



European
PIRATE PARTY

PROGRAMME

Preamble

Today's European Union (EU) as a supranational institution is a project of its member states rather than its citizens. Pirates believe that Europe should be organised to serve the common interests of all European citizens, as well as the interests of member states.

Pirates in the European Union have adopted this election programme and strive together to make our vision for the Union a reality.

The democratic deficit within the European Union has existed since its formation and has not been sufficiently addressed during the integration process.

An essential goal of all Pirates is to build a solid democratic foundation for the Union. To achieve that goal, it is crucial to ensure that political processes are more citizen-friendly. Together we must encourage the development of a common European space for culture, politics, and civil society to protect the rich and diverse cultures within the Union.

The EU must live up to its own principles on subsidiarity. Decisions should not be taken on the EU level if they can be better resolved on the national, regional, or local levels. Equal and easy access to communication and an informed citizenry are essential requirements in legitimate democratic decision-making. Political decisions at the European level need to be preceded by Europe-wide debate and allow for the adequate participation of all.

Pirates strongly believe that all people must have the right to fair and equal treatment. Society must respect the rights of minorities. We will stand against discrimination of any kind and oppose movements that act against human rights.

The Internet as a medium of communication offers tremendous opportunities for political development, overcoming top-down, one-way communication. Pirates will therefore defend the freedom of the Internet with fierce determination at the European level and on a global scale.

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AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHERIES,& ANIMAL WELFARE

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Towards a Sustainable Europe and a Sustainable Planet

As we are a part of nature, our quality of life depends on natural resources like unpolluted water, air, soil, and food in our homes. We must achieve sustainable and healthy food production for all, now and tomorrow. We advocate for a strong role of the ENVI, AGRI, PECH, and REGI committees, provided that lessons are learnt from past mistakes in EU agricultural policies. It is their duty to protect our natural resources and change nature's exploitation into nature prospering.

Pirates demand upholding (and, wherever possible, exceeding) the ambitious environmental promises and plans made on the EU and international levels. Both regarding conservation and support of biodiversity in agroecosystems as well as greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture.

Urban and suburban agriculture and gardening must be encouraged to reduce transport, provide nutrition, spread knowledge, and satisfy human needs.

In trade agreements with third countries, the EU shall avoid unfair trade practices based on its trade power. Exports of European surplus food products into third countries must be reassessed if they risk damaging the markets for local food.

Subsidies only for the public good

We want a Common Agriculture Policy that supports natural and cultural diversity. We are convinced that the multiplicity of food production, which is locally adapted and in the hands of many independent and self-determined actors, will also grant food security and quality of life in the countryside and cities.

The CAP should encourage farmers to adapt to climate change in terms of technologies and choice of crops or breeds. The CAP must provide a frame stipulating equal rights, opportunities, and commitments. The role of subsidies in

European agricultural politics must change towards a greater focus on diversity and equality. Financial support must be granted according to sustainability criteria and not based on the land area or production.

As agriculture in the EU provides high overproduction and production can be marketed by standard market means, subsidies should only support the common public good. Ecosystem degradation should not be part of agricultural policy as an excuse for social issues. Pirates want to preserve and support small-scale farming and subsistence agriculture to enhance resilience.

Use of technology and digital solutions

The principle of 'no patents on life' must be strictly upheld. The EU shall establish the frame for open access to digital applications and open interfaces. Publicly funded data on, for example, climate, weather, soil, and water must be easily accessible to the public. The EU must ensure that any such datasets obtained using proprietary technologies will not pass into private hands.

Forestry

EU should do more to incentivize practices leading to the preservation and restoration of biodiversity, water retention, and carbon capture in forests, both in terms of regulation and funding. But we have to learn from the mistakes of the Common Agricultural Policy. The goal is to help develop a sustainable industry, both in the economic and environmental sense. EU has to enforce strict protection of old-growth forests and old trees in all other parts of the landscape.

Animal welfare

All animals deserve to be treated humanely. Pirates support strengthening measures ensuring appropriate care and management and less painful slaughter, such as the phase-out of cage farming as soon as possible, introducing species-specific standards for all farmed animals, ban on the export of live animals to third countries, and reduction of long journeys of live animals by introducing strict absolute time limits. Lack of transparency on farming conditions and education on the welfare of animals in modern farming systems needs to be addressed, e.g. by a method-of-production plus label for animal products. Pirates support further development of alternatives to meat and incentives to a shift towards a more plant-based diet.

Sustainable fisheries

Fishing quotas must be revamped to adapt to scientifically evident sustainability and protect small-scale fisheries. The EU should expand policies combating illegal fisheries. Marine protected areas should be granted an appropriate and harmonized level of protection by forbidding unsustainable practices harmful to biodiversity, such as bottom trawling or extractive activities. Large-scale aquaculture development should also be closely monitored to ensure animal welfare, equilibrium between feeding and fishing, and better integration in the environment and ecosystem while

ensuring traceability. EU should push for enabling fish migration in rivers, especially by removing unnecessary dams.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society is a crucial component of any democratic society, as it plays a vital role in ensuring that the voices of individuals and communities are heard and represented in the political process. As the European Pirate Party, we recognize the importance of civil society in the European Union and its member states, and we are committed to strengthening the values that underpin it.

At the heart of our mission is a commitment to the fundamental values of the European Union, as outlined in Article 2 of the Treaty on the European Union. We believe that respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities like LGBT+, are non-negotiable principles that must be upheld and defended at all times.

To achieve this goal, we call on the EU to work closely with civil society organizations across Europe and beyond to ensure that these fundamental values are respected and promoted in all EU policymaking and decision-making aspects. We believe that civil society should have a meaningful say in shaping EU policies. The EU should actively seek out and listen to the voices of individuals and communities traditionally underrepresented in the political process.

Furthermore, we believe that the EU is responsible for promoting these values not only within its own institutions and member states but also in its interactions with other countries and international organizations. We believe that the EU should lead by example, demonstrating its commitment to these values in its external policies and working to promote them in countries and regions where they are under threat.

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Citizen Participation and Open Government – Democracy Add-On for Europe

Pirates advocate for a directly elected citizens' convention tasked with drafting a new EU treaty that will clarify and replace current treaties and address the need for democratic reform within the Union, provided it is accepted by the citizens of the Union through a referendum.

The present EU legislative process is dominated by the executive branch (the European Commission) at the expense of the legislative branch (the European Parliament). Pirates seek to adjust the balance of power in European Institutions to favour the legislative branch.

Direct democracy at the EU level, i.e. pan-EU referendums on constitutional revisions and citizen-initiated legislative referendums, should be part of the new constitution. Citizens shall have the right both to repeal existing legislation and initiate new legislation.

Citizenship Add-on for Europe

We, the European Pirates, consider ourselves European citizens. However, at this point, European citizenship is only an idea. Pirates want to transform this idea into reality. With European citizenship, we can be more than French, German, and Swedish. We can be citizens with a bundle of common rights in every country of the Union. We will be able to issue European passports, allowing any European citizen to be recognised as a part of a concept larger than their own countries in the ideal of a borderless world.

Pirates want to open discussions and organise workshops to fulfil these goals.

The European Pirate Party believes that everyone in the European Union should have the right to real EU citizenship. This citizenship should come with an EU passport and physical and digital documents recognized all over the EU as European citizenship.

We believe that real EU citizenship is essential for ensuring that all people in the EU have equal rights and opportunities, regardless of their country of origin. It is also a

vital step towards creating a more united and cohesive Europe, where everyone feels like they belong and are valued members of the community.

Innovating Political Participation

Pirates want citizens to have a more direct and significant impact on the policy debate and decision-making process, both individually and collectively.

The European Parliament should set up an e-participation tool. Citizens should be able to discuss legislative proposals publicly, propose amendments, and support (or vote against) proposed amendments online.

We wish to reform the EU Citizens' Initiative. Data requirements shall be reduced. The European Commission should deal even with unsuccessful but interesting initiatives.

Petitioners with a significant number of supporters shall have the right to be heard in person. The European Parliament should open its doors to citizens regularly to let them directly submit their proposals and concerns to a joint plenary session with Members of the European Parliament and Members of the European Commission. These sessions should also be open to citizens participating remotely via the Internet or social media.

European citizens must be able to search, use, and exchange the information made available by different European governance processes. This way, they can understand and participate in the life of our European democracy. The social cost of participating needs to be minimized.

Open Government

The European Union shall join the Open Government Partnership. This multilateral initiative aims to promote open government, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance.

Promoting Civil Society Participation

We believe that civil society participation is crucial for a healthy and vibrant democracy. Therefore, we are committed to promoting and supporting the work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) across the EU. To achieve this, we propose increasing public awareness of the importance of civil society participation and encouraging greater participation through education and outreach programs.

Clear Regulation of NGOs

We propose advocating for clear and fair regulations for NGOs operating in the EU, focusing on transparency and accountability. We also suggest making it easier for NGOs to establish and finance themselves within the EU.

Tax Incentives for Donations

To encourage more organizations to engage in social and environmental causes, we believe donations towards NGOs working for the common good should receive a special tax status in all EU member states.

