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GREENING THE EU GREEN DEAL:
NO MORE BUSINESS AS USUAL!

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Motion Text

The EU Green Deal has been hailed as the main policy that will influence and guide the Green Recovery in a post-pandemic Europe. However, the Green Deal should not stay at a level of a big statement or ambition, but be backed by strong plans and action that will lead to a more resilient, united and equal Europe.

One of the main aspects of the Green Deal that we are primarily concerned with is the Just Transition Mechanism. In its current form, focusing on coal intensive regions, the mechanism fails to address the extent of the potential consequences that the transition will have on work, people, businesses and society. In reality, many sectors across Europe will enter a profound transformation. The oil and gas sectors, transport, and some of the industrial production will see job cuts in the future across regions, and without acknowledging the extent of the issue we will fail to ensure that workers and communities across Europe will be able to adapt to the changes, and we cannot rely on the private companies to 'help them'. We cannot continue either our increasingly consumerist behaviours, endlessly trying to grow the economy because this cannot be sustainable. In the year 2020, the earth overshoot day is calculated to already be August the 22nd. This is due to the extensive amounts of consumption that is seen as essential within our growth based economy and is encouraged by a massive advertisement industry to generate demands that actually don't exist. We need to pursue alternative economic models that prioritize people and the environment over profits. Examples can be doughnut economics, degrowth, economy for the common good or the circular economy. We have a chance to use this massive transformation as an opportunity for creating a whole new society, where equality is achieved (or at least much closer). But if we let the opportunity slip and the transition will not be implemented with the most vulnerable people in mind we are risking to weaken even more the connection between the citizen and the EU institutions and lead to more crises for the EU project. Furthermore, the EU Green Deal will not be successful as a top-down strategy, especially when it has the potential to hit hard local communities. Therefore we believe it is important for mechanisms to be created for local communities to be consulted and engaged in the transition process at the local level. It is important to note that young people and green movements across Europe played a key role in the Green Deal. We demanded action and whilst our general demand was heard, we now have to play an active role in how the Green Deal will be shaped and how we want the EU leaders to implement OUR vision for the future.

We demand the EU Green Deal should move on from big statements and act on the following:

A focus on people and not payouts to businesses. As our democratically elected representation for the environment, where most of our life takes place, local governments should play the main role in local development and the transition to guarantee the transitional process to be as democratic and transparent as possible. To enable political participation for everyone, regardless of their social status and political background, we propose introducing citizens assemblies where participants are selected by mechanisms of sortition and prepared for their mandate by receiving political education ahead of starting it as well as ongoing support.

Despite heavy industry, especially the fossil industry being the main target of a just transition,

ecological and social justice affect most regions and areas of life, so a just transition mechanism has to go beyond just focusing on heavily industrialised regions and regions depending on fossil fuels. In addition to the money supposed to be spent into the EU Green Deal to support transition, there are still a lot of subsidies as well as funds of public and private banks going into fossil based industries. We demand total divestment of those subsidies and funds by controlling directly public banks investments and want them as well to be spent on transitional measures instead. We also demand to implement discouragement measures for private banks. Also small businesses, cooperatives and other regional actors should be financially subsidised, if they exceed in decarbonising their operation and thereby contribute to meeting the EU's emission reduction targets.

We demand from OLAF and the Commission/DG REGIO to introduce a robust anti-corruption mechanism in order to secure money spent on a Just Transition actually getting to where it's supposed to go. Civil society should also be engaged in such checks and controls.

The EU emission trading system (ETS) needs to be reformed and entire sectors, like transport which currently aren't included in the system should be introduced into the ETS. We generally demand the exploration of more regulatory approaches to reducing emissions in all sectors.

We demand involvement of local communities and citizens councils in the decision-making processes, of policies on renewable energy projects or closing of mines, coal plants, or factories. These policies will indeed directly impact on their employment, environment and livelihoods. Additionally, we support the initiative «free cities alliance» started by the Polish, Hungarian, Czech and Slovak capitals to receive direct EU funding and thereby avoid being dependent on the national governments of their countries. This will allow those European cities in need to avoid the misuse or corruption of EU funds by their national governments.

A focus on a circular economy with long living products that are recyclable or even cradle to cradle that enable our economic system to satisfy people's needs in a manner within our ecological limits.

Implementation of social policies (enabling to uncouple wealth from growth and ensure good living conditions for everyone) which help leading people into just transition such as reducing working hours, improving wealth distribution (by tax measures and improvements within the social welfare systems) and by introducing measures like a Universal Basic Income. A more equal wealth distribution could notably be achieved through a European wealth tax whose revenues should be earmarked to support in a number of ways people living in precarious conditions and strongly affected by the transition.

A definitive adjustment of the EU's emission targets, to comply with a 1,5-degree pathway of global warming.

Discrimination against women is still present in many areas in life, also especially within our economic system. There is a gender pay gap even within jobs with equal qualifications, jobs in which traditionally more women work are paid much worse than other jobs and they have more difficulties getting into leading positions, hence taking the opportunity of participation within the economic system from them. We demand that the current unequal gender system is not simply shifted into the transition policy and new industries but that the EU Greens Deal actively seeks to eliminate the gender pay gap and resolve the issue of women's participation in the economic sector. Where possible that their unpaid/care work duties will be compensated through appropriate

measures. Furthermore, women have time and again proven to make skilled leaders, and by including them equally in decision making processes and facilitating opportunities for them to lead, we will improve both policy and society.

Older generations have left us with a crumbling ecological, social and economical system, especially considering that people in some wealthier countries have been living above eco-friendly standards. The outcome of this is a lack of perspective for young people represented by youth unemployment, endangered pensions and an imminent ecological collapse. We want to restore generational justice by higher taxation of wealth and inheritance and investing that money into ecological, social and educational measures to ensure our generation a life worth living. We demand an increase in youth mobility within education and work to increase sensibility for global justice and interculturality and help us create an economic system that enables everyone within future generations to live well, not just a small privileged proportion of humankind.

Divestment from carbon based infrastructure into sustainable, decentralised energy and utility production, with appropriate re-schooling and transitional measures for workers whose jobs are endangered by transition. Facilitation of grassroots based economies such as farming or energy cooperatives to increase division of wealth and participation within economic decisions.

Not cutting off a part of the Just Transition budget to transfer it to Covid-19 response budget, even if we stand for financial help to the ones who were affected the most by the Covid-19 crisis. These crises must both be taken seriously without the responses being influenced by each other. We ask the Just Transition budget being untouched and still ask for a well subsidized Covid-19 response budget.