



## **“Change for Europe”**

### **ECOSY – Young European Socialists Activity Report 2009**

**Change for Europe - Odnova dla Europy - Bewegung für Europa - Omslag voor Europa – Changeons l'Europe - Změna pro Evropu - Αλλάζουμε την Ευρώπη – Változást Európának - O zмене pre Európu - Förändring för Europa – Cambio para Europa - Mudança para a Europa - Permainos Europai – Spremenimo Evropo - Cambiamo l' Europa - O schimbare pentru Europa - Muudame Euroopat – Forandringer for Europa – PÁRMAIÑAS EIROPA - Muutosta Euroorraan - Промяна за Европа - Bidla għall-Ewropa**



## **Change for Europe** **- 9 deliverables for 2009**

The year 2009 was the year of the ECOSY Change for Europe campaign. Having adopted its manifesto "Change for Europe – 9 deliverables for 2009" at the ECOSY Summer Camp that took place from the 15<sup>th</sup> until the 31<sup>st</sup> of July in Carpentras, France, ECOSY embarked on a common fight to win the European elections on youth issues.

ECOSY – Young European Socialists campaigned for:

- 1. 15 million new jobs by 2014. End poor working conditions for young people.*
- 2. More social security; high quality public health care, education and life-long learning.*
- 3. Eradicate poverty. National minimum incomes and wages.*
- 4. No unnecessary bureaucracy. Build a citizens' Europe. Take decisions together with young people.*
- 5. Better integration and tackling the root causes of migration.*
- 6. Equal rights: No more discrimination based on gender, age, sexuality, ethnic or social background, or religious beliefs.*
- 7. A sustainable life style. Polluters pay extra "green" taxes. Environmental responsibility is rewarded.*
- 8. No more unilateralism: reform global governance and disarm peacefully.*
- 9. Decent work for all. End the global financial crisis and regulate fair globalisation.*

For each of the nine deliverables, young comrades from all over Europe wrote short articles explaining the importance of the deliverables and European action for their country situation. Forty-six articles were written and published on the ECOSY website, including contributions from ECOSY Presidium Members, SSF Sweden, MSD Czech Republic, SDY Finland, EDEK Youth, JSS Latvia, FMS Poland, Sinistra Giovanile Italy, MSD Slovakia, VSSTÖ Austria, Mladi Forum Slovenia, SSU Sweden, JSC Catalonia, FGS Italy, SDY Montenegro, DSU Denmark, SJÖ Austria, SONK Finland, PASOK Youth Greece, ANIMO Belgium, JUSOS Germany and JS in de PvdA Netherlands.

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Over sixty candidates in the European elections joined the ECOSY Change for Europe campaign. Supporters include Paul Nyrup Rasmussen, Zita Gurmai, Martin Schulz, Anna Colombo, Stephen Hughes, Stavros Lambrinidis, Maria Badia e Cutchet, Asa Westlund, Britta Thomsen, Dan Jorgensen, George Papandreou, John Monks, Ivar Padari, Jan Andersson, Miguel Angel Martinez Martinez, Richard Falbr and Thijs Berman. On the specially equipped website, supporters shared their reasons for joining the campaign with the ECOSY activists.

Most importantly, 29 debates for 2009 were organized all over Europe by ECOSY's member organizations. This report highlights the biggest activities organized in the framework of the Change for Europe campaign. An exhaustive list of debates can be found at the end of the report.

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### **ECOSY Expert Group on the Economic Crisis**

**ECOSY is convinced that young people need to lead the response to the crisis, as naturally it is our generation that will particularly suffer from the effects of this crisis as far as the cuts in jobs and social security are concerned, as also the rapidly diminishing value of savings and growing obstacles in getting credits, for example for buying apartments. Therefore, in line with the 9<sup>th</sup> deliverable "end the global financial crisis" of the ECOSY Change for Europe manifesto, ECOSY – Young European Socialists established a Youth Expert Group on the Economic Crisis.**

The ECOSY Economic Crisis Expert Group headed by Vice Presidents Estelle Göger, Nils Hindersmann and Petroula Nteledimou met for the first time in Brussels, Belgium, on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> of February 2009. The youth experts discussed the macro-economic situation preceding the crisis, including a poorly regulated banking system, deregulated financial markets and the unfair distribution of wealth globally as well as within our countries. The ECOSY Expert Group on the economic crisis professed itself strongly in favour of a fierce and coordinated European recovery plan, active labour market policies, European level regulation of hedge funds and private equity as well as of the introduction of a Tobin Tax. The expert group called on leaders to keep to their promise of 0,7 GNI development cooperation.

