

Putting
people, jobs and fairness
at the
heart *of*
Europe

Labour's European Election Manifesto 2009

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FOREWORD BY EAMON GILMORE

These are the most important European elections Ireland has ever had.

Europe is facing its worst economic crisis since the 1930s. More than 19 million Europeans are now unemployed, and the number is rising. In February 2009 alone, half a million Europeans lost their jobs.

This crisis has created clear political dividing lines in Europe.

Between those whose instinct is to do everything possible to save jobs, and those who are obsessed with accounting exercises.

Between those who want to regulate financial markets to make sure this never happens again, and those who want to get back to business as usual.

Between those who want a social Europe, and those who want to erode rights and living standards.

Labour, together with our sister parties in the Party of European Socialists (PES), is campaigning on a platform that is about jobs and fairness. Even before the collapse of Lehman Brothers, the PES was to the forefront in advancing proposals for better regulation of global finance. The number one priority for the European Labour movement in these elections is to safeguard jobs, create new ones, and promote smart, environmentally friendly growth.

Ireland's future depends crucially on what happens in Europe. For all that our economic problems have been caused by Fianna Fáil's misgovernment, getting out of the economic crisis will depend too on what happens in Europe. Growth in Europe will help to drive growth and jobs in Ireland. And European action can assist Irish people to get back to work as quickly as possible.

This is a global crisis in global capitalism. It demands a response at European level, where countries can come together, because this crisis will not be solved by any one country acting alone.

A strong progressive voice in the European parliament is vital. A strong PES will campaign in Europe for greater levels of European investment, a more co-ordinated European approach to the crisis, and direct European action to assist in re-training and skills initiatives.

Please give your No. 1 Vote to Labour's candidates on 5th June.

EAMON GILMORE TD

Leader of the Labour Party

WHY DOES IT MATTER WHO WE ELECT TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT?

It matters a lot. As the credit crunch has shown, we live in a joined up world, where the problems that face us have to be dealt with in a joined-up way. Working through the European Union, we can tackle the big issues that face our country, in a way that we simply cannot do acting alone.

But it won't happen by accident. If we want the European Union to deal with the issues that affect our lives, then we must send people to European Parliament who will make those issues a priority. The European Parliament will appoint the new Commission President and the entire Commission in November. Our elected representatives in the European Parliament play a vital role in setting the priorities of the EU. The conservative, right-wing parties in Europe will work to ensure greater deregulation and more of the neo-liberal policies that created the global crisis. Labour in Europe, acting with our sister parties in the PES, will work to deal with the issues that affect all of us in our daily lives, and that will affect the lives of our children and grandchildren.

This manifesto sets out the priorities that will drive Labour in Europe for the next five years, including:

Tackling the Jobs Crisis and Reforming Financial Markets

Building a Social Europe

Transforming Europe into the leading global force against climate change

Promoting equality and justice in Europe

Enhancing Europe's role as a partner for peace, security and development.

Labour wants a progressive Europe, working in the interests of the people of Europe. We will rigorously pursue that objective in the European Parliament, and our vote to ratify the next European Commission will depend on whether they are also committed to pursuing that objective.

1. TACKLING THE JOBS CRISIS

The number one priority for Labour in Europe is to safeguard jobs, create new ones, and promote smart, environmentally sustainable growth.

Europe is facing its worst economic crisis since the 1930s. The scale of the challenge is so great, that Europe must act together to overcome it. The more quickly Europe's economy recovers, the more quickly Ireland can begin to recover from the economic chaos created by Fianna Fáil.

Already, the euro has played a key role in protecting European economies in the middle of the global financial crisis. But more must be done now to simultaneously reform financial markets, counteract the recession and relaunch the economy to create new growth and jobs.

Fighting climate change is a key part of our economic strategy. The threat of catastrophic climate change is growing: if we do not act now, it will further damage the planet and directly affect our lives. At the same time, fighting climate change can transform the European economy and create new smart, environmentally sustainable growth, jobs and prosperity for everyone in Europe.

This smart, eco-growth will be much easier to achieve if we work together.

In Ireland, and across Europe, how people get through the crisis, and the speed of our recovery, will depend on skills. It is imperative that our citizens – of all ages – have the opportunity to develop their skills, to help them find new and better jobs, as well as being able to work and study abroad. Equally, the speed at which new jobs can be created in new sectors depends on people having the necessary skills. We believe European policy can support action at local and national level to enhance educational and re-skilling opportunities.

