



REPORT OF THE PLENARIES AND ASSEMBLIES

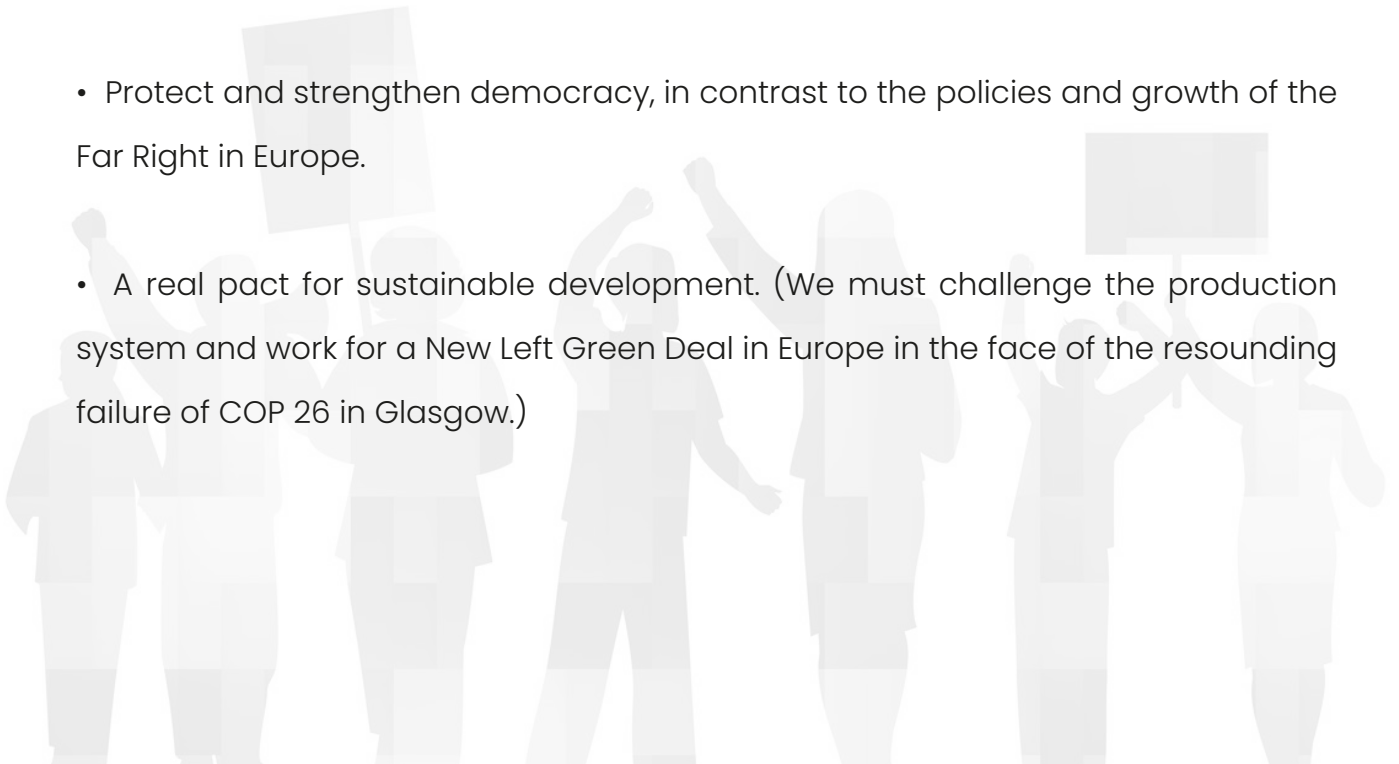
Plenary

Socio-economic problems in a post-pandemic world

The pandemic has resulted in further casualisation of labour and has exacerbated the problem of climate change, not to mention the profits big multinational pharmaceutical companies are making out of vaccines.

Proposals for a way out of this crisis:

- Protect and strengthen democracy, in contrast to the policies and growth of the Far Right in Europe.
- A real pact for sustainable development. (We must challenge the production system and work for a New Left Green Deal in Europe in the face of the resounding failure of COP 26 in Glasgow.)



