

# F I R D ' M E N S C H E N A N E U R O P A

The CSV commits to Europe. A Europe that protects fundamental and human rights. A Europe that keeps its promises. A Europe that offers its citizens the best possible protection in an increasingly globalised world. A Europe that, with newly acquired self-confidence, benefits from opportunities offered by globalisation and asserts itself internationally. A Europe that serves its people, not financial interests. A Europe with functioning institutions and politics that make an impact within its own borders and outside of them.

The CSV's election programme is laid out for the people of Europe. It is a programme for all of us who see Europe as a practical and palpable added value to our daily lives. It is a programme for a better functioning and more effective European Union. It is a programme that seeks to create a Union that can assert itself as a global competition force and can defend its interests, values, and principles. The CSV represents a Europe of added value and results.

## *FOR THE PEOPLE ...*

For people to think of Europe as something positive, it has to noticeably improve their daily lives. Despite the fact that the European Union has a limited sphere of action in certain areas and cannot politically act in other areas at all, it has to address the concerns of the people. Economic development is not an end in itself and the European Union has to be a synonym for a kind of social security that doesn't exist anywhere else in the world. It has to stand for labour laws that protect people and guarantee planning security.

In the future, Europeans will be travel around more within the Union. Therefore, the Union has to support job mobility as much as the mobility of students, teachers, professors, research scientists, and artists. Initiatives like the free interrail-card for young people make it easier for people to get to know other parts of the continent. Already existing student exchange programmes have proven their worth over a long time.

Improved job mobility, however, is only possible if there are European social security mechanisms that are able to pay out pensions that people have earned in different European countries. Hypothetical calculations are of no use, it has to become a real and functioning

mechanism. Entering and exiting national social security systems should be made easier and a minimum wage adjusted to the living costs of each country is a must.

The free movement of people is being put under pressure, but the CSV firmly believes in the four freedoms of the internal market and restrictions are not an option for us.

The CSV will prioritise the social dimension of Europe. We will actively work on reducing the risk of poverty and social insecurity, which are problems mostly faced by the young and the elderly. In the 21st century, poverty in Europe is unacceptable. European sociopolitical measures will actively combat those issues. We want to be an active part of a European pillar of social rights, so that principles become realities.

The internal market has to become a reality for people living in Luxembourg and that means getting rid of existing concessions with other countries when it comes to product imports. We also have a lot of work to do when it comes to communications. Data transmission, just like roaming, has to be generalised. Geoblocking as well as geographical restrictions when it comes to online purchases of services and goods have to be abolished entirely. Creativity within the digital internal market has to be protected and people doing creative work have to be paid. However, such a protection cannot be realised with upload filters that limit the functioning of the internet as we know it and the freedom of expression.

Freedom of expression has to extend to political participation. People who possess the Union citizenship are allowed to vote in local and European elections. Beyond that, however, participation in public life has to be made easier for them. As Europeans, they should hence be allowed to fully articulate their political opinions in the country they live in.

The European Union has to face its future head on. Europe has always been a pioneer when it comes to climate policy. Europe has to keep that energy going. We need to meet the emission targets that we have set for ourselves at the prescribed time, despite the fact that these measures still will not be enough to prevent temperatures from rising drastically. This circumstance should however encourage Europe to innovate its economic reasoning.

Although electric mobility definitely means that we have made progress, it is not a definite solution. Promoting an economy based on hydrogen could be a way of reducing carbon

emissions faster and more effectively. If we then combined hydrogen-based energy with wind and solar energies, the continent could quickly switch to renewable energies. We would, of course, have to make sure that everyone has the possibility of producing such energies. Moreover, we would also have to make sure that they are transported to consumers throughout Europe. Modernisation and connectivity to neighbouring countries are therefore a must.

Europe can and should be a global centre of competence and excellence in the field of medical research and the research and fight against cancer in particular. Europeans have to address issues around artificial intelligence in order to embed them within high ethical standards. These investments have to be accounted for in the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework.

After long periods of stating the aim, the European Union owes itself and its citizens an investment plan for a trans-european transport network, in particular for the extension and technical adjustment of railway networks. These have to make the movement of people and goods faster and more reliable. Such a plan is sustainable and fits the climate policy goals the European Union has set for itself.

