

TOGETHER for a **NEW EUROPE** work, cohesion, participation

The CISL priorities



Europe was born of the sacrifice and hard work of those who, after the horrors of war, wanted to give the continent and the world a project of widespread peace, democracy, prosperity and development.

In the face of the immense changes that are taking place, we must rediscover the same motivation to open a new constituent phase and complete the journey towards a new, united, integrated Europe of peoples and workers.

We need a leap forward, a major reform process that promotes the social model, democratic values and supranational governance, capable of promoting and protecting the interests of Member States and responding concretely to the workers, pensioners, citizens and immigrants.

The European Union will have to do more to protect and promote human dignity and quality job, to combat inequalities and social exclusion, and to provide solutions for the integration of women and young people in particular.

The major transitions of our time, a turbulent and fragmented international context, call into question Europe's ability to find the right answers, accompanied by an increase in its geopolitical role. Faced with two dramatic crises, the pandemic and the war provoked by Russia's criminal invasion of Ukraine, the European Union has shown that it is not the problem, as anti-Europeans and sovereigntists have long tried to make people believe, but the solution.

In the darkest years of the Pandemic crises, the joint purchase of vaccines, the SURE programme, the suspension of budgetary constraints, an expansive fiscal policy and, above all, the Next Generation EU instrument have helped to outline a great project of community reconstruction, financed with the commitment of all, to respond to the needs of each.

It is necessary to make these approaches structural, also on the basis of debt mutualisation processes, by consolidating the instruments, by adding new levers such as a sovereign Fund for industry, by increasing the EU budget with more own resources, in order to create European public goods for the benefit of all.

From this point of view, the new Stability and Growth Pact has worrying aspects that need to be addressed by overcoming the excessively rigid approach and, at the same time, avoiding that the effects of this system burden the citizens through cuts in social spending and development.

Achieving these objectives would make it possible to regain people's confidence in the European project, curb populism and nationalism, and achieve, also through a revision of the Treaties, the construction of a federation of states as the ultimate goal for tackling the complexity of the context, promoting and advancing peace and cohesion, democracy and development.

1 Achieving participatory governance

Greater trade unions and businesses involvement is essential to address the complexity of epochal transitions such as energy, climate and digital, while ensuring cohesion.

Social dialogue, collective bargaining and workers' participation must be the cornerstones of a new European governance in order to promote quality, stability and security at work, to foster the sustainability and growth of territories, to support investment through the recovery and redistribution of productivity, to promote innovation and to protect people in transitions.

The European Trade Union Confederation must have a greater role in the negotiations, also in view of the major changes in employment due to digitalisation and the advance of artificial intelligence.

Greater participation should also be linked to the involvement of civil society organisations in order to contribute to collective wellbeing.

2 Strengthening the social dimension

The labour market must be made a place of human development. The European pillar of social rights must be fully implemented, promoting improvements in wage levels, working conditions and social protection.

It is necessary to build an EU collective bargaining space that strengthens transnational participation, starting with the revamping of the role of European Works Councils in multinational companies, in order to reduce the risk of dumping and relocation, and to develop sustainable corporate management tools to ensure shared responsibility throughout the supply chain.

It is necessary to ensure the enforcement of fair labour mobility rules, also by strengthening the European Labour Authority, and to guarantee the principle of equal pay for equal work. The criteria for public funding of companies must be based on strong social constraints.

Undeclared work, shell companies and bogus self-employment must be tackled and eradicated. The fight against illegality and organised crime must also be guaranteed by extending the content of the Italian law on the confiscation of mafia assets to EU level (so called «La Torre» law).

The major regional disparities must be addressed by strengthening cohesion policy in the long term.

3 A fair single market

Strengthening and completing the single market, aiming at fairness and sustainable competitiveness, and extending it to new sectors such as finance, energy and telecommunications, is an objective that can no longer be postponed.

We must converge on common policies, starting with industrial and research and development policies that contribute to the production of European public goods from which all Member States can benefit. It is necessary to adapt competition policy to the new challenges in order to promote European industrial clusters while safeguarding cohesion and territorial development, and to ensure the inclusion of social clauses in trade agreements in order to safeguard the rights of workers throughout the supply chains.

In addition, the strengthening of the internal market cannot disregard harmonised taxation, in order to avoid downward competition phenomena, and the strengthening of the savings component through investment instruments in the real economy.

It is necessary to improve access to capital for businesses and citizens, also taking into account the most disadvantaged regions, and to combat all speculative financial phenomena.

4 Establishing a Community decision-making process

It is necessary to promote a reform of the European decision-making architecture with the aim of strengthening the Commission's political power and legitimacy, increasing the role of the European Parliament and overcoming the unanimity rule in the Council, within the framework of a genuine European Constitution. This reform is all the more necessary in view of a possible enlargement to 35 countries.

The European Union's effectiveness must be increased by reviewing its powers and areas of intervention in the face of a system that is too intergovernmental and too subject to vetoes and national interests in fundamental areas such as migration, taxation, foreign and defence policy.

In the context of "re-globalisation" and geo-strategic reorganisation, which is seeing the re-emergence of autocratic regimes, Europe must have a strong and authoritative voice in the field of defence and security, with a military capability that, on the one hand, rebalances the forces on the ground and, on the other, allows for synergies in the spending of Member States, with savings that can increase the resources available for social and development policies.

Similarly, it is essential for the European Union to have a common foreign policy and to be able to manage migration and asylum flows according to criteria of solidarity between Member States, legal channels, equal treatment, integration and the valorisation of skills in the labour market.