Effective Interaction with European Institutions

NGOs need access to information about upcoming legislation to interact with European institutions effectively. We propose that NGOs registered in the EU get access to the actual text and additional information, allowing them to put the legislation into context. This will ensure that all stakeholders have a place at the table and access to the latest developments.

Promotion of Good Work by NGOs

We will work to promote and showcase the critical work that NGOs are already doing across the EU. By highlighting their successes, we aim to encourage more people to get involved and support their efforts. We recognize the critical role that NGOs play in areas such as environmental protection, social justice, and human rights. Therefore, we are committed to supporting their efforts and working together to build a more just and sustainable society.

Anti-corruption and Containing Corporate Lobbyism

The influence of money on politics is one of the key corruption risks in the EU and a threat to its democratic foundation. Political decisions will not be made in the best interests of all citizens when corporate interests are allowed to dominate.

Disclosure and Containment of External Influence on Political Decisions

To protect the democratic process and make decision-making more transparent, the Pirates call for disclosing the influence of interest groups and lobbyists on political decisions. Lobbying activities shall be as transparent as possible. That can be helped by making the existing lobby register mandatory, linked to an open calendar on the Internet. Every EU citizen should have a chance to look up with whom the elected representative met, what was the purpose of the meeting, and what happened there. The process shall be based on a multi-level controlling system that is needed for a reliable democracy. In addition, a legislative footprint shall be published. Everyone involved in policy making shall disclose their meetings with lobbyists and the written input they receive. All draft bills and amendments shall be traceable to their original author.

Enforceable ethics rules and an oversight mechanism for lobbyists shall be introduced. These should prevent lobbyists from exercising undue influence.

Preventing Conflicts of Interest

Public officials (including Commission Special Advisers) and elected representatives (including Rapporteurs) shall not be unduly influenced by private interests in performing their public duties. Conflicts of interest may occur with outside activities and previous jobs, but also through revolving door cases related to MEPs, Commissioners or civil servants taking up new jobs in the private sector.

Proper rules must be established to ensure that relevant office holders do not have any conflicts of interest, that interests are being declared and that misbehaviour is sanctioned. The European Parliament and the European Commission Codes of Conduct need to be reformed. Effective transparency and ethics rules are needed for Intergroups and other cross-party groups involving MEPs and lobbyists. An independent body should oversee compliance and impose sanctions where necessary. Comprehensive rules limiting the revolving-door phenomenon shall be adopted.

Re-democratising the Input Process

Business interests shall no longer dominate policy expertise. The Commission shall introduce effective safeguards against corporate capture of expert and advisory groups, technology platforms and EU agencies. Because a vastly disproportionate number of meetings with EU officials is dedicated to big business, the number of these meetings should be reduced. More time should be devoted to actively seeking input from citizens, SMEs, and other currently under-represented interest groups.

Political Campaign Financing

All European political parties shall use transparent bank accounts for campaign funds. The authority overseeing European political parties shall be given effective auditing and sanctioning tools.

Transparency and Whistleblower Protection

Transparency gives the powerless the power to monitor the powerful. Pirates believe transparency is needed to allow the public to make democratic decisions.

Whistleblower Protection

Pirates advocate for general and comprehensive whistleblower legislation to protect anyone who exposes issues that are in the public interest, including abuse of law, unlawful activities, and wrongdoings. We strongly believe whistleblowers must be able to equally report internally, to a competent authority or to the media to guarantee

the freedom of expression and the citizens' right to information. The right to anonymous whistleblowing should be established.

Transparency of the Public Sector

The public sector, including private entities carrying out work on behalf of a public body, must be transparent and publish information as open data by default without applying restrictions on their re-use. Better legislative transparency is needed, particularly in the Council and in trilogues. Public authorities should have a duty to document information concerning decision-making processes. Public authorities and representatives should be obliged to keep records and proactively publish information such as agendas, minutes of meetings, third-party documents such as lobbyist input, and information justifying decisions.

The principle of transparency should apply to all public bodies, including the Court of Justice, the permanent representations of member states and the rotating national presidencies of the Council.

Pirates believe that it is a fundamental right of citizens to inspect, without the need for any specific justification, all contracts or financial benefits related to the delivery of public sector or government projects and services.

DEFENSE POLICY & CYBERSECURITY

The European Union must be empowered to defend its security interests and, in doing so, make a greater contribution to global security. The EU must articulate common guidelines and build the necessary capabilities to achieve this. Any need for military autonomy of Member States should not be misused to harm the common European spirit of cooperation. The Pirates support the integration of currently separate national armed forces, with the long-term goal of creating a joint European army under sufficient democratic control.

Our goal is stabilising fragile states and mitigating conflict outbreaks, as this instability is a security issue for the entire international community. Due to the increasingly unstable global security landscape, the Pirates support a capable domestic defence industry. This goes hand in hand with efforts for better information sharing on arms export licence decisions and denials, to ensure a coherent EU arms export policy and increased support for countries that share the core values of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. The Pirates follow an interdisciplinary approach, considering multiple perspectives on countering hybrid threats and adjusting to disruptive geopolitical shifts. We aim to strengthen European resilience against current and future threats of hybrid warfare, disinformation, cyber-attacks, and economic coercion. Our present dependencies on fragile and often hostile authoritarian nations in energy supply, critical raw materials, and general supply chains must be sustainably reduced. Pirates want clear and transparent criteria and selection procedures for assessing suppliers and their compliance with international law and human rights.

Pirates reject the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and support the reduction of global arsenals of nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons. Pirates support initiatives to ban the use of lethal autonomous weapon systems in kinetic and digital warfare while preserving our European capacity to research and develop emerging technologies.

DRUG AND ADDICTION POLICY

The “War on Drugs” has failed. Prohibition ties up resources and causes immense costs. Unnecessary prosecution and conviction of users of psychoactive substances not only harm society through ever-increasing expenses for the police and judiciary but also pushes marginalised people into illegality and to the margins of society instead of regulating substance use outside a black market. This strengthens the black market and organised crime. Many EU member states are planning to reassess, legalise, or decriminalise cannabis, which can only be a first step towards a “New Drug and Addiction Policy”. Drug policy should first and foremost be health policy, taking into account the social and economic factors that promote drug use and addiction. A world without drugs in complete abstinence is unattainable. However, access to relevant information regarding the use of drugs is vital to ensure both the freedom and safety of the individual. The state should only intervene in a regulatory way based on scientific findings about the danger of the substance/addiction.

The European Pirate Party believes that drug and addiction policies should be grounded in scientific evidence, prioritise individual autonomy and public health. The party supports a revision of the UN Conventions on Drugs and their implementation into EU law to create evidence-based drug policies that prioritise public health and harm reduction. The party believes that policies aimed at reducing the negative consequences of drug use should be prioritised over punitive approaches. These policies could include measures such as decriminalising drug use and possession, expanding access to evidence-based treatment, and regulating drugs to ensure safety and quality.

The Pirates, therefore, advocate that the EU work towards a recast and, if necessary, termination of the UN conventions on psychoactive substances to adopt a science-based view. Cannabis and other substances should be removed from the list of illicit drugs. The EU should create a framework facilitating a science-based approach allowing, among other things, for information exchange and contribution to research on psychoactive substances. This will allow treatments using these substances to be researched and implemented (such as the treatment of cancer, ADHD, or Long Covid).

The EU must create a framework that encourages member states to decriminalise, legalise, and regulate cannabis and other substances to limit the black market, better ensure consumer and youth protection, and respect the philosophy of the free EU Single Market. It shall take measures to regulate legal substances that are particularly harmful to health, such as alcohol and tobacco, and to ensure health, youth, and consumer protection, for example, by banning advertising and restricting lobbying. One of the Pirates’ key priorities is harm reduction policies for drug users. The European Union should encourage introducing harm reduction services such as drug-checking services, drug consumption rooms, and substitution therapy programs. The European Pirate Party argues that these services are essential for reducing the

harms associated with drug use, such as overdose deaths and the spread of blood-borne diseases. We are convinced that these services can help reduce the stigma associated with drug use and support individuals seeking help for their drug use.

The European Pirate Party supports the regulation of cannabis for personal use in the EU. We believe that criminalising the personal use of cannabis is ineffective, harms marginalised communities disproportionately and diverts resources from more urgent public health needs. The party advocates for evidence-based cannabis policies that prioritise harm reduction, including regulating the production, distribution, and sale of cannabis to ensure safety and quality.

The European Pirate Party supports the legalisation of psychedelic-assisted therapy. We believe that patients should have the right to access these treatments under medical supervision and that they should be regulated to ensure safety and efficacy. They support the development of evidence-based policies aimed at expanding access to psychedelic-assisted therapy and promoting research into the therapeutic potential of these substances.

The European Pirate Party supports a joint European alcohol and tobacco policy focused on harm reduction. We are convinced that public health should be a priority, and policies should be evidence-based and aimed at reducing harm to individuals and communities. We advocate for measures such as education campaigns to promote the responsible use of alcohol and tobacco, discourage excessive consumption, and prohibit advertising and marketing.

We advocate for rational regulation of gambling in the EU. This includes the principle of informed choice, where players should be provided with information on how each game works, the house advantage, the risk of loss and the cost of the game.

