



PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

16-19 January 2017



Gabi Zimmer - President

European Parliament presidential elections and 'European Pillar of Social Rights'

On the upcoming elections:

For the first time in years, there is a chance that the new president of the European Parliament will not be decided through secret deals by the 'very Grand Coalition' - but from a free, democratic vote by all elected members of the Parliament. The European Parliament is at the core of European democracy with all its deficiencies. It is incumbent of this house to uphold democracy by ending secret deals between the big groups - and to include smaller groups and individual members elected by EU citizens.

We therefore envision our presidential candidates as the alternative: for the full participation of citizens and for the respect of minorities. As we have seen, a strong president does not automatically make a strong Parliament. What we need is a strong Parliament vis-à-vis the other institutions. With the new Rules of Procedure now in place, we fear that smaller groups will be excluded further. Therefore, we insist upon the new EP Bureau with its vice-presidents to reflect all political opinions which respect democratic rules and values.

On the Social Pillar:

At the beginning of his mandate, Juncker's Commission promised a 'Social Pillar' for the EU. However, the proposals presented in March 2016 were very weak. A pillar must be made of substance. If the EU once again fails to deliver on its social promises, it will fail. We urgently need a social EU! The Parliament's priorities for the 'Social Pillar' should be: EU accession to the European Social Charter; decent working conditions; lifting all children out of poverty; and national minimum wage targets. In the vote, we must prevent the EPP and others to undermine meaningful proposals before the Pillar could be built properly. The Parliament has got to send a very strong message to the Commission and the Council.



Eleonora Forenza MEP - Italy

GUE/NGL European Parliament presidential candidate

Europe needs more democracy - not less. My candidacy is for those who want to build another Europe; where this Parliament is central to the European project and with the full participation of its citizens in the political process.

Having a truly democratic Europe means radically changing the current set-up in the European Union whilst accepting the failure of the current model based on neoliberalism, austerity, budget constraint, sovereign debts and blackmails.

In addition, the lack of recognition of the right to work and the minimum income - particularly in southern Europe - must be reversed.

Similarly, an oversight of fundamental rights for women and migrants are all elements which must be changed inside the EU where a third of women have suffered physical or psychological abuse.

GUE/NGL Press Briefing: Tuesday 17/01/2017 @ 14.30 EP Press Room LOW N-1/201

Gabi Zimmer – GUE/NGL President – European Parliament presidential elections

Dimitrios Papadimoulis - Candidate for European Parliament Vice-President

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Dimitrios Papadimoulis - Greece

GUE/NGL European Parliament Vice-Presidential candidate

I'm honoured that my political group, GUE/NGL, has put my name forward for the second time during this parliamentary term as their vice-presidential candidate.

My goal as Vice-President of the European Parliament is to continue to serve this institution and the citizens of the European Union; and to respect and promote the ideas and principles of participation, transparency and democratic accountability.

I have always tried to achieve this vision by supporting collective work, unifying efforts and respecting diversity.

Since July 2014, the European Parliament has faced growing challenges that have put the future of the European project in doubt. The economic crisis has deepened; cohesion has weakened; unanimous solidarity over the refugee crisis remains unfulfilled. Such challenges have worsened over the past years – and we must do better to address them.

I would like to count on the support of all the democratic, progressive and green voices in the European Parliament - together - in order to keep our work more efficient. At the end of the day, we can only succeed together and to achieve that, we must address the growing concerns of European citizens - constituents who have elected us and whom we represent.

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