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PARTY OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS
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EQUAL SOCIETIES:

For fair and progressive asylum and migration policies that work for all

Migration represents an opportunity as well as a challenge for the European Union, but opportunities cannot be effectively seized and challenges adequately faced unless the European Union is united in its approach. Root causes that are forcing people to leave their countries must be tackled, effective legal pathways need to be established and irregular migration needs to be addressed. The fight against human smuggling and trafficking should be reinforced and we must step up the efforts and investments in the integration of those refugees and other migrants who have the right to stay. Migration is a global issue that requires a multilateral and multilevel approach. We need to foster a positive vision on migration.

The PES is making a stand to govern migration and **turn disorderly migration into orderly migration.**

Few topics are as divisive today as migration. But when migration is well managed, we can make it work for all. As Socialists and Democrats we promote progressive policies on asylum and migration, which protect human lives, human rights and help those fleeing from violence and unbearable living conditions alike. We address the root causes pushing people to leave their home countries, such as violation of human rights, inequality, poverty, a lack of future perspectives, conflict and climate change. We support pathways for legal and managed migration, we address irregular migration and we firmly promote effective integration policies. Unilateralism and inflammatory rhetoric are not the answer to manage migration.

The PES stands for a shared response to a shared challenge and opportunity.

Therefore, when managing migration, we have to uphold our core values. The way we deal with this will affect, on the one hand, people's right to move and lead a decent life, and on the other hand, the stability, security and cohesion of the host communities. It is therefore crucial that **migration and integration policies must be grounded first and foremost in humanity and solidarity with refugees, other migrants and host communities alike.**

Migration is part of human history and can be an important driver for innovation, but it is also increasingly the result of **political, economic, social and gender inequalities on a global scale**. Climate change is increasing the scale of inequalities. Uneven development among regions of the world, growing uneven distribution of wealth, conflict, persecutions, massive violations of human rights, climate change, changing demographics and a lack of future perspectives are reasons for people to leave their homes behind to start a life elsewhere. Indeed, the latter reason is also a push factor for important departures of skilled workers and employees from Northern Africa or the Western Balkans.

The number of refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced people around the world has topped 65 million according to UNHCR. The vast majority of people do not migrate to the European Union. There are more people moving within Africa

than towards Europe. Over 80% of refugees globally are hosted close to their home countries, within low-income and low-growth regions. Together we support these countries in order to ensure that refugees can live in secure, humane and decent conditions; Migration involves multiple dimensions – global, national and local –**Migration and development must be approached as interconnected variables and their mutual relationship must be addressed from a multidimensional perspective**, encompassing economic, political, social, environmental, cultural, ethnic, gender, geographical, and demographic factors.

The number of asylum seekers, other migrants and irregular migrants entering the EU reached high levels during 2015. More than one million refugees and other migrants crossed into the EU in 2015 and crossings remained high in 2016 and 2017. Only a few countries have been continuously dealing with the largest numbers of people arriving and settling. As the front-line Member States, Italy, Greece and Spain, along with, Germany, Austria and Sweden, have taken by far the largest share of the responsibility, with some other countries refusing to contribute sufficiently. Recently, Spain has become the main destination of the migrant routes to the EU. This situation has created division in the EU over how to best deal with the relocation of newcomers. This cannot be accepted in a democratic Europe and the PES family calls for equal responsibilities regarding policies on welcoming refugees across all EU countries and respecting international and EU agreements and law. We stand against the criminalization of humanitarian assistance to migrants and refugees. In 2018 the number of people trying to enter the European Union was significantly lower than in 2015. However, we have to recognize that migration is increasing globally and the European Union is part of this development.

Our policies are guided by **international human rights law and standards**. The PES stands firmly for the right of asylum. People in need deserve our support. Yet the actual system clearly needs to be improved. Thus we propose to go further than the current Commission-led reform process in order to establish an independent agency of common asylum which would guarantee the right of asylum.

Turn disorderly migration into orderly migration

Currently there are very few legal possibilities for migrants who are not refugees or asylum seekers to settle in the EU. This means that many migrants arriving in the EU today apply for asylum, viewing it as their only alternative. This includes people without a sufficiently well-based real claim to qualify for the strict criteria of refugee status or individual right to asylum. This results in an overburdened system with excessively long asylum procedures.

