

Manifesto for the 2024 European elections.

(translated from French to English by artificial intelligence)

Contents

- 1) A Europe of possibilities.**
- 2) The famous social Europe must finally take shape**
- 3) A climate policy that goes beyond green capitalism.**
- 4) Binding measures to protect the environment.**
- 5) Sustainable agriculture based on remunerative prices.**
- 6) Combating the privatisation of universities and hospitals.**
- 7) Regain control over essential services.**
- 8) A progressive economic, monetary and fiscal policy.**
- 9) Fundamental reform of the Treaties to make them more democratic.**
- 10) Renounce all forms of imperialism.**
- 11) Dismantle Fortress Europe and put an end to inward-looking attitudes.**
- 12) Digital services need rules.**
- 13) Guaranteeing the rights of women and LGBTIQ+ people.**

1) A Europe of possibilities.

The planet is burning: under an increasingly relentless sun and under bombs. Inequality is growing, popular anger is roaring and, in the absence of any alternative, the far right's attempts to seduce workers are proving increasingly effective. All the more so as the capitalist system of exploitation has been bankrupt for a very long time. There's no point in dwelling on it.

The left-wing parties have a historic duty to turn the tide by laying the foundations for a better Europe based on equality, social justice, environmental protection, and solidarity. This is not a dream, nor a utopia emanating from wildly idealistic minds. On the contrary, it's a necessity, and we have the means and resources to implement it. The destructive policies of previous years are not inevitable, but the result of political decisions, some more catastrophic than others. Young people are no longer content to stand by and watch the

politics of compromise and baby steps. That's why déi Lénk has decided to put its faith in a resolutely young list to carry the colours of eco-socialism, red and green, loud and clear. Because there are no answers to the ecological question unless we tackle the social question head on. The main challenge of our era is to combine the fight for the planet's habitability with the fight against inequality. It is therefore essential for politics to throw off the yoke of the multinationals and finally take back power to the people. We need to put an end to the stranglehold of lobbies, social dumping and the exorbitant power of multinationals and unscrupulous financiers! It's about forcing the business world to contribute, to shatter the myth of a lack of alternatives to the capitalist system and neo-liberal cynicism that is sacrificing the future of the next generations at the altar of profitability.

It is this policy of serving shareholders that has disgusted European workers. Their working conditions have deteriorated, their purchasing power has plummeted, and their dreams have been shattered by the harsh laws of budgetary austerity. The far right is winning the votes of these citizens by fanning the flames of righteous anger, but without proposing any systemic alternatives. It is playing a dangerous game with the resentments and disappointments of people abandoned by the political and economic elites.

Only left-wing parties and movements can offer an alternative project for a Europe where power is returned to the people, where everyone has access to the most basic goods and services, where education and health are a universal right, where housing is no longer an object of speculation, where protection of the climate and biodiversity are not reduced to empty slogans, and where workers enjoy working conditions commensurate with their efforts. déi Lénk and its resolutely young list are carrying forward this project for an ecosocialist, open and democratic Europe. It is this Europe of possibilities that we will win by strengthening déi Lénk and the left-wing parties at the European elections in 2024.

2) The much-vaunted Social Europe must finally take shape.

Social Europe is little more than an empty shell, a beautiful formula devoid of meaning that is trotted out in the run-up to the European elections. The posting of workers, in the name of the sacrosanct free movement of services, creates direct competition between workers and thus creates an ecosystem conducive to social dumping.

Yet European social security regulations still exist and protect migrant workers and European residents on an equal footing with national workers in terms of social rights. But it is being systematically called into question, particularly by Luxembourg, which is opposed to the so-called "export of benefits", as in the case of family allowances for non-resident children of resident workers or student allowances for cross-border workers. If it were not for the principle of unanimity in social security matters, many of these traditional rights would already have been shattered at European level.

Above all, no real progress has been made for a long time. Initiatives by the European Parliament and social movements to advance European legislation are boycotted by the Member States. At the end of 2023, France scuppered the directive on online platform such as Uber and Deliveroo. This text would have provided a legal framework for an increasingly important economic sector that is still outside the scope of labour law. As a result, these platforms are multiplying their abuses with impunity. The bogus self-employed who break

their backs to earn a pittance are the first victims of this lack of regulation. For a Member State to nip in the bud a project that could have benefited tens of thousands of workers is a symptom of the malfunctioning of an economic Union in which social issues - and therefore workers' rights - remain the poor relation.

The only response to this practice, which encourages a deterioration in working conditions, is a consistent strengthening of workers' rights and social rights at all levels. As at national level, we also need to fight for these rights at European level, together with the trade unions.

The famous Social Europe must finally take shape. We need to start with a minimum income above the poverty line in the various Member States, then we need to regulate platform work and prevent the emergence of minions who can be exploited at will, and finally we need to strengthen the negotiating rights of trade unions and encourage a surge of European solidarity between workers in order to organise a European fight for good wages, job security and quality working conditions in general.