Our economies are more interdependent than ever. Only a stronger, bolder and better coordinated European and global recovery effort will lift us out of recession. By acting together in Europe and worldwide, we can forge a stronger path to recovery. By choosing the right priorities for action, we can help engineer a recovery that would benefit everyone. We should also treat this crisis as an opportunity to bring lasting transformational change for a fair society. Therefore, we call for a strengthened European Economic Recovery Plan, based on a coordinated response to the recession and a longer-term strategy for smart, environmentally sustainable growth and jobs.

The European budget is central to these efforts. It should be refocused on achieving smart, environmentally friendly growth, and meeting future challenges. It should serve to improve living standards and foster social cohesion and growth throughout Europe, as well as supporting convergence of the least-developed EU regions.

A European strategy for smart eco-growth and jobs:

Labour in Europe is proposing a series of measures to promote smart, environmentally sustainable growth and job creation. This would build upon the European Union's existing strategies to make Europe into the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. The European Union institutions and the EU budget should be central to this strategy. EU-funded investment projects should be swiftly implemented to help achieve these goals.

- Developing the smart, low-carbon economy in Ireland and in Europe demands far greater availability of broadband across the continent. Multi-billion investments in developing networks are needed throughout Europe. Labour in Europe is proposing greater European investment in broadband infrastructure. The European Investment Bank is already involved in the financing of energy as well as telecoms infrastructure and could step up its commitment. Greater use of European Structural Funds should also be considered. In Ireland, a new Eircom, operating as a public interest company should be linked into this strategy.
- Labour in Europe is proposing a European initiative to expand the use of green energy and tackle climate change. Effective use of wind energy, for example, requires new, cross-border grids, the development of which should be supported by Europe. Energy efficiency is one of the best ways to lower people's fuel bills and create new jobs, for example in the building-insulation sector. We propose active cooperation between the EU, and national and local authorities to help people cope with rising fuel prices by reducing their energy consumption, funding energy efficiency improvements in homes, and ensuring that energy companies' pricing and customer policies are fair and responsible.
- Labour in Europe is proposing a European Pact for the Future of Employment. Advantage should be taken of the possibilities offered by the European Social Fund for integrating the unemployed into the labour market and for training workers. In a global economy, investments in education are fundamental for growth and creating better-paid and better-quality jobs. We propose to fund a Skills Programme through the current EU budget, to train workers across Europe for, amongst other things, the eco-jobs of the future, such as in the renewable energy sector. We will also work towards full and equal access to lifelong learning, with special attention paid to 'second-chance' education and training for those who have not completed their formal education. This can be supported by European, national and regional policies. We propose to expand funding, within the current European budget, for education and training exchanges to include, for example, apprentices and older people, building on the success of the ERASMUS programme, and giving as many young people as possible the chance to study abroad. Mobility should be the rule not the exception. Every young European should have the chance to enjoy it.
- The EU's Internal Market should be completed. The Better Regulation Programme which aims to reduce the red tape facing businesses should be accelerated - to generate more European trade and jobs, based on high environmental and social standards. We should simplify the legal framework for SMEs through a statute for European Private Companies, together with easier access to the Internal Market and to financial and innovation resources.

- The capital base and credit volumes of the European Investment Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development should be increased and the granting of credits simplified for SMEs. Ireland should access more of the extra €30 billion European Investment Bank funding for firms, use the new flexibility in EU state aid rules to support jobs, opt-in to the new EU rules cutting VAT temporarily on the labour costs of home renovations, and push for Eurobonds to ensure Ireland isn't penalised for necessary borrowing.
- We propose to support businesses to anticipate changes caused by climate change and technological shifts – thereby safeguarding existing jobs and creating new jobs – while also helping workers retrain if they lose their jobs because of these changes. This can be done, in particular, through the reformed Globalisation Adjustment Fund.
- We will also support the development of the social economy in Europe – which, for example, currently employs over 5 million people in cooperatives – by introducing a European statute for associations, mutual societies and foundations.
- We will support Irish agriculture and the long-term development of the rural economy, with an emphasis on sustainable tourism. The Lisbon Treaty provides for full co-decision powers for the European Parliament in respect of the CAP. While CAP funding is guaranteed until 2013, it is important that Ireland adopt a forward looking perspective on the future of agriculture, and position the sector to ensure it maintains competitive advantage in the post-2013 environment.
- The EU can play a role in transforming transport in Europe into the most efficient, affordable and 'clean' transport for people and businesses in the world. This includes building a more competitive and affordable high-speed rail network between major cities and regions, and focusing on making it easier to switch between rail and other types of transport; creating an integrated airspace to shorten flying times by allowing aircraft to take more direct routes; making maritime and inland waterway transport cleaner, more efficient and safer for workers and passengers; and transforming our city transport systems.