- Improve public services:
 - Less investment in arms and more funding for health systems, which must be publicly-funded and free at the point of need.
 - More taxes on big business.
- Greater protection of workers' and migrants' rights.
- We must focus on the significance of the fact that it is big corporations who are benefiting from science and technology and not the people who are supporting the system with their taxes.
- We must stand up to big pharma and continue to support citizens' initiatives such as #Right2Cure, demanding vaccines for all and forcing the EU to stop pandemic profiteering.
- The way out of this crisis will not be through neoliberal measures that erode workers' rights.



Plenary

Strategies for Democracy and Peace in Dangerous Times – Common struggles against the far right, militarisation and for real democracy in a global crisis

This session demonstrated that there is space for exchange and convergence between the political families on many points and that building bridges is important. There was a common understanding that Democracy is more than electoral processes and parliamentary representation.

During our discussion we heard firstly about the dangers and the devastating results of politics and policies hegemonized by the far-right. Even in Greece, where the Leadership of neo-nazi Golden Dawn is now behind bars, accused of constituting a criminal cartel, the current conservative government still serves far right and racist narratives when implementing social policies or migration policies. This trend is observed in all European countries. Neo-fascism has many faces and is not as visible as we know it.


Economic democracy and social equality, together with gender democracy are the basis for the democratic society that we envision. The past and present show that globalized financial capitalism is not capable of handling of either economic or political crises. “This system is not legitimized” we heard, during the exchange of the panel. The important role of civic society was emphasized, along with bottom-up and participatory democracy and redistribution of power. This doesn't necessarily mean nationalization, but rather socialization of the means of production. Thus, participatory, inclusive democracy at the workplaces is also crucial eg. Representation of workers no matter their citizenship status in the unions.



It was pointed out, that when we speak about social, economic, and liberal democracy, we should not neglect the democratization of knowledge and science. Currently humanity struggles with global crises like the COVID19 pandemic, or the climate change. As the pandemic demonstrates, for these global problems the solutions can only be global and can only be found if we prioritize life over profit, globally. Which means that we should not be governed by profit driven decisions and decision-makers, but rather share intellectual property of inventions that are beneficial to society – like the vaccines and relevant medicine. Knowledge should become a common, and help us with tools to confront the upcoming and current crisis democratically and in solidarity. The pandemic should not be governed by profit and thus the patents on vaccines and medicine need to be released. This would be a first step, towards the minimum of Europe's responsibility towards the Global South and opening the way for equal global access to vaccines.

Peace, security, and safety are more than the absence of violence and war and militarization. The military industrial complex not only fuels war and injustice. It also contributes dramatically to the carbo emissions that drive climate change. The climate crisis makes the necessity of non-militaristic security concepts very urgent.

The ecological question – as addressed during the panel- is the question of human survival. Next to genocides, we need to discuss ecocide: our ecological suicide, for which the Global South is little responsible but will bear the most severe consequences. Similarly, migration politics and refugee rights cannot only be discussed from a moral point of view but need to be analysed as a question of class. In a global capitalist system, the Wretched of the Earth should not be divided by nationalities and civic statuses, but united in organizing for a democratic socio-ecological transition in their workplaces.



Although there was not much time to discuss more in depth, many convergences were observed and there was agreement on the need for a new concept describing not only the state of the world, but common future visions.

Plenary

One decade to save the planet. What now?

The composition of the panel represented the plurality that we need in this forum, with voices from the south, east and central Europe, from political parties in government and in opposition, with representation of the civil society and with a voice from the global South.

Summary of the discussion:

Hervé Bramy (French Communist Party, coordinator of the EL Environment WG, France) introduced the discussion, and said we cannot leave in the hands of the market the solution to climate change, we need solidarity and we need a strong role of the progressive forces.

Zakia Khattabi (Minister of Climate, Belgium) explained that the original sin of the Paris agreement was to leave in hands of the Member States all the concrete action. At the same time she shared the importance of the COPs as the only global forum where the voices of the South are represented.

