EPP Manifesto

“Let’s open the next chapter for Europe together”

1. Our vision

Europe stands at a historical crossroads: at these European elections, the people of Europe will have the choice between shaping a bright future together or getting stuck in anger and a backwards orientation. We in the EPP stand for a bright future, because we know our past and want to build on it. We are proud of the achievements of our European Founding Fathers and want to take them to the next level.

Our Founding Fathers had the vision that without the will to reach out together and overcome national egoism, Europe would be doomed to eternal war. Our Founding Fathers could see that without the determination to commit to our freedom and our values, Europe would remain forever divided between East and West. Just as our Founding Fathers did in their time, it is now our generation’s duty to have the courage and the will to overcome the challenges of today.

In the 21st century, our world has become less secure. We are facing new threats: from authoritarian powers such as Russia or China, to demographic pressure in Africa and instability in our neighbourhood spurring uncontrolled migration. The global climate is changing, threatening our well-being and prosperity. Terrorists are trying to destroy our free societies. We are challenged by populists and demagogues that preach egoism and nationalism, by a left that is stuck in the past and by a new Green narrow-mindedness that categorically rejects trade, hinders economic growth and fails to include large parts of our societies.

We in the EPP want to take on these challenges, because we believe that together we can overcome them. We believe that we can create a new community spirit to protect and renew our Europe. Our Europe is a Europe that is optimistic and believes in the power of working together.

Together, Europe will become a safer place and will protect our citizens against external threats and against the excesses of globalisation. Together, Europe can preserve our unique way of life and our European values, so people will not lose their common feeling of belonging. Europe can lead in innovation and technological change that concretely improves people’s lives and inspires optimism for the future. Together we can empower people to take their destiny into their own hands and be the masters of their future. Together, we Europeans can take the work of our Founding Fathers to the next level. If we stand together now, our Europe will have a better future.

2. A Europe that protects its citizens

The events of recent years have shown that Nation States alone can no longer offer full and effective protection to their citizens. Only if we act together will we stop illegal migration, fight terrorism and organised crime, counter new military threats, shape globalisation, and combat climate change. By joining together, European countries can raise our security to a higher level. This is why we want to join our forces in Europe to offer the best protection possible to our people. Our Europe protects its citizens against the threats of the 21st century.

We protect Europe's borders against illegal immigration

Effectively protecting Europe's external borders is a precondition for securing our citizens and the trust in our Union. It is also a precondition to ensure borderless travel within the Schengen area. This is why we will make sure that no one can enter European Union territory without the knowledge and explicit approval of our authorities. At the same time, we assume our Christian and humanitarian responsibility to help those in need and to improve living conditions in their home countries.

i. We will equip the European Border and Coast Guard with up to 10.000 new officers, with the latest technology, including drones, and with a direct right of intervention along our common external borders, to put a definite stop to the cynical business of smugglers and of human traffickers.

ii. We will negotiate border protection agreements with North African countries and help them establish their own powerful coastguards and reception centres, to prevent deadly departures along the Mediterranean coast. We will draw on the success of the EU-Turkey agreement, which lowered illegal arrivals to Greece by 96 % to achieve even better results in the future.

iii. We will set up a true Marshall Plan with Africa. We will leverage private investments and stimulate economic growth on our neighbouring continent in order to ensure African youth have a chance. Young people with good prospects at home should no longer feel the need to leave their own countries.

iv. We will push for a decision on a comprehensive European list of safe countries.

We fight terrorism and organised crime

Today's criminals and terrorists are operating across borders. We put trust in our police, security and intelligence services across Europe to achieve better results together. We will defeat terrorists and criminals with the combined power of these forces.

i. We will further connect all European security databases, to make sure that established

- police knowledge on criminals will no longer be lost when they cross our borders.

ii. We will enable undercover police forces at all internal borders to check suspicious vehicles and passengers; we will turn our internal EU borders into an added layer of security for our citizens.

iii. We will step up the cooperation of our external and internal intelligence services, to allow for a better exchange of intelligence on terrorists, potential offenders and other radicalised persons, whether they are at home or abroad, who may represent a security risk for our citizens.

