

40 Years of European Union of Christian Democratic Workers

60 years after the conclusion of the Treaties of Rome and 40 years after the founding of the European Union of Christian Democratic Workers, **the European Union is the largest and most successful peace project of our times**, a place where Europeans are rich in cultural differences, find strength in common values and enjoy more stability, security and prosperity than in many another places in the world.

However, there is no reason to rest on these achievements. Even if much has been achieved, the promise of European unity has not yet been fully realized. Moreover, we in parts of Europe, democracy and participation, equality and social justice, solidarity and sustainability, respect for the rule of law and human rights are being undermined. Europe's achievements cannot be a lasting success story, unless we succeed in building an attractive place to live for current and future generations.

In these uncertain times, European citizens rightly demand a greater focus on those "European values". They look to Europe for economic, social and environmental progress. Economic progress in the form of prosperity for all and a more equitable distribution of income. Social progress through social security, in the provision of healthcare, education and public services accessible to all, and a strengthening of the social fabric that binds us together. Ecological progress in a healthy natural environment, in which all life on Earth is protected and clean water and clean air are guaranteed.

We are proud of the social rights that we have so far achieved for workers in Europe. The European Union must not only recognise those rights, but also actively support their enforcement. Whether the right to form or join trade unions,

the right to collective bargaining and to strike, as well as the right to social dialogue and information and consultation, including codetermination.

Therefore we commit ourselves to a 'social market economy' to the benefit of all. We must come to a more comprehensive economic and social policy, which ensures that all citizens participate in Europe's prosperity, without harming our planet.

We want to defend our open and democratic societies. We call for the protection of our values and for investment in employment and education. We demand that human rights, democracy, freedom of religion, gender equality and the rule of law be fully implemented and enforced both at EU and at national level. We want a hospitable Europe, where every contribution is welcomed and migration is recognized as an opportunity for society.

Europe must play a leading role in tackling global challenges. Climate change in particular forms an existential risk to our world and must be tackled not only for environmental reasons, but also to prevent the escalation of conflicts, famine and forced migration.

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the EUCDW, we reaffirm our conviction in European integration and set out concrete proposals for the future of Europe.

We call for:

- A Europe that promotes and protects the civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights of all, and supports their realization beyond its borders;
- Strengthening our representative and participatory democracy with the ability for citizens to participate also beyond the elections, so that a diverse civil society can flourish;

- Strengthening education as a public task, providing lifelong learning for all people, to strengthen active social inclusion, awareness of sustainable development, human rights and active citizenship, with citizens taking up these tasks in diverse ways;
- The full implementation of the Paris agreement by increasing energy efficiency and the acceleration of a socially just and sustainable transition to clean and affordable energy, to keep global warming below 2° C;
- A European Social Model that offers comprehensive protection to all employees, all consumers and all people living in the EU, and tackles poverty and social exclusion;
- A European Union with a strong pillar of social rights, which ensures high-quality employment and fair remuneration, and prevents inequalities between women and men, discrimination of children and young people, or on the basis of race, sexual orientation, age, or disability;
- A trade policy that creates prosperity for all, tackles dumping and enforces the ILO core labour standards;
- A digitization strategy, which allows everyone access to new technologies, guarantees digitization as a service of general interest as well as protects the security of the data;

In the face of a world that is changing faster than ever before, **European unity and solidarity are today as important as at the conclusion of the Treaties of Rome.** Solidarity brought us together and solidarity is the only way forward to a secure a successful future. None of the current challenges can be solved by a nation or a group of people alone.

The European Union and its institutions must urgently remain connected with the realities, dreams, and hopes of its citizens, if the lasting meaning and survival of our Union are to be secured. Now is the time to rethink the direction we are

taking, to build on our successes and to lay the foundations for the further development of European integration.