Diego Pary Rodríguez (Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bolivia) talked about democracy and justice. his party MAS defeated the fascism once again, in the ballot boxes and more clearly than ever. Developing and industrialised countries must have a common but differentiated responsibility. Rich countries must accept they have a historical responsibility.

Rossella Muroni (Independent MP, Member of Environment Committee, Italy) talked about people, prosperity and planet. If the EU was founded for a shared management of steel and coal, we need now to put climate change in the centre of its action. And only with the end of austerity we can move forward towards climate justice.


Urszula Zielińska (Zieloni, Deputy Chair of Environment Committee, Poland) explained the importance of alternative narratives to counterbalance the conservatives, and should put a strong focus on the job creation capacity of renewal energies and circular economy.

Andreu Escrivà (Writer and scientist, Spain) was very clear in the shared disappointment about the outcome of the COP in Glasgow. The Member States are incoherent with science, and he highlighted that ecological transition is much more than a change of socket, we need a cultural change to make it possible.

Cultural Assembly

“Social issues lie at the heart of culture”

- The pandemic has worsened the living conditions of cultural workers generally, even though it is widely acknowledged that they – and in particular performance artists – have played a very positive role during the lockdown.
- Culture must be considered a common good: it touches all sectors of life, it brings people together and unites them. Its role in fighting the Far Right and racism is crucial.
- The speakers revealed a great diversity of situations from one country to another,



with even greater disparities depending on whether the cultural workers were organised or not. The issue of professional status for performers has thus been raised in some countries (including at government level) but is totally absent from others.

- In terms of action during 2022: 1) take simultaneous action to demand at European level that States devote at least 2% of their GDP to culture; 2) introduce a basic European status for performers.
- At the end of the session, the assembly attended the screening of a short film which, by means of images and music, depicted the living conditions of the Roma population in a deprived area of the city of Odz (Hungary). This film, produced at the initiative of our comrade Judit Morva, shows how culture can – through photography and music – raise awareness of a concrete social issue without the need for extensive commentary.


Youth Assembly

"Post-Covid-19 democracy: a crucial debate"



Dear comrades, we are happy to report from a very **productive** youth assembly under the topic of democracy in a post pandemic world. To ensure everyone gets a chance to speak for themselves we separated the assembly into 4 tables to discuss 4 different aspects of democracy. Among other things we discussed topics such as self-determination, the relationship between individual choices and collective action, the threat of far-right movements in Europe and rights of the youth in Europe.