The ECOSY Economic Crisis Expert Group met for a second time in Brussels on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of October 2009. The Expert Group discussed employment and sustainable growth with Prof. Dr. Maria Joao Rodrigues. On Sunday, Mathieu Meulle (FEPS) and Cécilia Gondard (GPF) joined the Expert Group to debate the recovery packages and legislative proposals for financial regulation. In its final declaration that is attached at the end of this report, the youth experts ask for more effort to tackle youth unemployment; a stronger focus on core labour standards; a fairer taxation system; clear limits to the value that financial investments vehicles can take; investment in education and research; and to honour the 0.7% commitment.

### **ECOSY Winter University**

**The 4th ECOSY Winter University took place in Brussels from Monday 30th March to Friday 3rd of April 2009 thanks to the kind support of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament. As always the event took place in the PES Headquarters and in the European Parliament. This Winter University was special though because its programme included participation in the the Global Progressive Forum.**

The fourth edition of the ECOSY Winter University combined an intensive campaign training with a high level discussion on the topics of that would dominate the European election campaign.

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On Monday 30<sup>th</sup> of March more than 30 comrades from all over Europe boarded for this exciting adventure, from the North to the South and from west to east. We had participants for example from Finland and Sweden - Italy and Greece. But we also had participants from Ireland and Hungary. The centre of Europe was also well represented, for example by Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria and the Czech Republic.

The upcoming elections and especially the campaign played a big role in this year's programme. After a short introduction we started with a campaign training by former ECOSY Bureau Member Eric Sundström. Tuesday, the second day, was all about the media (which were the subject of training) and the PES Manifesto (presented to us by Julian Scola). We finished by an inspiring dialogue with Anna Colombo (Secretary General of the PES Group in the European Parliament). One of the many valuable points Anna made was that we (as social democrats) look at the creation of jobs as a value and not as a mean to tackle economic downfalls.

Wednesday was all about the policy debates and content of the electoral Manifesto "Change for Europe". Ieke van den Burg (MEP, PvdA) addressed the Winter University on the building of a European social security system - the very issue whose coordination is currently under discussion in the Council of the European Union. For the scientific point of view there was also Mathieu Meaulle from FEPS (Foundation for European Progressive Studies). Maria Badia I Cuchet (MEP, PSOE/PSC) discussed with the ECOSY participants the EU education and innovation policy,.

After lunch we spoke about climate change and sustainable policies with ECOSY veteran Asa Westlund (MEP, SAP) and Eluned Morgan (MEP, LP) who went into a deep discussion with the Sangeev Kumar from the WWF and Jo Wood from the Socialist Group in the EP on the ambitiousness of the EU's environmental targets. Participants discussed global governance with Jan Marinus Wiersma (MEP, PvdA) and Hannes Swoboda (MEP, SPÖ). Gary Titley (MEP, LP) closed the day in the European Parliament with an engaging debate on the integration of non-Western minorities in our societies. The participants were joined by PES Women President and MEP Zita Gurmai for a working dinner on Women's Rights in the EU.

Thursday morning was composed of two sessions. We talked about the millennium development goals with Pia Locatelli, MEP's and Emma Ceery of Oxfam International. Winter University 2009 was closed with the question on how to build a citizens Europe with Richard Corbet and Jo Leinen, who debated the democratization of Europe and the building of truly European political parties.

On the invitation of the GPF, the ECOSY participants joined the **Global Progressive Forum 2009** that took place in the European Parliament on Thursday and Friday.

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## 9<sup>th</sup> ECOSY Congress

**April was the month of ECOSY's 9<sup>th</sup> Congress that took place in Brussels from the 16<sup>th</sup> until the 19<sup>th</sup>, thanks to the great support of the Socialist Group and the FEPS, and during which ECOSY adopted its updated Position Paper and elected its new leadership.**

The following people were elected: Petroula Nteledimou (President), Janna Besamusca (Secretary General), Amalija Koren (Vice President), Brando Benifei (Vice President), Christophe Schiltz (Vice President), Johan Büser (Vice President), Kaisa Penny (Vice President), Katarina Nevedalova (Vice President), Nils Hindersmann (Vice President), Pedro Delgado Alves (Vice President) and Adrianos Kyriakidis (President of Control Commission).