EDUCATION, CULTURE, RESEARCH & FREE KNOWLEDGE

Broader public access to information, knowledge and culture is a prerequisite for our society's social, technological, and economic development. However, it has been hindered by artificial information monopolies, which are supposedly designed to motivate creators and inventors to produce more. In reality, the only beneficiaries of the monopolies are huge corporations. The system as a whole is failing to meet the claimed objectives. This failure manifests itself in many forms, including the frequent bullying of individuals and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by collecting societies, privatization of profits from publicly funded works, or the loss of orphan works. We face attempts to create new copyright restrictions on AI-generated content.

Our goal is to create an environment where the motivation to create goes hand in hand with freedom of information. These challenges require thorough copyright reform and systemic changes in the public sector.

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Culture

Promotion of the Commons and Free Culture

We will work towards adopting provisions in trade agreements which support the use and development of open formats and Free/Libre Open Source Software and promote the mutual recognition of licence models like Creative Commons.

The creation of commons, such as Free Software, free cultural goods, open patent tools, and free and open educational material, must be promoted and legally protected.

To the greatest possible extent, existing cultural heritage shall be digitized and made available to the public free of charge.

Free culture is an essential base for the education and creativity of society. We promote artistic activity and cultural diversity to ensure a rich educational and creative environment for present and future generations.

Copyright Reform

The European Pirate Party is advocating for a copyright reform that is inclusive and fair. We strive towards a copyright system that reflects the changing landscape of the digital age and promotes a more equitable society.

We believe in creating a fair system that enables creators to receive compensation for their work while ensuring that the public has access to valuable resources. We strive to abolish information monopolies, supposedly designed to motivate authors to produce more works. In reality, only a handful benefit, while the market as a whole is failing. Our goal is to create an environment where the motivation to create goes hand in hand with freedom of information.

Copying, storing, using, and providing access to literary and artistic works for non-commercial purposes must not only be legalized but protected by law. Everyone should be able to enjoy and share our cultural heritage free from the threat of legal action or censorship.

The time-span of a commercial monopoly given by copyright should be further shortened. Derivative works shall always be permitted, with exceptions enumerated explicitly in law, with minimal room for interpretation. Freedom of information must be safeguarded by safeguarding the right to link: Hyperlinks are a fundamental building block of the World Wide Web and must never constitute a copyright infringement. Remixing, parodies, quotes, and sampling shall be exempt from the exclusive right of the commercial copyright monopoly. Non-commercial file sharing should be allowed.

Monopolies in the sectors of information and culture have to be prevented. The Pirates strictly oppose the creation of additional layers of copyright restriction for AI-generated outputs – such as AI-generated texts, paintings, and other works. By law, the state should only allow or maintain exclusive rights for intangible goods if these are in the public interest. Any exclusive rights must be temporally limited; neither their time span nor scope may be expanded retrospectively.

European collecting societies must ensure comprehensive transparency, fair, participatory rights for their members and fair contract terms for artists.

Free Knowledge and Education

An educated and critically thinking population is necessary for sustaining functional democracy, welfare, and social cohesion. We strive for universal access to high-quality education across the EU that enables people's personal development, unhindered by their social and economic background.

The education system must offer citizens all the essential skills for independent and creative life in the information society. Through education, we wish to improve people's critical thinking.

The European Pirate Party aims to create a system that encourages cross-border education and makes it accessible to all students and education workers in the European Union. Student and teacher mobility is an advantageous way to spread educational know-how across Europe and fight national education systems' underdevelopment.

Free access to knowledge and information is essential and must be promoted and guaranteed in education. Educational institutions should increasingly use learning resources available under free licenses without any restrictions on copying. The availability of educational media under free licenses to all is essential for barrier-free access to education, both within and beyond the borders of the EU.

We support digitising educational institutions and publishing documents stored in public libraries and archives across the EU.

We see innovation as the key to developing our cultural and intellectual wealth. We support educating citizens and students about their right to information and free formats and Free Software in all types of educational facilities. We oppose maintaining the vendor lock-in reality favouring leading digital solutions producers.

Media Freedom and Pluralism

Free and independent media are the foundation of healthy and well-functioning democracies. Yet, in recent years, we have observed attempts to paralyse free media by state authorities, attacks, and cases of spying on journalists and mergers of media houses diminishing the European media landscape. Citizens of the EU have the right to receive impartial and pluralistic media content.

We support the effort to harmonise minimum rules and safeguards to protect media freedom and pluralism in the EU. We see strict rules on ownership structures and promoted content as a key to preventing unfair allocation of state economic resources. We need tools to assess media market concentration and evaluate risks rising from economic transactions that further impact pluralism in the media market.

Patents

Patents in the Information Age

Patents are often an obstacle to innovation rather than an incentive. The patenting of knowledge in areas like genetics and biotechnology, as well as software, makes the process it a tangible threat to the future of our society.

Monopolies on plants and seeds and costly legal disputes about often trivial patents already demonstrate how both innovators and consumers have to pay the price. Patent law needs to be reformed or replaced with an approach that enables a shared economy and more accessible and sustainable markets instead of continuing to hamper innovation further.

Rebalancing Patents with the Common Good

Patents do not exist to allow big businesses to stifle competition with an ever-growing tide of trivial and overreaching patents. We, therefore, want to halt the continued and increasing abuse of patents.

Patents in the Information Society

Success in the information society is no longer dependent only on technological inventions but on the development of knowledge and sharing of information. The effort to regulate these factors via the patent system is diametrically opposed to our demand for freedom of knowledge and culture.

Patents should never be granted for “inventions” that are trivial, non-substantial, computer programs, business models, or works of nature. These types of patents impede the development of information society and result in the privatisation of the commons. Innovation must be fairly rewarded, but this does not necessarily require granting monopolistic privileges that harm innovation and negatively affect access to essential goods.

The EU, its Member States and other industrialised countries should not force less developed countries to accept patent provisions that are likely to be detrimental to their essential needs, health, education, or development opportunities.

Patents, Medicines and Health

We oppose the frequent abuses of patent privileges, such as introducing spurious changes to medicines with expiring patent protection. Uncompetitive practices, such as paying competitors to delay the marketing of generics, should be actively prevented.

We support establishing and funding alternative methods to incentivise pharmaceutical innovation, progressively replacing patents in this area. We aim to break the direct link between the reward for advances and the end product's price to ensure medicines are affordable for all.

Universities and research institutes should be able to carry out scientific research for health and medicine without being encumbered by patents.

International Regulation of Intellectual Monopolies

The Pirates strive for a revision of the TRIPS Agreement in favour of restricting exclusive rights on intangible goods. We would aim for similar restrictions to apply to all trade agreements, which may include similar or even more far-reaching regulations on patents and copyright.

ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE AND ENERGY

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Goals

We want to ensure that future generations have a base for a life of freedom and dignity. A healthy environment, biodiversity, sustainable use of resources, and equal and fair access to energy, food, and water are fundamental requirements for this. To ensure a safe future, we want a fast transition to a clean, circular economy that reduces its environmental impact to zero.

Environment and climate do not stop at borders. Energy also crosses borders in the EU's internal energy market. We need to strengthen European coordination to overcome the energy and climate crises. We want to establish EU-wide standards that take transparency and auditability into account to ensure effective implementation and prevent greenwashing.

Sustainability

The Pirates support the EU's aims and principles for safeguarding our water, air, soil, and natural environment for the sake of everyone's well-being, including future generations.

Emissions must be minimised, existing pollution cleaned up, and natural habitats preserved and restored wherever possible. Voluntary measures by potential polluters are a preferred method. However, they must be monitored closely, as they often fail to reach the targets.

A strict “polluter pays” principle has to be implemented to increase the pressure to implement more precautions and prevention. Environmental problems must be addressed at the source and not as an afterthought.

Biodiversity

The loss of biodiversity is an emergency connected to but not only caused by climate emergencies. Biodiversity is lost at a pace unprecedented in our geological era, and still, the issue does not get adequate attention.

This dramatic loss is not only tragic by itself. It can potentially cause a collapse of worldwide food production and have other negative effects.

We appreciate the ambitious goals set on the EU and UN levels (namely the EU Nature Restoration Law, UN Ocean treaty, and COP15 Montreal goals and targets) regarding species’ habitat protection and restoration, relevant funding, prescribed measures, and transparency of enactment.

Transparent Data

The public has the right to easy, timely, and reliable access to environmental data and the decisions based on it. This information should also include methods of monitoring and investigations.

Scientific advice and specifications that form the basis for administrative and legal decisions must be sourced from independent experts. Participation in decision-making processes needs to be inclusive.

Consistent and Effective Rules

All environmental laws must include a proper impact assessment and must only require minimum bureaucracy. Implementation needs to be tightly checked.

Regulations must not require registrations in every single EU country. A central registration should be sufficient so as not to obstruct access to the common market for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

Currently, diverging national rules complicate sustainability work. EU should aim for a common system of labelling and recycling products.

Circular Economy

Preserving and reusing resources by recycling is key to a sustainable economy. To ensure the long-term availability of materials, the EU must implement a circular economy based on the cradle-to-cradle principle, which considers the whole life-cycle of a product and makes the reduction, reuse, and recycling of materials a part of the design.