We protect our citizens through stronger defence

In times of Russian hybrid warfare, China's new military ambitions and instability in our neighbourhood, Europe must increasingly take its military security into its own hands. Moreover, insecurity is also increased by US President Trump's questioning of the transatlantic partnership. We must be capable of protecting ourselves against the threats of the 21st century.

i. We will establish a European Cyber Brigade within 2 years to make sure Europe is able to thwart cyber-attacks, such as those in 2007 in Estonia, in 2015 on the German Parliament or in 2017 throughout Europe with the WannaCry ransomware.

ii. We will join national resources and research capacities to develop a European drone and to make sure the main combat systems of the future can still be produced in Europe.

iii. We can do more with the same resources if we do it together: By pooling EU Member States' military capacities, we will create a real defence capacity by 2030 — not to replace any national army but to bring our forces much closer together and make them stronger. This shall not prejudice the specific character of the security and defence policy of certain Member States.

iv. We remain committed to NATO and will do everything possible to preserve and further strengthen it. This is why all further European defence integration must happen in close cooperation with NATO and our American allies, so that a stronger Europe can be a stronger part of our common transatlantic security.

We defend our European social model in a globalised world

We are proud of our unique European social model, where everyone enjoys health insurance and high-quality public services, where workers have their rights and where social interests and market forces are balanced. We want to bring this European model of our social market economy into the 21st century.

i. We fight for equal opportunities for women in the labour market: we want to make sure that men and women receive equal pay for equal work. We believe that by facilitating greater choice how parents and care-givers choose to balance their work and caring responsibilities, we can ultimately achieve more fairness for men and women and greater well-being for families.

ii. We will significantly increase the European Fund for Transition to help those who lose their jobs due to the structural changes related to digitalisation and globalisation. Working hand in hand with trade unions and industries, we will reduce the impact of globalisation on the most vulnerable workers and make sure nobody is left behind.

iii. With improved trade defence and systematic foreign investment screening, we will protect our high-quality workers' jobs against dumping, delocalisation and technology sell-out.

We fight climate change

Only if we step up our fight against climate change and significantly reduce the environmental and climate impacts of our economy will we be able to pass on a clean planet to our children and grandchildren. This is why we continue to defend the Paris Climate agreement based on scientific evidence and remain the global leader in combatting climate change. We must reconcile protecting the environment and biodiversity with a dynamic economy. This is not only about a future-oriented economic policy which enables Europe to remain a leader in the innovation of tomorrow's clean technologies; it is also a policy that benefits the whole planet. Europe can be a global pioneer for a better and cleaner world and show other countries in very concrete terms how sustainability works.

i. We will ensure an effective price on CO2 with a well-functioning emission trading system and further incentivise emission reductions in our industries and the energy sector.
ii. We will enable investments and innovation in all technological solutions to low-carbon mobility. All forms of transportation must contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gases. Self-driving vehicles and connected mobility solutions will further contribute to decreasing transport emissions and establishing European charging standards, to enable the EU to be one of the global leaders in e-mobility.
iii. We will build a true Energy Union, where electricity and gas can cross borders without any obstacle, to bring down citizens' living costs, support the cost-effective expansion of renewable energies and make sure no external power can undermine Europe's energy security.

3. A Europe that preserves our way of life

What makes Europe unique in the world is our rich cultural heritage, our shared history and our common Judeo-Christian roots. In Europe, we combine great diversity with solid shared values and embrace a way of life that strikes the right balance between responsibility and solidarity, security and freedom, tolerance and our traditions. Radical Islam, terrorist threats and the authoritarian waves coming from Russia and Turkey, are all shaking the foundations of our European way of life. Now more than ever, we must safeguard, for all our citizens, our shared European identity and our European way of life.

We preserve our cultural richness and diversity

From the Greco-Roman period through to the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance to the Enlightenment, European civilization has been layered on the nuances of each of its countries: our rich cultural and linguistic heritage has created and, in turn, developed through the prism of our landscape, our arts, sciences, literature and religion. In Europe we know that our diversity makes us stronger. That is why we want to preserve it. We defend European cultural diversity and traditions: no former empires, absolute monarchies, or totalitarian regimes have protected each region's and nation's richness and sovereignty as the European Union does. Only a democratic Europe acting together defends and preserves our cultural diversity. We will stick to our European way of life in a strong Europe.