On the 16<sup>th</sup> of April, ECOSY presented its candidates in the ECOSY Launch of the Young Candidates. Nine young candidates in the European elections, members of the ECOSY member organizations, presented the 9 deliverables of the ECOSY Change for Europe campaign. The launch was attended by Martin Schulz (President of the Socialist Group in the EP), Zita Gurmai (President PES Women, MEP), Piero Fassino (National Secretary Democratici di Sinistra), Anna Colombo (Secretary General of the Socialist Group in the EP), Said El Khadroui (MEP, SP.A) and Joseph Muscat (Part leader MLP).

In the afternoon, ECOSY Vice President Nils Hindersmann chaired a panel discussion on the Economic Crisis from the youth perspective. The panel included Prof. Dr. Maria Joao Rodrigues (special adviser on the Lisbon Treaty), John Crombez (head of list SP.A in the Flemish elections), Jan Cremers (MEP, PvdA), Alexandre Polack (ActionAid) and Mathieu Meaulle (FEPS).

On the morning of Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> of April, thanks to the support of the FEPS the Next Left conference took place under the chairmanship of Ernst Stetter, FEPS Secretary General. Caroline Gennez (President of SP.A) and Conny Reuter (Solidar Secretary General) both addressed the Congress in the afternoon.

## ECOSY Campaign Study Visit

**From the 23<sup>rd</sup> until the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2009, twenty-five comrades gathered in Eastbourne, UK, for the ECOSY Campaign Study Visit, organized thanks to the hospitality of Young Labour and Labour Students. The ECOSY campaigners received intensive training in British campaign techniques, met the Labour Party leadership and helped out on the ground in the electoral campaign in Hove, with LGBT Labour in Brighton, Hastings and London.**

On Saturday, just arrived, the participants jumped on a bus to help the Hastings local activists who had been leafleting for a last few hours. In the evening, the group followed a training from Young Labour Chair Sam Tarry, who introduced the participants to the campaign techniques of the anti-BNP Hope not Hate campaign.

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Former Young Labour chair Richard Angel took the ECOSY participants out campaigning for LGBT Labour in the UK's Gay capital Brighton. Angel also explained the Labour Party campaign structures, database and techniques that depend heavily on access to the electoral roll. On the penultimate day, the participants tried the traditional British campaign technique "door knocking".

On Tuesday morning, the group met Labour Party General Secretary Ray Collins, International manager Jo Billingham and EPLP Secretary General Giampiero Alhadeff at the Labour Party HQ. Before flying back home, the participants went out campaigning in multicultural London with Labour MP Emily Thornberry and met Young Labour Youth Representative on the Labour Party NEC Stephanie Peacock and PES Presidency Member Denis McShane, MP.

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## ECOSY Change for Europe: 29 Debates

	<b>When</b>	<b>Where</b>	<b>What</b>
1	25-31 July 2008	Carpentras, France	Campaign Launch
2	12 September 2008	Ostrava, Czech Republic	Change for Europe Debate
3	28-30 November 2008	Madrid, Spain	ECOSY Fringe Meeting on the extreme right
4	6-8 February 2009	Berlin, Germany	Change for Europe panel debate at JUSOS Linkswende Conference
5	14 February 2009	All over Europe	Launch of the Universal ERASMUS petition
6	15-16 February 2009	Brussels, Belgium	ECOSY Expert Group debate
7	16 February 2009	Luxembourg City	Press conference on ECOSY manifesto
8	21-22 February 2009	Budapest, Hungary	Change for Europe campaign presentation
9	13 March 2009	Warsaw, Poland	Campaign Launch Seminar
10	28 March 2009	Talinn, Estonia	Campaign Launch Seminar
11	27-29 March 2009	Maribor, Slovenia	Presentation campaign at SD Congress
12	30 March - 2 April 2009	Brussels, Belgium	ECOSY "Change for Europe" Winter University
13	16-19 April 2009	Brussels, Belgium	Launch of the Young Candidates
14	25 April 2009	Helsinki, Finland	Campaign Launch Seminar
15	1 May 2009	Rotterdam, Netherlands	Labour Night
16	6 May 2009	Tampere, Finland	Election debate on 7th deliverable
17	8 May 2009	Jyväskylä, Finland	Campaign event supporting young candidates Jenny Lindborg and Ilkka Taipale
18	10 May 2009	Torres Novas, Portugal	Campaign event
19	12 May 2009	Graz, Austria	Campaign debate on 2nd deliverable
20	16-17 May 2009	Tolfa, Italy	Campaign seminar
21	17 May 2009	Gaia, Portugal	Presentation young manifesto for Europe
22	23 May 2009	Barcelona, Catalonia	Campaign event supporting young candidate Sandra Ramos
23	23 May 2009	Paphos,	Campaign debate