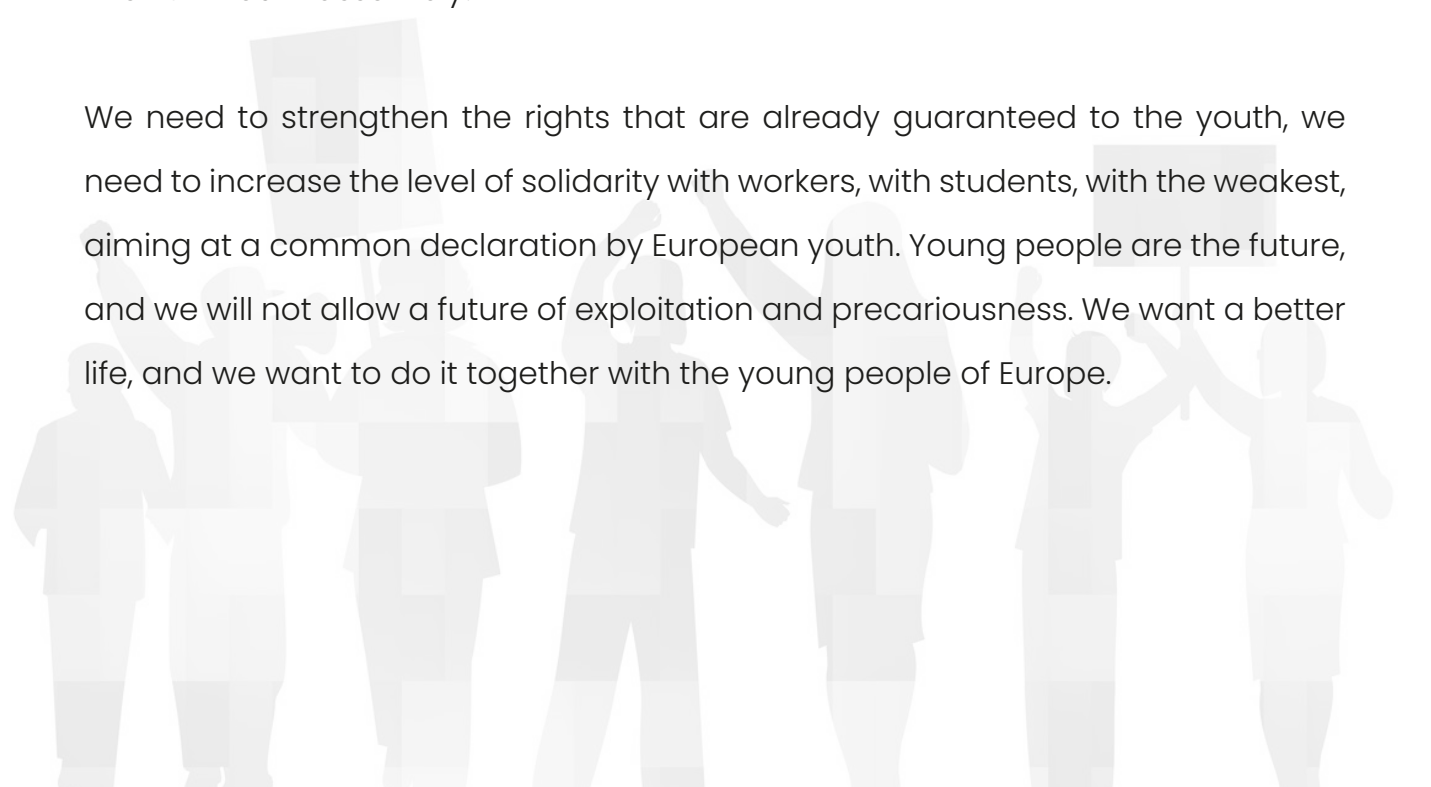
I don't need to tell you how important the question of democracy is in the current crisis within the European Union. But one aspect took our special interest: The democracies of western Europe reflect numerous contradictions that affect the lives of the younger generation.

After our discussion one thing seems to be clear across all perspectives: The current problems must be answered with European Activism, including online formats, as well as the organization of actions on the local level.

But **how** do we do that? The answer is: **We need a common space to encourage discussion with Youth organizations from all over Europe. We need** spaces to verify our work, to rethink activism, understanding what has worked and what has not, to achieve a single goal: to **push people to change the material conditions in which they live.** A space for comparison would allow us to map the main problems, have a common toolbox that collects information, proposals, and useful analyses to each organization to try to change society.

We thank the organizers of the European Forum for giving us a first taste of this at this 2021 Youth assembly!

We need to strengthen the rights that are already guaranteed to the youth, we need to increase the level of solidarity with workers, with students, with the weakest, aiming at a common declaration by European youth. Young people are the future, and we will not allow a future of exploitation and precariousness. We want a better life, and we want to do it together with the young people of Europe.



Thus the Youth Assembly has given, the European Left Youth Network, a mission for the next year: it is our aim to build a campaign by the European youth that can deepen our understanding of these issues. A campaign whose state of implementation can be witnessed at the next European Forum.

But: creating this campaign requires a strong Youth Network and the creation of a larger space of discussion to debate the state of our democracies and the needs of our generation.

Let's give our democracies the right antibodies against a future of exploitation, precariousness, and individualism. We can obtain these antibodies fighting for our rights and together with the European Youth.

For this we ask humbly for your support.



Feminist Assembly

“The advance of the Far Right and women's rights”

The Assembly entitled “The advance of the Far Right and women's rights” was presented and chaired by Cristina Simó, Secretary of the PCE's Feminism Unit.

It comprised two distinct sections:


The first was aimed at highlighting how women's rights are always challenged.