We safeguard our democracy and our European values

While Europe is diverse and nuanced, we have one thing in common: in every town and city there is a Christian church. Christmas, Easter and Pentecost are holidays we all share. We have to protect our European way of life by preserving our Christian values and fundamental principles. Democracy, human rights, human dignity, freedom and responsibility, equality between men and women, solidarity, rule of law, justice, pluralism and tolerance: these are the principles at the heart of European civilization. We will safeguard our common traditions and beliefs, uphold democracy and the rule of law. We will fight with determination against intolerance and antisemitism, as well as any kind of racism.

i. We will fight against fake news and ensure access to quality information. Up to 90 million fake Facebook accounts are actively stirring up hatred and fake news. We want social media platforms to take more responsibility in countering disinformation and to increase fact-checking in cooperation with journalists' associations. Not being able to distinguish what is real from what is false is one of the greatest dangers to our democracy and to the stability of our communities.

ii. We will launch a pact against antisemitism by fighting hate speech and establishing a common EU definition of antisemitism based on the definition by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) which should be adopted by all Member States. This definition should be used in education and training and for law enforcement authorities in their efforts to identify and investigate antisemitic attacks more efficiently and effectively.

We take care of our families

Our families are our roots, our homes, our safety nets, and the centre of our European identities. They are the pillar of our European way of life. Family bonds are the backbone of our community, and we intend to preserve them. In times of demographic change, we want to strengthen families and intergenerational solidarity. During crises, parents and grandparents have supported young Europeans and vice-versa.

i. We will defend European social standards and increase living standards to empower

- families. Job insecurity, the impossibility of affording a house and uncertainty for the future too often prevent young Europeans from starting a family. In Europe, only one in three couples has children. We want Europe to be a safe home where new families can grow.

ii. We will create opportunities for young people in order to allow families to remain together. Sometimes Europeans have no other option to find viable opportunities than to leave their country and their loved ones behind. In Europe, no family should be forced to be divided: we must put a stop to brain drain by providing viable opportunities in every region through our cohesion policy.

iii. We will safeguard family values and respect subsidiarity. Family law must remain in the hands of Member States because family life must be supported at a level as close as possible to citizens.

iv. We will fight against health threats and combat the challenges arising from an ageing population, antimicrobial resistance and chronic and infectious diseases. We will support innovation and investment in the area of health for a better life for our families. We will develop the silver economy to promote active ageing. Over 40% of Europeans are over 50 years old. While an ageing society is a challenge, we also see an opportunity. Seniors increasingly shape our economies and create businesses: they create around 70 million jobs each year. We want to create conditions for the elderly to flourish.

v. We support greater civic engagement in local projects to foster a greater degree of common purpose. In the context of widespread chronic loneliness, as traditional ties break down or change in nature, we must work to cultivate a sense of true and sustainable belonging in line with our Christian democratic values.

We will improve our integration capacity

Europe is a community of values. While everyone´s rights and beliefs must be respected, it is also fair and reasonable to expect everyone in the European Union´s territory to respect the values, traditions and obligations our Union is built upon. Hatred, intolerance, misogyny, racism, antisemitism and hatred against ones' country of birth have no place in our societies. If we want to help those in need, an effective and solid integration policy goes hand in hand with an effective return policy.

i. We will improve the integration of recognized refugees. We want to ensure that those who come to live in the EU legally become integrated members of our community. We need a solid integration policy to prevent parallel societies. That is why, by virtue of the principle of subsidiarity, we will support the Member States in their endeavours and in the sharing of best practices of integration policy. We will fight with determination against parallel societies and against disrespect for any members of our societies.

ii. We will reform the Common European Asylum System. Only through a coherent, simplified shared asylum policy across the EU will we guarantee the timely processing of asylum applications and reduce the pull factors arising from differences in Member States´ respective

legislation. We will establish a European Return Warrant System to ensure the return of rejected asylum seekers to their countries of origin. We want to integrate the migration management chain across Member States to effectively prevent asylum shopping.

iii. We will increase the European funding of returns within the Asylum and Migration Fund. Every year only 40% of illegal migrants that have been ordered to leave the EU are returned or repatriated. By increasing the funding, we will make sure that people who do not qualify for protection are sent back to their countries. We will make EU visas and development aid conditional on cooperating with the EU on migration. We will speed up the systematic return of persons not entitled to protection by depriving EU visas to citizens of third countries refusing to take back illegal migrants.