Thanks to technological progress, productivity has risen spectacularly. The technological conditions are in place for a reduction in working time for equal pay. However, care must be taken to ensure that technological progress does not create new instruments for enslaving workers. Regulation of these new technologies, including artificial intelligence, must be an absolute priority. But the greatest challenges for our societies, and therefore for workers, will be the ecological and energy transitions in terms of employment. A massive investment plan must ensure the creation of "green" jobs and the training of workers so that no one has to fear the repercussions of these essential transitions.

People who have toiled for decades must be able to enjoy a decent retirement. Public pension systems in European countries must no longer be put under pressure by cost arguments but must be financed by the economy. *déi Lénk* is committed to ensuring that the right to a decent pension becomes a fundamental right. If we want a social Europe worthy of the name, solidarity must be its foundation. And solidarity means universal access to high-quality public social protection.

*1) **déi Lénk** wants to break with the current policy of putting economic freedoms before social rights, by calling for the inclusion of a Social Progress Protocol in the Treaties.*

*2) **déi Lénk** will fight with workers and trade unions to consolidate and extend European social law and prevent social dumping between countries by harmonising the conditions of access to public social protection.*

*3) **déi Lénk** will work to strengthen labour law and job security as part of a just ecological transition, based on trade union involvement and collective bargaining.*

*4) **déi Lénk** wants to guarantee the right for all to lifelong training during working hours, at no cost to workers, and to commit to real employee participation in the decision-making process in companies.*

5) déi Lénk wants to improve working conditions and substantially reduce maximum working periods and working hours by moving towards a progressive reduction in standard working hours at European level to 32 hours a week at constant pay.

6) déi Lénk wants to strengthen public pension schemes, declare the right to a decent pension as a fundamental right and tackle the pension gap between women and men by introducing individualisation of pension rights.

3) A climate policy that goes beyond green capitalism.

The climate crisis is one of the main political challenges. It is a statement that can no longer be doubted. Scientific reports, such as that of the IPCC, are increasingly alarming and, unless there is a radical change of course, it now seems impossible to meet the commitments made in the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to +1.5°C.

In 2023, instead of falling, global CO2 emissions reached a new record high. Faced with this situation, there can be only one response: put an end to green capitalism, the failure of which no longer needs to be proven, and initiate a fair and democratic transition towards a new ecological and social economy. Recent years have revealed the incompatibility between the capitalist system of exploitation and ecological imperatives. Replacing combustion-powered SUVs with electric SUVs will not take us any further towards sustainable management of natural resources. The policy of tax incentives and subsidies is not bearing fruit. The carbon market allows the global North to continue its emissions madness while depriving the global South, the main victim of the dangers of climate change, of the means to develop.

So the policy of compromise and small steps is not only inadequate, it is fundamentally unfair and colonially wrong. A radical change of system is therefore needed if we are to save the planet while reducing social inequalities. déi Lénk is convinced that there can be no answer to the ecological question without an answer to the social question.

At present, we live in a system where the big emitters - big business and the wealthy - can afford the luxury of polluting with a clear conscience and at low cost, while employees are subject to taxes that hit them indiscriminately, such as the notorious carbon tax. In this way, green capitalism increases inequalities, undermines the foundations of popular support for the ecological cause and undermines international solidarity with structures that keep the countries of the global South in a dependency that smacks of colonialism.

Yet another policy is possible. In its ideological blindness, the political class dares not force the real polluters to show solidarity in the fight against global warming. Yet today, this is the only way to respond to the climate emergency. At the same time, a public investment offensive is essential to reinvigorate less polluting public transport networks, regain control over energy supply networks and implement a vast European energy renovation plan, while avoiding false solutions such as nuclear energy, which is expensive, dangerous and unsustainable. The budget allocated to cooperation must first and foremost be used to ensure the transfer of technologies to the South, so that the poorest countries can defend themselves against the disasters in the making.

The fight against climate change can only be won if oil, coal and natural gas remain underground, and it is on this objective that all efforts must be focused.

1) déi Lénk is fighting for an ambitious European climate policy, aiming for climate neutrality by 2045, mainly through public funding of renewable energies and consistent promotion of energy efficiency and sobriety.

2) déi Lénk insists on the need for a climate policy based on social justice, which does not penalise the working classes.

3) déi Lénk wants to significantly increase public funding for the energy transition by making the big polluters and billionaires pay more.

4) déi Lénk proposes to reverse the liberalisation and privatisation of electricity production and distribution networks in order to facilitate the energy transition.

5) déi Lénk wants to abolish direct and indirect subsidies for fossil fuels and nuclear power, to close down obsolete nuclear power stations immediately and to ban any new use of these energies in the EU.

6) déi Lénk wants to drastically reduce emissions from the transport of people and goods by promoting public transport and the transport of goods by rail or inland waterway.

7) déi Lénk wants to tighten up European emission standards for new cars pending a ban on combustion engines from 2035, put an end to the production and sale of high-consumption SUV cars and relaunch research into very low energy consumption engines.