Export of waste (sometimes disguised as used products) to third countries for substandard recycling or disposal must be effectively restricted to ensure materials are not lost or destroyed.

Climate

The policies adopted under the European Green Deal strategy must be in line and go beyond the original European and international climate commitments.

Climate – No Time to Lose

Most necessary technologies for achieving climate protection goals have been developed and are already in use. Now, it is necessary to roll them out on a large scale.

The Pirates want to provide the legal tools for these technologies to be deployed as fast as possible by incentivising climate-neutral technology and eliminating incentives for technologies that harm the climate.

All subsidies for activities negatively impacting the climate must be phased out. This includes financing or providing securities for financing climate-damaging projects abroad.

Climate – Stop Carbon Leakage Effectively

Emissions of greenhouse gases for imported goods (i.e. resulting from power generation at the production location) should be attributed to the importing countries. Imported goods must be taxed to account for carbon leakage to stimulate more climate-friendly production for goods imported to the EU.

Climate – Not Just CO₂

CO₂ is the largest part of greenhouse gas emissions, but other emissions must also be controlled. Gases with high climate impact have to be reduced, replaced, and contained. All emissions of climate-active gases should be controlled and reduced.

Climate – Reverse Emissions

The greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere are already too high and must be reduced. We want to stimulate projects that capture greenhouse gases and use them as base materials for products and chemicals. The use of such projects for greenwashing must be prevented, and they must not produce certificates that allow emissions in other places.

The expansion of natural carbon sinks should also be considered.

Climate – Get Prepared

Even if we could stop greenhouse gas emissions right now, the climate crisis would not stop immediately. We will have to face changes in weather patterns and precipitation, as well as sea level increases. Critical infrastructure like the food supply, transport, and energy will be negatively impacted. Adverse weather events can cause natural disasters. To mitigate these effects, we have to prepare our infrastructure, cities, coastlines, agriculture, and forestry for the ongoing changes.

Energy

We want to establish a sustainable and reliable energy infrastructure that offers as much participation and transparency as possible.

With the increasingly imperative role of renewables, the number of privately owned electricity generation is exploding. Former consumers are becoming a mix of consumer and producer; energy cooperatives take the local supply into their own hands. The legal framework has to be adapted for this new situation where the market is no longer made up of only a few large companies.

Our future development, including building a circular economy, depends on energy. We have to ensure that we have clean, reliable, and abundant energy available.

Energy – Becoming Sustainable

The transition from fossil resources to sustainable and clean energy sources must be accomplished. Energy sourcing must not conflict with other environmental objectives or agriculture for food production.

The technologies with the lowest environmental impact must be prioritized and their construction supported.

Energy – Becoming Resilient

Recent events have shown the negative impact of being dependent on the import of energy resources in times of crisis. The EU has all the necessary technology and resources available domestically to build an energy system without critical

dependencies on third countries. We want to build and maintain European production capacities for all components necessary to transition to a green economy.

Energy – Becoming Efficient

The “energy efficiency first” principle must be at the heart of all European policies. For this goal, we want to support energy-efficient technologies and the transition of energy sectors to electricity as the primary energy form. Eliminating energy transformation steps also eliminates many losses. By electrifying transport, heating, and many industrial processes, the required primary energy will drop, even though the need for electricity is going to rise.

Energy – As Local as Possible, as Central as Necessary

The European electricity grid efficiently compensates for temporary fluctuations in demand and supply and prevents regions from getting into trouble in case of local supply problems. However, it is not efficient in transporting significant amounts of the energy for a whole country across the continent. This would produce bottlenecks that can lead to major failures.

Production and demand should primarily be matched locally as much as possible, and the European grid should act as a safety net.

ECONOMY & FINANCES

Our economic program aims to support sustainable long-term development and overall quality of life improvements and foster a competitive, fair, and innovative economic environment. In this regard, we believe it is necessary to consider a broader set of economic metrics besides immediate gross productivity. Such measures must capture the development of long-term economic opportunities, well-being, environmental and social sustainability, and successful collaboration across the whole EU.

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Competitive Economic Environment

The environment for all economic activity needs to facilitate resilience and competition and stimulate and enforce transparency. This incentivizes social progress in a sustainable, fair, and democratic way. The Pirates aim to protect individuals, preserve opportunities, and promote individual autonomy and well-being by dispersing and de-concentrating public and private power. Competitive markets provide a fertile ground for entrepreneurship. Competition policy should aim to prevent excessive market concentration and monopolistic practices that hinder new businesses' market entry. Facilitating opportunities for entrepreneurship, including SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) and start-ups, leads to job creation, innovation, and economic dynamism, contributing to overall prosperity. An effective competition standard should look beyond consumer welfare and be science-based. Rather than sanctioning the abuse of a dominant position, competition policy should focus more on preventing market power. Competition enforcement agencies should be adequately resourced and get institutional support and a sufficient legal mandate. Ideally, the competition authority must be independent and shielded from direct political interference.

Trade

Pirates believe trade and cooperation are a way towards development and shared wealth. However, we see many challenges in the current trade environment. At the same time, trade agreements have been abused in the past to empower private entities at the expense of public courts, exploit communities, and promote nepotism and cronyism.

We propose basic principles regarding international trade. For trade treaties, the European Parliament must ratify the treaty, which must be negotiated as transparently as possible, including public hearings and comprehensive access to information. Trade should enlarge our markets and allow for more competition. Therefore, trade agreements should not give out more or less hidden special favours. The ultimate goal of international trade agreements is the positive development of all involved parties. Therefore, we must always ask that our partners uphold at least the most basic labour and enforce paying up for common externalities that damage us all through Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism and similar tools.

Trade is also an economic and political tool. We support economic sanctions against authoritarian regimes, especially those actively undermining European security and committing crimes against humanity. These sanctions should be precisely targeted to damage the wealth of the government elites, hinder the offensive and persecuting capacities of these regimes, and avoid the suffering of ordinary citizens as much as possible. We should not supply weapons and surveillance technologies to authoritarian regimes.

Last years have also seen a surge in protectionism and the closing of free trade in critical technological areas like microchips or renewable energy technologies. We believe that Europe should attain the highest possible level of strategic autonomy concerning these and that we need to reduce our overdependence on authoritarian regimes. The way to get that autonomy and prosperity is through trade with new partners, research, technological excellence, and cooperation. Trade wars have repeatedly proven to be detrimental.

Taxation

The tax mix should establish an environment of fully internalized externalities of economic activities to cultivate an entrepreneurial environment and a long-term well-developing society.

To achieve this, we propose moving a larger part of the tax burden from labour to capital. To facilitate this, tax harmonization across European jurisdictions should be further developed. This should include targeting strategic capital allocation for tax avoidance and the intentional obscuring of corporate structure (incl. public entities). We should focus on empowering local communities' decision-making and interests regarding their local tax structure together with establishing an all-European harmonization framework. We do not aim for a unification of tax rates or tax base

definitions, only a framework of the shared approach. We will support global coordination on taxation, particularly as regarding international corporations.

Financial Markets and Multinational Corporations

Regulation, supervision, and taxation of the financial markets should encourage investment into long-term development strategies which are environmentally and socially sustainable. The environment should deter financial dominance, capital concentration, and for-profit short-term reallocation (e.g., stock buybacks). Speculative investments should come with heightened disincentives and be more transparent.

European Budgetary Rules

Budgetary policy is an essential tool of economic policy. The current budgetary rules are targeted at preventing budgetary deficits, and they stop member states from reacting in times of crisis.

We propose to discard these and replace them with long-term budget sustainability assessments to prevent excessive budgetary imbalances.

This will allow member states to implement investment policies despite the defence, environmental, and social challenges of our time, as well as encourage balancing their savings and consumption, which will foster a dynamic internal market.

European Economic Integration

The next steps of European economic integration should support all European regions' labour mobility, equality, and broad economic development. Moreover, there should be continued support for the economic development of physical and institutional infrastructure, particularly of cross-border regions.

Cryptocurrency

We, as the Pirates, see the potential of crypto assets and that they may have a positive role in economic development. We want to protect cash for its anonymity, including digital cash.

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General Principles

Pirates build on the fundamental values of democratic decision-making, non-discriminatory protection of human rights around the world, and the free dissemination of information, together with freedom of the Internet. We support everyone's right to participate in public and political life and to free and fair elections, and we reject foreign interference in other countries' elections.

The cornerstone of our foreign policy is an orientation towards like-minded democracies and alliances in the Euro-Atlantic area, emphasising membership in the European Union.

The Pirates want to establish and develop relationships with democratic partners everywhere in the world and support democracy and cooperation as a source of sustainable peace in the world. We prefer cooperation over pursuing our own interests.

We must defend the Internet as a means of freely sharing and obtaining information about the real world and as a tool for fostering human connection.

The Pirates strive for environmental sustainability in accordance with international agreements, given the current global demographic and economic development.

European Politics

The Pirates support the active role of the EU to promote peace and stability in the world, as well as the deepening of the common security and defence policy. We promote changes leading to strengthening the elements of direct democracy and want to improve the transparency and democratic control of EU institutions.