We stand for Europe's responsibility in the world

As the first provider of development and humanitarian assistance worldwide, the EU must continue to lead the fight against poverty and the efforts to achieve sustainable development globally. The potential of the External Investment Plan and the New Alliance for Africa needs to be fully maximized in order to create jobs and growth where it is needed the most, to foster investment and entrepreneurship, and therefore address the root causes of irregular migration. With the new External Financing instrument as a strong and flexible development tool, we will continue our cooperation and solidarity with the countries on the African continent, ensuring their continued path towards more advanced economies and more solid democracies, bringing a brighter future to their young generations, lifting them out of poverty and making Africa ready for the challenges of the 21st Century.

We will enhance our capability to act

Our shared European values are steering our policy direction and maintaining balance within our Union. If Europe wants to be an effective political force, it must create strong partnerships with our neighbours and draw closer to those who share our European perspective:

i. We support the concrete European perspective of the Western Balkans and help countries in the region improve their prosperity, as long as they adhere to European standards and achieve progress in the rule of law and the fight against corruption. This European perspective is not only about abstract proposals, it is about concrete projects. We want to connect roads and railways, build common energy infrastructure, reduce roaming charges and reduce tariffs at the borders. We cannot leave the Western Balkans to the authoritarian influence of Russia, the Gulf States, Turkey and China.

ii. We will put a stop to Turkey's accession negotiations. Europe and Turkey should focus on partnership and cooperation in concrete fields — close economic cooperation and the EU-Turkey refugees' agreement on migration are successful examples — but Turkey is moving further away from European values. EU membership, therefore, is not an option for Turkey, and negotiations must be stopped.

4. A Europe that delivers opportunities

Together we have achieved great things in Europe. In recent years, economic recovery has reached millions of families, and unemployment is at its lowest level since 2009 – helped in part by EPP policies and the governments belonging to our political family. Yet too many Europeans still struggle to find work opportunities. To continue on this dangerous path is unacceptable; Europe cannot afford to waste its talents and to lose its future. We must keep everyone onboard. We want to open a new chapter for Europe by investing in the great potential of our people through a strategy based on three pillars: the social market economy, human-centred innovations, and keeping all regions competitive.

We will create a dynamic economy that creates 5 million new jobs

We believe that the social market economy is the best economic system for the 21st century. Our European model lets people make their own decisions, unlike China's state-run communism, as well as providing opportunities and social protection for all, unlike American-style capitalism. We need a strong economy for a society in which everyone is taken care of and finds security and opportunities. The economy for us is a tool — not the master of the house. Our prosperity is created by those running small- and medium-sized enterprises. They are our European economic heroes. In fact, SMEs provide 67% of all private-sector jobs. In the last 10 years, we helped to create millions of new jobs in Europe. With the help of the Investment Plan for Europe, the "Juncker Plan", we have mobilized private and public investments through an EU guarantee, supporting the creation of more than 750 000 jobs and helping 850 000 SMEs across Europe to benefit from improved access to finance. We want to continue on this path and create the right conditions for at least 5 million new jobs in the coming years, especially for the young generation. We can achieve this by opening new markets in Europe and engaging with new markets around the world, by supporting our SMEs to grow and employ staff, and by designing an industrial policy for the 21st century.

i. We will open a new chapter in the European Single Market to create more market opportunities; to do this, we will implement existing rules and open new sectors, especially in the digital economy and circular economy.

ii. We will negotiate new and additional free and fair-trade agreements, alongside ongoing talks with Mercosur, Australia and New Zealand, to create even more jobs than the 36 million already supported by trade in Europe, all while defending our high standards and preventing unfair trade practices. We believe that we must seek to start negotiations on a trade deal with the US without lowering our standards.

