

**LEV!CE**

**ELECTION PROGRAMME**  
for the European Parliament  
elections in 2024

Our motto:

We are in favour of European integration and cooperation, but it must serve the people, not corporations and elites.

Currently, the European Union does not do this.

## Home

Europe today is being affected by the consequences of global crises such as catastrophic climate change, pandemics, wars and economic instability, accompanied by energy crises, inflation and growing income and wealth inequalities. The consequences of these crises have been exacerbated for decades by neoliberal policies that have prioritised the interests of capital over labour, cut social spending for the needy and led to the rise of the far right. Xenophobia, racism and fascism are on the rise in Europe, along with disrespect for refugees and migrants.

We support the European Left's common commitment to a society based on equality and justice and oppose nationalist tendencies. Let us turn the trend of rapidly increasing differences between the richest and the poorest into a trend of reducing these differences. We believe in internationalism and the cooperation of progressive forces, and we are determined to work together to defend the rights of those who are denied them, to join with trade unions and with all those who are working towards the same goals, not only in Europe but throughout the world. Europe must not be associated with international exploitation and support for imperialism, the main source of wars of aggression, and must always be on the side of the attacked and oppressed. It must lead by example in respecting international law and the UN Charter, expressing solidarity with the victims of aggression and promoting humanitarian aid in conflict zones.

In this situation, we intend, as a full member of the European Left, to support the joint efforts of the European Left and other left-wing and progressive parties. The European Left is an association of European left-wing parties that oppose capitalism and Stalinism and strive for democratic socialism. As the Left, we are affiliated to the Left Group in the European Parliament (THE LEFT).

### 1.

#### A left-wing vision of the European Union

We believe in a Europe where integration and cooperation is based on the interests of the people, not on the interests of corporations and elites. We want a European Union that is peaceful and socially just. This requires fundamental reform of the EU so that the voices of all citizens are heard and taken into account. This is the condition under which we are willing to support it; otherwise, we are prepared to oppose it.

We support the interests and demands of workers against capital and seek to set the conditions that will allow for the Europe-wide coordination of their solidarity actions, such as the protests against the French pension reform and the German strike movement. We believe that strong and united work at the European level can lead to significant changes in favour of workers, their increased participation in decision-making in a similarly economic democracy - co-determination by workers in private and public enterprises.

We want to strengthen democratic principles in the EU, which includes strengthening the role of the European Parliament compared to the unelected European institutions and ensuring that citizens and regions have a greater say in decision-making. We call for more transparent decision-making by the European Commission, the European Council and other EU institutions.

## 2.

### Social justice and workers' rights

It is important for us to promote and protect the social rights of vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities, the elderly, children at risk and those living below the poverty line.

We will advocate for expanded and improved access to social services such as health care, education, housing and welfare. We want to ensure that everyone who finds themselves in a difficult life situation has access to the help and support they need. We want to eliminate the poverty trade. We want measures to be taken within the European Union against the abuse of power by bailiffs. At the same time, we are committed to combating social exclusion and striving to create an inclusive society in which every individual has the opportunity to live a life of dignity, regardless of their socio-economic status.

We strive to create a fair and safe working environment where labour standards are respected, fair wages and conditions are guaranteed, and where every worker has the right to decent work and protection against discrimination and reduced levels of exploitation.

In the area of working conditions, there are EU directives that aim to ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all employees, but they are often not enforced. We therefore propose the introduction of a uniform procedure for labour inspectorates across the EU so that all Member States adhere to the same high standards.

We propose the introduction of an unconditional basic income (UBI) in conjunction with the concept of unconditional basic services. This would ensure free access to the basic necessities of life for every citizen in addition to a regular, guaranteed income. In the unconditional basic services we want to include basic health care, care services, clean water, energy, affordable food, housing and education.

We plan to fund these services through a combination of sources, including a reallocation of existing social spending, tax revenues and dividends from productivity gains through automation, robotics and artificial intelligence. Given the complexity of implementing and integrating these systems, both will need to be carefully tested through pilot projects to verify and ensure that they work effectively and fairly.

