

# EPP Manifesto

## **Why vote for the European People's Party?**

The outcome of the upcoming elections will influence the direction of EU policy on a range of important issues. This will have a significant impact on the lives of over 500 million Europeans, including you. We would like to introduce our ideas to you here.

## **Where do we come from, and where are we going?**

The European People's Party is the political family that has shaped Europe. Members of our political family have been the founding fathers of this great unifying project, contributing to the fall of Communism and welcoming new countries. Over time, the EPP has become Europe's largest political family, uniting parties of the centre-right across the continent.

We believe that the European Union can solve the economic crisis that has affected all levels of society. The European Union is the solution to the crisis, not the cause. We want the European economy to create new growth and jobs. Young people – as for all European citizens - must be able to look to their future with confidence again. We want to live in freedom and dignity. We do not want to incur debt, which our children will be forced to pay back.

Today, and every day, we work to lead Europe out of the crisis. In 2009 and 2010, EPP-led governments reacted quickly and decisively, pulling Europe back from the brink of disaster. In 2011 and 2012, we kept the Euro area together and laid the foundation for recovery. Now we are setting the agenda for economic reform, growth-friendly budget consolidation and job creation in the Member States.

Finding solutions to crises means making tough choices. During the crisis the EPP proved itself as the party of responsible government. While others talked, we acted. Our policies stemmed the crisis. The spend-now-and-pay-later policies of our competitors caused the crisis in the first place, and increase the risk of another crisis down the line.

We want people to live in a safe and stable world, in freedom and with dignity. To achieve this, we have to make the right choices now, and renew our sense of solidarity. We want all Europeans to take pride in where we have come from, and where we are going. Europe has risen from the ashes many times before, and will do so again.

- EPP believes that the euro is a reliable currency that assures political stability and makes us more competitive internationally.
- EPP will reform financial markets so that all banks in the EU follow the same rules, and, globally, will seek a better regulatory framework for financial markets.

## **Creating a better Europe for all citizens**

The people of the European Union value individual freedoms, and democratic rights. Europeans need to work together to build on these shared values. We already travel, work, buy and sell across borders. We believe working together strengthens us. Those political parties that call for separation and division will weaken their countries, economies, and relations with others. We can only tackle many challenges together and not in isolation. Either we become stronger together, or

weaker apart. However, we do not want a centralized Europe that deals with every detail of people's lives. We want Europe to be bigger on big things and smaller on small things. We want to focus on what really needs to be done better, together. The European Union as a community of values must defend our common values and interests in the world, whilst respecting the diversity and different traditions between Member States.

- EPP supports a European Union that tackles the big issues together, leaving the smaller issues to the capable responsibility of individual countries.
- EPP believes in building a more open, more responsive, more democratic Europe.

### **From reform to growth**

Our combined strength is in the more than 500 million people who make up the largest economy in the world – our EU. Our potential to be a global leader in new industries is vast. To remain a strong and competitive player globally, create jobs and ensure continued wealth, reforms are necessary. Sustainable and targeted investment is the key. Creating the right conditions for new and sustainable growth and jobs is our primary political objective for the next five years.

We need structural reforms, so that Europe attracts the private investment that creates growth and jobs. Socialist parties choose the wrong approach to economic reforms. They believe growth comes from irresponsible spending, or redistributing other people's money. Our policies create healthy economic structures which attract private investment, create growth and jobs.

- EPP will create conditions that favour small and medium sized businesses, family firms, start-ups and entrepreneurs, including R&D funding, private investment, and more accessible lending.
- EPP invests in education, research and technology, leading to innovation, new ideas, a competitive economy rooted in knowledge and new digital services.

### **Building a Social Market Economy to combine freedom and solidarity**

The cornerstone of EPP policy is the idea of the Social Market Economy. This precept aims to balance the principles of freedom and solidarity. We understand that the advantages of a free market must serve the common good, so that social cohesion is achieved. Simply put, the economy should serve the people, and not the other way around!

We strive for sustainable growth based on a competitive and innovative economy, while respecting the environment. We are determined to combat climate change through more efficient use of energy and investment in renewable energy while preserving Europe's industrial base through affordable energy prices. It is our responsibility to leave our world safer and cleaner for future generations, and it stimulates innovation and a need for skills in these sectors.

- EPP will balance the principles of freedom and solidarity.
- EPP will champion an EU energy market, and invest in low carbon technologies.