iii. We will reignite the spirit of entrepreneurship and help SMEs reach their full potential

by making it easier to get financing, providing special financing schemes for young entrepreneurs and by helping with digitalisation and by encouraging innovation that fosters breakthroughs and creates new markets.

iv. We will have a forward-looking European industrial and competition policy which will allow global champions to be built in Europe, in order to challenge our competitors China and the US while defending strategically important European sectors against unfair practices.

v. We will promote a stronger, innovative and competitive European industry while protecting public health and the environment. We will ensure that consumer rights are not undermined and that citizens are provided with reliable and scientifically validated information regarding the impacts of new services and products.

vi. We will encourage a more sustainable, more circular economy in Europe by increasing recycling, reusing, and repairing. This will promote environmental and social sustainability, as well as enabling the creation of new and innovative business models in Europe.

vii. We will jointly enforce agreed European economic rules on Member States’ public finances in order to provide all citizens with economic stability, defend their savings and pensions against economic crises caused by reckless policies and provide companies with a stable future outlook. Decisions on a national level require liability on a national level. This must be observed especially for national debt.

viii. We will strengthen European tools to combat economic shocks. We will turn the European Stability Mechanism into a fully-fledged European Monetary Fund to boost growth and job opportunities and to ensure that we are not reliant on US decisions. We will complete the Banking Union with a European Deposit Insurance Scheme – provided that the risks in the European banking system have been significantly reduced - in order to safeguard citizens’ savings and strengthen the tools needed to boost investments during downturns.

We will boost living standards in every region

European potential would be wasted without a strong network between regions. We believe that good connections and mobility across all regions of Europe are crucial for job prosperity. Brain drain caused by lack of economic opportunities is a serious threat to people’s future and happiness. We must complete road and rail infrastructure, while seizing the future´s possibilities by investing in the latest digital infrastructure. We commit ourselves to bridging the gap between regions and between cities and rural areas with the help of a strong cohesion policy.

i. We will boost investments into rail, road and digital infrastructure to make every region competitive. Our aim is to combat brain drain by offering better access to markets and jobs to our citizens, in whatever region they are from, by guaranteeing access to high-speed internet and world-leading supercomputers in all European regions.

ii. We will support bringing telemedicine to rural communities because everyone should have access to the best doctors available.

iii. We will invest in technologies to support the development of ‘smart’ cities and villages to increase the quality of life in all parts of the continent.

iv. We will help Member States improve citizens' digital literacy and digital competences.

We will create new opportunities for young people

We believe there is no contradiction between being proud of our regions, of our countries and of our common European Union. That's why even as we increase opportunities for our citizens, and especially our young people, to preserve their way of life in their own home communities and find quality jobs, we also believe it is vital to make it easier for them to explore our continent and discover the ideas and opportunities that will help them succeed in the future.

i. We will expand Erasmus programmes for all, especially non-academics. The Erasmus programme has been a huge success which we can reproduce in other areas such as vocational training and schools.
ii. We will expand DiscoverEU Interrail for all 18-year-olds. This will empower a new generation both in discovering Europe and building promising relationships around the continent.

We defend strong farmers growing healthy food

European farmers produce the best-quality food in the world. They preserve our rural landscape and keep our rural communities together. We are proud of our rich traditions and of having better standards and qualities of food than any other continent. For us, the purpose of our agricultural policy is to ensure that our children also get to enjoy eating food grown in Europe that maintains our traditions and standards. Our high-quality agricultural products are sought after globally. We are committed to helping our rural areas continue to thrive and grow. To achieve this, we will need a forward-looking, strategic and well-funded Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) fit for the 21st century. Many of Europe's small- to medium-sized family farms are under pressure as they struggle to keep their production competitive and sustainable. We can help them meet these challenges with targeted support and a modern CAP.

i. We will modernise the Common Agricultural Policy, making it fairer, more sustainable and results-driven, while respecting subsidiarity and local conditions and adhering to common EU rules. The CAP must be designed to help family farms to face globalisation, climate change and challenges to food security. It must also provide additional incentives for both young and female farmers so that the future of our rural areas is safeguarded.
ii. We will cut red tape for farmers by introducing more digital solutions and by simplifying administrative procedures. We must let the farmers do their jobs: produce our food and not be stuck in bureaucracy.
iii. We will defend our standards for agriculture, fisheries and food quality, as well as protect our health against lower-quality imports. We commit to defending our high standards and fighting unfair practices in trade negotiations so that our agricultural sector remains competitive and so that European customers continue to enjoy the best standards in the world. We will not accept dual food quality in Europe. There can be no second-class citizens.