NEVER AGAIN: Reforming the financial markets

The turmoil in the financial markets revealed the true importance of European cooperation to prevent a collapse of the banking system and stabilise the markets. Coordinated action in the EU has helped to protect people's jobs, savings, pensions and homes. But the financial crisis has revealed deep-seated flaws in the market system that need to be tackled to prevent such crises happening again. We need reform in Ireland, but we also need reform at European level.

- Building on talks that have already taken place in the EU and at global level, Labour in Europe is committed to reform of financial markets. Regulation should cover all financial players. We need a new standard for transparency and disclosure. There should be rigorous capital requirements for all financial players, and limits on excessive borrowing and bad loans to prevent excessive risk-taking and debt. Limits are also needed on top executive pay and bonuses, notably so that earnings reflect losses as well as profits.
- New rules are needed to prevent conflicts of interest. We must ensure that workers have full rights to information and consultation during all takeovers and that employees paying into pension funds know where and how their money is being invested. Ireland must implement long-standing EU rules designed to protect workers' pensions in the event of the insolvency of their employer.
- The European system of supervision must also be further improved. Financial institutions must state all risks on their balance sheets. Detrimental short-selling made the crisis worse and should be curbed by regulatory authorities. Hedge funds and private equity funds must be monitored and regulated more effectively. The key issues are obligations to disclose asset and regulatory structures, more stringent requirements to inform investors about risks, the limitation of excess debt financing and restrictions on investments.
- The European Union should take strong action to deal with tax havens, tax avoidance scams and tax evasion, and step up the fight against money laundering in the European Union and globally so that everyone pays their fair share of tax to the countries in which they operate.
- Europe should take a lead in working towards reform of the global financial architecture in order to prevent the recurrence of a financial crisis and to make the power of financial institutions subject to democratic scrutiny.
- Labour will continue to press the Fianna Fáil government to implement in full EU rules designed to prevent money-laundering and white collar crime.

2. JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS – A NEW SOCIAL EUROPE

No matter who we are, or where we were born, people in Europe share the same basic values about the kind of society we want to live in: a safer Europe, with high living standards, decent and stable work, and a safe and clean environment.

The European Union has been a progressive force in Irish life for more than 30 years, from equal rights at work for men and women, to decent employment standards, to environmental protection and laws that forbid unfair discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.

However, the global recession, and emerging global challenges, are deepening existing inequalities in our societies, and creating new ones. People across Europe are facing similar challenges, such as unemployment, changes in the labour market, an aging population and work-life balance.

We must tackle these challenges together, so that we can ensure that economic recovery and a fair, strong society go hand in hand.

- One step towards a stronger social Europe would be the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, and its legally-binding Charter of Fundamental rights, by all member states. The Lisbon Treaty reaffirms respect for human dignity and human rights, equality, non-discrimination, justice and solidarity as the basic values of the Union. It redefines the EU's core aims to include social progress, social inclusion, social justice, social protection, the social market economy, inter-generational solidarity, and children's rights; and requires social objectives to be taken into account in the definition and implementation of all policies.
- Labour in Europe will seek agreement on a European Social Progress Pact, with goals and standards for national social, health and education policy to contribute to the fight against poverty and as well as Europe's continued social and economic development. We will do this in partnership with social NGOs and people experiencing poverty directly. We favour needs-based social welfare benefits for all those who are retired, homeless, unemployed or unable to work, to guarantee a life of dignity. We support targeted policies to support those most affected by the economic crisis.
- We propose to include a social progress clause in every piece of EU law, and to take into account social and environmental impact assessments when developing new laws. The process of liberalisation must be assessed, particularly in the context of the Lisbon Agenda, which was put in place to open up the single market, and also to forward the agenda of decent work and pay, and workplace equality. We propose that the EU carries out a social audit of its environmental and energy policies to develop measures to prevent these policies hitting the poorest hardest.
- We will continue to work for a European framework for public services, guaranteeing universal and equal access for citizens, quality, local autonomy and transparency in public services, maintaining their integrity as defined at national level, so that European competition and business rules do not run counter to citizens' rights, particularly in the field of social services. We therefore very much welcome the new legal base contained in the Lisbon Treaty, allowing the adoption of such a framework, as well as the new Public Services Protocol contained in the Treaty.