The Pirates want to strengthen the role of the European Parliament, as the only directly elected EU institution, in decision-making on EU political matters. We welcome the outcome of the Conference on the Future of Europe and favour its full

implementation. We support the effort to acquire a right for the European Parliament to propose legislation, allowing it to act as a true legislative body. The Pirates seek to replace the current unanimous voting in the Council of the EU by introducing qualified majority voting, especially in foreign and tax policies and matters related to the common budget. Vetoes by national states seriously undermine the EU's ability to react swiftly and effectively to international challenges and threats.

Decisions that can be better dealt with at the national, regional, or local level should not be taken at the EU level. Equal and easy access to true and non-misleading information for all citizens is a fundamental prerequisite for legitimate democratic decision-making.

The EU needs a functional and jointly implemented policy in a number of areas. The EU and its member states must support education, science and research more. In the EU, the Pirates want to defend the free movement of people, goods, services and information and minimize bureaucracy and centralization. We consider the promotion of digital freedoms to be at the heart of Pirate policy at the European level.

The Pirates support the enlargement of the European Union by other states that meet the conditions and criteria for entry. The EU should foster deeper relationships with countries interested in joining through increased economic, political, and cultural cooperation.

International Affairs

The Pirates seek to reduce the financing of authoritarian regimes through mutual trade and fight against trade linked to human rights abuses and forced and child labour.

We aim to solve global environmental problems and disasters together at the international level. We reject multilateral international treaties that enforce dysfunctional monopolies and patents at the expense of civil rights and human freedom. We will advocate for the revision of international conventions, which have only negative consequences and are only upheld for historical reasons.

The Pirates consider multinational corporations to be part of the international security environment and will hold them accountable for the impact of their actions on the world's security situation.

The European Union should be a political actor protecting European and international whistleblowers. They should be able to benefit from the right to political asylum in the EU.

The Pirates want to pay special attention to stabilising conflict outbreaks and fragile states, as their instability is a source of problems for the entire international community. Conflict resolution has to be based on respect for international law.

FREE SOFTWARE & OPEN DATA

Pirates support the promotion of software that can be used, analyzed, disseminated and modified by anyone. Free/Libre Open Source Software is essential for users' control of their own technical systems and significantly contributes to strengthening the autonomy and privacy of all users.

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Free Software, Formats, and Protocols in Public Administration

Citizens' data must be processed, managed, and secured with Free Software tools whenever possible. Proprietary software may only be used as long as Free Software cannot effectively be used for that specific purpose, and the option of creating such a piece of software is not viable.

Free Software reduces administrative costs, promotes local technical support and significantly strengthens security – for example, by allowing anyone to quickly check for malicious, vulnerable or backdoored code embedded within the software. We will drive the migration of the public sector to Free Software so that there is no longer a dependency on specific suppliers.

Citizens and businesses must never be forced to use proprietary software when dealing with public administration or any other communication with their government. It must never be based on proprietary forms of communication designed to only work with specific, usually non-free software. Instead, it must use open, interoperable, vendor-neutral protocols and formats.

Free Software Funding and Development

Free software, which often powers critical infrastructure, is usually maintained by a few volunteers in their spare time. We want to fund innovative open-source projects and contribute to existing free software development. This can, for example, include direct funding and organized hackathons.

We also plan to encourage member states' governments to set up their own Open Source Program Offices (OSPOs). This will significantly enhance the ability to create and collaborate on free software that can be (re)used across the Union.

Finally, free and open-source software development must never be held to the same obligations as proprietary software development, and its developers cannot be held liable for damage linked to the free use of their work.

Government-provided Software

Government-provided software, such as mobile ID cards, must be functional on free and open-source operating systems, including those not installed by default or officially supported by device vendors, whenever technically feasible. No artificial restrictions should be placed on this functionality. Furthermore, software versions should be made available for all major mobile platforms.

Software developed using public funds must be open source – “public money, public code.” However, if there is a valid reason for not disclosing the source code at a given time – such as a potential threat to national security – the code must be made public as soon as the reason no longer applies. We also suggest that the source code for such software be hosted by the corresponding country's OSPO using Git or similar software repositories.

To ensure the broadest possible use and accessibility, we also recommend that governments license their software with a copyleft license. The software should also be compatible with all major operating systems on the platform it was designed for. Additionally, web-based programs should be designed to be portable and compatible with all major free and open-source browsers, preferably respecting web standards as defined by the W3C.

Open Data

Data drives every decision in our society, and there is now a colossal asymmetry between governments, large companies, and individuals.

We strive for a Freedom of Information Act at the European level that stands for open and free access to all public data, fully anonymised in order to respect individuals' privacy, shared using an open and standard format, free of any charge, and easily accessible to everyone.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE DIGITAL ERA

The European Pirate Party stands for the protection of fundamental rights in both the physical and digital world. We stand against measures targeted to undermine individuals' personal liberties and freedoms. The protection of fundamental freedoms has always played a vital role within the legal order of the Union. While significant progress has been made to extend the freedoms of Union citizens, protecting fundamental rights in the digital world requires further scrutiny.

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The Right to Internet Access

The respect for fundamental freedoms and liberties should naturally flow to the digital world. Internet access allows us to participate in an increasingly digitally-driven society. Whereas access to the internet has rapidly become a standard within the European Union, many still have not been able to enjoy its potential.

We believe that the right to internet access should be effectively guaranteed across the EU in terms of coverage and quality. Digital transformation and progress should not leave anybody behind. Everyone should enjoy access to affordable high-speed internet under favourable conditions. In keeping with current standards, the quality of internet access should be sufficient to allow persons to partake in digital affairs sufficiently.

Access should be provided without unreasonable difficulties, burdens, or costs.

The Right to Privacy

Everyone should have the right to privacy, which includes the right of individuals to control their personal information and to be free from pervasive surveillance. As a fundamental human right, respect for privacy is essential to safeguard the interests of individuals and prevent abuse. Privacy includes the right to discretion and to remain anonymous online and offline. Anonymity does not relieve any person of responsibility for their actions.

Individuals who constantly feel watched and under surveillance cannot freely and effectively exercise their rights and stand against abuses. Surveillance, distrust, and fear risk transforming our society into a community susceptible to the erosion of rights. We do not want to live in such a society. We believe in accountability in collecting and using personal data and advocate for robust data protection laws that give individuals control over their personal information.

To preserve our rights and freedoms and ensure law enforcement's effectiveness, the Pirates demand that the retention of personal data be limited to persons suspected of committing or preparing a crime (targeted investigations). The Pirates wish to abolish the practice of routine, automated, and untargeted data processing. We advocate for a moratorium on new legislation for mass surveillance or systematic data collection of the population, be it on our communication, movement, internet use, biometrics, or other data.

Specifically, we defend the right to privacy of digital data against policies that generally and indiscriminately search private chats, messages, emails, or photos automatically for suspicious content (Chat Control). We defend the right to communicate anonymously against mandatory age verification policies. Publicly accessible spaces should be free from biometric mass surveillance, including biometric identification and automated behavioural monitoring. The Pirates oppose the automated profiling of people to divide them into risk categories. We reject the blanket and indiscriminate collection of traffic data (Data Retention). Every person should have the right to use the internet without being pervasively tracked.

The Pirates oppose the exchange of personal data with countries that lack effective safeguards. Such transfers may be permitted only under exceptional circumstances, where this is done in an emergency and subject to appropriate safeguards and limitations.

Adequate protection against crime is an important responsibility of the state. We must ensure this responsibility is fulfilled through an intelligent, rational, and evidence-based security policy. We, therefore, want the European Fundamental Rights Agency to systematically examine all current and future surveillance powers and programs as to their effectiveness, cost, adverse side effects, alternatives, and compatibility with our fundamental rights.

The Pirates support funding research through the EU. However, the frequent funding of surveillance and control technologies (such as iBorderCtrl) demonstrates a clear intention to use such technologies to dismantle civil rights. We, therefore, argue that the EU must not fund technologies that interfere with fundamental rights, that human rights-defending bodies and NGOs should be involved in drafting tenders and selecting applicants, and that all publicly funded project results be fully disclosed.

Everyone should be entitled to access key public services in the EU. The EU digital identity proposal provides a gateway to access services and authorities easily under

a single digital pass. Such a system should provide for the independent processing of personal data and ensure that strict technical measures are in place to prevent tampering and abuse by states or 3rd parties. Such a system should respect the personal integrity of Union subjects.

Freedom of Expression

Individuals shall have the right to express themselves online without fear of censorship or retribution. The freedom of expression shall be safeguarded without restrictions to the extent to which it does not encroach on the rights and liberties of others. Large online platforms should respect legitimate online discourse and provide an open space for persons to express themselves.

It has become the case that states mandate the censorship of online dissent to curtail protests and whistleblowing against restrictive policies. The use of such measures should only be permissible in extreme circumstances, where there is a particular risk of causing adverse effects to the personal integrity of other persons as long as these measures are proportional and necessary to avoid legitimate harm and not as a means of pursuing government policy or to curtail rights. Online platforms shall take proportional measures to tackle illegal content published online while paying due regard to societal interest and the rights of others.

We advocate for the use of open-source software, decentralized platforms, and other software that helps to facilitate the utilization of the freedom of expression. We support greater protection of whistleblowers and laws that protect the freedom of the press and information.