We advocate a significant reduction in working time and the elimination of unjustified overtime across the European Union.

We want to extend the scope of the European Joint Undertaking so that it can produce certain goods or services where it would be disadvantageous to do so at national level. A good example is the pharmaceutical industry. Not only the Czech Republic, but much of the EU is currently suffering from a shortage of medicines, and a joint European producer of medicines under public control would be very helpful here. We will seek changes to European regulations in this regard, including the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, if this proves necessary.

Our programme also includes sixteen points drawn up by the Left Group in the European Parliament in cooperation with European trade unionists and listed in Annex 1 of this programme.

### 3.

## European Union economic policy

Our economic policy is based on the principles of social justice and sustainability. We promote economic development that is measured by indicators of wellbeing that reflect the quality of life of the population, not just by pro-growth GDP. We focus on a non-growth ecosocialist economic model that emphasises a balance between economic activity and environmental protection, ensuring that resources are used in a way that achieves greater equity and that everyone has access to basic services and living conditions regardless of economic growth.

At EU level, we will work to coordinate tax measures that include progressive taxation of income and wealth, taxes on financial transactions and fair taxation of profits from the European activities of large corporations.

We will push for measures against tax evasion and the elimination of tax havens in some EU Member States, such as Cyprus and the Netherlands. The competent EU authorities must also prevent and punish financial leakage outside Europe. Everyone must contribute their fair share to the financing of public services and infrastructure.

We reject EU trade agreements with other non-European partners, such as TTIP (Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership), CETA (Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement) or JEFTA (Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement). These agreements, under the pretext of removing economic barriers, often allow social and environmental safeguards, as well as product quality standards, to be circumvented or challenged in court.

We will also promote fair trade principles with poorer countries. It is unacceptable to us that the European Union should enforce unfair advantages that disadvantage the local economy, often driving local people into poverty and forcing them to emigrate. We demand that EU trade policy respect social and environmental standards both within the Union and abroad. The situation where the EU is a major part of the exploitation of the countries of the South must end.

We approach the issue of adopting the euro openly, but two requirements must be met. Firstly, there must be sufficient convergence of economic, social and fiscal policies between Member States. Secondly, it is essential to establish democratic political institutions at the level of the monetary union capable of actively shaping economic policy and ensuring that the decision-making of the European institutions reflects the interests of citizens and not just those of capital. We will seek democratic control of the functioning of the European Central Bank (ECB).

#### 4.

### **The impact of automation, robotics and artificial intelligence**

It is essential to address the impact of automation, robotics and artificial intelligence on the labour market and society. The rapid development of these technologies inevitably raises concerns about the potential loss of jobs, particularly in sectors where human roles can be effectively replaced by machines. There is therefore a need for regulation and taxation in the field of robotics and artificial intelligence. At the same time, this is an opportunity to reduce working hours and redistribute work tasks, and therefore to improve quality of life and employment.

A democratic approach to decision-making on AI is a must. Only in this way will its implementation not be solely in the hands of corporations and not only serve to generate profits, but also take into account wider social and ethical aspects. We will advocate measures to reduce the risks associated with the introduction or misuse of these innovations.

#### 5.

### **Cohesion policy and reducing disparities between countries and regions**

Significant social and economic inequalities still persist between the countries and regions of the European Union. Current EU instruments have not been successful in addressing these problems.

We want to strengthen cohesion policies (cohesion policies) that reduce inequalities and support the development of disadvantaged regions. The aim must be to raise the living standards of the population through programmes and measures aimed at education, research and innovation in the regions, leading to the strengthening of the local economy, and not to create better conditions for multinationals.

We will advocate for transparent and efficient use of EU funds and the involvement of local communities in decision-making processes. It is important that citizens have a voice in how EU funds are used in their region.

#### 6.

## Ecology and sustainability

Our planet is facing an ecological crisis. That's why we support a sustainable and environmentally friendly economy both in the EU and globally. We reject the transfer of environmentally intensive production to third countries.