4) Protecting the environment with binding measures

Alongside the climate crisis, which logically dominates the debate, there is another, less publicised but just as threatening: the biodiversity crisis. Species of flora and fauna are dying out, yet we continue to spray our fields with plant protection products that are proven to be dangerous, to destroy our wetlands and forests that are rich in habitats that capture greenhouse gases, to build as if we had an unlimited area to build on, and to pour our plastic waste and chemical substances into nature and the oceans, only to re-eat them with a platter of seafood.

Like the climate, biodiversity is suffering from a political system that relies on incentives and refuses to take the binding measures that are so vital if we are to halt the hecatomb. A coherent and effective policy involves imposing strong social and environmental criteria on companies. Only in this way can we achieve the goal of drastically reducing plastic waste and chemical substances to prevent the disappearance of pollinators and ensure environmental well-being in general.

The European Union must shake off the yoke of the multinationals and their army of lobbyists, who have long since infiltrated the corridors of the Commission and the European Parliament.

The initiatives taken by the Union's institutions are often progressive at the outset, but it is during the legislative process that the texts are watered down, in particular because of the lobbyists who are paid handsomely by the multinationals. Lobbying has, for example, prevented the European Union from effectively regulating plastic packaging or banning once and for all the herbicide glyphosate, which continues to wreak havoc on health.

Alongside stricter and more binding regulations for the private sector, the public sector must assume its share of responsibility and regain control in certain key areas. Common goods such as water and energy must be returned to public ownership and managed in a participatory and democratic way. This is the only way of neutralising the neoliberal forces that are exploiting these resources and guaranteeing universal access to them. Responsible use of these resources must, however, be guaranteed, for example by staggering the price of water, so that those who waste this precious resource pay a high price.

In order to increase understanding of environmental issues, *déi Lénk* is also focusing on education in a very broad sense. As well as raising awareness of ecological issues from an early age, ecology and in particular environmental justice must be part of the school curriculum in all primary schools in the Union. Finally, we need to build a European research network dedicated to ecological issues.

*1) **déi Lénk** wants to strengthen the social and environmental criteria imposed on companies domiciled in the EU for the exploitation of resources on European territory and to ensure that resources imported into the EU are exploited under similar conditions.*

*2) **déi Lénk** wants to halt the disappearance of species and strengthen the protection of biodiversity, in particular by urgently phasing out pesticides such as glyphosate, neonicotinoids and the marketing of genetically modified organisms.*

*3) **déi Lénk** wants to strengthen nature protection by extending the Natura 2000 network, a European nature protection initiative, in particular by making the framework more restrictive in terms of authorising projects impacting on these protected areas.*

*4) **déi Lénk** wants to strengthen the European strategy against plastic pollution by significantly reducing the manufacture and use of plastic and stepping up the fight against micro-plastics.*

*5) **déi Lénk** wants to promote environmental education and research.*

5) Sustainable agriculture based on remunerative prices

The beginning of 2024 saw the anger of farmers explode into the open. Across Europe, the men and women who cultivate our land and fill our plates are living on the edge of a financial abyss, continuing to do work that was once noble but is now devoid of meaning after decades of a Common Agricultural Policy that has focused on productivity at all costs and has enslaved the farming world through insidious subsidies.

déi Lénk wants to put an end to this aberrant policy, which is slowly killing both farmers and the environment. Because agricultural policy is a major lever in the fight against global

warming and the loss of biodiversity. *déi Lénk* is campaigning for an urgent end to the use of pesticides, neonicotinoids and GMOs. We need to destroy the monopoly on seeds held by the big agri-food companies. These not only harm farmers' yields but also reinforce monocultures that are harmful to the ecological balance.

At present, EU subsidies are calculated on the basis of the area of farmland cultivated. This system is incompatible with an agro-ecological approach. We therefore need to redirect the flow of subsidies towards small, environmentally-friendly farms and guarantee sustainable, well-paid jobs.

Training and guaranteed remunerative prices are essential to make up for the lack of vocations in this crucial sector of activity which, if based on sound foundations, could ensure our food sovereignty. It is therefore essential to regulate margins, particularly those of supermarkets, which are holding a knife to farmers' throats. Instead of putting European farmers in competition with gigantic, poorly regulated farms from all over the world, by signing free trade agreements all over the place, the Common Agricultural Policy must protect our farmers, consumer health and the environment by focusing on short production circuits, local or regional consumption and the transition to organic farming. At the same time, we need to put an end to the export of subsidised agricultural products to markets in the global South, as this destroys local agriculture in those countries.

Such an approach, combined with better labelling, would also have the merit of restoring the image of agriculture and guaranteeing better consumer protection. It is time for the European Union to tackle head-on the malaise of the farming world. If the men and women who feed us are forced to go into debt in order to comply with the demands of an agricultural policy that fails to meet the environmental and social challenges, then the policy has failed miserably.

We urgently need to free ourselves from the dogmas of productivism and put people and nature back at the heart of agricultural policy. Instead of encouraging huge farms with excessive livestock, we need to reduce the size of farms and encourage the cultivation of plants rather than intensive livestock farming, which requires a large area to grow cereals that are unfit for human consumption. Agricultural cooperatives should be encouraged as an alternative to industrial farms. In this way, animal welfare will increase considerably, land will be used more sustainably and more intelligently, and we will gain food sovereignty while reducing meat consumption.