Personal Integrity

Individual interests shall be safeguarded from interference by public authorities or corporations. Personal identity should not be used as a tool for political or economic propagation. Discriminatory algorithms and unreasonable disclosure of personal data shall be prohibited. Personal data shall not be used for profiling purposes in circumstances where clear behavioural and personal attributes of persons can be ascertained. Public authorities shall not retain or request personal information that is not essential or incompatible with the mandated purpose.

Developments in AI in recent years have resulted in increased reliance on the technology. Whereas AI serves as a useful tool for humanity, it should not work to undermine the freedoms and privileges of individuals. AI development should respect the highest ethical standards and preclude discriminatory biases or profiling. This area should be closely regulated to ensure that the individual EU citizen will benefit from it. Artificial intelligence should not curtail the capacity to make individual choices.

The Right to Self-Determination

We consider the people's right to responsible self-empowerment and self-determination as self-evident. We advocate for using digital infrastructure to enhance citizen participation in decision-making processes.

In order to safeguard the freedom of self-determination, states shall ensure that sufficient respect is paid to the transparency and legitimacy of the voting process. Adequate safeguards must be in place to ensure ballot secrecy. The influence of foreign actors in the voting process is unacceptable.

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Migration

The Pirates recognize that immigration has always been an essential part of the European community and has contributed immensely to our shared cultural heritage and the development of Europe. Migration is primarily a social issue and must respect the human dignity and rights of all migrants and asylum seekers.

The Pirates want to build a prosperous and dynamic Europe that is better prepared to meet future challenges and the demands of the labour market. In light of Europe's striking labour shortages, an effective immigration system is inevitable to ensure the functioning of our communities and economies.

We call on all member states to receive refugees and asylum seekers according to their capacities. It is crucial to implement a European refugee and asylum policy based on solidarity that does not leave individual member states alone with the financial, logistical, and administrative effort.

The Pirates are convinced that the best way to ensure the safety of future asylum-seekers is effective conflict prevention and fighting climate change.

We refuse the criminalization of those providing humanitarian help to people in need.

An Ethical and Effective Immigration System

Pirates are convinced that migration must be well managed to benefit all participating parties. We demand a comprehensive immigration system that recognizes the skills and talents of each individual. Any discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality contradicts our core values.

It is crucial to ensure fair and transparent recruitment of migrant workers and international students so that everyone can develop their full potential equally.

We acknowledge that immigration may pose challenges and are committed to addressing them responsibly and effectively. We insist that immigration must be dealt

with holistically and with a commitment to foster a culture of inclusion, collaboration, and respect for European values.

The Pirates demand a common European immigration policy that:

- enables legal migration opportunities to the European labour market while ensuring ethical and transparent recruitment of migrant workers and international students,
- protects the rights of migrant workers and international students and enhances their participation in the everyday life of receiving societies,
- ensures fair representation of the interests of non-EU labour migrants under the temporary labour migration programmes,
- evaluates language skills and other given skills of the applicants positively in the process,
- recognizes given certificates and professional qualifications in a simplified way,
- enables member states to adjust their requirements according to their situation and needs,
- is sensitive and non-discriminatory against migrants' religion, ethnicity, race, gender, and sexuality.

Asylum

Asylum System

Pirates are committed to a comprehensive revision of European refugee and asylum policy.

Pirates firmly believe that Europe's refugee and asylum policy must be based on respect for human rights and International law. All EU states have an obligation to support refugees and asylum seekers as they are legally bound to this responsibility by international treaties. All EU states must comply with the provisions of the Geneva Refugee Convention and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Pirates condemn the criminalization of all people and organizations assisting those seeking protection. The criminalization of humanitarian aid fundamentally undermines the principle of legal certainty and, thus, the rule of law in the EU.

The EU border agency Frontex must comply with international law in the same way member states do. Frontex's allegations of the breach of the rule of non-refoulement must be taken seriously.

We must work on a non-discriminatory asylum system reform that all member states will respect.

Pirates demand a common European Asylum Policy that implements the following:

- reconsiders the first safe country of asylum principle as decisive in determining where the asylum procedure takes place and where the asylum-seeker must stay,
- [promotes the possibility of family reunification first for those whose application was approved;]
- employs a system of mutual processing of asylum applications, allowing each application to be made directly to the EU, while leaving discretion to the Member States to decide whether to admit asylum-seekers onto their territory,
- emphasizes the principle of solidarity among the Members States as a leading principle to face humanitarian crises,
- avoids dehumanizing detention of asylum seekers and fast-track procedures at land borders and airports,
- ensures that asylum applications can be made from any location on the planet so that refugees can be transported to the host country humanely and safely.

NET POLICY

The digital revolution has changed social and economic structures throughout Europe; free and equal access to the Internet is now a basic requirement for participation in civil society. Citizens should have the option to access the Internet anonymously.

Pirates wish to include the right of “digital participation” in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. We will support measures which seek to ensure the capacity of representative civil society to participate in multi-stakeholder forums. We will oppose any attempts by corporate, governmental or intergovernmental agencies to take control of Internet governance.

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Protecting Freedom of Expression Online

Freedom of speech is the cornerstone of a democratic society. It must not be placed in the hands of private corporations or algorithms. The decision to remove content shall be reserved to an independent public body such as a judge.

Online intermediaries should not be liable for actions of their users. The use of automated upload filters to detect and block “terrorist content” or copyright infringements online should be banned, because they frequently lead to the deletion of legal content, including documentation of human rights violations in conflict zones, and they impinge on users’ rights to use copyright exceptions such as quotation or parody.

Net Neutrality

Net Neutrality is crucial for keeping the Internet free for everybody. We will not allow any traffic restrictions. Namely, restrictions based on the nature of the content/service. We will also not allow restrictions based on the geographical location of the broadcaster and the recipient. Traffic management measures shall only be allowed in exceptional circumstances, operated in a clear and transparent manner and only for technical reasons.

Upgrading of Net Infrastructure

Pirates strongly support the Europe-wide development of state of the art communications infrastructure. Our goal is to provide access to broadband for everyone in the EU.

While networks are improved and modernized, any monopoly over infrastructure must be avoided.

Unlocking the Net: A Right to Interoperability

Commercial social and messaging platforms are well known to spy on their users, to help advertisers manipulate them and to censor online communications. When leaving such platforms, Pirates want users to have the right to take their contacts to an alternative service and keep in touch with them. Social and messaging platforms need to be made interoperable.

Security in the Digital Era

With the Internet of things, computers start affecting the world in a direct and physical manner (e.g. car or hospital technology). IT devices that are insecure and vulnerable to integrity and availability threats increasingly risk our lives and property. We can no longer afford security disasters happening regularly.

Pirates want users to have control over the technology they use in their daily lives. Users need a right to modify and repair devices on their own.

Pirates want to oblige commercial manufacturers of IT devices to provide regular updates for a reasonable period of time. If updates or fixes of vulnerabilities aren't provided within a reasonable timeframe after their discovery, commercial manufacturers shall be held liable. When a manufacturer decides to abandon a product that is still in widespread use, the source code and development tools should be made public to allow the community to maintain it.

Public authorities shall be obliged to disclose vulnerabilities they find or acquire. There shall be no backdoors in encryption technology as that would weaken and threaten the integrity and security of all systems.

We will support legislation aimed at securing the possibility of transferring personal data from one Internet service to another and maximizing interoperability between different Internet service providers.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We believe regional development is crucial in promoting economic growth and improving citizens' quality of life. Regional policy directly impacts people's lives, especially since there are still significant social and economic imbalances between European regions, both in the EU and non-EU countries. Regional development should be a priority in order to create a more just and united Europe based on principles of equity, participation, and ecological responsibility.

Regions, and even more so border regions, often face very specific challenges, such as environmental damages due to climate change, de-industrialisation due to the economic crisis, difficulty accessing healthcare and education, and demographic changes.

Regional development should help European regions with the green transition. In order to ensure policies are sustainable and environmentally responsible, we support the financing of projects that promote the transition to a low-carbon economy, respecting climate targets.

In the same spirit, the goal of successful regional development is also an ever-increasing cohesion of Europe's various regions. Large-scale projects like the Green Transition can only succeed if all regions receive the support that is adequate for their challenges.

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Digital Transition

We also recognize the importance of the digital transition of European regions. The emphasis should be on promoting digital innovation in regional development. Therefore, we support connectivity projects providing access to digital infrastructure, such as high-speed internet and telecommunication networks, across all regions.

Transportation

Because European regions often reach across borders, we also believe regional policies play an important role in developing regional transport projects. Therefore, we support deploying transnational transport projects that improve connections to and in less developed regions, such as high-speed railways.

Cross-border Cooperation

To achieve this, we call for an increase in the EU budget for regional development to help regions reduce disparities and foster cross-border cooperation. Supporting sustainable economic and social growth of European regions should be the EU's main investment area. The funds intended for regional development should be primarily used for long-term investments, whereas separate crisis management funds should provide timely short-term crisis support in times of need.

Targeted policies for urban and rural regions

These policies should be promoted in activities designed for specific types of regions, in which the EU should intensively cooperate with member states. A robust urban agenda should help European cities and metropolitan regions become greener and smarter, strengthen housing capacities, and improve the quality of urban life. Particular attention should be paid to the transnational coordination of policies focused on the development of rural areas .