Due to a lack of legal migration pathways, people resort to human smugglers and traffickers. Desperate individuals pay thousands of euros each to people who try to benefit from human misery and human tragedy in order to reach the EU. Human smugglers send migrants across the Mediterranean in boats which are not seaworthy and without food or protection, exposing them to life-threatening risks and violence. Irregular migration must be prevented. It is often deadly for the people involved and it is not fair on the communities receiving them either. Therefore the PES is making a stand to **turn disorderly migration into orderly migration.**

Create effective legal pathways, fighting human trafficking and irregular migration

We have to **create more effective pathways for legal and managed migration** that facilitate access to protections such as; humanitarian visas, resettlement, possibilities for circular migration, students visas and seasonal employment visas. We also need an immigration policy that reflects demographic and global labour market realities and development challenges and opportunities, and that reunites families and partners. This will shorten asylum procedures and will **create safe, orderly and regular migration at our borders and ensure security**. Legal pathways will reduce the need for migrants to resort to ruthless human traffickers and smugglers to reach our shores. In that sense we should intensify joint efforts to prevent and combat the trafficking of migrants and to break this business model. Nevertheless, people who are not entitled the stay in the EU, must return to their country of origin in order to ensure the functioning and the legitimacy of the EU's asylum and migration policies. We believe in a **humane and dignified return policy**, which respects the principle of non-refoulement, in line with the requirements of fundamental rights. Placing migrants and asylum seekers in detention should be seen as a last resort to be used only in strictly limited circumstances. The EU needs a comprehensive approach to reducing the incentives for irregular migration and to securing a well-functioning asylum and migration system. Such a policy should be designed and implemented in cooperation with the countries of origin. Therefore, cooperation with countries of origin for the return of refused asylum seekers must only take place with states which fully comply in practice with international human rights law.

Reform the Dublin system – solidarity needed

Asylum seekers and other migrants arriving in the European Union all too often face unacceptable conditions in reception centres in the Member States. The conditions are even worse for women, children, elderly and people from the LGBTIQ community. The current Common European Asylum System (CEAS) is not functioning effectively. **A reform of the CEAS** is a first important step towards an effective, harmonized, proportional and progressive European asylum policy, based on solidarity, an equal sharing of responsibilities and respect for fundamental human rights. We therefore call urgently on all Member States to implement the necessary changes in order to achieve our common objectives. According to the Dublin regulation, which determines which EU Member State is responsible for examining an asylum application, the country where a migrant arrives first is the one that must process the application for asylum. This leads to an unacceptable pressure on countries at the borders of the EU. **A fundamental overhaul of the Dublin rules is necessary. This revision should establish a system where an asylum claim has a truly European dimension.**

We call on all Member States and the EU institutions for a strong commitment to reform the legal framework and to give effective support to those Member States confronted with the highest number of refugees and other migrants and to increase their efforts to **implement the relocation and resettlement schemes.** These schemes reflect fundamental European values of solidarity and responsibility so each Member State must take its part of the shared challenge or face financial sanctions. Rescuing humans at sea is not only a moral obligation but also an obligation under international law for all ships under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. We call for shared and complementary actions, including granting humanitarian visas, and a legally binding agreement among the Member States for the disembarkation of those who are saved in Search and Rescue operations among Member States. When a boat arrives on the shores of Tarifa, Lampedusa, Malta, or Lesbos, it's not an arrival to a country, but an arrival in the European Union. The PES makes a stand for **shared, proportional and regional EU responsibility.** The EU must have a sustainable asylum system based on proportional responsibility for receiving asylum seekers. Being a member of the European Union equals having rights and obligations. Therefore, there must be economic consequences for those countries not taking their proportional responsibility. A sustainable migration system based on a shared responsibility will benefit the whole EU.

Manage our external borders - a shared responsibility

Shared responsibility is also key when it comes to the management **of our external borders**. We need to manage our common external borders together, according to international law and common human rights standards, in order to **ensure freedom of movement within the EU**, **guarantee security for our citizens and newcomers** alike, fight against human trafficking networks and prevent deaths. Therefore, the PES is supporting the enhancement of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. Common management of the Union's external borders alone, however, will not be sufficient nor sustainable without a comprehensive European migration and foreign policy in order to address the drivers of migratory movements.

Tackle the root causes of migration and invest in future perspectives: partnerships for peace, security, sustainability, jobs and women's empowerment.

We must provide equitable solutions addressing rising global inequalities, preserving peace and security and fostering social and economic welfare, as well as gender equality for all. The PES stands firm for solidarity both within the European Union and on the global stage. Together with the UN we commit with countries around the world and all parts of society to a comprehensive multilateral agreement on asylum and migration, to ensure an outcome that works for all. Migration partnerships should only be initiated with countries that abide by the UN Refugee Convention.

Tackling the root causes of migration is necessary to manage the issue and to facilitate a fair and regulated migration policy within the EU. The PES believes we can only address the motivations for migration through fair, equal and strong development and global skills **partnerships** with origin and transit countries. Together we can **fight common challenges** such as insecurity, poverty, gender inequality, corruption and climate change, and **take advantage of common opportunities**. An emphasis should be put on enhancing the relationship between the EU and Africa as equal partners, and thereby promoting economic opportunity, security and stability throughout the continent. To fight inequality, migration policies need to be accompanied by fair foreign policies, as well as, fair trade and fair taxation policies. As the PES, we focus on trade, not just aid; on investment, not just assistance; and on establishing policies for 'climate refugees' as well as fighting climate change. More countries and regions in the world have to be characterized by democracy, human rights, women's rights and stability. Only by promoting sustainable peace beyond our borders will we be able to ensure our own security.

