NO TO POPULIST IDEAS

YES TO DEMOCRATIC RESPONSES
1. Immigration and the Schengen area
2. Posted workers and social dumping
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Yes to democratic responses

After 60 years of peace and prosperity, the European project is under greater threat than it has ever been before.

Successive economic and migration crises, along with terrorism, have given fuel to the populists who accuse Europe of all ills and want to see its demise.

The European Democratic Party (EDP) is fighting constantly, with its active Members of the European Parliament (MEPs), for a European social model that simultaneously guarantees public services and fair competition. This is synonymous with strong and ongoing growth based on research, innovation and sustainable development.

The EDP is a transnational political movement defending the idea of an integrated and sovereign Europe, which through collective action is the only way to keep pace with established and emerging economic powers. It brings together parties, deputies and citizens who want to build a Union that is closer to the people. This is why the EDP wants to rebuild the European project and offer populations new and audacious but credible solutions to define a new path for the future.

Affiliated with the European Democratic Party, whose objectives it supports and complements, the Institute of European Democrats (IED) is an independent political research institute, supported by the European Parliament. It aims to play an active role in restoring and strengthening citizens’ confidence in the European Union, and beyond this, in promoting a united and sovereign Europe.
Abolishing Schengen would threaten security, not guarantee it. An investigation following the latest attacks has shown that the cross-border sharing of information needs improvement, and that there is a lack of coordination between national information services, thus revealing major flaws in the European security system. Reintroducing internal borders would further complicate the fight against terrorism and would cost each Member State several million euros.

Only **two citizens** from non-European countries have been involved in the sixteen major terrorist attacks that Europe has suffered since 2004. It is wrong to conflate refugees with terrorists, because the vast majority of terrorist attacks committed in Paris, Brussels, Nice, Berlin or London are perpetrated by EU citizens in Europe, not by migrants.

**Immigration and the Schengen area**

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The EDP argues for a European border control and coast-guard agency, with wider powers (strengthened Frontex) and strict control over European citizens at the EU’s external borders. In addition to this, the creation of a European intelligence agency should facilitate the exchange of information between Member States.

Never has the Schengen area been in such danger. It must be protected as the guarantor of our freedom and of an open European society. A threat to Schengen is a threat to our safety and prosperity. The Member States must understand that security does not necessarily mean losing sovereignty, as long as we create shared surveillance bodies for our external borders and strengthen internal security legislation.

In the sixteen major attacks that Europe has suffered since 2005, only two of the 33 terrorists involved came from non-European countries.
The phenomenon does not only concern countries with low salaries, because more than half of posted workers come from the richest Member States. Thus, we see large flows between high-salary countries like Germany, France, Belgium, the Netherlands or Luxembourg.

The enforcement directive approved in 2014 aims to bring concrete improvement through the application of the rules. The EU is therefore combating social dumping by fighting fraud and attempts by certain unscrupulous companies to evade regulations.

Populist discourse stigmatising ‘job thieves’ and ‘freeloaders’ exploiting the social system in host countries does stand up to scrutiny of the facts. Only seven in every thousand jobs are occupied by posted workers in the EU.

Posted workers and social dumping

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‘I am defending French workers against immigration, which lowers their salaries.’

Marine Le Pen, Front National MEP
The EDP defends the principle of ‘equal pay for equal work’. It advocates the creation of a European control agency for the ‘posted workers’ directive to combat unfair competition, the establishment of a blacklist of agencies and companies that break the rules, and the creation of a European worker status.

Free movement of people is one of the founding principles of the European venture. This fundamental right for all European workers must be protected. It is a major challenge for Europe, which must ensure it establishes equitable labour standards. Only common action from Member States can guarantee equal treatment for all European workers, posted or otherwise.
Far from benefitting from the social system to the detriment of Europeans, migrants actively contribute to the society they live in. Reliable European studies have emphasised the positive impact of migration on European employment and social security systems. Indeed, the majority of migrants are young, healthy and qualified, and thus compensate for the ageing of the EU population. In Germany, for instance, the birth rate is so low that it cannot replace the population there. At this rate, Germany will lose 15 million inhabitants between now and 2100.

The European social model

The European social model has made our continent one of the most successful on the planet, with nine Member States among the world’s fifteen most prosperous countries. Based on strong social protection and high-quality public services, this system reduces social inequalities and strengthens social cohesion, while facilitating integration.
The EDP wants to promote the values of solidarity and social justice by guaranteeing the principle of reciprocity (every gift must be followed by a counter-gift), by helping underprivileged regions through structural fund policies and by establishing equitable pay.

The European social model offers a true safety net for all EU citizens. Today, however, basic social rights are threatened by a lack of common action. The EU must consolidate a shared pillar of social protection, based on the highest standards of each Member State.

2016 Legatum Prosperity Index

Of the 30 most prosperous countries in the world, 17 are in the EU (9 EU countries in the Top 15) – this figure is higher than in 2014 (15 EU countries in the Top 30), or in 2008 and 2007 (14 EU countries in the top 30).
The consequences of a country leaving the EU are not yet known, but the first reactions of economic stakeholders to Brexit are not encouraging. Many large companies (Goldman Sachs, Lloyd’s) are moving to other European countries. Other heavyweights in the economy (Microsoft, Deutsche Bank) are also seriously considering this. In 2015, the EU was second in the global goods export ranking (% of global volume).

Protecting trade and industry

In 2015, the EU was second in the world goods export ranking (% of global volume).
The EDP advocates integrated industrial and trade policy. To create jobs and revive growth, the EU needs to modernise its industry. To do this, it must rely on its traditional sectors (automobile, aeronautics, chemicals industry...), whilst investing massively in the domains of research and innovation (transport, electricity, nanotechnologies, biotechnology, artificial intelligence, sustainable development). Regulations also need to be simplified in order to facilitate access to global markets for small and medium enterprises.

It is a lack of a common industrial vision that has taken Europe down the path of deindustrialisation. In a time of globalisation, only the EU as a whole has real negotiating power to compete with the United States and the main emerging economies, such as Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS). However, it must stop being naive and equip itself with strong and protective commercial defence tools, like those of the United States, which have not hesitated to take anti-dumping duties up to 200%.
With financial support from the European Parliament