

Plenary “Building the forum together”

1. Why such a forum : The speakers expressed their satisfaction and gratitude for the organization of this timely forum, for example at a time when the multi-faceted crisis in Europe is not over, where structural problems persist for a lack of political will to solve them.
Today, Europe is almost exclusively an area of austerity, social deregulation, the dismantling of labor law and the closing of borders for refugees and migrants. This situation creates the risk of leading the peoples of Europe into the trap of making the neo-liberal right seem as an alternative to the extreme right-wing, xenophobic and reactionary parties – see the presidential elections in France. It is also a risk for solidarity between European nations.
2. Target of the Forum: This first meeting should be the first step towards creating a permanent forum to pool the richness of diversity that is present here, such as left-wing, ecologist and progressive forces. The idea is that this forum meets once a year in different European cities to develop convergences to fight neoliberal domination. These ongoing debates will strengthen the left by building a common political culture as well as joint action programs.
3. Proposals and decisions to be taken: the debates could be organized around three main themes.
 - 3.1. Democracy: what is the profile of the people we want to represent, what is our relationship to power and institutions, the euro zone, CETA TTIP international treaties, etc.
 - 3.2. Equality: feminism (reproductive rights, fight against violence, equality at work, defense of public services), taxation, social protocol.
 - 3.3 Ecology, especially energy.

For the follow-up to this first meeting: without ignoring the European elections it is important to see beyond.

It is a question of deciding in principle to establish this permanent forum, about its functioning and if necessary to envisage a future forum.

Plenary “One Europe for peace and freedoms”

From Turkey to Colombia, Palestine to Cyprus the state of a world and of a Europe facing misery, oppression, occupations and wars have been described, analyzed and confronted by the delegates attending the forum.

The first call that emerged was to refuse the ideological trap were the current leaders of the continent want to trap us. No, the current flow of migration is not a threat nor an unsolvable problem. Xenophobia, racism, discrimination, building walls, settling borders all around the continent is definitely not an acceptable perspective for Europe at the 21st century. No militarized or so called smart border at the external borders of the EU or inside it. We should refuse the establishment of a border within Ireland that would harm the effectiveness of the Good Friday agreement after the Brexit, we should refuse the attempt by some governments to forbid the welcoming of migrants.

This offensive of the far right appears at the same moment where a reinforcement of the militarization of the EU occurs. Following the 2016's Bratislava summit, and in line with the Permanent Structured Cooperation which is contained in the Lisbon treaty there is a push toward the establishment of a more integrated defense policy at the EU level. As progressives, pacifists, leftists, for the future of our continent we should refuse such a road. Europe could and should become a land of peace. In order to achieve this goal, denouncing the militarization as a matter of principle is necessary but is not enough. Indeed, concrete mobilizations are to come. First, we should pressure our governments, for them either not to participate to the Permanent Structured Cooperation on defense, either to withdraw from it. Second, we should denounce the budgetary choice of increasing the military budget of every EU country to 2% of GDP, following the NATO guidelines. Third Europe is broader than EU, all the countries, all the continents of Europe should be integrated in a pan European peace project through a pan European peace and security conference. What was possible in Helsinki is still possible now. Fourth, following this pan European perspective NATO should be dissolved and Europe become a denuclearized zone.

This reference to NATO is key. Europe could not be a harbor of peace in a burning world. To this regard the recent award of the peace Nobel Prize to the ICAN campaign is a good news that we should emphasize and popularize. More concretely we should pressure our government to undersign the recent treaty on the abolition of the Nuclear Weapon. Peace in Europe and Peace in the world can only be established if there is a sustainable and social oriented economy. In this regard our global action should tackle, priority, at least to central issues. First tax avoidance is destroying economies all over our planet. Governments are able to organize big rounds of discussion on the climatic issues, which are necessary, the COPs. We believe that a Global Fiscal COP could be undertaken. However, we are not going to wait for the governments to establish those big meetings. On the contrary, together with unionists, grass root movements, we can start from now this process. Second, Free Trade Agreements are destroying local economies and societies, particularly in Africa and Latin America. Big campaigns against CETA and TTIP, should be launched and continued. Cooperation is necessary, not competition. This will help to stabilize population against forced exile.

Last but not least, to achieve those goals this forum appears more than necessary. This good initiative should be continued, toward a more integrated, cooperative, open, forum.

Plenary “Labour and social rights in Europe”

What is the actual situation?