- We will continue to support the role played by state aid in fostering economic development and employment, particularly in peripheral and underdeveloped areas and in areas suffering high levels of unemployment. We believe the social and environmental criteria for awarding public contracts under European law should be extended and strengthened.
- Taxation of companies is the exclusive responsibility of each member state. Ireland has a veto in this area at the European level, and will retain that veto even if the Lisbon Treaty is ratified. The Labour Party will defend Ireland's low 12.5% company tax rate, which we introduced when we were in Government in the 1990s.
- We will act to prevent the exploitation of workers and defend their right to collective bargaining. A number of recent European Court judgements such as Viking, Laval, Ruffert and Luxembourg, have created uncertainty about workers' rights and collective agreements. A revision of the 1996 Posting of Workers directive is essential, as are amendments to Irish labour law to avoid a race to the bottom. We want to develop a framework for cross-border collective bargaining and collective agreements. Together with the social partners we will continue to examine the impact of these judgements to ensure that rights are not undermined. In this regard we welcome the provisions of the Lisbon Treaty which would enable the EU to accede to the European Convention on Human Rights, which would make the Charter of Fundamental Rights legally binding, and the Treaty's horizontal social clause which would require that in defining and implementing all policies, the EU takes social objectives such as the promotion of a high level of employment, adequate social protection and the fight against social exclusion into consideration.
- We support the development of policies based on the concept of flexicurity, i.e. the promotion of employment security through investment in the education and skills of employees, better protection of income after redundancy, and active policy to ensure rapid re-employment after a person loses their job. We will work to promote decent working time, meeting health and safety standards, and a fair work-life balance, in line with the European Parliament's position on the revision of the Working Time Directive.
- We will propose to strengthen workers' rights to information and consultation – a vital element of a more social Europe and a precondition for decent work. We want to foster greater social dialogue between unions and employers and extend it to more sectors.
- We welcome the adoption of EU rules protecting temporary agency workers. We want to see full implementation in Ireland of EU laws protecting the rights of workers on fixed-term contracts, including those in the public service.
- We will propose to develop an EU strategy on children's rights to help eradicate child poverty and guarantee access to education, including pre-school child care. In this regard we particularly welcome the enhanced priority afforded to children's rights by the Lisbon Treaty. We will also continue to press for the activation in Ireland of a hotline for missing children, as proposed by the EU in 2007.
- We propose to establish a European Charter for Internships, to give young people seeking work experience better rights and ensure they benefit from a good start to their working lives.
- We will continue to champion consumer rights following our success in securing safer food and cheaper travel and phone calls. We propose to strengthen individual and collective consumers'

rights, and ensure these are properly enforced in the EU. We will demand the full application of EU laws protecting the rights of air passengers and the adoption of similar EU laws covering coach, rail, and sea transport. And we want more effective action against misleading advertising by business directory companies.

