

The following is a shortened version of the 1994 Common Electoral Programme:

BUILDING A CITIZENS EUROPE

THE COMMON ELECTORAL PROGRAMME OF THE ELDR PARTY

INTRODUCTION

The last five years in the European Parliament have seen several important steps towards real European Union. Despite the achievement of the internal free market, the Maastricht Treaty on European Union, the disappearance of communism and the unification of Germany, citizens of the European Union have much cause for anxiety. We see yet another economic crisis. Unemployment has grown to an unacceptable level. Protectionism and illiberal solutions are supported by too many. Furthermore, there has been a resurgence of political and economic instability, a revival of nationalism, outright war and violation of human rights in a number of countries, as for example in former Yugoslavia, which must be resisted.

Some believe European Integration can go no further and that "Brussels" interference in national affairs must end. They argue that the concept of subsidiarity means preserving the dominant position of the nation state. The European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party rejects this and regards subsidiarity as the coordinated sharing of responsibilities between all levels of democratic government, so that power is exercised at the lowest possible level.

We believe in a society where individual expression is allowed to flourish under the rule of law. Our political objective is to enhance the well-being of society in a healthy environment by building an ecologically sustainable social market economy in a European Union based on decentralised federal characteristics. We will campaign for an open society where liberty and opportunity prevail.

Our priority for the next Parliament is to put into effect the Maastricht Treaty, to strengthen representative democracy and to introduce open government. We will work to draw the European Union closer to the citizen, and to encourage them to exercise their rights and duties at all levels of government.

ECONOMIC AND MONETARY INTEGRATION

European economic and monetary integration must lead to sustainable economic growth, prosperity and social justice for our citizens, as well as more jobs, low inflation and a stable currency. We therefore demand:

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

1

- strict adherence to the convergence criteria as a precondition for entering the third phase of the European Economic and Monetary Union;
- reinforced commitment to economic and monetary integration and a single currency;
- the creation of independent national central banks as an important step towards establishing a European Central Bank;
- a tough and convergent fiscal policy, aimed at reducing budgetary deficits;
- a tax burden which allows the citizens to enjoy a substantial part of their revenue and savings;
- the management of EMS should be adjusted to allow, if necessary, for orderly realignments, taking into account a fair "burden-sharing", aiming to prevent competitive devaluations and monetary turmoil and lay a sound foundation for the establishment of EMU.

SOCIAL POLICY AND EMPLOYMENT

ELDR is working for the strengthening of the social dimension of the European Union. Unemployment disenfranchises and marginalises millions of European citizens. The Maastricht Treaty provides the starting point to addressing this problem, We need social and labour market policies which promote a flexible and dynamic labour market, equality of opportunities and improvement of working conditions, especially among the lowest paid and less qualified, It would be wrong to try to enhance European competitiveness by forcing workers to accept less safe, less healthy working conditions. We demand:

- lower unemployment be a major goal of the Union's social and economic policies;
- the establishment of minimum standards of social provision throughout the EU to avoid the danger of exploiting the workforce;
- new approaches to the concept of work such as voluntary part-time working, retraining, career breaks for family and personal development, mobility of the work force, reduction of those social costs which hinder the creation of jobs;
- all remaining obstacles - legal barriers and discrimination - to the achievement of equal opportunities between women and men be removed: this includes discrimination in pay and employment, taxation, and sharing family responsibilities; maternity and parental leave provisions for both men and women to take care of their children and

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

2

opportunities to support relatives who need special attention, as well as provisions for adequate and affordable child care facilities;

- that a new approach to flexible retirement be found in the light of the demographic changes facing Europe;
- that the tax burden on labour be reduced and compensated for by an increasing tax burden on environmentally damaging consumption and production;
- that in order to combat unemployment, we achieve competitive employment costs in Europe;
- that non-public employment agencies be allowed to operate throughout Europe, to enhance labour market performance;
- that the United Kingdom joins with the other eleven countries and abandons the "opt-out" clause.