We will work to implement international agreements on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including the Paris Climate Agreement, as soon as possible. Only a global and coordinated approach can effectively address the challenges of climate change.

We will push for common energy policies to promote renewable energy and reduce dependence on fossil fuels, to introduce taxes on emissions, to create a common energy infrastructure to ensure the availability of energy resources, to protect consumers' rights to quality and affordable energy, and to ensure the social dimension of the transition to renewable energy.

The Green Deal for Europe, which is now being promoted in the EU, represents for us the concept of green capitalism. It is based on the idea of green growth and decoupling, which means separating the growth of production from the growth of resource consumption. This approach is unrealistic and inadequate for tackling the climate crisis.

It is important to oppose proposals that would make the payment of emission allowances compulsory for ordinary households. Such a measure would have a negative impact on the economic situation of many families and would increase their financial burden. The cost of repairing the environmental damage and the consequences of the climate crisis should be borne by the wealthiest groups of citizens, who will be taxed accordingly. The introduction of the latest sustainable technologies will help to raise additional funds to tackle these problems.

We demand that the main costs of ecological transformation be borne by those who are the main emitters, especially large corporations and industrial enterprises, which are the largest contributors to emissions and pollution. It is essential to ensure fairness in the distribution of environmental costs and to protect the economic situation of ordinary citizens.

However, since large companies and wealthy households will always be able to pay the higher costs, and taxing environmentally harmful production or services would mostly affect everyone else rather than them, in many cases it will be necessary to go down the route of prohibition rather than taxation. For example, we are proposing a ban on private jets, which make a significant contribution to emissions.

## 7.

### Fair agricultural policy and food safety

The Common Agricultural Policy is an area that accounts for almost half of the EU budget, covering issues such as food safety (in terms of ensuring food

sufficiency and health), addressing the environmental impacts of agriculture, reconciling regional and ownership interests (small farmers, cooperatives and agri-complexes) and global impacts (in relation to third country producers), the effects of tradition and government commitments.

We support small farmers, family and community farms, agricultural cooperatives, organic farming, and local self-sufficiency. We support fair trade in agricultural commodities, both within the EU and towards third countries, and we promote social and labour rights across the EU in the form of a sensible agro-ecological policy that is not intended to be destructive to farmers, but to ensure a fair solution.

The model of organic sustainable agriculture must become the standard and should be adopted by all farmers across the EU.

We oppose agri-complexes and their cartel agreements with supermarket chains, which endanger consumers and cause differences in food prices in different parts of Europe. We advocate transparency in food chains and consumer information on the origin and production of food. We are in favour of shortening supply chains and promoting local markets, thereby reducing transport emissions and combating food waste.

We advocate the provision of a permanent analysis of the development of prices of inputs and outputs in agriculture. In the event of negative developments in this area, intervention by the relevant European Commission authorities is appropriate.

We support the establishment of a Common Agricultural Policy based on environmentally sustainable agriculture that ensures fair incomes for farmers, quality food and food sovereignty and mitigates climate change.

We consider it important to invest in research into sustainable technologies, including the use of artificial intelligence, robotics, geodata and biotechnology, programmes to facilitate access to land for young and beginning farmers, the promotion of crop diversity and agricultural practices to increase biodiversity and resilience, and the extension of support for agroecology and permaculture for sustainable agricultural projects that protect the environment.

## 8.

### **Migration and human rights, the consequences of colonial and imperialist policies**

We want the European Union to promote a fair and humane migration policy that respects the rights of immigrants and refugees. This means providing asylum to all those who need it and supporting the integration of immigrants into our society.

We call for clarification and facilitation of the conditions for job applicants from abroad and the introduction of legislative measures to prevent migrants from becoming the cheapest labour force, which is heavily discriminated against in

employment. This will prevent downward pressure on wages and improve conditions for all workers.

We also demand transparency in the EU's negotiations with third countries, with the key requirement being the introduction of measures to protect human rights and promote democracy. It is essential to ensure fair trade, support development programmes and improve living conditions in these countries.