Europe has to stay the continent on which water, electricity, and heat are provided for and monitored by public institutions. Everyone should be able to afford these basic needs; privatisation of water supplies cannot be on our agenda.

We support the Digital Europe programme initiative taken by the European Commission, which lays out a plan to offer free WIFI in public places for each municipality in Europe until 2022.

Europe often also works remarkably well on a local level. The Greater Region that Luxembourg is part of is a space in which cross-border exchange and cooperation function seamlessly. Municipalities are often important cross-border actors and citizens from both sides experience Europe in the form of joint initiatives and activities. These joint efforts are important, because we can make the most out of cross-border cooperation within the Greater Region. We will pay particular attention to creating a Greater Region Labour Market Agency as well as a better cross-border cooperation in terms of trade supervision (ITM). We want to make sure that the

new European employment authority gets competences and means to enforce existing social and labour market regulations which, in turn, will benefit European workers.

Culture is a significant element of our lives that brings people together and makes us understand one another. Europe thus has to invest in culture and cultural events. Music, the performing arts, cinema, theatre productions, and literature have to be promoted. European culture that people can experience shows them the vitality and importance of the different cultures within the Union.

The 9th May should become a public festival on which we celebrate unity in diversity and strengthen the European identity. Every identity needs a common tale, so the European success story should be playfully communicated to every European child and adolescent.

The EU should be valued more within European education systems. It is hence equally important to boost the European Parliament Ambassador School programme.

We want a Europe that provides accessibility to people with disabilities (Design for all) and want to facilitate their entry into all areas of society. Every barrier that makes an autonomous life difficult, has to be gradually removed. Private providers of goods and services have to be every bit as much responsible as public authorities in that respect.

Millions of Europeans are active citizens. They volunteer in sports, art, development cooperation, civil protection programmes, fire services, numerous youth organisations, and European movements. Such civic engagements have to be appreciated and recognised as truly valuable. In European politics, concerns, suggestions, and demands of civil society have to be taken seriously and integrated into policy-making. European civil society is a cornerstone of European reality.

#### *... AND FOR EUROPE*

European citizens want an optimally functioning and functional European Union. They want a Union that implements solutions and reaches goals. The EU has committed to create a Capital Markets Union, a European Banking Union, and an Energy Union. These commitments have to become a reality. If the President of the Commission, who is elected by the European

Parliament, were to be president of the European Council as well, more coherence, visibility, and accountability could be guaranteed to citizens.

In order to be able to meet its requirements and strategic plans, the EU needs a budget that meets real needs. At the moment, the budget only equals 1% of the EU's economic output and hence gradually has to be increased. As already stated in the treaty, resources acquired through a European tax, are needed. These could be levied on digital transactions and on CO2 intensive products. In times of global climate movements, a European tax on flights and shipping seems legitimate.

Tax policy however still remains in the competence of member states and in that respect, we hold on to the principle of unanimity.

European policy makers have to move towards policy making that does not overwhelm. Policy making, especially European policy making, has to make sense and has to be perceived as necessary. It cannot be something that is perceived as harassment. Future policies have to be tested in order to determine whether they are compatible with people's daily lives and the functioning of companies. We want to reduce bureaucracy and improve quality of life. Hence, policy making cannot be reduced to political commitment, but has to be anchored in legal regulations that are effective and applicable.

For Europe to be able to deliver, it has to become more efficient. We want a Europe that is capable of making decisions with less bureaucracy.

We want more European solutions to foreign policy. This should include European defence policy. The European Union still is more of a 'global payer' than it is a 'global player'. We want this to change. Europe has to become more visible and effective in the world, especially when European interests are at stake. Europe simply has to take on more responsibility in that respect. Europe has to vigorously fight for its interests. Especially (but not only) when faced with superpowers like China, Russia, and the United States. Nevertheless, we still commit to NATO and to the western community of values. They guarantee democracy, the rule of law, and human rights.

We are responsible for our security. Europe has to build defence capacities without the support of NATO partners. Therefore, we want a gradual creation of a European defence identity with a number of structures and policies. The aim of a European defence initiative is not a uniform European army, but a deployable compound of European armed forces, capable of operating together. This compound should become an equal partner to NATO. A common EU armament policy is therefore indispensable. The creation of a new security apparatus would also include security from cyberattacks.