Social and economic cohesion is a priority for us, but it is more than the transfer of funds. Regional comparative advantage, competition and ecological sustainability should be incorporated into EU cohesion policy. We demand that:

- cohesion policy should promote investment in environmentally friendly production processes;
- structural funds are used by regions to provide training and enhance skills, as well as to improve the infrastructure of deprived and disadvantaged areas; investment aid should be limited to a certain period of time and be given to encourage self-help. Coordination between the local, regional and European level must be improved;
- as a significant contribution towards the Single Market, transnational transport, energy and telecommunications infrastructures should help weld national economies together and bring about economic recovery;
- better public scrutiny and tighter financial control be introduced by the Commission, with the assistance of the Court of Auditors and under Parliamentary supervision. The Court of Auditors should be authorised to recommend sanctions;
- special attention be given to a policy of the Union geared to the development of small and medium-sized enterprises necessary for their adaption to new markets and technologies and new challenges on markets outside the Union.

A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

3

Nature is a unique resource and its depletion and pollution must bear a price. An efficient and competitive economy in a healthy environment needs to manage its natural resources according to the principles of sustainability. But a sustainable environment is a global concern, it can only be achieved through a truly international approach and a reconciliation between economic development and environmental protection. The market economy in its response to present ecological challenges can create new jobs, new industries and thus economic growth. We demand:

- the internalising of environmental costs into the economy;
- the use of economic incentives and fiscal instruments to achieve sustainability and to create an ecological dimension to the Single Market, particularly in the fields of transport, fossil fuels and agriculture;
- the immediate start to a phased implementation of a fiscally neutral European wide energy/CO₂ tax as a major contribution to the fight against the greenhouse effect; and ensure that all forms of energy, including nuclear power, bear the full cost of their impact on the environment. The European Union should simultaneously work closely with the USA and Japan to achieve a similar energy/CO₂ tax in these countries;
- that efforts be made to extend the life-cycle of products and the use of recycled raw materials;
- that international regulations be put in place to avoid uncontrolled dumping of hazardous waste.

The incorporation of environmental factors in international trade is crucial to achieving sustainability at a global level but as long as there is no international harmonisation of such legislation, the effect will be trade distortion. Therefore we demand that:

- tariffs or monetary compensatory amounts may be levied to avoid environmental dumping. These should be subject to negotiation within GATT.

The risk of a nuclear disaster - caused either by old nuclear power stations or carelessly guarded and protected nuclear arms - represents a severe threat to all people of Europe. Therefore we demand that:

- the EU supports the programmes for training nuclear engineers and specialists to advise on the management and security of East European nuclear power plants;
- the EU promote conversion to cleaner industries and greater energy efficiency, and ensure the rapid phasing out of unsafe practice and

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

4

environmentally damaging use of energy in Central and East European countries;

- the European Commission undertakes as a priority a comprehensive public enquiry into the safety and long-term viability and competitiveness of the nuclear energy industry throughout Europe.

AGRICULTURE AND RURAL POLICY

European agricultural policy must help farmers to face the economic and social challenges of today. ELDR wants to see an entrepreneurial and competitive market-oriented agriculture operating in an attractive and productive rural environment where a range of farms, many of them family-run, occupy the central role in thriving rural communities which enjoy a range of jobs and activities. Structural funds must be used to encourage the cooperation needed to achieve this. The CAP was conceived to ensure stable markets, security of food supply, a fair return to farmers and reasonable prices for the consumer, but administrative control of the reformed CAP becomes more difficult every year; new farming techniques have led to ever greater production and intensification and caused the market to be over-supplied. ELDR wants a CAP, transformed into a common rural policy embodying the principle of sustainability where production balances market needs and with clear aims to protect rural communities and the countryside.

Therefore we demand that:

- the market place plays a much bigger role through the progressive transfer of market management mechanisms to income support schemes, aiming to establish continuity of agricultural activity in the Union;
- EMU be created in order to rule out currency-dependent price fluctuations in agricultural markets;
- the European Union affirms the desirability of ensuring food sufficiency by maintaining a well-functioning agriculture;
- a code of conduct be adopted to define those good agricultural and forest practices that respect soil, water, air and biological diversity; payment of subsidies will depend on following this code;
- CAP rules must be scrupulously enforced throughout the Union;
- additional payments for the protection of landscape, biotopes, rural communities and encouragement of new activities to provide new jobs should be organised and financed on a regional basis, that is according to the principle of subsidiarity;

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

5

- the current system of set-aside by rotation be phased out, and permanent uses of lasting benefit to the environment be found for land that is no longer viable for food production;
- extensive agricultural practice be encouraged and stimulation be given for:
 - scientific research into non-food use of farm production,
 - new industries using farm products.