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ECOSY -Young European Socialists

		Cyprus	
24	23-26 May 2009	Eastbourne, UK	UK Campaign Study Visit
25	25 May 2009	Athens, Greece	Change for Europe manifesto promotion action
26	30-31 May 2009	Novagor, Italy/Slovenia	Joint debate Sinistra Giovanile Mladi Forum
27	31 May 2009	Utrecht, Netherlands	Time for Change debate
28	31 May 2009	Xania, Greece	Change for Europe event
29	4 June 2009	Volos, Greece	Campaign event supporting young candidate Petroula Nteledimou

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# Change for Europe

## - 9 deliverables for 2009

Young European Socialists, Social Democrats, Labour supporters and Progressives stand for solidarity, equality and justice, freedom and democracy. We are united for a federal, democratic, social and international Europe. We do not allow anybody to be left aside. We strive for more and better jobs for everyone. We promote diversity and ensure social inclusion. We stand for social security. We ensure better governance for Europe. We guarantee fair globalisation.

**Together, we make a change.**

Right-wing and conservative political forces make false promises. Action is needed. Unemployment of young people is rising. Many people feel abandoned. There are more and more school drop-outs. Too many ineffective rules and regulations are created. Poverty is increasing. There is less and less social security. Europe forgets to take its international responsibility. We do not turn a blind eye for these problems, but propose realistic solutions.

**Together, we care!**

We make concrete commitments. We propose 9 deliverables for 2009. And we are only accountable to You, the People of Europe. Change for Europe is a new vision of a new generation. A concrete vision that provides everyone chances for a better future. We invite you to come along.

**Together, we can make Europe work.**

1. *15 million new jobs by 2014. End poor working conditions for young people.*
2. *More social security; high quality public health care, education and life-long learning.*
3. *Eradicate poverty. National minimum incomes and wages.*
4. *No unnecessary bureaucracy. Build a citizens' Europe. Take decisions together with young people.*
5. *Better integration and tackling the root causes of migration.*
6. *Equal rights: No more discrimination based on gender, age, sexuality, ethnic or social background, or religious beliefs.*
7. *A sustainable life style. Polluters pay extra "green" taxes. Environmental responsibility is rewarded.*
8. *No more unilateralism: reform global governance and disarm peacefully.*
9. *Decent work for all. End the global financial crisis and regulate fair globalisation.*

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## **SOLUTION 1: MORE JOBS. BETTER JOBS. END TO POVERTY.**

In Europe (one of the richest places on the planet) one in six lives below the national poverty line, summing up to some 74 million people. 19 million people in the European Union are unemployed. The richest 1% have more than doubled their share of income from 8% in 1980 to 17% now. And recently the phenomenon of the "working poor" started occurring amongst a majority of young people; working but remaining in poverty. **Our future for Europe is different.**

### **✓ 15 million new jobs by 2014. End poor working conditions for young people.**

Economic growth is essential to achieve the goal of full employment, but it is not enough to create more and better jobs and reduce poverty. We need a Europe that invests in its people, invests in skills and opportunities of especially young people. Further implementing and renewing the goals of the Lisbon strategy is essential in this process. Full employment is a central part in our vision to ensure a high quality European social welfare state.

Active labour market policies have to enable young people to enter the labour market easier at the same time protecting them from exploitation in unpaid internships or short time contracts without proper social security. Strong contractual legislation, trade unions and member states providing the right to employment are necessary.