Especially within the borders of the EU, security has to be guaranteed and perceived as such by its citizens, so that they can believe in a Europe that protects them. We dismiss populist claims that praise security over freedom, because security without freedom and freedom without security do not exist. We have to continue to strengthen European security forces such as EUROPOL, EUROJUST, and the Schengen information system. Furthermore, a European prosecuting authority has to be made operational and given competences in the fight against terrorism. The communication and cooperation between European security forces needs to be substantially improved. It is unacceptable that a person who commits a crime in one European country can freely travel to another one to continue committing crimes.

The protection of European external borders is a central matter. European border protection and coast guards therefore have to be substantially extended, whereas borders within the Schengen area should only be controlled during exceptional situations, such as during critical major events. The fact that there are border controls between member states that serve no purpose, other than that of symbolic showcasing, are unacceptable.

Europe is a continent of migration. It used to be a continent of emigration back when people had to flee poverty and lack of perspective. Today, it is quite the opposite. Europe is attractive for people who live in bad situations, are the victims of persecution, and fear for their lives. The attractiveness of Europe is linked to our high standards; however, we cannot absorb all the woes of the world. Nevertheless, we owe it to our heritage of migration to find a solution. We should hence opt for a controlled immigration policy – not just with asylum seekers. We have to pave paths for legal immigration: for students on Erasmus Plus programmes, for exchange programmes for craftsmen and qualified workers, who would like to succeed in Europe. A limited number of people, who can and want to contribute to our society, should be

given the opportunity to immigrate to Europe legally. Europe is not a fortress. It is a community based on the rule of law.

Unfortunately, the migration phenomenon on the Mediterranean Sea has become a criminal business that exploits the fears, hopes, expectations, and dreams of people from poor backgrounds. In that respect, it is paramount to put a stop to the actions of modern human traffickers. Their networks have to be destroyed and their finances dried out. The EU has to assume responsibility for this problem.

Anyone from a non-European socio-cultural background has to be given the chance to integrate and adopt to European culture. Europe is not only a continent of hope and refuge, but also a continent that values human dignity and human rights. People who move to Europe have to understand and accept the way we live, our values, our principles, and our norms. Someone who cannot commit to constitutional and legal systems and to equality between men and women, cannot stay. Europe has to be fully committed to its values and has to function according to European rules. Any person who has the wish to move to Europe, should internalise our values.

Solidarity is also a European value that has to be applied within the Union and with our dealings with the outside world. Especially when it comes to solidarity with Mediterranean neighbouring states.

European politics has to work with Muslim citizens to make clear that Islam is absolutely compatible with European constitutional and social orders. It lies in the EU's interest that a tolerant, integrated, and European Islam is created. After all, there are 20 million Muslims living and working in Europe who actively contribute to European societies. Therefore, in collaboration with specialised higher education institutions in the Muslim world, there should be an education for imams in Europe, that teaches European Islam.

The rule of law is a European invention. We want to protect it from populist parties within the European Union who seek to destroy it. The EU has to monitor the respect for rule of law and sanction the countries that do not adhere to standards. Those who seek to replace common standards with state despotism, question the independence of the judiciary, and disrespect

the functioning of democratic institutions have to be sanctioned. In this domain, we want European structural funds to be dependent on the respect for the rule of law.

*FOR THE PEOPLE OF EUROPE*

The European Union has 500 million inhabitants. A small number when compared to a world population that is currently moving towards 8 billion. A significant number of that world population lives within rising economic powers such as China, India, Indonesia, Brazil, Russia, and Turkey. Tomorrow we will have to add South Africa, Nigeria, and Ethiopia to the fold. Global competitive pressure on Europe is increasing and no-one can defend our interests better than ourselves.

We need to accept the fact that the rules of competition have changed. European nation states need not compete with each other anymore, but should focus on the competition on other continents. Traditional competition law that would forbid mergers between economic heavyweights within given sectors does not necessarily make sense anymore. Especially if such a merger were to guarantee that a European business win a bid for building a high-speed train network against international competition. Europe can only succeed if it is united.

Globalisation has become a reality and we have to adjust to that reality. We are convinced that multilateralism is the way forward and believe in free, fair trade, and international organisations such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), who seek to structure trade relations between countries and organisations such as the European Union. Nevertheless, this organisation also needs reforming to make sure it becomes more efficient and gets the necessary competences to interfere in certain situations. Arbitrary actions from big economic actors make such measures a necessity. Trade agreements between the EU and other economic powers are regulators of globalisation.