- We propose setting EU targets for providing care for the elderly, modelled on those already in place for child care, in light of our ageing population and the need to reach the goals of full employment and gender equality. We will continue to work for an EU active ageing strategy, including measures to increase healthy life years and demand the full involvement of older people and organisations working on their behalf in EU policy-making affecting them.
- We will campaign to ensure disability is mainstreamed into all areas of EU activity and seek to improve EU support for the de-institutionalisation of people with disabilities. We welcome the role played by the EU in the negotiation of the UN Convention on the Rights for People with Disabilities and want Ireland and all outstanding Member States to ratify this Convention and the adoption of the Council decision enabling the European Union to ratify it also, without further delay.
- We support the rapid adoption of proposed European legislation tackling discrimination in the provision of services and goods to people with disabilities and the full implementation in Ireland of European legislation tackling discrimination against people with disabilities in the workplace. We will seek revision of European legislation on the application of social security schemes to workers and their families moving between EU Member States (Regulation 1408/71) so as to facilitate the rights of people with disabilities to qualify for 'personal assistants' when they exercise their right to free movement.
- We support European action on issues such as tackling health inequalities, rare diseases, pandemic flu preparedness, care-related infections and cancer screening, while reaffirming health as a responsibility of national governments. We welcome the new provisions of the Lisbon Treaty which will enable the European Union to play a bigger role in improving health services in cross-border regions, a role which Labour sees as of particular benefit in the border counties in Ireland, and on mental health.
- The European Court of Justice has delivered rulings on the question of cross-border health care. These rulings however are not sufficient to ensure the legal safety necessary for the mobility of patients and professionals. Therefore, we believe that the adoption of an EU legislative initiative for health care is necessary. In such an instrument, the EU must ensure a high level of health protection and equal access to health care services for all, as recognised in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Mobility of patients and professionals has to be ensured in compliance with the values and fundamental principles of universality, solidarity, equal access, quality, safety and durability, and the capacity of the Member States to control their health systems.

Reform of the European Union

- Labour supports the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. We will seek guarantees from Government on key issues that arose in the referendum campaign, before endorsing a YES vote in a second referendum.
- Labour believes that the European Union needs to be reformed, to make it more democratic, and more responsive to the needs of Europe's citizens. That is why we support the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty. We believe, in particular, that the Charter of Fundamental Rights is an important advance in the development of the European Union.
- Labour will insist that members of the Dáil have a say in who Ireland's next European commissioner should be, and that the candidate must be ratified by the Dáil. We require that the nominee be committed to social and economic reform and pursue an agenda of jobs and justice. We support the creation of a commissioner with overarching responsibility for job creation and retention.
- In the European Parliament Labour MEPs will only vote for a Commission President who is also committed to an agenda promoting social and economic reform; jobs and justice.
- We support the creation of a commissioner with overall responsibility for pursuing equality in all areas of EU policy and law making.
- Labour in the European Parliament has worked to ensure that the new Parliament, elected in June, will be subject to a new transparent regime of salaries and allowances for MEPs. Labour's representative in the European Parliament has already put this information on his website.
- We will ensure that democracy, transparency and accountability are cornerstones of all reforms of the European institutions. We propose to strengthen transparency by obliging all lobbyists and lobby agencies to register themselves, their clients, and their activities, including all contacts with elected representatives, as well as with civil servants and other officials.
- We will ensure that EU legislation respects citizens' rights as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. We will strengthen anti-discrimination legislation to ensure equal treatment on grounds of gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. We fully support the adoption of the draft directive tackling discrimination in the provision of goods and services as proposed by the European Commission in 2008, and will continue to campaign for the full implementation of EU anti-discrimination laws in Ireland.
- We support equal treatment for all EU citizens, without discrimination, when they move around the Union by moving towards recognition in all EU countries of marriages, partnerships and parental rights legally recognised in one of the Member States.
- We advocate giving regions and local authorities a greater role in European affairs, reflecting their growing role in implementing European policies and promoting discussion of European questions

at the sub-national level. We support the recognition and fostering of Europe's cultural and linguistic diversity, as one of its richest assets and a key part of its identity.

3. TRANSFORMING EUROPE INTO A REAL FORCE AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

Global warming is the kind of problem the European Union exists to solve: it transcends borders, it threatens our common future, and it can only be solved by collective action. The need for a world leader in the fight against climate change has never been more urgent. Through its market of 490 million people, and its diplomatic power, the European Union can achieve far more in December's international climate change negotiations than each nation working alone.

Breaking our dependence on imported fossil fuels is essential if we are to meet the challenge of global warming, and to protect our economy from high energy prices. Ireland could be a world leader in renewable energy, but we need to be part of a European grid, with access to a large energy market.

We have to act now, and together, if we are to secure our future.