CIVIL RIGHTS AND JUSTICE

We have always been in the forefront of the struggle for civil liberties, Our policies are based on the respect and equal treatment of all individuals, without any kind of discrimination. To prevent the abuse of free movement of people, goods, services and capital throughout the Union, we need a common external border policy and certain measures to curb drug trafficking, terrorism and other forms of serious crime. Therefore we demand that:

- all Member States ensure fulfilment of their Treaty obligations with regard to the freedom of movement of people;
- Europol be established as an effective instrument to fight against international crime and drug trafficking;
- the police and judiciary be entitled to operate throughout the Union in a legally defined and coordinated way; agreement should be reached on indictment, extradition, banking control and the fight against money laundering.

We know that a European immigration and refugee policy cannot alone solve the increasing problem of immigration, the improvement of living conditions in the countries migrants come from is needed too. But people have the right to move around in an open society, live in harmony and be free to express their personality- regardless of their ethnic, religious or cultural origin. Nevertheless, we do recognize the increasing number of refugees in Europe and the abolition of border controls between EU Member States makes it vital to introduce common European Union legislation on asylum seekers and refugees. Therefore we demand that:

- anybody not coming from a safe country who can genuinely claim to be persecuted is initially allowed to enter any EU Member State;
- the fight against illegal immigration leading to third country citizens working and residing in the EU, be intensified by increased cooperation between Member States; and that common standards for immigration policies, issuing visas and control at the entry to European Union territory be elaborated;

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

6

- common criteria and legislation for asylum with separate legislation for refugees be created; the distinction between the two must accord with the existing international conventions;
- once the application for entry has been rejected by one Member State, all others shall be bound by this refusal;
- the right of appeal against refusal shall exist, according to national laws – with appropriate interpretation facilities provided;
- applicants shall be assisted during these proceedings, which should be as short as possible;
- the burden of costs and services of asylum and refugee treatment during these proceedings shall be shared equitably between member states.

CULTURE, YOUTH AND EDUCATION

A Europe rich in cultural diversity - where people are tolerant of and knowledgeable about our common heritage and cultural minorities, is best guaranteed by European integration because it increases the exchange of cultural experience between the cultures, Young people represent the future and continuity of every society, to enhance their knowledge of each other, the EU should encourage their mobility. Therefore we demand:

- the teaching at the earliest possible age of at least two foreign languages spoken within the EU;
- that Member States encourage civic education by teaching the history of Europe at all levels;
- a substantial increase in exchange programmes for all young people, especially trainees and people in education, in the EU: these programmes should preferably be undertaken on an individual basis, person-to-person and family-to-family;
- that the EU should encourage Member States to introduce a period abroad as a part of the education system;
- that the EU must guarantee the mutual recognition of exams and course elements throughout the Union;
- the EU-wide availability and distribution of European films and television programmes.

ACTING TOGETHER IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

The European Union needs a new concept of security in today's multi-polar world. This in addition to the traditional military dimension, should

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

7

aim to create political, economic and environmental stability and close relationships with the developing world. NATO still remains the most important organisation for collective defence and stability. ELDR supports the European-American partnership within the North Atlantic Alliance, but Europe must assume more responsibility. The WEU, as an integral part of the European Union, represents the European pillar within this partnership. The Union must play a major security role and put in place a limited but effective military force for rapid response to armed conflicts within Europe. Therefore we demand:

- the establishment of a European security and defence policy with efficient military structures and forces to implement it;
- the strict adherence to the timetables for and implementation of existing arms control agreements, restraint of arms exports and an end to production and proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction;
- that the European Union plays a major part in reforming the UN to meet its new challenges of securing peace more quickly and efficiently, to improve the protection of human rights and of the environment; .
- that the European Union remains open to new members who have fully subscribed to the "acquis communautaire" and the "acquis politique";
- that with the enlargement of the European Union, a reform of the structure of the Union must be carried out which maintains the capability of its institutions to act, guarantees the representation of all Member States and strengthens the rights of the European Parliament through specific reforms concerning the elimination of the democratic deficit and the consolidation of the principles and aims on which Political Union is based.

To foster democratisation and free market economies in East and Central Europe the EU must open its markets to their products. The Union must give all possible support to the economic and political development, environmental improvement and social stability of Russia and the other former Republics of the Soviet Union.