We embrace the potential of artificial intelligence and robotics

Over 830.000 innovative start-ups are active in Europe's major hubs, employing around 5 million people. Innovation is in Europe´s DNA. We believe Europe has the potential to seize the next digital wave and to take the lead in artificial intelligence, robotics, biomedicine, big data and mobility engineering. In addition, we must do this if we want to stay competitive, prosperous and influential in the world. We must rediscover our desire for technological discovery — based on where European strength lies: fundamental human values and fundamental science — so we can continue to solve new challenges and create well-being by human-centred innovations. We believe that digital technology does not shape people but that it is the people who shape and must control digital revolution.

i. We will increase our investments in artificial intelligence and robotics to make the EU the leader in this field, to ensure we are a prosperous and competitive continent globally, as well as shaping these innovations in line with our European values.
ii. We will build a new European University Institute 4.0 combining the latest breakthroughs in technological innovations, philosophy and ethics to foster human-centred innovations where people come first.
iii. We will invest in life-long learning programmes and support the development of education and skills-training schemes that are future-proof and that boost employability in close cooperation with the Member States.

We will improve people's lives through an innovation offensive

We want to put people at the heart of innovation. This is our philosophy for the future. Too many citizens are afraid of technological changes; we must reassure them that we all benefit, that all of our lives will become better and healthier. When we combine values and innovation, we can shape the future of our European way of life and create jobs. Against the advancements of China and the US, Europe has a competitive advantage: our common values, the social market economy and political stability. Placing our citizens at the centre of our innovation policy means pooling our resources to find solutions to illnesses affecting countless families and thus to improve our citizens' lives. When we lead in the fields of AI, biomedicine, robotics, big data and mobility engineering, we can identify the big European innovation projects and commit common funds to find the solutions that will bring benefits to everyone. To achieve this, we will create a true European Innovation Union to improve people's lives and remain competitive at the global level. For example, we will create a European Master Plan to pool our joint resources and data in order to find a cure for cancer. We will increase funds and strengthen the European Innovation Council in order to enable better support to innovators and entrepreneurs on high-risk and breakthrough innovations so that new markets can be created.

5. A Europe that empowers its citizens

We want a Europe in which all our citizens can thrive. This means more than simply recovering collectively from economic crisis, more than just having a job and feeling safe from harm. It also means feeling included; feeling at home; feeling empowered to face a future shaped by an ever-increasing digital revolution. It means being politically engaged and truly feeling represented by our elected leaders and institutions. It means being able to access opportunity. Ultimately, it means having a common hope in a future we feel ready for. We will build a Europe that enables our young people, our families, our businesses, our citizens of all demographics and geographies, to succeed in a fast-changing world.

We will foster parliamentary democracy

We believe European democracy can go further and can be brought closer to citizens: more accountable, more understandable and easier to relate to. This is why the European Union must become a fully-fledged parliamentary democracy. This will help bridge the gap between what European representatives do in Brussels and Strasbourg and the feeling of disengagement many of our citizens have. We must increase democratic engagement in Europe.

i. We call for granting the European Parliament the right to initiate legislation. As with any other parliament in the world, the European Parliament must have the power to introduce the laws it later decides on. This will further empower European citizens by further empowering their directly elected representatives.

ii. We must improve national and regional parliaments' involvement in law-making and oversight in line with the principle of subsidiarity so that decisions are taken as close as possible to the citizens. This will entail strengthening both the European Parliament and national parliaments at their respective levels.

iii. We believe any future President of the European Commission must first have run as the Lead Candidate of his or her European Party. Candidates should have to defend their programme for Europe and explain to people what it is they stand for; this will make the process easier for citizens to understand and ultimately empower them to hold their elected leaders to account. The choice about the future direction of our continent must be put into the hands of the citizens.