Contracts: In Europe we can see an outbreak of precarious contracts, especially of contracts for 0 hours, in which you don't know neither when nor how much money you will get nor where you will work, like in the United Kingdom. One can identify a drop in fixed term contracts.

Layoffs: administrative requirements for layoffs are removed (like in Spain), layoff indemnities are reduced in all countries. Obstacles are put for the reintegration of workers like in the latest laws in Italy.

Collective agreements: Today the hours, the salary, the extra working hours,... are negotiated in the companies. It is imperative to recuperate the collective bargaining in Greece.

Unemployment indemnities: They have been reduced in all Europe.

Informal work is increasing and the situation is especially severe when it comes to youth and women.

Pensions: All around Europe the age to retire has increased and the correction mechanisms have been eliminated as there are many people with very low pensions or no pensions at all.

Right to strike is threatened

Salaries: have dropped all around Europe

Inequality, in and between the countries, and one has to highlight the bad situation in the Eastern European countries.

Migrant workers are especially disfavoured being treated as second class citizens.

The line separating the worker and the destitute is slowly but surely diminishing.

Demands presented:

To work along the line of **changing the Social Pillar**, which will be approved in Gothenburg. Change the paradigm: **modify the treaties so that the social protocols stay within** the treaties.

Eliminate austerity policies

Change the directive about free circulation so that there shall be no second class citizens.

We need common initiatives:

Guaranteed salaries through collective bargaining agreements which don't fall below the poverty line. Social Protocol as condition sine qua non. Public investment, gender equality, just transition model. The trade unions on their own cannot cope; we need to **generate alliances against neoliberalism**. The liberalism presents itself as the only possible alternative, and facing it we need to present a **project of common social change as objective**. It is illusory to think that one could

struggle against this situation in only one country. We have to **search for points of convergence**, of unity between parties, even if that is not enough, as we need to develop a coherent strategy.

We have a choice: common projects, set aside differences and talk about what unites us. We don't leave the space for the extreme right, we don't leave the poor to the extreme right.

One foot in the institutions and thousands in the streets.

We need **more unity** and a legislation which accompanies it. There is a neoliberal attack towards the welfare state and we need to influence the European institutions faced with this explosion of inequalities.

Unite the social, labour and political rights.

Protection against layoffs, application of the 58 of the ILO.

We have special attention to **women**, to migrant women, to women in charge of families, as they endure the worst conditions.

The line between the workers and destitute is getting ever so weaker. We generate **alliances between the poor and the workers** for a dignified life, not of survival, where the people a guaranteed future. The helpless human being has to be in the centre of any political decision made.

Enhance the **cooperatives and the social economy** in order to improve the workers' situation.

Work closer with the trade unions.

Proposed actions:

Support the strike in Norway of the 15th of November.

Campaign in order to demand collective bargaining in Greece.

- Campaign in all Europe so that the Social Protocol shall be part of the treaties as condition sine qua non.
- Platform in 2019 which starts to effectuate changes in Europe.
- Campaign for salaries, to be launched on the 1st of May:
 1. Minimum wage in each European country
 2. Decent salary
 3. Distribution of work
 4. Retirement at 60 years of age and better pensions.

Plenary “Towards a sustainable development model”

- No separation between economic, ecological and social issues.
- Therefore to build a more sustainable model, there are some measures that should be taken under consideration:
 - Regaining power over the monetary system, especially the European Central Bank to finance ecological and social protection, public investment, to be based on some other basis than profit.
 - Be aware that transition to more sustainable model is costly; even bigger for eastern countries.
- Need to develop appropriate regulations. But not just to have laws but to assure their implementation
 - Industrial policy
 - Ecological and social priorities
 - Investment in infrastructures, mobility education, housing, health...
 - Participation of workers
 - Learn from local experiences, inspiring initiatives from Greece
 - Democratization of the economy and the need to preserve and appropriate the commons
 - Link to fight against austerity and the political dimension the fight to protect the environment, with austerity there are not environmental policies
 - Reducing working time in order to have more balance participation of men and women in caring duties and also to enable an alternative way of live and consumption
- Need of International cooperation and altermundialism
- Importance of CULTURE; it is a driver to enable new styles of lives, thinking, solutions... and to increase participation
- But we have an unsolved question:
 - Develop sustainable growth or
 - on the other hand, stop growing as the planet is finite, reduce our consumption of energy and goods without renouncing to improve conditions of life