



**Group of the Progressive Alliance of
Socialists & Democrats
in the European Parliament**

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7th October, 2020

Dear President von der Leyen, dear Vice-President Šefčovič,

Ahead of the upcoming adoption of the 2021 Commission Work Programme, please allow us to set out some of our key demands.

Our political group is proud that this Commission has already adopted so many core elements of our progressive programme, and we look forward to continuing in a similar vein over the coming years. However, whereas 2020 was characterised by a predominance of strategy documents and white papers, next year must be the **year of delivery**, and we expect **all major legislative initiatives to be on the table by the end of 2021**, in order to allow the co-legislators ample time to reach agreement before the end of the parliamentary term.

While the annexed table provides plenty of detail on our expectations for the CWP 2021, we would like to highlight in this letter a few of the new headline initiatives we would expect to see.

Firstly, the S&D group strongly reiterates our call to ensure **a proper social dimension to the Green Deal and digital transition**. Despite the commitments made in the Green Deal Communication to ensure a linkage with the European Pillar of Social Rights, there was no mention of this in your SOTEU speech and even the sectoral social policy agenda was only addressed in a very limited way. The social dimension is a crosscutting one which all European Green Deal proposals should encompass in concrete terms and thus proactively combine ecological and social progress inside the green and digital transitions through well-designed policies and legislation.

Secondly, we expect the **action plan for the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights** will include clear and mandatory targets, linked to access to European funds, and be accompanied by proposals including a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy, revision of the temporary agency work directive, a directive to limit the length of the subcontracting chain, a new framework directive on workers' information consultation and participation, and the already-promised digital EU social security number proposal. Such measures should be proposed as early as possible in 2021, in order to take advantage of the Portuguese Presidency during the first half of the year.

Thirdly, in the economic field, as we emerge from the pandemic, it is clear that we will be living in a very different world and the old economic rules will be even less fit-for-purpose than before. **The key questions of public investment and who will pay for the severe economic damage caused by the crisis, must be addressed and the slim window of opportunity to reform our rules must be seized.** We must urgently reform the macro-economic framework and redress the European Semester towards a framework of sustainable development policy coordination, revise

the Growth and Stability Pact, based on the Community Method, including a golden rule for sustainable public investment, and the proposed digital levy must be accompanied by a proposal for minimum effective taxation.

Regarding migration and asylum, following the recent proposals in this field, we expect you to propose next year legislative initiatives on **legal migration and humanitarian visas**, whilst recognising the category of “climate refugee”.

Additionally, we reiterate our strong demand for a legislative proposal on a Rule of Law Mechanism to monitor democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law, with a link to financial sanctions and a strong focus on judicial independence. We must put into action our rhetoric on values.

On the world stage, 2021 must be the year where we fight back against those determined to undermine the rules-based international system, with a strong focus on human rights, global health and fighting disinformation. Our demands include a mandatory EU human rights due diligence instrument, a sufficiently-resourced global EU human rights sanctions mechanism, strong defence of the ICC’s independence and impartiality, the establishment of a European Observatory on prevention, accountability and combating impunity, and an initiative on debt sustainability, including debt relief, designed to save developing countries from excessive debt.

We welcome the planned initiatives on health, and the Health Union, and expect that our proposals for stress tests for national healthcare systems, minimum standards for EU healthcare and the setting up of a European Health Response Mechanism will feature prominently.

Throughout the whole work programme, **gender issues must be mainstreamed**, and more specifically, we call for the legislative proposal to prevent and combat gender-based violence to include all forms of gender-based violence, including cyber and online harassment, and for gender-based violence to be added to the list of EU crimes.

We look forward to your positive response to our input, and to the continued positive engagement between the S&D Group and your Commission on all these issues and more besides, over the coming months and years.

Kind regards,

Iratxe García Pérez, President

Simona Bonafè, Parliamentary Secretary

S&D Group