- Labour in Europe will advocate that the EU takes the lead in international negotiations to get agreement on at least a 30% global target for emission reductions by 2020 at the UN Copenhagen summit in December. All developed and emerging economies should sign up to this. We are committed to a global approach based on solidarity.
- We propose to increase EU support for developing countries to fight as well as adapt to climate change. The EU should increase technology transfers to ensure that these countries can fight poverty and develop economically without worsening global warming. We must also take steps to avoid the risk that energy intensive industries will move to other parts of the world where the climate change requirements are less strict.
- We propose that the EU should take the lead in establishing a Global Energy and Development Forum, bringing all nations together to define a long-term vision for energy and the sustainable development of the planet.
- We propose to introduce a comprehensive EU climate directive that would ensure that targets and actions in all those sectors not already covered by existing law – energy, agriculture, food, building and transport – are combined to enable the EU to reach its overall emission targets. All other climate legislation should also be adapted to meet the 30% emissions reduction target.
- We support the development of a European Common Energy Policy based on sustainability, energy security and independence, diversity of energy sources and solidarity between Member States in the event of energy crises.
- We support a modern Common Agricultural Policy that promotes comprehensive rural development and values the fundamental role of farmers. We recognise the role of agriculture in ensuring food quality and security of supply, maintaining economic activity and employment in rural areas, protecting the environment and preserving the landscape, and protecting animal welfare and plant health.

- We welcome the enhanced decision-making role for the European Parliament over European fisheries policy, as well as the establishment of Regional Advisory Councils involving local communities in the areas of fisheries, as proposed by the Lisbon Treaty. Our unique marine sector must be supported and promoted, especially during a period where it faces major challenges due to serious neglect over the past ten years. We believe that, if properly managed, Ireland's sea fisheries have the potential to be both profitable and sustainable in the long-term.
- We support the revision of the Biofuels Directive to ensure that the lowering of transport emissions through biofuels is not at the expense of food production, environmental protection or biodiversity.
- We propose that the monitoring of existing and new nuclear power plants should be better coordinated at the European level, due to the threats posed by existing plants like Sellafield and the importance of nuclear safety for all European countries. We will support the revision and insertion of a 'sunset' clause into the Euratom Treaty.
- We will continue to press for high environmental standards in Ireland by supporting the full implementation of EU environmental laws, particularly those concerning the Aarhus Convention, environmental impact assessments, environmental liability, landfills, urban waste water treatment, waste, and water quality, all of which have been the subject of unnecessary legal delays by the Government over the past two years. We will urge the Commission to come forward with proposals for a biowaste directive and for a revision of the Energy Performance of Buildings directive.

4. PROMOTING JUSTICE IN IRELAND AND EUROPE

The European Union is far more than an economic union: it is a community of values. The EU is a powerful engine of progressive social change, and the reason why Europeans' rights to equality, democracy, and freedom are protected from Galway Bay to the Black Sea.

However, despite significant progress, there is still more to do to ensure the equal treatment and dignity of those who live and work in Europe. Women in Ireland still earn an average of 17% less than men for the same work, and 15% less across the EU; work-life balance for parents is still uneven across Europe; and there are still too few women in politics.

We can do more too to address the common challenge of migration, and to enact real reforms to ensure integration, fight illegal migration, illegal work and human trafficking, and work to create a better life for people in poorer countries outside Europe.

Together we can build a fairer society, not just for ourselves, but for all who live and work in Europe.

- Labour in Europe will work to create a European Women's Rights Charter to improve women's rights and opportunities and to promote mechanisms to achieve gender equality in all aspects of social, economic and political life.
- We will work to introduce improved parental leave rights for men and women across Europe up to the highest standards in Europe.
- We will campaign for equal political representation of women and men in all decision-making bodies at European level. We will campaign for a gender-equal European Commission and a gender-equal European Parliament, and will call for the creation of a European Commissioner for Gender Equality.
- We will work to support parents so that they can balance their caring responsibilities with their professional responsibilities. To support this goal, we propose that Member States achieve the existing EU target of 33% child care coverage for 0-3 year olds and 90% coverage for children from 3-school age, and adopt complementary EU qualitative targets for child care.
- Lead the fight to close the gender pay gap, which is vital to improve living standards, fight poverty and increase economic growth.
- We propose to step up European efforts to eradicate human trafficking and sexual exploitation through closer police cooperation, and particularly welcome the new provisions in the Lisbon Treaty on these problems.
- We will support the EU and its Member States in their efforts to stop domestic and gender-specific violence, including that perpetrated against women of ethnic minorities, through all

appropriate EU programmes and funds.