Decentralisation and Empowerment

In order to allow for bottom-up decision-making in our societies, regional authorities should be more empowered to develop their own local policy strategies relying on their unique strengths and resources. Regional authorities should also be more involved in the legislative process when it concerns their development. To this end, we encourage the cooperation of local representatives through EU platforms dealing with regional policy. We also strive to direct public funds as much as possible to regional authorities for distribution to local-led initiatives.

Given the limited administrative capacity of regional authorities, we understand the need to reduce the bureaucracy needed for access to public funds and ask for additional financing for technical assistance to develop and report on large-scale and innovative projects. The funds and their allocation to projects should be based on concrete data to provide evidence-based decision-making.

Just and transparent Funding for more Uplifted Regions

However, this should not hamper the urgent need to improve transparency of end beneficiaries of public funds. This is crucial to avoid conflict of interest, fraud, and corruption. At the regional level, project evaluation criteria and implementation requirements should be objective and transparent. EU funds under shared management by Member States are particularly at risk of being abused because of the lack of information shared between the regional, national and EU levels.

That is why we suggest fully using interoperable digital tools for budgetary control and publishing non-sensitive data on all public procurements, including the implementation reports on projects. Only full transparency will allow the public and the media investigators to follow the money in order to identify potential cases of abuse.

We also believe that regional development policies must be guided by the principles of social justice and inclusivity. This means that rules for the distribution of EU funds to regions should always comply with the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the rule of law and the European Code of Conduct. All citizens should have equal access to the benefits of regional development policies, and these policies should be designed to reduce inequality and promote territorial and social cohesion.

Citizen Participation as the Guarantee of Progress

Finally, regional development policies must be based on active citizen participation and democracy. This means involving citizens in the decision-making process and empowering them to shape the policies that affect their lives.

SOCIAL AFFAIRS & HEALTHCARE

Human rights conventions require these services be founded on the principles of respect, equality, and enabling access.

All inhabitants of the EU have the right to the highest attainable standard of the quality of health care and health education, no matter how health systems have been structured (private, public or mixed).

This includes preventive, curative and palliative health care, as well as mental health care. It also includes the underlying social determinants of health, such as safe food, potable water, basic sanitation and adequate housing, safe and healthy working conditions and a healthy environment.

An adequate level of health care can only be provided if the health care workers are paid a decent wage and enough equipment and medicines are available. Training and employing enough medical professionals is necessary to reduce waiting lists and keep medical professionals working in the field.

Health care costs should either be paid for by public funds, public health insurance, or a combination of both. Health insurance should be mandatory, affordable for all EU citizens regardless of income level, and coordinated between EU countries.

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Availability & Comfort of the Patient

The Pirates want equal access to health care for every inhabitant of the EU, irrespective of the resources available to a state, and support:

- No discrimination (direct or indirect) in access to health care, irrespective of the resources available to a state.
- Health goods and services should be accessible to everyone. States must ensure that no persons face barriers in accessing their right to health, including access to information about health and health services.
- Health goods and services affordable for everybody regardless of their income level.
- Health laws and policies designed and implemented in a transparent manner and with meaningful participation of persons affected by it. All health systems must include a framework for accountability, which should include access to effective judicial or other appropriate measures for violations of the right to health.
- Free access to prenatal care for all pregnant women, with a focus on both physical and mental well-being.
- Adequate perinatal care
- Free guidance by public health nurses and doctors, monitoring the physical and mental health and development of children in their families.
- Preventing and fighting poverty. Poverty leads to poor health in children through, e.g. poor diet, inadequate housing, stress, and feelings of inferiority.
- In order to ensure the mobility of nurses within the EU, all countries should conform to the same minimum academic standards in training.
- Easier cross-border care utilization. Improving opportunities to use health care systems abroad with the coverage of domestic health insurance companies.
- Cross-border care should not lead to the implementation of policies that violate privacy, nor the decentralization of data or patients' control and consent over the use of their data.
- EU health card for the world: Negotiation of the validity of the European Health Insurance Card (Blue Card) in third countries.
-

Patents and Technology

Reducing the number and lifetime of patents for medicines or at least avoiding administrative prolongation of patents. Publicly funded medicines, including e.g. COVID-related vaccines, should be available under patent-free open-source licenses.

The Pirates demand that Europe strengthens its sovereignty on active ingredient and medicines production.

Pirates demand that Europe improve its sovereignty in producing and developing biomedical equipment.

Apps and equipment that measure biomedical data, including menstruation and fitness apps, should fully comply with the GDPR and never be used for biometric mass surveillance.

The European Pirate Party demands adequate data protection for the European Health Data Space. We understand that health data is useful for science, but it can be misused by, e.g. insurance companies and employers.

Health data must be anonymized and encrypted. To this end, it must be clearly defined where it is stored and when and by whom it may be used.

Right to Bodily Autonomy

The European Pirate Party considers bodily autonomy to be an essential human right. Therefore, all medical procedures must be based on informed consent obtained without coercion.

Bodily autonomy implies that safe and legal abortion be available to all, no matter the reason for their choice. We also demand free access to contraceptives, including both male and female sterilization.

That all medical procedures must be based on informed consent obtained without coercion is particularly true for those related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. As such, we demand the criminalization of sex corrective procedures done on intersex infants unless it is absolutely medically necessary.

In addition, we demand an informed consent model for gender-affirming care, made affordable and accessible. Neither legal gender recognition nor access to medical or surgical sex reassignment should be made conditional on abusive requirements such as a psychiatric diagnosis, normative gender expression, or medical procedures.

We will work towards creating a safe and inclusive environment where everyone can freely express their gender identity and sexual orientation without fear of discrimination or violence.

Free Movement of Workers

EU nationals working in another EU country have to overcome dozens of administrative obstacles to work in and fully integrate into another EU country – especially different social security systems, different nature of the payment into these systems, registration in health care systems and many more. Therefore, the EU should encourage its member states to continue removing administrative barriers to the free movement of workers by harmonising social security systems and public healthcare systems, especially the harmonisation of payments into these systems and sharing the information between member states.

Fighting Discrimination

We propose policies that promote equal rights and opportunities for all individuals regardless of gender or sexual orientation. We prioritize mainstreaming gender equality and LGBT+ rights. This would involve ending discrimination and violence against women and LGBT+ individuals, promoting reproductive health and rights, and ensuring equal pay and employment opportunities. We believe that recognition of same-sex marriage and parenthood should be enshrined.

Just Transition

As advocates of the digital and green transitions, we acknowledge the interconnectedness of social, digital, and environmental issues, especially in certain regions. Therefore, we promote adequate EU funding to the most impacted regions and for the development of new required skills. We push for life-long learning via up-skilling and re-skilling, for instance. Ensuring that science, technology, engineering and mathematics sectors are appropriately staffed, with a view to integrating underrepresented categories, is a priority.

As part of the no-one left behind policy, we believe that providing funding to vulnerable persons/households for their transition regarding transport, heating, insulation, etc., is necessary.

Social Standards

Pirates defend the idea of universal access to education, knowledge, healthcare and adequate social protection. On the latter, we need to protect vulnerable groups from poverty and exclusion, including through policies that guarantee a minimum income and satisfactory social services.

Workers shall be granted appropriate and good working conditions. Teleworking and platform work are becoming more prominent but still facing regulatory gaps. We must

ensure that new forms of work are not enhancing employees' surveillance nor degrading their working conditions and rights.

European countries shall ensure adequate wages for the employees working in European Economic Area. While we recognize that uniformly defining an adequate wage is impossible in current Europe, we believe employees shall be provided with transparent access to information and proper legal protection to be able to negotiate fair wages. No double standard for refugees and other non-citizens working in Europe shall be allowed. Further research and pilot projects for universal basic income are welcomed.

European Pension Fund

Our goal is a truly social Europe with comparable social rules and comparable pension conditions for all Europeans. Pension regulation should not cause an even fiercer race of the poor against the very poor.

Multiple countries face crises of national pension schemes due to demographic changes and migration between European countries. Therefore Pirates propose to establish a common European pension fund. The fund shall not be considered a replacement of national pension schemes but rather an additional complement to them to provide necessary minimum income where needed. No one in Europe shall face poverty in old age. The pensions shall be available fairly to everybody, without needless restrictions based on age or other criteria.

Mental Health Care: Enhancing Prevention, Improving Care, and Promoting Education

Introduction:

Effective mental health care requires a comprehensive approach encompassing prevention, care, and education. By addressing these aspects, we can strive for a society that supports individuals with mental health difficulties and promotes their well-being. This text explores key points in mental health care and highlights the need for greater accessibility, destigmatization, inclusion, and education.

Prevention:

Prevention is paramount when it comes to mental health. To achieve this, we must focus on providing greater access to mental health services throughout communities. This necessitates establishing a well-developed service network readily available to all individuals, regardless of their geographical location. By ensuring that mental health services are accessible, we can effectively support those in need and mitigate the potential for mental health issues to escalate.