### **Movement of Europeans within Europe**

Free movement of people within the European Union is one of our greatest achievements together, and we are committed to ensuring it remains so. Why? So that any European can travel, work, and live in any other country in the EU, while retaining the same rights as in their own country. Pan-European movement of qualified people helps businesses to recruit those they seek,

and in some countries is the only solution to skills and labour shortages. However, we are against social fraud - social benefits for EU citizens should only be available if they have worked in the country where they live.

- EPP sees mobility as an absolute right that benefits people, businesses and the economy: Freeing our citizens to work at home and abroad.

### **Controlling immigration into Europe to ensure internal security**

While having abolished internal borders, Schengen states have also tightened controls at their common external borders to protect the security of those living and travelling within the Union. EU Member States need to cooperate closely on border management to ensure internal security is maintained. Our common border agency Frontex must be reinforced. The EU must effectively cooperate with third countries' border security authorities to prevent crime from migrating too. At the same time, victims of political and religious persecution need genuine protection. Integration policies for migrants have to be developed and strengthened. Integration is a two-way street which involves both rights and responsibilities.

- EPP demands greater cooperation between EU countries on border management, to show solidarity with countries that are on the front line of migration flows.

### **Fighting organized crime**

The fight against organised crime, especially corruption and money laundering, is a top priority for us. Organised crime undermines the rule of law, fundamental rights, good governance and deprives governments of important revenues. We believe that transparent politics is vital for the future of democracy. We are committed to improving transparency and strengthening the rule of law.

- EPP will lead the fight against terrorism and crime.

### **Ensuring data protection as a human right**

We believe that privacy is a fundamental, inalienable human right. It was the EPP that drove reform of data protection rules. These rules reinforce privacy for citizens as well as increase consumer trust online. This also helps to establish a Single Market in digital services, which is central to the creation of new digital jobs.

- EPP vows to reinforce citizens' privacy rights, protecting personal data.

### **Promoting peace and stability in a globalized world**

Europe has, more than any other continent, shaped the world in which we live. But in the past decades, other players and power centres around the world have emerged. Nation states acting alone will not be capable to defend our values and interests. In a time of increasing global concerns such as international terrorism, weapons proliferation, failed states, climate change, natural disasters and mass migration, the EU must reaffirm its values in the eyes of the world and do everything in its power to defend and promote them. Therefore, the EU must strengthen and increase the efficiency of its foreign policy. We gain strength through united action.

- EPP will boost Europe's Foreign, Security and Defence capacities – enhancing its ability to act in the world.

## **Being more prudent about EU enlargement**

The enlargement of the European Union is one of its success stories, because we can share the benefits of freedom, democracy, peace, stability and the rule of law throughout our continent. For the future, though, it has to be clear that in order to become a member of the European Union not only the fulfillment of political and economic criteria must be safeguarded but the EU's capacity to act must remain intact.

- EPP favours judicious enlargement, while retaining the identity of the EU, and taking the EU's capacity to integrate into consideration.

## **Spreading democracy and the rule of law in our immediate neighbourhood**

Our immediate neighbourhood is a source of new opportunities, as well as challenges and potential threats. A much longer-term approach must be developed for the relations with our eastern neighbours. The EU must remain committed to supporting fragile democracies in Eastern Europe. For the Southern Mediterranean countries, the EU should develop a vision and propose new strategies. Only the promise of shared prosperity can gain support of the wider public in the region.

- EPP will work to create a prosperous, democratic and stable neighbourhood.

## **Building a trustful transatlantic partnership**

The EU must maintain and develop a strong transatlantic partnership, combining with a free and fair market built on common values and mutual trust. Together, the EU and the US can take the lead in developing strategies to address global threats and challenges. A transatlantic free market will contribute to trade revenues and increased growth, creating more jobs and prosperity for European citizens.

- EPP welcomes the trade negotiations with the US, as long as the agreement protects Europe's high standards, and that important elements of our European identity are safeguarded.

## **Making our development policy more effective**

The EU should reform its development policy to improve effectiveness, accountability and sustainability. This revised policy must be based on the principles of the Social Market Economy. Human rights, the fight against poverty, and providing education must be central factors in our development policy.

- EPP wants a development policy that is effective, accountable, aimed at reducing poverty, and is based on the principles of the social market economy.