



PES Declaration on Europe Day 2020

Adopted by the PES Presidency on 5 May 2020

Today, May 9th 2020, we celebrate 70 years of the Schuman declaration and 75 years from the defeat of the Nazi regime ending World War II, two major landmarks for Europe and the European Union. Our community has grown throughout the decades and, together, Europe has experienced the longest period of peace in its history. Europe Day is as much an opportunity to look back and to remember our efforts in reconciling our differences, as it is a day to consider our path towards a fairer, equal and sustainable future and our upcoming steps to foster unity, enlargement, integration and cooperation within the European continent. That is what the PES fought for in the 2019 European elections.

On this day, we must also acknowledge that we are facing the battle of our lifetime. This is a defining moment for the European project. The COVID-19 pandemic is shaking our societies and, if we are not alert and active, it could threaten the social, economic and democratic future of our Union. The need for solidarity, coordination, and joint action has never been clearer. In the last weeks, the people of Europe have felt very certainly that a strong EU is a necessity, and also that harm can come from a lack of European solidarity. They believe in a Union that protects the people, therefore European solidarity will be absolutely fundamental in the months to come to support every European citizen through these difficult times. This crisis has shown how relevant the EU, with its shared freedoms, values and culture, is for today and tomorrow.

As socialists and democrats, we are convinced now more than ever that the values on which our political family is founded must be the bricks with which we construct our common future, cemented by a strong and progressive European Union: social policies that support and protect people, families, workers and the most marginalised; strategic public investments; quality public services; tax justice and, cohesion between regions and countries. Years of austerity policies have unfortunately weakened our health systems and social protection. They have increased economic and social inequalities, and had a toll on climate policies. We must learn from the mistakes of the past so that they are not repeated. Resilient welfare states and social protection are instrumental today as we face the pandemic and support our societies. The PES will keep pushing against those who seek to undermine the welfare state, particularly by fighting against tax evasion and money laundering. The current crisis can become an opportunity to renew our economic and social model with our core values towards a sustainable, fair and green Europe.

We are convinced now more than ever that the European fundamental values of democracy, rule of law, gender and minority rights and full equality, and the respect of human dignity and human rights, are universal, and must be respected at all times. These recent weeks and months have also shown that we must always remain vigilant and ready to stand up to defend these values against the nationalists and populists who shamelessly used this crisis to push their authoritarian, sexist, and homophobic agendas.

PES Prime Ministers, Leaders, Ministers, Commissioners, Parliamentarians, Mayors, representatives and members in all levels are fully mobilised to contain the crisis and promote a European recovery, grounded on the principles of the European Green Deal, the European Digital Strategy, the European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Gender Equality Strategy, supported by a European Recovery Fund, a reform of



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Party of European Socialists

10-12 Rue Guimard

B-1040 Brussels

Belgium

the European Monetary Union with a true fiscal capacity, a strong MFF and new own resources, commensurate with the profound damage caused to our societies. We need solidarity among our countries to overcome this crisis, to deliver for all European citizens.

The PES has several ongoing working documents such as the “PES Plan to Contain the COVID-19 Shock and Recover”, “The European Green Deal as a central pillar of the COVID-19 Recovery”, and “Affordable and Quality Healthcare for All”, paving the way for a sustainable and fair recovery through targeted investments in the future, enabling a just and fair transition and better jobs. As socialists and democrats, we will stand up for a strong and progressive European Union that leaves no one behind.

On Europe Day 2020, all European Socialists and Democrats stand united in restating once more our deepest conviction that a progressive European Union is the best way to ensure prosperity, equality, and freedom for all our citizens. It is our duty to bring new hope and a future for Europe. This ambitious agenda requires resources, agreements and negotiations. Our political family is committed to achieve a new, fairer and better Europe. That is the future the PES wants and we will stand up for it.