The following comrades spoke:

Michelle Urquiza, from Mexico, a student and activist with the association “Sisters Without Borders” (Belgium); Florencia Urquiza, from Argentina, a member of the “Juanita Moro” feminist organisation (Argentina), spokesperson of the national campaign for the right to abortion; and Clara Serra, a human rights lawyer and member of the “Stop Violence” Association in Andorra.

The second section was aimed at shining a light on European public policies on gender equality and the eradication of male violence.

The following spoke: Elena Kountoura, MEP for Syriza in the Left Group (GUE/NGL) of the European Parliament. She is a member of the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality and Special Rapporteur for the Report on the impact of intimate partner violence and custody rights on women and children; Clara Alonso, Director of Communication in the Spanish Ministry of Equality and Secretary of the PCE's Institutional Unit; and María Karamessini, Professor at the Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences–Department of Social Policy. She has a PhD in Economics and is a member of Syriza's Secretariat representing the Feminist/Gender section.



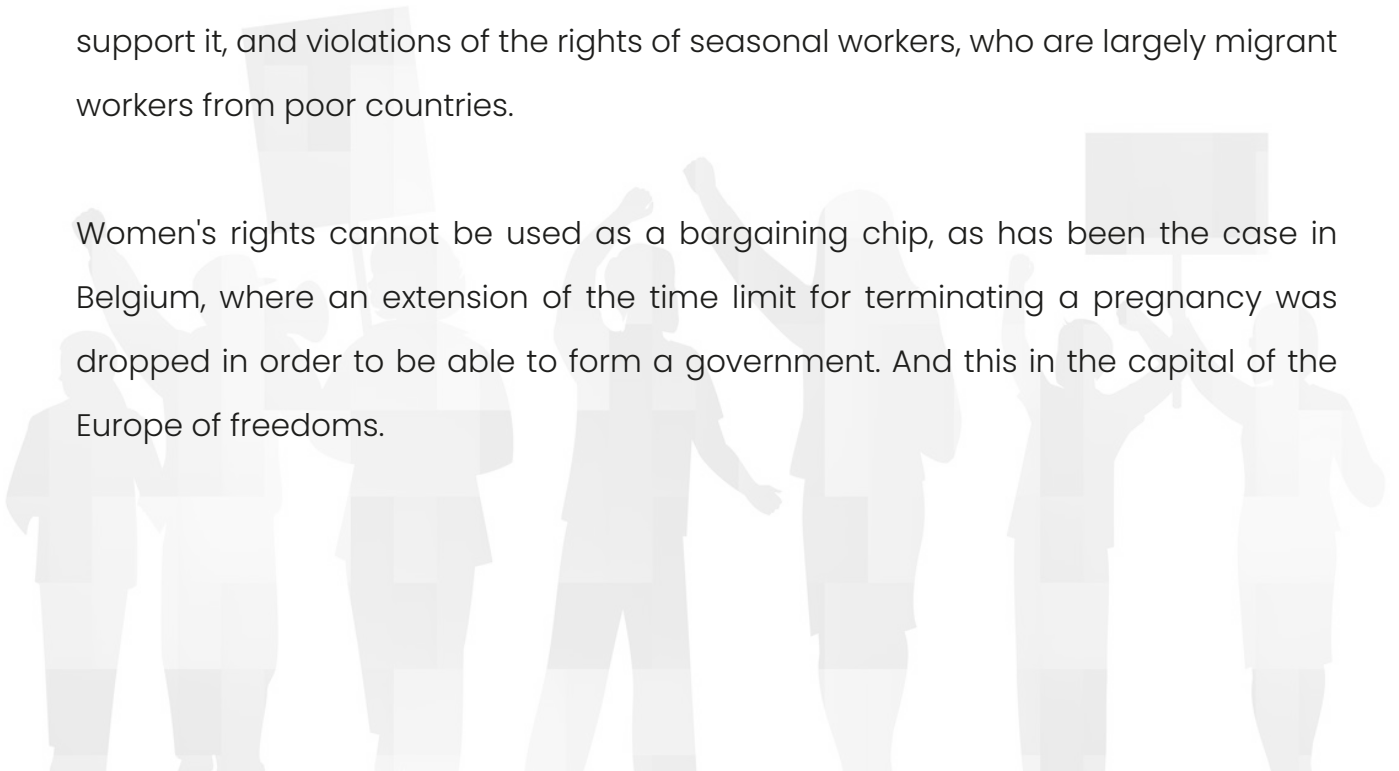

The debates in both groups focused on the fact that the Left's priority should be to defend and promote policies that will overcome inequality and eradicate male violence and femicide in Europe in the face of the misogynist policies of the Right and Far Right.