The EU has to stick to its standards and fight for them at a global level. This only works if European standards are adapted by international organisations. These standards comprise legal jurisdiction over trade areas and should be handled by a multilateral court and not by private courts of arbitration who can question political decisions. A substantial part of European standards are environmental and social standards.

We have to protect Europeans from the negative impacts of globalisation. Among other things, that means rigorously applying the principle of reciprocity. We cannot give a third country access to the European internal market, if we have no access to theirs. The fact that Chinese firms build infrastructures (that are paid for by European funds) while European companies at the same time have no equal access to the Chinese market, is unacceptable. In general, it is unacceptable that foreign companies undermine strategic European infrastructures. Europe has to stop selling off ports and airports to Chinese actors. When our security is at stake, Europeans have to stand up for themselves. Over the centuries, European were always able to innovate and pioneer. There is no reason whatsoever to give up on those qualities now. Europe has to give itself the financial resources to perform when it comes to research and development in all areas. We have to become one of the big actors in the digital sector. We need a Europe of researchers and an ambitious digital plan that will allow us to structure the communication and economy of the future, so that we do not have to rely on others.

The digital sector will offer new innovation opportunities and will create jobs. Existing jobs in classic fields might at the same time be in danger. Therefore, it is only fair that heavyweights within the sector pay appropriate tax to the EU. That tax could, in turn, be added to the European budget to supply the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund, which helps companies and workers, who have lost their jobs because of globalisation. It helps people to find new orientations by financing their new professional ambitions. A European digital tax will have to be a priority for the next legislative period.

The European economy needs sustainable and qualitative growth. We want to build on the success of the European investment plan, the so-called Juncker-Plan. We want a sustainable social market economy that keeps people fully employed. We especially want to support small and medium sized companies.

In a world of progressing digitalisation, we have to protect workers and their rights throughout the Union. We have to make sure that workers have the right to not be available after a given time.

Globalisation also has a great impact on farming and agriculture. We want a modern European agriculture that guarantees the quality and security of our food and fulfils our needs. European

agricultural policy has to be simplified in order to cater to the needs of those with increasing dietary awareness.

Farmers and winegrowers are a substantial part of the climate sector and actively participate in species and water protection. The market only compensates these contributions to a very limited extent. If food production is to remain stable, we need more investments in public research, education, and compensation payments to reach our goals in rural development. Here, we especially want to involve young farmers. Europe has to protect its own food market by imposing higher customs on foreign products that are also grown on our proper soil. Because of European standards and higher wages, European products are, in this respect, inevitably more expensive. Unfair competition practices need to be restrained. When it comes to food production, we strongly believe in the precautionary principle. We need to be able to provide for ourselves.

As a significant part of sustainable politics, environment and species protection as well as animal welfare have to become top priorities for Europe. Animal transport, for instance, has to function under stricter rules and demands from regional and local slaughterhouses have to be taken seriously.

Consumer behaviour has to change everywhere, not just in Europe. The littering of the oceans has to be stopped and air pollution in metropolitan areas drastically reduced. Destroying the basis of our existence is not an option.

Africa is evolving swiftly, especially when looking at the demographic growth of some nations. Economies, however, cannot keep up with the rapidly growing populations. African nations hence urgently need support in building economic and government structures that could develop normative behaviour. Economies and transactions have to be formalised, which requires a functioning and possibly mobile banking system. Only then will it be possible to levy taxes that can feed state budgets that can, in turn, be redistributed. Only then will it be possible for state administrations to function and for systems with a basis in the rule of law to assert themselves. Only then will it be possible to sustainably tackle problems of extreme demographic growth. When a state functions normally, demographics normalise. Europe has

to offer assistance in all of the above mentioned areas. To move away from the current dependence, development cooperation has to turn into a partnership.

Long story short: Europe has to become more humane and we want to focus on the people of Europe, on their fears and worries. More importantly, we want to focus on their hopes and dreams. We want to make Europe attractive by producing results and a clear added value to the daily lives of its citizens. We want more cooperation inside and outside of European borders. Europeans will only have a chance to face tomorrow's globalised world if we stand together. We want to take these opportunities together and fight for a better future.

*Fir d'Mënschen an Europa ... an zu Lëtzebuerg!*