*1) **déi Lénk** wants to establish an agro-ecological policy model based on ecologically sustainable agriculture, guaranteeing fair incomes for farmers and high-quality food, while putting an end to the process of land concentration and the dominance of the agri-food industry.*

*2) **déi Lénk** wants to guarantee a remunerative price for producers while preserving the purchasing power of consumers, in particular by limiting the margins of intermediaries and protecting the European market from agricultural imports from intensive overseas farms that do not respect European environmental standards.*

3) déi Lénk wants to strengthen training in small-scale farming, make it easier for young people and those changing career paths to set up or take over a farm, while recognising and promoting the role of women on family farms.

4) déi Lénk wants to protect animals by introducing binding regulations on the treatment of animals at European level.

5) déi Lénk wants to promote and subsidise local and regional production, distribution and consumption networks that are economically and ecologically sustainable.

6) Combating the privatisation of universities and hospitals

In 2020, our healthcare systems were rocked by the Covid-19 wave. Those long months, when the gloom of successive confinements gave way to the fear of a new, potentially more deadly variant, were the most convincing argument in favour of a robust public health system and high-quality public research.

If we collectively managed to overcome this major crisis, it was because public hospitals withstood the shock and because public money enabled researchers to organise a rapid and effective response. Vaccines were developed in record time. Countries that had dismantled their public health systems in the name of austerity had more difficulty managing this unprecedented crisis. A shortage of beds, constantly overworked staff and a shortage of equipment all contributed to increasing the toll of the pandemic.

Although the most effective vaccines were developed by private companies, they would not have been possible without the scientific advances made in public institutes. If vaccine development had been carried out entirely in independent public universities, we might have been able to avoid the fruitless discussions on lifting patents to guarantee universal access, and we would certainly have avoided the exorbitant prices charged by the pharmaceutical industry. A vigorous public health system and massive public investment in research are the two ingredients that make it possible to overcome a pandemic and ensure quality care in normal times. This observation is without appeal.

In the year 2024, applause for healthcare workers is a distant memory. The dismantling of public services continues as if nothing had happened. Successive waves of privatisation are leading to a two-class society: those who can afford access to quality care and education and those who cannot.

It is up to left-wing movements to lead the fight against the privatisation of universities and hospitals, to demand universal and free access to quality health care and education, to call for a substantial increase in the budgets allocated to research and education, and to commit to public universities that are independent of the business world and financial interests. The Erasmus programme, the success of which no longer needs to be demonstrated, must be facilitated, in particular by adapting grants to real costs based on the cost of living.

But it's not just hospitals and schools that are suffering from the growing influence of private financial interests, but also housing. Although Luxembourg is in a special position, it is far from the only country mired in a deep housing crisis. Large investment funds are using real

estate as a speculative tool. Prices are soaring, and a growing number of people are being priced out of the market. We need a European initiative to combat property speculation and put in place a vast funding programme to support construction and energy renovation.

1) déi Lénk wants to establish European requirements for the quality of health systems and guarantee universal access to a free public health system based on solidarity-based social security, while rejecting the commercialisation of the health sector.

2) déi Lénk wants to increase the European budgets allocated to education and public research, excluding funding from lobbies and multinationals defending purely commercial interests.

3) déi Lénk wants to combat the privatisation of universities and schools in Europe and establish free and open access to universities in Europe.

4) déi Lénk wants to develop the Erasmus programme by allowing free choice of universities, by adapting grants to real costs based on the cost of living and by providing greater freedom of choice of courses.

5) déi Lénk wants to guarantee a universal right of access to housing and combat property speculation at European level.

6) déi Lénk wants to set up European and national investment programmes for the construction and energy renovation of housing.

7) Regain control over essential services

Since the 1980s, a wave of liberalisation has ravaged public services. Trains, postal services and aviation are just a few examples. Private companies rushed in and gutted these services to satisfy the voracity of their shareholders. All that remains at the end of the process is a hollowed-out structure barely capable of providing a minimum service. The loss of public control over the common goods of water and energy is catastrophic in a highly inflammable ecological, economic, social and geopolitical situation.

Subjected to the laws of the market, the prices of these essential services and goods tend to soar. People on low or average incomes have to absorb the devastating loss of purchasing power or forgo these services, while shareholders line their pockets. In this way, access to basic services and products is compromised. The wave of liberalisation has also transformed millions of stable, well-paid public service jobs into often precarious employment. What's more, once liberalised, these services of public interest fall victim to the logic of profit maximisation. The consequences are particularly visible in relation to the liberalisation of the energy market, where the transition to green energy is being slowed down by the ruthlessness of the profit diktat.

déi Lénk is committed to a public reappropriation of these services and to democratic, participatory and non-commercial planning that will enable us to meet the challenges of both climate change and social issues. Public control is the only way to guarantee universal access and quality jobs. To the same end, we propose the creation of strong public services

at European level, such as a European railway company. Education and research must also become public services in their own right, and the fruits of research must be common property whose value cannot be monetised.