Therefore we demand:

- the forging of close and open partnerships with all genuine democracies in Central and Eastern Europe;
- that the EU seeks a friendly partnership with Russia on a broad basis and supports close cooperation of all new independent states within the region, this is essential for stability and peace within the region and should be reflected in special cooperation agreements with the European Union; Russia must become the 8th member of the Economic Summit;

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

8

- that all democratic countries work towards the creation of an all-Europe free trade area;

- that all countries work towards the development of direct investment in and transfer of technologies to Central and East European countries,

North-South cooperation must be conceived within a global context, be based on the protection of human rights, the environment and free and fair trade. To this end, ELDR considers that the EU should move towards a European development policy. It is natural for those living in persecution, conflict and poverty to search for peace and prosperity. Successful development policy and the establishment of just, fair and self-sustained societies in the countries concerned is the only way to remove the main cause for migration. Therefore we demand that:

- a rapid and balanced conclusion of the GAD Uruguay Round be achieved. Free trade is a prerequisite for successful economic reform; international protection must be ended;

- the resources for future generations be preserved. Environmental protection must be included in the cooperation with developing countries: Furthermore development funds should also be used to meet higher development costs due to environmental requirements;

- the developing countries put in place sustainable democratic and economic structures which allow individuals to participate fully in political processes and use their abilities to best advantage;

- development aid should be concentrated on those countries which respect human rights and democracy, are setting up a market economy, pursue environmentally sustainable policies, efficiently control population growth and restrict military spending;

- Member States continue to aim for the international target of 0,7% of GDP for official development aid, and for a greater effectiveness in its use, it must help people to help themselves;

- industrialised countries must contribute to easing the debt burden of developing countries by further opening their markets and by debt rescheduling: any proposal for debt relief must be evaluated on individual merit;

- the EU regards as a priority the development of its relations with the countries of the Mediterranean Basin, particularly those of North Africa, and builds policies that contribute directly to the social, economic and political stability of that region.

THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY IN THE UNION

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

9

The European Union we fight for is unique. No blueprint exists. It is not and will never be, the centralised all-powerful European superstate caricatured by our nationalist opponents of left and right. We propose an institutional framework, where democratic authorities at different levels - local, regional, national and supranational - share power with each other in a coordinated way. Our aim is to make the institutions that govern the EU efficient, using light regulation wherever possible, and retaining a pluralistic and decentralised federal character. Therefore we demand that:

- a European constitution be drafted by the European Parliament in close cooperation with the other political institutions of the European Union, the national parliaments and governments. It must include a charter of Rights for the European citizens and reflect their concerns about democratic control of the Union, lack of transparency in the EU and consequential national legislation and the loss of national, regional and cultural identity;
- the European Union be democratic at all levels, fair to its citizens, open and efficient in all activities, and embody the principles of human rights, including respect for minorities;
- co-decision between Parliament and Council, which is the key to the development of European Union, must be made to apply to all legislation;
- modifications of the Treaties on which the process of European integration is based be subject to the assent of the European Parliament;
- at the political level, a separation of powers should be accomplished. The legislative power should consist of a directly elected parliament, which embodies the sovereign will of the peoples of Europe, and the Council, which represents the political majorities of the Member States. Both branches of the legislative power must operate on the basis of equality and should meet and decide in public;
- the Council of Ministers must evolve into a full democratic legislative body: the first step being that the voting record of the Council should be public; another step being the extension of majority-vote decision making within the Council to other main policy areas;
- a uniform electoral procedure be introduced for the European Parliament so that seats won broadly match votes cast: fair votes for the citizen and equal treatment for the parties;
- the appointment of the Commission as the executive body of the European Union be made by the legislature (European Parliament and Council) within sixty days of the elections;
- the two intergovernmental pillars of the Treaty of Maastricht, along with other arrangements such as the Schengen Agreement be brought fully

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

10

under the auspices of the European Union, and eventually involve all Member States;

- European integration at variable speed - although it may be unavoidable in some areas of competence - does not lead to a Europe "a la carte";
- the Committee of the Regions develops rapidly into a powerful forum for autonomous regional and local institutions.

The ELDR demands that by 1996 the European Union be based on a Constitution which defines the rights of the citizen vis-a-vis the Union, its competence and the rule of democratic decision-making. This Constitution must also include a Charter of Rights for the European citizen. The constitutional settlement shall only be brought into effect by popular endorsement according to the practices of individual Member States.

Resolution:

Manifesto European elections 1994

Year and Congress:

1993, Congress
Torquay, United Kingdom

Category:

European democracy – ELDR electoral programmes

Page:

11