The migration crisis has its roots in the consequences of (neo)colonialism and imperialism of Western states, as well as in the effects of the climate crisis. Many migration waves are triggered by instability and conflicts linked to the interventions and policies of Western powers, including those of the European Union, in different parts of the world. Climate change, leading to droughts, floods and other disasters, is exacerbating the pressure on the population, which is forced to seek better living conditions elsewhere.

To address the root causes of the migration crisis, it is essential to provide targeted, effective and selfless assistance to the countries from which migrants are fleeing. It is crucial that the international community, and Western states in particular, take responsibility for their part in creating the crises and play an active role in solving them.

## 9.

### Feminism, gender and LGBT+

The feminist dimension should be reflected in all aspects of EU decision-making, from the economics of care to security policy. The radical reduction of the gender gap and de facto wage discrimination in care is a major problem for the EU. We want to overcome gender inequalities and ensure social rights for all.

In the fight against gender-based violence, we want the EU to accede to the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and ensure its implementation in the Member States. We advocate the creation of a European legal framework for the elimination of violence against women, including the inclusion of gender-based violence in criminal law and the adoption of a definition of rape based on the absence of consent.

In order to improve the position of women in the workplace, we will promote measures aimed at pay transparency, reducing the gender pay gap, equal employment opportunities and combating gender stereotypes in employment and the education system.

We want adequate remuneration for care work. It is also important to raise the profile of unpaid care for children, the elderly and the disabled as a key contribution to society.

We will enforce measures against discrimination on the basis of disability, marital status, sexual orientation, age and origin, as well as the right to self-determination and sexual and reproductive health. This includes supporting women's right to make decisions about their bodies and motherhood, including



free and safe access to abortion and the inclusion of the right to abortion in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

It is important to fully recognise the equal rights of LGBTQIA+ people, including the right to marriage, adoption and asylum, and to ban conversion therapy and involuntary sterilisation of transgender people. We will also advocate for a gender perspective to be taken into account in migration policy.

## 10.

### Copyright

We advocate limiting the duration of copyright for heirs to twenty years from the author's death, but no longer than fifty years from the publication of the work (instead of the current seventy years from the author's death, regardless of the date of publication). It is not right for someone to hold the rights to a work in which they had no part in the creation for too long. At the same time, we support extending the possibilities of free access to digitised versions of works that are still protected by copyright but are no longer commercially available.

We will push for a revision of the European Copyright Directive, which favours the big players both on the side of copyright holders and on the side of online platforms: it allows giants like Google or Meta to get out of the use of a work by financially compensating copyright associations, which small entities (e.g. non-profits) do not have the means to do, and on the contrary, only rights holders with a strong corporate or institutional background have the capacity to effectively litigate against platforms. In the dispute over "internet freedom" (intellectual property versus freedom to share), oligarchic groups have a strong influence on both sides. We, on the other hand, want to support the ordinary user, whether author or "consumer".

## 11.

### Security Policy

We will pursue a common security policy based on the promotion of peace in accordance with the UN Charter and international law. This policy includes support for the victims of war and rejection of any imperialist aggression in the world.

We recognise the right of states to adequate defence in the event of attack as defined by the UN Charter. We emphasize the prevention of conflict and the promotion of diplomatic solutions to disputes between countries, peace negotiations and the provision of humanitarian assistance to victims of conflict. We call for EU diplomacy to be more involved in proposals for just solutions to existing war conflicts.

We support initiatives aimed at disarmament, arms limitation and reduction of military spending. Our aim is to strike the right balance between reducing military spending and ensuring our own security. This can only be ensured by public control over arms production, including the possibility of expropriation.

We reject the influence of the military-industrial complex on the policies of the European Union and its Member States and advocate an international ban on private armies.

## 12.

### International cooperation

We want the European Union to be a strong and credible partner on the international stage. Our policy must be to promote cooperation with international organisations such as the UN and the International Court of Justice and to conclude international agreements on security and conflict resolution. In this context, we urge the EU countries that are members of NATO to fully respect the principles of international law and the UN Charter.