Alongside this drive to revitalise moribund public services, déi Lénk is campaigning for the reindustrialisation of Europe, particularly in strategic sectors and in sectors producing essential goods. The European Union can no longer afford to be held hostage to random supply chains that are subject to the geopolitical ups and downs of the four corners of the globe. If there is one lesson to be learned from the years of the pandemic, it is this. It is also for this reason, and so as not to leave the development of beneficial new technologies to others, that the EU must work towards relocating the production of essential or strategic products such as medicines, semi-conductors or solar panels.

Against this backdrop, Europe must also reaffirm its position in terms of scientific progress. We need to strengthen university research into virtuous technological progress, that which improves living conditions and preserves the environment. Progress that can be shared with the whole of humanity.

1) déi Lénk wants to break with the logic and practices of liberalising public services and return the management of essential goods and services to public control.

2) In Europe, déi Lénk wants to support a policy of public reappropriation of water and energy supplies, postal and telecommunications services, railways, aviation, waste management, education and research.

3) déi Lénk wants to encourage the creation of public services at European level, particularly in the public transport sector.

4) déi Lénk supports state interventionism in favour of the reindustrialisation of Europe, particularly in strategic sectors (production of medicines, semi-conductors, solar panels, etc.).

8) A progressive economic, monetary and fiscal policy

In response to the financial and economic crisis of 2008, the European Union's political and economic elite reacted by imposing an austerity cure, the harmfulness of which has now been proven. The most heavily indebted Member States were placed under the tutelage of European technocrats who ordered them to fight their deficits at all costs in order to obey the dogma of balanced budgets. As a result, pensions have been slashed, social security in general has deteriorated, public services have been dismantled and large parts of the infrastructure have been sold off. Greece has thus been butchered and its carrion abandoned to the vermin of the extreme right. Other countries, such as Italy, have suffered similar fates. This ruthless austerity, which has prevented governments from investing, is at the root of rising unemployment, job insecurity and inequality, from which we are still suffering today. This austerity cure has accelerated the growth of inequalities.

Given the inability of private financiers over the last thirty years to go beyond their goal of maximum profit to respond to the climate crisis and the loss of biodiversity, and given the inexorable rise in social inequalities, a fundamental revival of the influence of public

authorities and of democratic and participatory planning of the economy is crucial if we are to preserve a liveable environment and put an end to poverty. *déi Lénk* is campaigning for the dogma of austerity to be finally relegated to the well-stocked vat of false good ideas. The notorious Stability Pact, the main tool of neo-liberal coercion, must be transformed into a pact for economic, social and ecological development based on the principle of social justice.

This begins with a redefinition of the role of the European Central Bank, which must become the main instrument of a public investment offensive that is both social and ecological. It must be responsible for supporting Member States in this direction by opening up the possibility of lending them money, without necessarily going through the financial markets. Money must once again become a common good, by removing it from the exclusively commercial logic and allowing it to be managed by elected representatives and not by technocrats. In particular, the ECB should be able to choose securities for refinancing on the basis of ecological and social criteria, and penalise the securities of polluting companies by means of a discount and a higher interest rate on refinancing.

But there is another cancer eating away at the foundations of the Union's solidarity: tax competition. To secure the good graces of the big companies that are supposed to bring jobs and wealth in their wake, the Member States are outbidding each other to set indecent tax rates. In some countries, including Luxembourg, effective tax rates are shamelessly flirting with zero. The result is a lack of revenue for ambitious social and environmental policies. The European Union must abolish the unanimity rule in tax matters, which will enable it to legislate to put an end to tax dumping and combat the insidious tax haven schemes.

To generate the necessary public resources, tax policy must be harmonised upwards. Subjecting multinational companies, and in particular the GAFAs (Google, Amazon, Facebook, Apple), to a verifiable and minimum real tax rate and base in all EU countries should be on the agenda of future European tax policy. The aim should be a common consolidated corporate tax base in Europe, while respecting the specific characteristics of the Member States.

Stricter regulation of financial markets would be the third pillar of an overhaul of economic, monetary and fiscal policy. To avoid the excesses of the recent past, the main insurers and private financial institutions must finally come under public control. In this way, the EU will be able to impose ethical rules and ban speculation in food, living beings, water and land, for example.

*1) **déi Lénk** wants to abolish budgetary austerity measures and replace the Stability Pact with economic, social and ecological development pacts based on solidarity and focused on the fight against social inequalities and climate change.*

*2) **déi Lénk** wants to redefine the role and framework for action of the ECB and EMU central banks in order to support an ambitious social and environmental policy.*

*3) **déi Lénk** wants to introduce a European tax on the rich to finance the investments essential to poverty reduction and environmental and social transitions.*

4) déi Lénk wants to abandon the policy of tax competition between Member States and replace it with upward tax harmonisation, in particular by subjecting multinational companies to a real, verifiable and minimum tax rate and base in all EU countries.

