractivism*

Countries around the world must benefit so the green transition does not become a race that excludes the Global South. At the same, the EU's immediate need for metals and other resources cannot be satisfied without access to new materials. The EU must therefore speed up its transition towards a fully circular economy to reuse materials as long as possible and meet ambitious resource reduction targets. Furthermore, it needs to enable resource-rich countries to extract, process, and recycle raw materials, while prioritizing a "people and planet" approach that protects communities, nature, and biodiversity.



Extraction in the Global South must be done according to the same conditions as within the EU. The EU's resource needs should not further exacerbate existing inequalities, nor climate and environmental injustice. Our sufficiency approach, backed up by reduction and recycling targets within the EU, will help minimise the global mining sector's huge impact in terms of human rights violations, environment destruction, and climate.

### *Decolonize now!*

The legacy of the colonial era still weighs heavily on relations between certain Europe's countries and their former colonies. It is reflected in the unequal global distribution of wealth, ongoing economic dependencies and unjust economic structures, and lack of representation in our institutions as well as globally. We want the EU to face up to its historical responsibility arising from the crimes of colonialism.

We call for a deep comprehensive and inclusive review of Europe's colonial legacy to ensure reparation and accountability for past crimes. We support the push for the return of cultural artifacts. We want to correct disadvantageous clauses in trade agreements and push for reforms in development banks. The EU and its member states must work for sound debt restructuring and debt relief for particularly burdened countries.

### *From development aid to a global just transition*

Europe needs to increase funding for international development aid and humanitarian action to at least 0.7% of member states' economies. Development policy must be guided by a decolonial and anti-racist perspective.

Guided by the Sustainable Development Goals, we want to coordinate locally led development work better and increase funding to grassroots civil society, in line with the OECD DAC recommendation, avoiding duplication and wasting resources. We will follow a detailed approach to scrutinize and align the EU international cooperation budget with Agenda 2030, focusing on global justice, tackling inequalities, and transparency for private sector involvement. The EU must reconvene the Multi-stakeholder Platform on Sustainable Development Goals.

We want to promote local knowledge and local initiatives to support the development of economic cycles and social security systems. To this end, we want to further develop the existing European development cooperation in dialogue with our partners. We reject tying international aid and assistance to migration deals. The integrity of development assistance must be maintained and closely monitored.

### *Ending global hunger: food sovereignty for all*

The multiple crises of our time, first and foremost the climate crisis, pose existential challenges to food security worldwide. To end hunger, the EU must work for a sustainable and resilient global food system and contribute to the implementation of the right to food. The EU must prioritize agroecological approaches and align its own food and trade policy with the principles of food sovereignty for communities around the world.

### *Supporting global justice with sustainable trade*

As Greens, we believe in a global trading system that is based on equity, shapes globalization for the better, and puts human wellbeing at its centre. We believe in re-shaping the EU's trade policy towards sustainable development and stronger human rights protection. The EU should only enter new trade deals with countries that implement the Paris Agreement. Our Green Partnerships and the EU's new carbon tariff system (Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, CBAM) can create fair competition by making decarbonisation and environmental protection a joint effort. For the CBAM to be effective and fair, it must be complemented with higher EU spending on climate action in low-income countries.

The Greens successfully introduced legislation on due diligence, deforestation, and forced-labour-free supply chains, setting standards for imports into the EU. We will continue by updating the Public Procurement Directive and introducing a new Unfair Trading Practice for the textile sector.

We advocate rebalancing the global system of intellectual property rights to ensure the Global South can access key technologies, including for health and decarbonisation. As Greens, we will push for progress in the World Trade Organization reform to reflect the needs of the global just transition.

### *Remodel trade deals to protect social rights, environment and climate*

As Greens, we will push to improve bilateral trade and investment agreements with binding and sanctionable sustainability provisions. Sustainability goals and the Paris Agreement need to be horizontally anchored in all chapters of trade deals, from raw materials and agriculture to procurement.

Impact assessments for trade deals should include human rights, gender, biodiversity, and animal welfare. The precautionary principle needs to be fully respected and International Labour Organization standards fully implemented. Pre-ratification commitments, a European Parliament vote on the mandate, and full transparency shall ensure democratic legitimacy and the inclusion of civil society and trade unions.

We fight to end protections for fossil fuel investment and instead incentivize sustainable investment. The move to exit the climate-destroying Energy Charter Treaty is a major success. All investment agreements need to fully respect the right to regulate. We advocate abolishing Investor State Dispute Settlement mechanisms and their replacement with a multilateral investment court system.

Trade rules should not impede climate action, nor limit our ability to enact social and environmental policies. On the contrary, trade must be part of our efforts to limit emissions, switch to net-zero technologies and end ecological degradation. Trade of sustainable goods and services should be facilitated, so that they will become cheaper and broadly available. Freer trade should be paired with measures to limit environmentally harmful subsidies, including those for fossil fuels.

### *Making trade fair for all*

As Greens, we push for strategies to integrate fair trade principles into key EU policies related to production, consumption, and trade, promoting living incomes and wages, inclusive decision-making

involving smallholder farmers, artisans, and workers, and supporting measures to reduce pesticide usage in third countries. We demand that companies adopt sustainable purchasing practices and promote mission-led business models to free supply chains from exploitation.

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