



26th October 2005

A New Progressive Vision for Europe: An offensive answer to globalisation

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Within Europe today, too many of our citizens feel anxious and fretful about the globalizing world. As social democrats, we know that globalisation has the potential to transform for the better the lives of billions of the world's citizens, through managed change. The challenge for Europe's socialists and social democratic leaders is develop new policies that turn globalisation to advantage for Europe and its people.

To realize that opportunity we social democrats and socialists know that we cannot simply leave everything to the market, on the contrary, active government is one of the keys to economic success in the new global economy. And we know that we must reject the siren calls to scrap our social models, because social cohesion and an active welfare state can be facilitators to bringing change not obstacles to achieving it. But to play that role we need to modernise our welfare states and modernise social policies. In modernising our social models, we reject any race to the bottom of our social welfare. Our social democratic approach to facing today's challenges is about helping people to prosper in an expanding global economy and creating a more responsive and inclusive society. Our approach is about equipping people to live securely and confidently during permanent change.

We reaffirm our commitment to full and high quality employment in the European Union. New active public policies and investments must be at the heart of our drive to get Europe back to work and to assure the sustainability of public finances. We must combine stronger growth with more and better jobs and modernised social security. Therefore, reforms must be accompanied and supported by public and private investments to boost growth and create jobs. We cannot make a choice between introducing reforms or generating growth. It is about acting together - no sustainable growth without reforms of the right kind - and no reforms without sustainable growth: these are the conditions on which people will support a project of European renewal. This is the true European challenge.

We must modernise social protection to address changing needs and expectations. We must enable today's job-seekers to re-skill and regain employment – through active labour market policies - introducing in this way new employment securities that balance job flexibility and re-commit public policies to the fundamental right to work.

New growth and investment is critical for European renewal. Action is needed to foster simultaneous intelligent, public investments – including education, child care, research and development as well as efficient infrastructures and networks - through coordinated action between EU Member States to foster more and better jobs.

Europe's progressive leaders believe that the EU and its member states must now take the high road to human progress and global competitiveness.