5) déi Lénk wants to introduce a tax on financial transactions in order to finance part of the ecological transformation and effectively combat tax and financial evasion.

6) déi Lénk wants to regulate the financial markets to prevent a new financial crisis and subject the financial markets to strict ethical rules.

9) In-depth reform of the Treaties for greater democracy

At every European election, the European Union's political leaders rediscover the "citizen". It's a term that usefully dissolves the half a billion people living on the Old Continent into a concept with blurred contours and therefore difficult to grasp. It also makes it possible to talk about them in an equally vague way. This famous "citizen", who does not correspond to any tangible reality, should be put back at the centre of the European project, listened to and integrated more into the decision-making process. That's the refrain we hear every five years. Obviously, no one falls for this line of argument, the simplicity of which borders on the crassest brazenness.

The treaties protect the neo-liberal policies of the elites and are not conducive to democracy. There is a need for far-reaching reform, including a people's assembly and a democratic decision-making process. The European Parliament, the EU's only democratically elected institution, is at the same time its weakest. For déi Lénk, it goes without saying that the seat of democratic legitimacy must be strengthened, given the right of legislative initiative, elect the Commission, play a leading role in drawing up the budget and assume control of the Central Bank. It follows that the Commission should act primarily on the basis of Parliament's decisions, while the Council, where the most progressive initiatives are regularly mutilated and rendered meaningless, should lose some of its power. We also believe that the Presidency of the European Commission can only be held by a person democratically elected in the European elections.

When it comes to direct participation, we also have our work cut out for us. If this famous citizen, who is the subject of eloquent abstractions by disconnected Brussels elites, is to become a reality, the workings of the EU will have to change radically. First of all, direct participation must be extended to the drafting of European rules, by giving people the opportunity to express their preferences regarding the major policy directions. At the same time, excessive lobbying must finally be curbed by effective regulation. Excessive lobbying favours the interests of big business and special interest groups to the detriment of the general interest. It allows private and industrial interests to shape laws and regulations to their advantage, compromises the integrity of the democratic process and undermines public confidence in government.

Secondly, through a broad interpretation of the principle of subsidiarity, we need to give autonomy back to the regions and thus bring the Union closer to its citizens. Such an approach obviously implies decentralisation. National parliaments should be systematically consulted before any major decision is taken in the European Council and the Council of

Ministers. We also need to ensure that cross-border cooperation works, because regions are not confined to the limits of a national territory. The Grande Région, which brings together the territories of four different countries, is a perfect example.

At the borders of the Union, countries are rushing to join. But enlargement is based on strict rules that must be respected. No country can claim membership if it flouts the rule of law, the rights of minorities or human rights in general. Consequently, enlargement pledges must insist on this.

1) déi Lénk rejects the neo-liberal orientation of the current fundamental treaties and advocates a reform of the treaties so as to place progress and social justice, as well as environmental protection, at the centre of concerns, while reaffirming popular sovereignty with a strengthening of the democratic decision-making process.

2) déi Lénk affirms the supremacy of the European Parliament and national parliaments as the only institutions with democratic legitimacy.

3) déi Lénk wants to strengthen the direct participation of citizens in drawing up European rules, in particular by reinforcing European citizens' initiatives.

4) déi Lénk wants to combat excessive lobbying effectively and promote the transparency of bodies.

10. Renounce all forms of imperialism

All wars lead to human disaster and must be stopped. Instead of betting on a crazy arms race that consumes huge sums of money, it is essential that the EU strengthens its diplomatic network and commits itself to the peaceful and negotiated settlement of conflicts. The conflict in Ukraine, triggered by Russia's aggression, which is reprehensible in every respect, is a case in point. The fatalism now prevailing in Europe about the human suffering and destruction in Ukraine must be replaced by strong diplomatic initiatives to bring about a ceasefire.

All-out militarisation does not make the planet safer. On the contrary, we must limit military spending to the minimum necessary for a purely defensive military policy and strategy, and work towards a system of collective security in Europe that is independent of NATO and therefore of the United States. We oppose the participation of the European Union in military interventions outside the European Union, unless there is a legitimate UN mandate, and we demand the total denuclearisation of the planet. These demands go hand in hand with a strict ban on arms sales to bellicose countries or governments that do not respect human rights. Diplomacy, humanitarian aid and international solidarity should always take precedence over military spending. Europe's military industry must not profit from the suffering and pain of innocent civilians.

To prevent future wars on a global scale, we must renounce all forms of political, economic and military imperialism and defend human rights and international law throughout the world, without paternalism or double standards. This applies in particular to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, where the EU must finally use its economic and diplomatic clout to bring

about a two-state solution as soon as possible, with recognition of the State of Palestine as the key. Moreover, the two-state solution is not the only one that can be envisaged. We can also imagine a single secular and democratic state, where all the inhabitants would enjoy the same rights, whatever their ethnicity, religion, gender, etc. However, any decision must be taken with the participation and approval of the Palestinian people.

