3rd May 2019

Next week, Social Justice Ireland and Trócaire will co-host a hustings event for the Dublin constituency ahead of the European Elections on May 24th. Ahead of this, we have formulated a joint policy platform, with Five Key Policy Asks. They are:

1. Eliminating Poverty

We call on all MEPs to work to agree an EU-wide binding target and strategy to reduce the level of poverty in each country by half from its 2017 level by 2024, with a view to the complete elimination of poverty by 2030 as per SDG #1.

The poverty rate across the EU in 2017 was 16.9 per cent. This should be below 8.5 per cent by 2024, and at (or below) half the current rate in each EU member state. The strategy should include specific targets for children under 18 (20.1 per cent in 2017) and people over 65 (14.6 per cent in 2017).

2. Championing Climate Justice

We call on all MEPs to acknowledge that the EU’s existing 2030 climate targets fall far short of the EU’s fair share of the global effort required to deliver on the Paris Agreement, and that the window of opportunity to avert climate catastrophe is quickly closing. Elected MEPs should:

- Promote an EU agenda on climate action that commits to reducing EU emissions to net zero before 2050, and champion equitable delivery of a net zero global emissions target in its international diplomacy;
- Support the phasing out of extraction and burning of all fossil fuels in Europe as soon as possible, and call on European banks and Member States to follow Ireland’s lead in divesting from fossil fuels, investing instead in a safe and sustainable future.
- Ensure that the EU promotes global and European zero carbon transitions are managed that are timely, just, and benefit the poorest and marginalized members of society by integrating strong social measures and human rights principles and safeguard mechanisms.

3. Policy Coherence on the Sustainable Development Goals

We call on all MEPs to commit to ensuring:

- That the EU budget is fully aligned with the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and is used to advance environmental sustainability, human rights, gender equality and wellbeing within and outside the EU, including through the Multiannual Financial Framework;
- That each policy measure or piece of European legislation being proposed by their parliamentary grouping in Brussels promotes the achievement of at least one of the SDGs, and that the SDG being promoted is clearly highlighted within.

No new policy measure or legislation should hinder the achievement of any of the SDGs, but should instead serve to further their cause. This should also apply to the work of MEPs in budgetary and committee work.

4. Delivery of the European Pillar of Social Rights

We call on all MEPs to act to ensure the delivery of the European Pillar of Social Rights are delivered across the areas of:

- Equal opportunity and access to the labour market;
- Fair working conditions;
- Social protection and inclusion.

5. Supporting UN Treaty on Business and Human Rights

We call on all MEPs to commit to promoting an EU agenda on business and human rights for the next five years that includes:

- Supporting the development of a UN-binding treaty on business and human rights to regulate the activities of transnational corporations
and other business enterprises;

- Ensuring that the European Commission secures a mandate for the negotiation of the parts of the Treaty that fall under EU competence, with appropriate involvement from the European Parliament.

The treaty should ensure the primacy of human rights is provided for and fully implemented in all trade agreements and treaties to which the EU are a party. This should involve:

- Removing investor-state dispute settlement provisions from existing trade and investment agreements, and not concluding any such agreements in the future;
- Ensuring Human rights Impact Assessments are systematically carried out prior to concluding trade and investment agreements, and provide for the suspension or amendment of contractual provisions where these have proved a risk to human rights.

**Tags:**

- Climate Change
- Election
- Environment
- Europe
- European Parliament
- European Union
- Human Rights
- Poverty
- Sustainable Development Goals

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Links

[1] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/publications/register-our-european-election-hustings
[2] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/taxonomy/tags/climate-change
[3] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/taxonomy/tags/election
[4] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/taxonomy/tags/environment
[5] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/taxonomy/tags/europe
[6] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/taxonomy/tags/european-parliament
[7] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/taxonomy/tags/european-union
[8] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/taxonomy/tags/human-rights
[9] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/taxonomy/tags/poverty
[10] https://www.socialjustice.ie/content/taxonomy/tags/sustainable-development-goals