Europe should be different: social, peaceful, democratic

DIE LINKE.

Dear voter,

There will be an election for the European Parliament on May 25. DIE LINKE will be running in that election in order to change Europe. Unemployment has risen in the European Union since the last election, especially among young people. A whole generation is being robbed of its future. The gap between rich and poor has further widened, in Germany as well. The power of the banks and big corporations has grown. Newly created institutions such as the Troika rule, bypassing the parliaments. The European Union has opened up the markets and fuelled competition between production locations. The pressure on wages and social benefits is being felt by people in Germany and Spain, Ireland and Italy. EU policies find regulations for sausages and vegetables, but none to keep the banks and speculation in check, none to guard against production site competition and substandard wages, none to ensure a common minimum in the taxation of businesses. The EU acts with inhuman cruelty against refugees, who are dying in their thousands at the borders, but sets no limits to tax evasion.

The policy pursued by the federal government has not solved these problems, it has exacerbated them. At the European level, it has insisted on the curtailment of wages and pensions as well as social benefits, health care and education. Good neighbourliness should be different. This policy does not build the economy but dismantles it.

Public property is being privatised. No one is talking about the causes of debt any longer: Hundreds of billions of taxpayer euros were used to bail out banks after the crisis they brought upon themselves. The EU and the federal government failed to resolve that crisis fairly. The Grand Coalition, including the SPD, are counting on "business as usual". Fair should be different. Europe should be different.

A future-oriented programme against unemployment

DIE LINKE wants to combat the prevailing massive unemployment: with an economic programme that invests in the future, creates jobs and consolidates the education and health care systems and public infrastructure, and implements the energy transition in a socially responsible manner. We want training and the hiring of apprentices after their training to be a legal right!

Equal pay for equal work: Good jobs rather than job contracts and temporary agency jobs

In the EU as a whole, less than half of all jobs are permanent and covered by collective agreements. Precarious jobs must be converted into employment relationships subject to social security contributions. The statutory maximum working week should be reduced to 40 hours. We want to introduce mandatory minimum wages throughout the EU amounting to at least 60 per cent of the average wage in the country concerned.

Warding off poverty and safeguarding pensions

DIE LINKE fights for a penalty-free minimum social benefit and a statutory minimum pension amounting to 60 per cent of the local median income. Everyone in the EU should be entitled to a free baseline quota of heat, water and energy, telephone and Internet access. We oppose the privatisation of pension systems. Pensions must not be further reduced and the age of retirement must not be increased.

Anyone who wants Europe must take it from the rich

The wealth of the millionaires in Europe alone is greater than the national debt of all EU countries put together. DIE LINKE fights for a one-time millionaire levy in all EU countries. To prevent tax dumping and ruinous competition between production locations, we need a minimum EU-wide corporate tax rate. Tax evasion must be combated throughout Europe and tax havens must be closed down.

No tax money for casino banks

The assistance loans for indebted countries have been returned almost completely to the banks. The banks can continue as before. DIE LINKE wants to regulate the financial sector throughout the EU and prohibit speculation. We want to socialise big private banks and place them under public management. If new loans are granted they must be made conditional on social factors: The super-rich of the country must share in the costs, the banks must be monitored more closely and spending for the military must be curtailed. Wages, pensions and social benefits must not be reduced. Loans have to be accorded directly by the European Central Bank without other banks profiting from interest rates.

No privatization of public services. No to the free trade agreement with the United States

We want to stop privatisation and strengthen public services. We reject the proposed free trade agreement between the EU and the United States (TTIP). The agreement is being negotiated without the participation of the public and parliaments. It threatens the safety of our food as well as our social security.

We want to ban arms exports

Every weapon finds its war. The EU countries are the biggest arms exporters in the world next to the United States. DIE LINKE wants to ban arms exports EU-wide and develop programmes by which the armaments industry is converted and employment is secured.

For a humane refugee policy

At least 20 000 people have lost their lives in recent years at the external borders of the EU. DIE LINKE fights for a refugee policy that respects human rights and makes all countries accountable. We want to dissolve the FRONTEX and EUROSUR systems for sealing off the EU. No one is illegal!

We want to strengthen democracy and set limits for the business lobby

We want referendums in which citizens throughout the EU can vote on the EU treaties on the same day. We are fighting the influence of the big business lobby on the decisions of the EU.

DIE LINKE gives a voice to those who have no business lobby behind them. Together with the European Left, we are a powerful force for social justice. We ask for your support and your vote in the European election on 25 May 2014.