International cooperation, dialogue and recognition of diversity must replace fantasies of hegemony and exploitation. The EU must stop imposing its economic choices on other countries, as it is doing in particular through free trade agreements. The current trade policy is a neo-colonial tool that serves above all the interests of large multinationals. It must be replaced by a cooperative trade policy based on high social and environmental standards. The current debate on duty of care, the obligation to ensure respect for human rights and the environment in production chains, shows the extent to which EU politicians are under the influence of multinationals. In this way, and with the complicity of the EU, the big companies of the global North continue to impose a mode of domination with colonial overtones, which turns the workers of the global South into a workforce that can be exploited at will.

If we want to lay the foundations for a world of solidarity, this mode of exploitation must come to an end. Political power must regain the upper hand over economic power, because for the latter, natural and human resources are nothing more than a means of increasing its wealth and benefiting its shareholders.

1) déi Lénk fights all forms of political, military and economic imperialism and is committed to a pacifist Europe that defends human rights and international law throughout the world, without paternalism or double standards.

2) déi Lénk wants to strengthen the EU's diplomatic machinery and commit itself to the peaceful and negotiated settlement of conflicts.

3) déi Lénk wants to denounce the current ultraliberal free trade agreements, which serve above all the commercial interests of multinationals, and to implement a cooperative trade policy based on high social and environmental standards.

4) déi Lénk wants European companies to be held accountable for violations of human rights, social rights or environmental standards in their production chains.

5) déi Lénk wants to limit military spending to the minimum necessary for a purely defensive policy and to ban arms sales to governments that do not respect human rights or international law.

11) Dismantle Fortress Europe and put an end to inward-looking attitudes

Europe is ageing, and ageing badly. Contrary to what far-right agitators claim, we need immigration. Our borders must therefore remain open, and we must defend the right of asylum, which is an international and humanitarian obligation. We must not give in to the sirens of simplistic rhetoric, and it is alarming that the moderate right, and even some

parties on the left, are beginning to fall into the trap of the far right. Immigration is not a danger to Europe's prosperity, it is a guarantee of it.

As well as combating the causes of involuntary migration, which are poverty, repression, conflict and now climate change, it is vital to dismantle Fortress Europe and put an end to the inward-looking attitude that feeds the worst political instincts. At present, the European Union is on the wrong track. Not only is it treating immigration primarily as a security problem, but it is also acting contrary to human rights. The recent reform of immigration policy is introducing a policy that will inevitably lead to open-air prisons for people, including children, who have committed no crime other than fleeing war, repression or poverty.

The Mediterranean must stop being a vast graveyard and the shame of Europe. We must stop preventing NGO boats from rescuing migrants in distress and redeploy the naval forces of EU countries to help them. The European border guard agency FRONTEX must be replaced by a humanitarian border agency working closely with the European Court of Human Rights and the UN to prevent human rights violations. Instead of cooperating with dictatorial third countries to prevent migration, and thus becoming complicit in crimes against humanity, the EU must instead establish humanitarian corridors and legal immigration schemes. The EU has an obligation under international law to accept refugees from war or political causes. A similar right should also be recognised for economic refugees, who are often also victims of conflict and climate change.

We need a fair distribution of refugees between EU Member States based on solidarity, and to achieve this we need to abrogate the Dublin agreements. Reception and asylum systems must be harmonised upwards, and access to the labour market must be guaranteed. Undocumented workers must also be rapidly regularised after six months' residence. Finally, it is essential to put a stop to forced deportations to countries that are only safe in the imagination of technocrats who have never set foot there.

1) déi Lénk wants to break with the ideology of Fortress Europe and stop treating migration as a security issue.

2) déi Lénk is committed to combating the causes of involuntary migration (poverty, conflict, repression, climate change, etc.), in particular through an ambitious development partnership on an equal footing with the countries of Africa.

3) déi Lénk defends the right to asylum, refugee status and the right to family reunification.

4) déi Lénk wants to abolish the Dublin agreements and replace them with an agreement on the fair and united distribution of refugees between EU countries, while guaranteeing dignified reception conditions throughout the EU.

5) Déi Lénk wants to set up legal and regulated immigration schemes and regularise undocumented workers after six months' residence.

12) Digital services need rules

There is no longer any point in talking about rampant digitisation or digitisation in progress. We are already living in a digitised world. Admittedly, technologies will develop and new horizons will open up, but digitisation is a reality whose modalities alone will fluctuate.

What all the studies show, however, is the existence of a digital divide that is perfectly in line with the social divide. The issues that need to be addressed first and foremost are accessibility and digital education, in order to close this divide that risks reducing the chances of success of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds or even senior citizens. So that everyone can participate fully in the digital society, *déi Lénk* is committed to free basic access to tools, the Internet and digital and telecommunications services.

To ensure effective and secure use of the Internet, enabling users to become informed players rather than passive consumers subjected to an avalanche of *fake news*, we need to double our efforts in the area of digital education. This education must not be confined to the functionalities offered by the tools and services. On the contrary, it must include sections on the social and environmental issues associated with digital technologies, as well as a major section on data protection.