In addition to accessible services, community care should be recognized as a valuable resource in promoting mental health. By fostering supportive community environments, we can create networks that help individuals overcome challenges and maintain their mental well-being. Simultaneously, it is essential to destigmatize the field of psychiatry, making it more attractive and encouraging individuals to pursue careers in this vital area of healthcare.

Care:

When it comes to mental health care, prioritizing street work and outpatient care over residential services is crucial. Residential psychiatric services tend to be costly, so it is essential to involve field and prevention teams more extensively. This approach allows for earlier interventions, reducing the need for more intensive and expensive residential care. Furthermore, emphasizing the rights of psychiatric patients is essential to ensure their dignity, autonomy, and proper treatment within the healthcare system.

In order to promote greater inclusion in society, it is essential to create an environment that supports individuals with mental health difficulties. This entails providing adequate support throughout life, with particular attention to youth and seniors. Implementing early intervention and preventive measures can contribute significantly to improving mental health outcomes and reducing the long-term impact of mental health issues.

Education:

Addressing the affordability and availability of child and adolescent mental health care is imperative. Immediate action should be taken to ensure that these services are accessible to all who require them. Additionally, efforts should be made to simplify the process of preparing mental health experts, including support for the initiatives of organizations like the European Association for Psychotherapy. This will expand the availability of psychotherapy and make it more widely accessible.

Recognizing the importance of mental health, schools should prioritize it as a key aspect of education. Integrating mental health as a priority within the school curriculum can foster awareness, understanding, and emotional well-being among students. Moreover, empowering nurses by strengthening their specialization training in psychiatry can enhance the overall quality of mental health care delivery.

Conclusion:

A comprehensive approach to mental health care encompasses prevention, care, and education. By providing greater access to services, destigmatizing the field, prioritizing community care, and promoting inclusion and early intervention, we can enhance mental health outcomes for individuals throughout their lives. Additionally, addressing the affordability and availability of mental health care, simplifying the education and recognition process, and integrating mental health into school curricula are vital steps in building a society that prioritizes mental well-being for all.

SPACE PROGRAMME

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Space as a Vital Factor

Satellite-based communication and navigation, Earth observation for weather forecast, disaster relief, pollution tracking, and orbital-based research are normal parts of our life today. Space has become a commercial factor.

The EU plays a vital yet relatively minor role in space technology. We want to stimulate this sector and open it up. This will generate a significant push for technology and collaboration between EU member states and other partner nations.

With the commercialization of space, new opportunities like space mining and colonisation of space arise. These will generate considerable economic advances. The EU needs to make sure to get its share of this development.

EU Space Vision for the Future

Due to technological advancement and commercialization, activities in space are no longer topics for the distant future. Interplanetary travel, planetary defence, space mining, production in space, colonisation of other planets, and even early concepts for interstellar space probes are issues that need to be addressed today.

The EU needs to define a clear vision, strategy, and objectives to ensure international cooperation, multilateral global governance and basic principles of the rule of law, justice and democracy in the space domain. We need to ensure the continued development of the EU Space Programme Agency that is politically and financially accountable to the EU public through the EU Institutions and receives an adequate EU-wide mandate for space development.

Industrial Space Policy

Worldwide, the activities in space are shifting from government agencies to private and commercial entities.

In the current decade, the EU Space Programme should concentrate on stimulating development in the private sector. Public-funded research should primarily use commercial launch services and focus on high-risk aspects where it can break ground for disruptive technologies, like light sails for long-range missions and resource extraction in space.

Independent EU launch capacities with full reusability have to be developed to ensure the EU has sufficient access to space and can stay in a leading position technologically and economically.

A legal framework is required to prevent the abuse and weaponisation of space assets.

Law in Space

The Outer Space Treaty (OST) does not cover many critical legal issues regarding the use and commercialization of space. The EU, as a prime example of multiple nations working together for the common good, should take a leading role in pushing to expand the OST to cover important issues like space mining, space debris, and environmental aspects.

Space must be accessible and utilized for the good of all humankind.

Environmental laws in space should address issues like pollution that can affect broad areas or reach inhabited or potentially inhabitable space objects, areas that can possibly be home to extraterrestrial life, and also protecting places that are of high importance to research, like the far side of the Moon which has exceptionally low radio frequency interference, making it a vital spot for radioastronomy.

Space Debris

Derelict satellites, rocket stages, and debris in orbit threaten space travel. The EU must push for international treaties that mandate removing space debris and prevent new space junk by controlled deorbiting of spent rocket stages and end-of-life satellites. Activities that generate space debris, like tests of anti-satellite systems, must be outlawed.

Research programs for technologies to remove space debris have to receive additional funding.

Planetary Defense

An impact of a major object can cause immense damage to Earth. Planetary defence against such events is of high importance. We want to increase the funding for projects to detect potentially dangerous near-earth objects and for technologies to deflect dangerous objects.

The activities for planetary defence must be coordinated and integrated internationally.

Near-Term Goals

Expendable launch systems are becoming outdated fast, and the economic benefit of reusable systems is significant. The EU needs its own reusable launch capability to stay competitive and enable larger-scale projects.

Moreover, an independent crew transport capability, initially to the Earth's orbit, is needed.

Developing these systems on a domestic level will be necessary to keep up with the international development currently dominated by the USA and China.

Long-Term Goals

The EU space programme should also fund goals that are or seem to be out of reach today. Working on far-flung targets, like building an interstellar probe, space elevator or space hook, will stimulate the development of radically new technologies and materials. To ensure civilian use for humankind's benefit as well as effective scientific and economic collaboration, such large and powerful space technologies should be developed with international partners.

Reaping Benefits of the Space Program

The return on investment in space technologies is tenfold. The Pirates believe that investing in a large-scale space program will produce research results that have the potential to improve the lives of everyone. We want open-access principles to make the research findings broadly available. The application of space technology should benefit the everyday life of all people, like the already increasing internet coverage in remote areas and satellite-based navigation.

Tell the Story

Space exploration is underrepresented in the media. A vital part of the EU Space Programme must be the communication of projects to the general public to raise awareness of the importance of space for the future of humankind.

TRANSPORT

The fundamentals of our concept stand on principles of intermodality, networking, and sustainability. What new and innovative approach do we want to take in the European transport policy? We base our thinking on a complex view of supply chains, careful planning and transparent financing throughout the entire project lifespan. Knowledge of the whole image is time-limited; we appreciate confrontation with attentive, critical minds as it helps to prevent mistakes at the time of their appearance when it is easy to recognize and correct them.

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Energetic Laziness

Alternative fuels cannot save our planet while we continue to waste energy. We support a Shared Mobility Principles for Livable Cities initiative – where you can walk, you should not drive. Where you can drive together, you should not ride solo. The EU is losing billions of euros daily in productive time when commuters are stuck in traffic jams. That is why we promote coworking or work from home wherever applicable; civil service included.

Shunting goods around Europe for the purpose of tax optimization or importing them just because of holey local workers' rights is hypocrisy. We aim to create legislation which enables consumer to see the complete costs of production supply chains in order to transform EU preferences accordingly; e.g. promoting local waste-free food consumption over overseas imports.

In the long-term we envisage the use of bikes and public transport to access transport hubs, trains for domestic travel inside EU, and planes primarily to reach overseas destinations. Sharing is caring! Our priority here is adequacy: the total cost of any solution (including long-term maintenance) has to be proportional to the overall public benefit. We support innovative solutions like autonomous truck trains, smart roads and parking lots, freight trams or modular buses where appropriate.

Keep it Simple, Smart

European transport rules are full of exceptions. To get these rules aligned, competitive salary and working conditions for all professional drivers across the continent must be implemented, as well as truck driving ban harmonization and a single market for locomotives and trams. We support progressive legislation for autonomous, driverless cars to settle liability issues and keep the EU on the top of the automotive innovation ladder.

Different modes of transport should be made legally equal, have a transparent system of subsidies and their cost should reflect all applicable externalities.

Big Brother on the Road

We aim for a single, publicly controlled, easy-to-use toll satellite system for commercial transport on highways, allowing the use of open source apps, enabling to process anonymized big data and thus improve both municipal and interstate traffic management. We insist that eCall and other similar movement recording devices remain optional and their data strictly anonymous, so that participation in any such transport monitoring activity remains a transparent tool of choice with public benefits, rather than a compulsory means of government surveillance using outsourced contractors and opaque control mechanisms.

Local Cross-border Travel

Current transport streams, especially in new EU countries, still copy mainly the old national hierarchy. Utilizing new dynamic transport options (bike and car-sharing schemes, on-demand public transport, hailing apps) we will strive to allow new natural transport streams, that will ignore national borders. All EU citizens have the right to truly free movement. These measures allow boosting of peripheral regions that are often the least performing within the countries.

Ride-hailing Legalization

Large EU metropolitan areas are currently in legal limbo regarding the ride-hailing apps (Taxify, UBER), thereby hindering further research and development of those projects. We believe that the legislature has to reflect the current technology development and that one common framework for ride-hailing apps should exist on EU level, allowing GPS and similar technologies to be recognized as a certified system for the calculation of distances. Legalizing ride-hailing apps will be a great benefit for rural areas and less wealthy individuals.

Harmonized Legislation for Automated Vehicles

The EU should work towards a harmonized legislation for autonomous vehicles.

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