*"We want a European Youth Employment Charter that prevents exploitation."*

Easy and low cost hiring and firing has to be stopped. Labour market reforms have to be framed; enhanced flexibility while upholding high levels of social security is an aim. This is only possible when four preconditions are guaranteed: 1) good job contracts; 2) more support for transition between jobs or from unemployment to work; 3) better life-long learning that enables people to learn and develop; 4) modern social security systems which ensures all workers adequate support and facilitate labour market mobility.

*"Our goal is a 32 hours working week, without losing purchasing power."*

A 32-hour week represents a decisive incentive to the conciliation of family and professional lives and contributes to an increase in the quality of life of all European workers, particularly young parents.

To fight youth unemployment, sustained integration of young people into the labour market, national social inclusion policies to improve the situation of the most vulnerable young people, prevention of educational failure, stimulating vocational integration of young people and, easing the transition from education to work, must be realised.

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The "Polish plumber" syndrome is false. Workers have to work under national legislation limiting possibilities for wage dumping and unfair working conditions. Labour market regulations throughout the European Union must converge, not towards the lowest dominator but towards high standards. Therefore, existing directives have to be replaced by a new - legally binding - social labour mobility directive.

**✓ More social security; high quality public health care, education and life-long learning.**

The EU has predominantly been promoting the single market, often allowing alienation of citizens from their social rights. We put an end to this. It is important to promote the competitiveness of European economy, in public and private sector, but this philosophy can no longer be based on privatisation and ongoing liberalisation. A rights based approach has to be implemented in Europe.

*"We promote high quality and accessible services for everyone, everywhere."*

Fundamental sectors that must be run in the sphere of the government as public services are security, justice, health care, education, water, energy, waste management, public transport, post and telecommunication, public media and information, culture, sports, childcare, social housing, and social security. They are a key component of the European welfare state, provide the base of our comparative advantage and guarantee social inclusion through the principle of non-exclusion for everybody - insuring that public rather than individual interest prevails.

*"Recognised voluntary work is informal education, not cheap labour."*

Education is more than going to school and obtaining a diploma. Education is a tool to promote equality, citizenship, high quality employment and better (inter)cultural understanding. We intend to use this tool. All forms of education have to be accessible for everyone. A real European education area has to be established. Student mobility, especially for youngsters with disadvantaged backgrounds and young people from new or future member states, needs substantial improvements. It is imperative that a common European higher education system is open and accessible to all, when necessary through financial support to international mobility by students from less privileged backgrounds. Additionally a universal ERASMUS system has to be established - making participation in an exchange program for everyone until the age of 25 possible.

**✓ Eradicate poverty. National minimum incomes and wages.**

"Work has to pay." This simple principle has to become reality in Europe. The goal to reach it is a European minimum wage on the basis of equal purchasing power all over Europe combined with social minimum standards in Europe. We guarantee for everyone, everywhere a decent life and decent livelihood.

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It is necessary that a European minimum income or collective agreements with equal purchasing power are applied based on long-term vision of social convergence with the exception for those countries, where a minimum income is secured by collective agreements and is legally enforceable.

*"Child poverty should be eradicated by 2014."*

Social cohesion and integration must be a priority; therefore we demand actions combating poverty and strengthening the family. Children must have decent life and children's trafficking has to be eliminated by all means. What is more, we call for a roadmap to reduce the number of functional illiterates by 50% by 2010 and its complete elimination by 2020.

## **SOLUTION 2: BETTER GOVERNANCE. INCLUDE EVERYONE.**

In reality, the Reform Treaty is a relatively small step in the process of the European Union's institutional development. Yes, it will reinforce democracy in the EU and its capacity to promote the interests of citizens on a day-to-day basis. But the modern institutions and improved working methods have to prove efficient and effective. Furthermore, European legislation has lately strengthened protection against discrimination and improved social inclusion, but clearly some right wing governed Member States are failing to meet their responsibilities. **Our future for Europe is different.**

**✓ No unnecessary bureaucracy. Build citizens' Europe. Take decisions together with young people.**

The EU cannot be a Union of member states alone. It has to allow and develop strong and active cooperation between citizens. In our vision, Europe has to tackle and solve problems people are facing today. The European Parliament, as the only institution of the Union directly elected by the citizens, needs to have power to co-decide on all Union legislation, full budgetary powers and the right of initiative.