- The EU's Daphne programme provides funds to NGOs involved in helping the victims of physical, sexual and psychological violence such as children, young people and women. With our allies in the Socialist Group, Labour in Europe succeeded in preventing the Commission from merging the Daphne programme with an anti-drugs programme and achieved a 50% increase in funding for the Daphne III programme from 2007 to 2013.
- We support the establishment of common standards for legal migration into the European Union, while fully respecting Member States' competences in this field.
- We will work to establish a European Charter for the Integration of Migrants, based on equal rights and responsibilities and mutual respect, which should be coordinated closely with policies governing the admission of migrants. We want an integration policy that establishes an ongoing process to achieve inclusive citizenship and representation, as well as rights and duties for all citizens.
- We will work to improve European efforts to combat illegal migration through a common External Border Control Policy, improved cooperation to fight human trafficking by criminal networks, and partnership agreements with third countries.
- We commit to strengthening cooperation with third countries (including on readmission procedures) in order to manage migration more effectively and more humanely, while promoting the economic and social development of those countries. We propose to deepen existing mechanisms, and create new ones, to address the consequences for developing countries of the loss of skilled workers in key sectors due to migration into the EU.
- We support the further development of the Common European Asylum System, based on fair asylum rules for those fleeing persecution and on international human rights rules and burden-sharing amongst EU Member States. European cooperation is essential for an effective migration policy. This can only be achieved with a strong progressive majority in Europe.

5. ENHANCING EUROPE'S ROLE AS A FORCE FOR PEACE, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT

The EU should be a frontrunner in advancing peace and sustainable social and economic development worldwide. We believe that Europe needs a stronger common voice in the world to shape a better future for our citizens and the planet. We must work together for peace and partnership, and to eradicate poverty, in solidarity with people across the world.

Europe is already an active global player, but we must increase our influence and impact by coordinating our positions and speaking as much as possible with a single voice. Strengthening the role of the EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy will be an important step forward. Today's global governance institutions have proved themselves to be ill-adapted to new global challenges. Therefore, we must take the lead in reforming global governance – in partnership with the new Democratic Party administration in the US – on the basis of a strengthened cooperative and multilateral approach.

A new, progressive European agenda is essential to enhance the EU's role in promoting peace, security and development, for the sake of our own future development and security as well as solidarity with other countries and peoples.

- Labour in Europe will propose that European Union must step up its conflict-resolution, peacekeeping, and humanitarian efforts in crisis zones, and develop capacities to assist countries after civil or environmental crises. We must remove the root causes of conflict and terrorism in the world. Development policy towards poor, developing countries must be targeted, innovative and based on the real needs and the involvement of people at grassroots level. It should support the important role of women in development for example by extending access to microcredit schemes.
- We propose to strengthen police cooperation in combating drug trafficking, crime and terrorism. Fighting against terrorism should be a top priority and needs to be further strengthened as an EU objective, within the rule of law and without compromising fundamental freedoms. We will continue to promote a common European strategy against terrorism and support for the EU Special Representative.
- Actions to counter terrorism have to be a priority for Europe and the cooperation of all member states security forces. As we know from our experience in Ireland we will be most successful when we seek to win the hearts and minds of those who are likely to become involved in such activity, either directly or indirectly. The notorious 'extraordinary rendition' that denied completely innocent people of their human rights, and subjected them to torture, must never happen again. Such actions undermine the basis of the decent society we are trying to create. In the European parliament we will continue to press for the implementation of the recommendations of the European Parliament inquiry into the CIA extraordinary renditions in Europe. Many of those recommendations relate to Ireland's government and its collusive role in that notorious programme, as confirmed by the Irish Commission on Human Rights, and Amnesty International.