We will play a stronger role on the global stage

We have the opportunity and the responsibility in Europe to speak with a unified, powerful voice on the world stage: to defend European values such as democracy and human rights, to strengthen our vital partnerships, and to confront the major challenges and threats we face both in our own neighbourhood and around the world. We must step up, defend our interests and take our

global responsibilities seriously. We have an important role to play.

i. We are in favour of Qualified Majority Voting for foreign policy. One Member State alone should not be able to paralyse the European Union as a whole. We must be able to act decisively on the world stage in line with our values.
ii. We will make the best out of the British decision to leave the EU. We remain committed to continuing our close partnership with the United Kingdom. But it is also clear to us that the UK cannot enjoy, as a non-member of the European Union, the same benefits as our Member States. We Europeans will not allow any cherry-picking. The integrity of our union, including its four fundamental freedoms, needs to be preserved.
iii. We will invest in a stable and prosperous European neighbourhood. In an interdependent world, we know our success is linked with the success of the countries and regions surrounding us. Our aim is to export stability and to create a belt of prosperity and security around us.

We will ensure fair taxes for everyone

We believe everyone must contribute their fair share to the Europe we all benefit from. Big corporations should not get tax breaks or be allowed to take advantage of loopholes not available to everyone. Corruption must be found and removed, both in Europe and around the world, to protect the fairness and transparency of our own European tax systems. We will fight for fair tax distribution in the Digital Age.

i. We will introduce a Digital Fair Tax; the digital giants of our world must pay their fair share of financing our digital infrastructure and future investments in Europe.
ii. We will work closely with our European institutions and Members States as well as with partners around the world and international organisations such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to take a leading role in fighting tax evasion and eliminating tax havens. We aim to ensure transparency and fairness for all Member States.

We will reduce red tape

We believe that each euro spent at the EU level must improve people's lives by bringing prosperity and security. Reducing red tape for businesses by 30%, especially for SMEs, and repealing unnecessary regulations will facilitate greater and more sustainable growth.

i. We will cut bureaucracy for SMEs, including using digital tools and simulations which can free our small- and medium-sized enterprises from unnecessary and burdensome reporting duties.
ii. We will cut 1.000 outdated rules and regulations to eliminate inefficiencies and streamline our productive capacities.
iii. We will modernise our legislation so that we are ready for technological changes and provide a solid and functioning legal framework for companies operating in Europe.

6. Let’s open a new chapter for Europe

The upcoming European election will be a decisive moment for our continent. It is up to us, citizens of 21st century Europe, to shape our own future facing an unprecedented number of challenges. More than ever, we need a Europe that delivers to its citizens.
After years of crises, we need to open up a new chapter, with fresh ideas for a new era. The last European Commission under Jean-Claude Juncker, the Council under Donald Tusk, and the European Parliament led by Antonio Tajani managed to keep the Union together in difficult times, weather the Brexit storm and return to stability and growth. We know the European Union today is far from perfect. We have to build on the successful work of the EPP leaders of the last 5 years in developing our vision for a better Europe.

This is what we mean: Europe must become less bureaucratic. This begins with listening to what Europe’s citizens have to say and taking it seriously. The EU also has to become more democratic. That means that the head of the EU’s most powerful institution, the Commission President, must be determined by the people, as part of the elections to the European Parliament. Above all, we need a Europe that successfully protects its citizens. We need a Europe that delivers prosperity and jobs. We need a Europe that protects the environment. And we need a Europe that protects our values and interests in the world. We can only achieve all this in the spirit of cooperation, compromise and mutual respect. And we can only achieve it together. Manfred Weber stands for our forward-looking political approach. He is a true bridge builder, who not only unites Europe but also brings Europe back to people. He fights for a strong, secure, and ambitious Europe. He will open a new chapter for Europe, Manfred Weber has to become the next President of the European Commission.

If you have any question
you would like to ask
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