It must combat all forms of violence suffered by women: sexual, physical, psychological, economic, social, institutional and indirect, taking into account the different oppressions suffered by women due to their class, ethnicity and/or sexual orientation. The extent of the violence they suffer depends on the multiple layers of their oppression. In the case of migrant women, for example, they are the worst affected.

This was demonstrated by the example of Andorra, which presents itself as a tourist paradise while women's rights are being constantly violated and bullied, with the complicity of the Bishop of La Seo de Urgel (Spain) and the President of France, who are co-princes of Andorra, i.e. its Heads of State.

We denounce the fact both have been turning a blind eye for years to violations such as the criminalisation and persecution of the right to abortion and those who support it, and violations of the rights of seasonal workers, who are largely migrant workers from poor countries.

Women's rights cannot be used as a bargaining chip, as has been the case in Belgium, where an extension of the time limit for terminating a pregnancy was dropped in order to be able to form a government. And this in the capital of the Europe of freedoms.



We denounce the fact that we still have Member States of the European Union that have not ratified the Istanbul Convention, the fundamental basis for combating male violence.

We must advocate for public care policies. The State must be responsible for sustaining life.

We must demand an increase in women's wages to achieve full equality with men.

We must advocate for policies that create jobs for women and put an end to illegal work.

We must demand the equal sharing of unpaid care work between men and women and that rights such as free abortion are constitutionalised as a fundamental right for women.

It was concluded that we must push for a campaign that advocates for a European feminist agenda in which life, our rights and a public care system are valued, in contrast to the anti-feminist agenda of the Right and Far Right, which hates us and does not respect our rights or our lives.

A step forward for the feminist movement is a push back for the Right and Far Right!



TRADE UNIONISTS' ASSEMBLY

"Reflecting on the future of Europe: a new Social Contract for the 21st Century"

On November 27, 2021, 25 people from 16 organisations met from 4 to 6pm.

From the discussions, a number of issues were identified as key elements of the changes that Europe has to face if we want to be a role-model in the future:

- **New forms of exploitation** of workers, in place for the last years, have made the outcome of the pandemic especially harsh.
- A growing **racialisation of poverty** has been observed.
- The generalised trend towards **individualisation of labour relations** represents a direct attack on unions that negatively impact their evolution.
- Green growth (**ecologisation of work**) is a challenge and an opportunity for trade union action, where some jobs will be created, some will be replaced and others redefined.
- The Assembly notes that work on online **platforms and algorithms** at work have become a danger to labour relations that must be deactivated.
- **Decentralisation of industrial relations** have standardised effects on certain undesirable bargaining practices: sectoral bargaining is at risk.

- **Young people** are more often in **precarious jobs**; they deserve the same rights to decent pay and decent working conditions , as well as a high level of social protection.

The Assembly weighed up the number of trade unions present in the meeting as a factor to improve. Together with the elements noted above, agreed the following action plan to be proposed to the European Forum for its implementation:

The trade unionists' assembly of the European Forum (EF) 2021 recognises that the impact of the pandemic has revealed the inefficiencies and inequalities of capitalism: it is neither possible nor desirable to return to the "old normality."

For this reason, this assembly proposes to the EF to carry out an analysis of the impact of the pandemic on wages and labour relations in Europe, with a special focus on inequalities and poverty, to carry out this task, we recommend that the EF sets up a working group that coordinates the different actors, being able to create an "ad hoc" group or using existing network of the European trade union left wing.

To conclude, this assembly recommends that the EF increases its visibility in trade union events, especially those related to Labour Day.

On a separate note, the assembly suggested to organise a training on the different trade union models in Europe.