*"With us European Union assumes its real role."*

We have a long tradition in effectively fighting corruption and misuse of public funding, all elected officials have to comply with strict financial rules and regulations and any mischief must be severely punished. Furthermore, the EU administration has to be thoroughly reformed, the European Central Bank democratised and the number of European Commissioners limited. In fact, every Commissioner has to be elected on the bases of a concrete political portfolio, individually accountable to the European Parliament only.

*"For the right of citizens to demand and decide."*

Europe has to belong to its citizens. Participation acquires a new meaning; sensitization, mobilization and inclusion in decision-making can change the status quo. Every vote counts for major issues, even when reluctant leaderships tend to forget. Citizens' initiative becomes one of fundamentals of modern democracy in the EU. In order to achieve this goal, greater transparency of decision making processes must be achieved, not only on the EU level, but also within the member states' decision making processes.

*"For the right to vote from the age of 16."*

Young people have to be engaged in the work of the EU. Openness and public access to official records must be realised. No more paternalistic Europe. All new rules and procedures must be drafted with consultation of young people starting from the local level to the European institutions.

*"European enlargement has to continue."*

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South East Europe, Russia, Caucasus and Turkey are part of Europe. Accessing states as Turkey and Balkans have the responsibility to comply with objective criteria as respect for human rights, rule of law, *acquis communautaire*, economic policy, financial accountability, etc. The Union has to offer sufficient financial means and expertise enabling these countries and their societies to comply with European Union's criteria, but also act when human rights are violated. Meanwhile, the relations with Russia and Caucasus have to be strengthened also following the objective criteria, as outlined in the European Neighbourhood Policy.

### **Better integration and tackling the root causes of migration.**

Creating a "Fortress Europe", as right wing parties want, will not stop migration from taking place; it just promotes illegal migration and worsens immigrants' conditions. A rational, solidar, rights based approach to immigration offering safety to those who seek asylum and dealing with economic migrants in a respectful and responsible manner is necessary.

*"The unfair Visa regime should be ended."*

A "General pardon" for all "illegal residents" in Europe has to be applied, offering them citizenship including all rights and responsibilities. By 2014 a common immigration policy must be established, including the harmonisation of criteria and immigration legislation as well as the sharing of the financial burden of accommodating and integrating immigrants. This includes full civil, political and social rights for immigrants; the right to family reunion, right to work, access to public services, and right to vote and stand in all elections.

To answer mass migration, we need to tackle its causes: poverty, repression and armed conflicts. More than twenty million people have fled their home soil because of conflicts, humanitarian crises and dictatorships; many more leave their countries because of economic collapse and extreme poverty. European Union needs to keep its promise to make poverty history by 2015.

### **Equal rights: No more discrimination based on gender, age, sexuality, ethnic or social background, or religious beliefs.**

An open society is necessary, in which everybody can fully participate, regardless of income, ethnic or social origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, health condition and disability, religious or political orientation and citizenship. It is a society, where everybody's human and fundamental rights are guaranteed, and where all have the right to decent work, receive social benefits and follow education. Exclusion, discrimination, xenophobia, homophobia and gender inequality have no place in our future for Europe!

*"The gender pay gap has no place in Europe."*

Gender equality in Europe is far from achieved. Violence against women, both at home and away, mobbing, trafficking and forced prostitution are reality. All forms of gender inequality will be crushed and women's civil, political and social rights

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consolidated. Private enterprises should have a duty of at least 40% women in executive board.

Sufficient maternity and paternity leaves must be available with no distinction in payments. Both women and men must be encouraged to follow untraditional paths – the system must be open to the working woman as well as the caring man. This must be supported by state funds and high quality child care systems which allow women to return to work or studies at the end of the parental leave.

*"Same sex marriage in all member states."*

It is a right to be queer. We actively support the struggle for equal rights of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgenders and Transsexuals (LGBT). Several Member States have not legalised same sex partnership or marriage, and even less granted same sex couples the right to adopt children and social security systems are discriminative. This needs to be changed.