Responsible use that respects workers and the environment is only possible if strict social and environmental criteria are applied to all services offered throughout Europe, regardless of where the service providers are based. Like any market, the digital services market needs rules to prevent abuse and protect consumers.

It goes without saying that this also applies to any new technology. Artificial intelligence, which is already becoming part of the daily lives of many workers and households, holds enormous potential in areas as important as healthcare, for example. But it has also rapidly become the tool of choice for manipulators on all sides. Although neo-liberal advocates shy away from regulation to guarantee the sacrosanct competitiveness of companies in this relatively new field, the harmful potential of AI requires binding rules to ensure that it is used ethically and transparently. AI also raises the thorny issue of liability in the event of damage. The EU must come up with an effective legal framework as soon as possible to solve this problem.

Today, it is the multinationals that govern the digital market. Because they are greedy for profit, their services are expensive and their technologies protected by licences and armies of lawyers. This prevents universal access to the technologies that are so essential today. We need to break up the monopolies and campaign for open technical standards and the use of free software. This will not only enable universal access to digital services and technologies, but also stimulate innovation thanks to open technical standards.

1) déi Lénk wants to guarantee all citizens free basic access to digital and telecommunication tools and services, and calls for more digital education within the EU to enable citizens to be political players and not just consumers.

2) déi Lénk wants to impose social and environmental criteria for all digital services offered on European territory.

3) déi Lénk demands the adoption of ambitious European regulations to govern services and products based on artificial intelligence (AI).

4) déi Lénk wants to break up the monopolies of the digital conglomerates (Google, Amazon, Microsoft, Twitter, Apple and others) and encourage the development and use of free software.

13. Guaranteeing the rights of women and LGBTIQ+ people

The far right has grown stronger in all Member States. Its presence within the EU institutions has become commonplace, as has its openly racist discourse, which targets minorities and in particular refugees and migrants. The far right also represents a danger for women's rights and LGBTIQ+ people. There are plenty of examples to highlight these abuses. In 2020, Poland and Hungary used their right of veto to block a European budget because the payment of funds was conditional, among other things, on the fight against gender discrimination. In 2024, France and Germany watered down the directive against sexual violence because it provided for a reversal of the burden of proof in cases of rape.

At the same time, we are witnessing repeated and increasingly intense attacks on the right to abortion. Of the 27 EU countries, 24 still allow medical staff to refuse an abortion to their patients. Other countries, such as Poland, have considerably tightened the conditions of access. Malta goes even further and only allows abortion under two very specific conditions. Abortion is an increasingly fragile achievement of the feminist struggle. The right to free access to abortion should therefore be enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Other progressive ideas, such as the recognition of femicide as extreme gender-based violence against women, are fiercely opposed. In the Grand Duchy, déi Lénk is the only political movement campaigning for femicide to be recognised and enshrined in the Criminal Code. Belgium and Spain have already legislated in this direction, while the rest of Europe is clearly lagging behind. The same applies to the reception and protection of asylum seekers who are victims of gender-based violence and persecution. Yet the signatories of the Istanbul Convention are committed to establishing categorical protection for the refugees concerned. What's more, the reception arrangements do not take account of the reality of gender-based violence. The reception structures do not provide special protection for women and LGBTIQ+ people to prevent such violence.

We also note that violence against LGBTQ+ people is on the rise in Europe. The reactionary governments in power in some European countries are doing nothing to prevent this violence and are pursuing policies that stigmatise LGBTIQ+ people. For example, same-sex marriage is only permitted in 16 EU countries, and many countries still refuse to allow same-sex parenting. Access to therapies and medical interventions with a view to self-determination in terms of gender identity, sexual orientation and sex identity is not guaranteed throughout the EU. It is clear that women and LGBTIQ+ people still suffer considerable discrimination and that countries often fail to honour their international commitments to provide greater protection for women and LGBTIQ+ people.

déi Lénk is campaigning for a European Union that guarantees gender equality. Women's right to self-determination must not be undermined by any political, cultural or religious authority.

1) déi Lénk wants to make abortion a fundamental right to be enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union.

2) déi Lénk is committed to the adoption of common legislation to combat femicide, in line with the package of measures and approaches of the European Institute for Gender Equality.

3) déi Lénk wants to strengthen legislative and other measures to give effect to the provisions of the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

4) déi Lénk demands that asylum seekers who are victims of gender-based violence be granted refugee status in cases where it has been established that the fear of persecution is based on one or more of these grounds.

5) déi Lénk wants to authorise same-sex marriage in all European countries and to guarantee the right to do so by enshrining it in the European Charter of Fundamental Rights.

6) déi Lénk wants to guarantee the right to self-determination in matters of gender identity, sexual health and reproductive rights, to ban gender and sexual orientation conversion therapies and to have de facto co-parenthood recognised in all Member States of the European Union.

7) déi Lénk encourages the adoption of a European directive against all discrimination based on social class, religious beliefs, gender, sexual orientation and gender identity or expression.

8) déi Lénk wants to increase funding for pharmaceutical and medical research adapted to the needs of women and LGBTQIA+ people.