

Resolution adopted at the EPP Congress, Dublin (Ireland), 6th -7th March 2014

From Reform to Growth and Jobs – people are at the heart of our agenda

Today Europe represents about 7% of the world's population. We produce 22% of the world's GDP and account for about 50% of the world's social expenditure. To maintain our high standard of living we need to reform our economies. We have to become even more competitive and attractive for investment. This is the only way to ensure that the people of Europe will have good jobs in the future. Europe needs to be pro-reform to be a global leader.

- In the 2014 European elections the electorate faces a choice. Either we continue to increase public spending and debt burdens or we reduce our expenditure while at the same time improving our economies. **The choice stands between "Spenderity" or "Growth".**
- **The EPP stands for a clear "Growth" agenda.** Throughout the economic and financial crisis we have shown that it is possible to reduce debt and deficit levels which are detrimental for jobs and social welfare systems, while at the same time creating new opportunities for job creation and economic growth by reforming our economies. This has made our economies increasingly competitive and attractive for investors. We can only secure our high social standards in Europe if we reform our economies and produce goods which are demanded on global markets.
- Other governments in Europe tried to respond to the crisis with a "Spenderity" agenda. Spending more public money and increasing the already high debt and deficit levels was a fatal blow to these economies and led to higher unemployment, higher interest rates and undermined social welfare systems. This negatively affected social stability in these countries. **Countries which have postponed reforms, while increasing public spending, are worse off today than before the crisis.** Public spending shall be directed primarily to sectors which benefit citizens and which stimulate further growth and development.
- **We believe in people and their individual freedom.** Our vision offers people a clear prospect of a better future. Therefore, the EPP will continue to promote reforming economies to enable more growth and job creation. We will continue to tackle all causes of the crisis and not merely offer quick fixes to some problems. Our economies can only grow if there exists a global demand for our products. Only competitive economies can attract investment. This is the only way to ensure good jobs for our citizens.

- Jobs are primarily created by the private sector. This will only happen if companies trust the economic framework in which they operate. Therefore, **we need to create the right framework for companies to invest and create jobs**. The EPP also stands for promoting a stronger entrepreneurial spirit.
- **Education systems have to be modernised, so that they respond to the needs of the labour market** – pupils have to acquire those skills which they need to succeed. The private sector needs to be involved in the education of young people through dual vocational training; but it is the obligation of policy makers to put the right education policy framework in place. Opening up the Single Market stands at the heart of our reform agenda. In order to tap Europe's full potential as the largest Single Market in the world, we have to eliminate obstacles that prevent the free movement of services, people, capital and goods.
- **EPP proposes modern and flexible labour market policies**. We will create incentives for highly qualified Europeans to be employed in the private sector. Their knowledge and creativity is the key for creating innovative and competitive economies.
- We also need to devote more attention to the **inclusion of older workers in the labour market**. Only a comprehensive approach by all relevant stakeholders can create an environment that makes it highly attractive for older workers to stay in the labour force. We want appropriate incentives for active and healthy ageing at work, eliminating prejudices, developing access to further training programmes, promoting innovative and flexible work schemes and ensuring the compatibility of work and care responsibilities.
- The EPP supports the **industrial renewal of Europe**. A competitive and future-oriented European industrial base is essential for the European economy. A powerful industrial base will make Europe more crisis resilient in the future.
- The EPP will continue advocating for the **reduction of bureaucracy** and will make regulations on all levels (European, national and regional) less burdensome. This will ease the way of doing business in Europe, especially for SMEs which are at the heart of our priorities. This notably includes the simplification of rules for public procurement, improvement of SMEs access to public contracts and simplification of accounting standards.
- We do not want the state to regulate every aspect of doing business. **The state shall only create the framework in which businesses can develop**; it should protect them from abuses. In this regard, the EPP aims to fully implement the Small Business Act in

the interest of European SMEs and start-up companies. It should take no more than 3 days to found a company in any EU Member State.

- The EPP will ensure that the **regulation of European banks is completed** in such way that banks fulfil their mission of financing the real economy. A small companies' access to finance shall not be dependent on the country of origin of that company. A strong banking union is essential for the European economy.