### **SOLUTION 3: FOR DEVELOPMENT. FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE.**

Today's choices affect our own lives, but even more so the lives of our children and grandchildren. The green house gasses we send into the atmosphere in 2009 will stay there until 2109 and beyond. The world is a heterogeneous place: people have unequal incomes and wealth. Violent conflicts, insufficient resources, lack of coordination and weak policies continue to slow down development progress, particularly in Africa. **Our future for the world is different.**

#### **✓ A more sustainable life style. Polluters pay extra "green" taxes. Environmental responsibility is rewarded.**

Our Europe is environmentally sustainable. Europe has the technology and infrastructure to implement renewable energy policies, sustainable water management, safe waste management, and a new - environmentally responsible - agricultural policy. Polluters have to pay additional tax-penalties. More environmental education, especially for young people, has to be the corner stone of the European environmental policies. Nuclear energy, as we know it today is not the viable or suitable solution.

*"2014: half of the energy used at home is produced at home."*

Energy security means diversity of supplies; the EU should make better use of the potential of renewable energy, and democratize energy supply. Protection from the threats of genetically modified food has to be improved through a new label. Alternative means to conventional road and air transport have to be promoted, also to address increasing congestion problems. People need the opportunity to make responsible decisions for their future.

*"New partnerships for a new global energy security strategy."*

A more sustainable life style is a human right. By 2012 a new Kyoto protocol is needed to eradicate greenhouse gasses. A Security Council for environmental issues within the UN system should be established. The common agricultural policy should be reduced and trade disturbing measures eradicated.

#### **✓ No more unilateralism. reform global governance and disarm peacefully.**

Societies without laws are left to the solemn arbitrary decision making of the strongest. We need global governance. The UN is the most relevant global body and its global governance, coordination and effectiveness have to be improved. International law is crucial to build international democracy and a fair world order. Human Rights must be respected by everyone; no more torture and death penalties.

*"No further spread of HIV/AIDS and malaria by 2015."*

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The wealth of the world is unfairly distributed. International taxation on international financial transactions is needed to finance development and support stability and security. All EU member states should finally meet the objective of 0,7% international aid already agreed upon. International aid coordination must be improved to support democracy and human rights and not corruption or bad governance.

*"War is no solution. We fight terror peacefully and effectively."*

Real security is based on trust, respect and solidarity. Conflict prevention and management must be done through active diplomacy and wealth distribution. Military force can only be used with authorization of the UN. Nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction are a reality which must be prevented. Europe needs to invest more effort in advocating international disarmament through all its channels and relations with international partners, starting with disarmament of its own arsenals.

**✓ Decent work for all. End the global financial crisis and regulate fair globalisation.**

Labour markets have to be modernised in Europe and the rest of the world to anticipate on gradual economic changes and movement of sectors. People in the developing world - also - need more and better jobs to "work" themselves out of poverty and have better future perspectives. We choose to invest 250 Million Euro more in the Social Adjustment fund to counter balance social consequences of globalisation in Europe; and also to promote higher quality jobs and better social protection in the "south". For that reason ILO standards and regulations have to become mandatory to promote fair globalisation both in domestic as international policies.

*"Unfair trade regulations have to end."*

All bilateral and regional trade agreements must include enforceable commitments to implement core labour standards, decent work, sustainable development and human rights. All WTO, IMF and World Bank regulations have to build further on this principle.

The world is in a financial crisis. Financial speculators buy-in and disintegrate healthy companies to make short-term profits, without considering the social consequences. We need a financial sustainability pact involving both states and social partners in the frame of the EU and UN system, in order to prevent these practices for the future.

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## **ECOSY Economic Crisis Expert Group**

# **Final Declaration**

**11 October 2009**

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## **Final declaration of the 2nd ECOSY Expert Group meeting on the economic and financial crisis**

The ECOSY Economic Crisis Expert Group met in Brussels, Belgium, on 10 and 11 October to assess and discuss the current economic development in Europe. Notwithstanding positive signs from the stabilization of financial markets and GDP rates, the Expert Group is of the opinion that the crisis is not yet over.

### **The current situation**

It is clear that public economic stimulus and the social security systems stabilized the European economies. The national recovery plans could have been more effective if there had been coordinated better on the EU level. The monetary policy of the European central bank is still too restrictive. The negative effects of deflation are already being felt by some countries and other Euro zone countries are perilously close to being in this situation.