Protect the rights of children, women and people from the LGBTI community

Cooperation and shared responsibility between all levels of governance from local to regional, to national, to European and global are vital to ensure the security and protection of asylum seekers and migrants. More than 10,000 migrant and refugee children went missing in Europe during the last couple of years. Women and people from the LGBTIQ community were subjected to violence and rape. We call for the EU to focus particularly on the need to **improve the safety and security of the most vulnerable groups among migrants like children, women and LGTBI people**, including victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and of all forms of gender-based violence, such as, FGMs and child, early and forced marriages. We must provide a continuum of protection, health care, access to education and support for all children on the move. This includes respecting their fundamental rights, acting in the child's best interest and strengthening family reunification, relocation and resettlement procedures.

There should be a special focus on the well-being of children who have been stuck in reception centers. Children should never be detained or separated from their families.

All vulnerable groups of migrants like children, women and LGTBI people need to be protected from all kind of violence, especially sexual harassment and rape, in the reception centers and other public places. Victims of violence, psychological trauma, sexual assault and rape should have access to the Member State's support system dealing with these issues. Moreover, specialised staff in combatting violence and assisting victims should be at the reception centers. Women's residency status must be independent of their husband's as this would allow women to have full access to all integration measures – if necessary with an offer for childcare – such as language courses to ensure their empowerment and access to the labour market.

Stop the race to the bottom – fight for the rights of all workers, against irregular employment, exploitation and social dumping

Well-managed, regular, orderly and fair migration can potentially help strengthen the economy, generate new jobs and help maintain our welfare system. However migration and integration also have a cost. First, it has a cost in many countries of departure that find themselves deprived of a massive amount of youth and/or skilled workers and employees. This provokes significant deficiencies in basic public services. Second, in Europe, the costs of migration are not fairly distributed. They are often concentrated in certain segments of the labour market and low-income neighbourhoods. Newcomers tend to find housing in low-income neighbourhoods and have low-income jobs. Women all too often end up at the bottom of the line and in the informal economy. We have to make sure that the benefits of regular migration are delivered to the people who shoulder the initial costs. The demographic trends, growing pressure on the EU healthcare systems and labour skills shortages present a challenge for our societies. Well-managed labour migration can help in maintaining our European welfare system and the EU competitiveness.

Irregular migrants are often exposed to exploitation and irregular employment. Unscrupulous employers abuse irregular migration to place downward pressure on national wages and working conditions. **The PES fight for the rights of all workers, against irregular employment, exploitation and social dumping**. Migrants and native workers must not be played off against each other, since in fact they stand at the same side of the battle. We stand for inclusion and a **close coalition between native workers and migrants** to work together to enhance the economy, improve social security and to ensure non-discrimination through measures ensuring equal pay and equal social coverage for equal work. Inequality is the fundamental problem. The share of profits of our economy must be more equally distributed between the many, not the few. **Progress must benefit all**, so we can develop fairer societies, with access to decent housing, medical support and education for all citizens, natives and newcomers alike.

Invest in integration, invest in local communities

Successful integration can make our societies more prosperous. Getting an education and finding a job are the prerequisites to becoming part of society. **We support mutual engagement from both the receiving communities and migrants concerning their rights and obligations towards each other**. We should avoid 'silo' societies and promote lively communities in which people meet and interact with each other, go to school and work together. **Local and regional authorities, civil society organisations and trade unions play a key role in successful integration and therefore need to be empowered**. Access to EU funds plays an important role in supporting the integration of people and to strengthen the resilience of the host community. We propose a European integration fund which local authorities could apply for directly and that benefits both the host and refugee communities. We insist that the EU makes additional resources available and to implement policies aimed at empowering newcomers to fulfil their potential as equal participants in our communities and foster the resilience of the host communities. We encourage local authorities and communities to join forces for a progressive cooperation on integration.

When managing migration, we have to uphold our values. Europe flourishes when we act together, based on the **principles of solidarity, respect, mutual responsibility, gender equality and humanism.**

As the Party of European Socialists, we are fighting for equal societies. In this resolution we have focused particularly on our priorities for progressive European asylum and migration policies. It goes hand-in-hand with seven other resolutions for this PES Congress that reaffirm our commitment and plan for a progressive economy, empowering youth, a healthy environment and modern industries, true gender equality, a fair world and a stronger democracy in Europe.

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