- We support the implementation in Ireland and in all Member States and at EU level of the recommendations of the European Parliament's Committee of Inquiry into extraordinary rendition.
- We propose to ensure that the EU establishes coherent disaster prevention tools.
- We propose to step up European efforts to support international disarmament, including strengthening international agreements on arms control and non-proliferation, and making the EU Code of Conduct on weapons exports more restrictive and transparent. We want a world without nuclear weapons. To that end, we will ensure that the EU takes a lead role in the Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 2010.
- Labour in Europe supports a 'two-state' solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It is more vital than ever for the European Union to engage actively in making it possible for the parties to the conflict in the region to engage in real negotiations towards that end. While continuing to provide humanitarian and development aid to Palestinians, Europe must insist that as a first step that Israeli Settlements be stopped, the siege on Gaza lifted, and house demolitions in East Jerusalem and elsewhere by Israel must cease. All factions of the Palestinian elected representatives must accept the conditions of the Quartet of the UNO, Europe, Russia and USA as a basis of political progress.
- We also fully support the independent inquiry by the Geneva Council for Human Rights into the prima facie evidence of breaches of the Geneva Convention during the recent Israeli assault against Gaza, in which over 1000 civilians were killed. For this inquiry to satisfactorily complete its work, all European Member States must pro-actively support it, in particular those such as Ireland, which claims to support it but has not done so to date.
- We propose that the EU actively promotes an 'Alliance of Civilisations' through the UN, strengthening dialogue and partnership between peoples and cultures as a means to enhance world peace and security.
- We will reaffirm Ireland's policy of military neutrality, which is fully compatible with its membership of the EU.
- We will advocate for the reform of the United Nations, particularly the UN Security Council, as well as the revision of the decision-making process, mandate and functioning of the World Trade Organisation, the World Bank and the regional banks, and the International Monetary Fund. The allocation of voting rights in the IMF must better reflect the interests of developing countries, particularly the poorest amongst them.
- We will continue to promote a moratorium in the application of the death penalty in the United Nations, as an interim objective in the campaign to achieve the global abolition of the death penalty.
- We support the ongoing negotiations with Turkey and other European states with a view to eventual membership of the Union. These negotiations must take place in the context of compliance with and a capacity to implement European Union economic, legal, and human rights

obligations. The Copenhagen Criteria, on which membership of all applicants is based, would become legally enforceable under the Lisbon Treaty.

- We welcome membership talks with Croatia and support the start of EU membership negotiations with all other Western Balkans countries, once all the criteria have been met. We believe that the EU should respect the fundamental rights of all peoples as well as supporting the multicultural and multi-religious nature of European societies.
- We will continue to build a strong transatlantic partnership with the new US Democratic Party leadership.
- We support deeper EU relations with China, encouraging improved human rights, and social and environmental standards, alongside a deepening of trade relations. We strongly support closer ties with India as an emerging global actor, based on mutual respect and open dialogue. We will work to fully implement and consolidate the Africa-EU Strategy to strengthen relations, solve common challenges, conclude fair Economic Partnership Agreements, and support the long-term development of Africa.
- We will use this Parliamentary term to push for efforts to reach the United Nations Millennium Goals by 2015. We propose to put value-based and coherent development goals at the heart of EU policies on aid, trade and the reform of global governance. New, innovative sources of financing are needed in addition to delivering existing European aid commitments – notably, attributing at least 0.7% of Gross National Income to development policy – in a more coordinated, efficient and targeted way. We support decentralised cooperation in European development policy, including the contribution that can be made by Europe’s local authorities. We will support the establishment of a European Voluntary Humanitarian Aid Corps, as proposed by the Lisbon Treaty. We will continue to campaign against child labour and high maternal mortality rates in developing countries.
- We will advocate that the EU supports the multilateral trading system, to the benefit of developing countries in the WTO Doha Development Round, and to ensure a fairer domestic distribution of the benefits of trade opening, as well as guaranteeing better social and environmental standards.
- We will work to address the global food crisis by working to prevent further speculation on food prices, and to promote food security by developing a new generation of aid and agricultural production policies.
- We will work to ensure that all EU trade agreements include appropriate, enforceable human, environmental and social rights clauses and that all trade agreements with developing countries - such as Economic Partnership Agreements - serve as real tools for the economic and social development of the countries and regions concerned.
- We will work to promote the expansion of fair trade goods. Promoting and raising awareness of fair trade measures will encourage sustainable development and help to guarantee decent wages for those in the developing world, contributing to improving the lives of millions of people worldwide.

- We will make decent work a global objective to which all countries as well as international institutions and organisations are committed. This new global agenda must uphold core labour standards as well as promoting decent working conditions, adequate wages, social security and strengthened social dialogue.