European countries inevitably pursue their economic and geopolitical interests outside Europe, including in former colonies. However, we will not support the building of a common foreign policy or 'collective defence' if it is to serve imperialist aims, whether American, Russian or even our own European ones. Our aim is to cooperate at international level on the basis of the principles of justice, equality and respect for the sovereignty of all countries.

To advance our agenda, we will rely on cooperation with like-minded forces in other countries, both inside and outside the EU, including political parties, trade unions, NGOs, protest movements and other non-state actors.

**Workers of the European Union, let us unite in  
the struggle for democratic socialism and a  
better world!**

Discussed at the Levice Programme Conference on 11.11.2023 and subsequently amended by the Levice Party Programme Committee.

## Annex 1

# Workers & the working class must be at the centre of a new EU

## 16 points for the EU Parliament and decision-making bodies to deliver during the 2024-2029 term

These points are part of a document drawn up by the LEFT group in the European Parliament and the Trade Union Network for Europe (TUNE):

1. Just Transition (green & digital): "Nobody left behind". A Just Green& Digital Transition achieved by embedding a culture of engagement of trade unions and civil society in drafting and implementing all relevant investments.
2. Fair salaries for decent living standards for All (salary or conflict): "No more working poor!"
3. Empowered European Social Dialogue with a balance of power granted, so workers' representatives can effectively negotiate beneficial terms for workers.
4. The right to European actions/strikes must become a fundamental axis towards an EU collective bargaining and a people-oriented EU, where social rights must be at the centre of a new European Social Dialogue and be the foundation of European Works Councils.
5. Fighting abusive practices and social dumping: introduction of joint and several liability in subcontracting chains; introduction of a legal obligation to make companies' compliance with applicable collective bargaining agreements and/or labour law a mandatory award criterion in public procurements; implementation across the EU of ILO Convention No. 81 on labour inspectorates.
6. Anticipation to change: re/up-skilling of workers. High social development (in the shape of skills, job security and wages) must be at the centre of an empowered EU autonomy with a position of relative strength, while building a multilateral global economic scenario.
7. Fair taxation: achieving a more effective EU fiscal cooperation and fiscal solidarity is a must, together with a more stringent control of the public money given to enterprises, chiefly aimed at redistributing the risks inherent to the current economic turmoil and dispersing it away from citizens and workers.
8. Migrant workers welcome on equal terms & conditions: they must be guaranteed the right to work under the legal conditions and rights of the country where they perform the work when not respected by the employer.
9. A EU push for public ownership of key companies: (energy, health systems, transport, food..) with the purpose of both reducing existing quasi-monopolistic practices and spreading a scenario where States can regain a balance of power to benefit workers and citizens facing the growing power of private corporations and investment funds.
10. Mitigate competition's undesired effects by avoiding social dumping, bogus self-employment, outsourcing and race to the bottom of salaries (maintaining and enhancing workers' rights is more than ever necessary).
11. Fair and inclusive European welfare system that provides broad and well-organised access to sickness, education and unemployment benefits, thus combining social protection and social investments.
12. Mandatory sectoral agreements negotiated by country: in a new EU of the Peoples, there cannot be room left for anti-union practices – therefore collective bargaining must be protected at the highest possible levels, including public procurement.
13. Tackling violence and harassment against women everywhere, including at work: many women are affected in one way or another by violence and harassment because of their employment status, the type of work they carry out, or because of the conditions in the sector they work in. Just and fair policies and practices must be implemented to eradicate this scourge.
14. Improving working conditions in platform work: those working in the platform economy are workers too! Workers' rights are not negotiable! All forms of collective representation must be guaranteed so that platform workers can find the most appropriate way to union recognition.
15. Fair pension systems across the EU to support retired people: put an end to longer working lives and favour the stabilisation of a general working time reduction.
16. The EU needs to deliver a Social Progress Protocol giving priority to workers' and social rights over economic freedoms, a Protocol to channel the future frame towards an EU of the Peoples.

Remark: The Czech version of this annex is slightly abbreviated in comparison to the original.