Europe still has a negative growth rate. It is unclear when there will be a return to positive growth rates. Even more worrying is that there is still a decrease of the capital formation rate (investment rate). That implies that production capital and with that production potential is reduced. Since this process has not come to end yet the economic crisis will prevail for a longer time.

The employment effects of the economic crisis are different in Europe. In many countries the unemployment rate has increased dramatically especially among young people. But there are few countries where unemployment rate has remained stable. It is unclear if the economic crisis has yet reached its full impact on the labour market. It is indeed quite likely that unemployment rates will still increase and that there will be third crisis: The social crisis. Until now the social security systems have been able to dampen the effects of the economic crisis in most European countries, but with increasing unemployment and sky-rocketing budget deficits the pressure to cut spending on social security will increase. This will have devastating effects on the most vulnerable in our societies.

The financial market regulation is still necessary, despite the financial markets having began their recovery. Without more and better regulation, financial markets will still contain systemic risks and jeopardize efforts for a more sustainable economic growth path. The outcomes of European banks' stress tests and therefore the existence of more toxic assets remains largely unknown. The financial industry is as bold as to deny responsibility for the crisis, and as such is actively lobbying European governments, the European Commission and the European Parliament against legislation.

### **Our demands**

The economic stimulus was effective but it was not enough. We need a new recovery programme to further stimulate the economy. The worst thing to do at the moment is to cut the budgets in order to meet the goals of the Growth and Stability Pact. We need to at least maintain the level of public spending or increase it. The increase of public spending and controlling where the money goes is more effective than tax cuts.

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In order to prevent another economic crisis in the future we need a more sustainable economy. The unequal distribution of wealth caused the enormous growth of the financial sector and made it unstable.

When our economies start to grow again we need a fairer taxation system. That means higher incomes have to be taxed at a higher rate and capital income has to be taxed more effectively. Taxation of the highest trenches has to be brought beyond symbolism by covering a substantive number of people with high incomes. With this higher tax revenue the enormous deficit created during the economic crisis can be begun to be paid back.

The financial sector has to serve the real economy again: stock markets need to return to their original function of facilitating capital mobility *for investment*. Profitability of investment in financial markets has to be brought on a par or made less attractive than investments in the real economy. Limits relative to the real economy value need to be imposed on financial investment vehicles. The generation of revenues to compensate for the fiscal stimulus of the last years cannot be the main aim of the proposed financial transaction tax: it has to be introduced with the aim to reduce the volatility of the financial markets . The revenues from such a tax must be used for development cooperation.

A real reform of the financial markets is still necessary. The current debate is predominantly focused on controlling management bonuses and closing down tax havens. Although these actions are important, they should not overshadow the discussion regarding the lack of proper regulation of financial actors. The capital requirements under Basel II have to be revised to put more stringent requirements on the largest banks. Regulation of financial markets must cover all actors and must focus on the hedge *funds* and private equity *firms*, not merely their managers. Transparency has to be assured and workers' voices must be heard. The follow-up of the bail-out process must address the problem of the existence of banks that are "too big to fail".

In addition we need more and better jobs through a European employment and training program. The focus has to be on youth employment. We need more investment in green jobs that link in with the traditional sectors in order to actively re-direct their development. Investment in the social services sector is imperative.

But creating more jobs is not enough. We have to make sure that the new jobs apply to the concept of decent work. Precarious working conditions such as limited contracts, temporary and agency work, and unpaid internships have to be stopped. Social rights and core labour standards have to be guaranteed to everyone.

Another form of precarious work is false self-employment. Core labor standards have to apply to self-employed people who are economically dependent on one employer as well, no matter what kind of contract they have. At the same time, entrepreneurship among young people has to be further encouraged and supported. Increased access to credit and subsidies and better mechanisms to help young people in meeting regulatory requirements in order to start their business will drive a new generation of entrepreneurs..

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We need more investment in education, innovation and research; in both the public and private sectors. In the private sector especially, companies have to invest more in vocational training. The EU and its member states have to increase the public spending on education up to 6% of the GDP.

The economic crisis is not only affecting the EU and the other industrialised countries. The developing countries are more vulnerable to dramatic economic changes. This crisis leads to an increase of poverty, hunger and diseases in the poorest countries of the world and all countries need to honour their previously-made commitments and reach 0.7% of the GNI being donated to development aid. In addition, efforts to bring the DOHA round to a good end must be intensified.