

FROM REVOLUTIONARY TO GOVERNING PARTY

**Adjusting political programs,
keeping values**

**Selected Programs of
German Social Democracy**

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German Social Democracy

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung

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Foreword

Articulating perceptions of the world and reflections about one's place in it is important to the human being. When reaching the public sphere, touching on how a society is to organize its public life, this becomes an essential subject of public debate and consensus-building. In German politics, political parties are traditionally among the major actors who, guided by their worldview or ideology, express their vision of society, their goals and political plans. Political programs (or platforms) are one such communication tool by which individuals, through their membership in parties, manifest their collective identity and aspiration for the country. The ultimate aim is to appeal to citizens who, in the democratic exercise of elections, bestow a temporary mandate to political candidates and their parties to hold and exercise political power.

Political programs both reflect the values, visions and identity of a party and at the same time translate these into a general direction for political action and policy-making. They also serve as instruments for intra-party communication and consensus-building and help to integrate differing positions into a common platform. For a party and its program to be relevant, it needs to give answers to the issues of a given period of time. Therefore, while guided by values, programs need to respond to changing political, economic, social, cultural and legal conditions.

The exhibit *For Freedom and Social Justice*, conceptualized by the Historical Research Department of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in Bonn shows that the history of German Social Democracy is inseparably linked to political programs. From its early inception in the 1860s, it has taken up the issues and concerns of the German working people and translated those into political demands that were carried by the party. From the first party program of 1863 until the most recent of 2007, social democrats have upheld their values of freedom, justice and solidarity and translated these into programmatic responses to the challenges of the time.

This booklet intends to provide the reader a glimpse on the programmatic reflections of the German Social Democratic Party at very different points of time in its more than 140 years of history. It also provides a chance to trace its development from a traditional party of the working class with a strong Marxist foundation to a modern “people’s party”, integrating different constituencies with varying ideological convictions but finding a common ground in the values of the party and its general political direction.

The Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Philippine Office hopes that this booklet and the exhibition contribute to the ongoing reflections and debates about political parties in the Philippines and the role of a programmatic orientation for their identity, constituency-building and policy-making.

Mirko Herberg

Resident Representative

Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Philippine Office

Introduction

The Erfurt Program of 1891

“The German Social Democratic Party therefore does not fight for new class privileges and class rights, but for the abolition of class rule and of classes themselves, for equal rights and equal obligations for all, without distinction of sex or birth. Starting from these views, it fights not only the exploitation and oppression of wage earners in society today, but every manner of exploitation and oppression, whether directed against a class, party, sex, or race.”

In the Erfurt Program - viewed as an inspiration to all other European social democratic and socialist parties - the SPD, which traces its roots in the working class and the German labor movement, declared the Marxist theory to be its official party theory. The step towards Marxism and its manifestation in the program can be understood within the context of the Anti-Socialist Laws (1878-1890), a series of repressive laws that banned the political work of the Social Democratic Party except for its participation in elections. The repression was perceived by many members as a “class struggle”, caused a bitter feeling of political exclusion by the state authority, and led the party to adopt more radical Marxist views. At that time, members felt the imperative to stand up for the core values of freedom, justice and solidarity. After the lifting of the laws, the SPD was allowed to publicly continue its struggle for a better society. This struggle, however, was a fight only by words, arguments and organizing, not by means of violence. Although the party believed in the realization of a socialist society in the future, it was not working towards the violent overthrow of the government. Rather, it directed its efforts towards the reform of the social order, primarily by improving the political, economic and social conditions of the working class. Strategies employed emphasized electoral participation, local governance work, representation in parliament and legislative work. The Erfurt program reflects the co-existence of revolutionary aims and realistic reformist practices within the party identity while strongly maintaining its democratic values and principles.

The Godesberg Program of 1959

“The emancipation of the workers helped to enlarge the freedom of all men. From a party of the working class the Social Democratic Party has become a party of the people. It is determined to put the forces unleashed by the industrial revolution and the advance of technology in all spheres of life to the service of freedom and justice for all.”

Adapting to the reality of Western Germany after the traumatic experiences of World War II, its strong economic recovery, the separation of the German nation as well as reacting to societal changes and election defeats, the Godesberg Program sought and espoused change and reform. It formally accepted private ownership, abandoned socialist economic principles and adopted the concept of a social market economy. Most importantly, the Social Democratic Party finally completed its move from being a socialist workers' party to a left-wing “people's party”. It opened its membership to a broader constituency by emphasizing the core values that bind Social Democrats together rather than ideological convictions or philosophical leanings. With this crucial change, SPD garnered support from citizens and voters with firm religious beliefs, for whom the Marxist doctrine had presented an insurmountable obstacle to striving for their social orientation within the ambit of the Social Democratic Party. The party transformed itself into a genuine “people's party”, to which broad sections of the working people including white-collar workers, public servants, professionals, i.e. the middle class, could relate. The Godesberg program ultimately paved the way to take on the responsibility of governing Germany.

The Hamburg Program of 2007

“The Social Democrats are contrasting the economically curtailed concept of society with the image of people oriented towards human values of equal dignity and respect. [...] The Social Democrats are not only guaranteeing civil, political and cultural basic rights for all people but also social and economic rights. This safeguards equal social participation of all by social democratization, especially by codetermination, by the preventive social welfare state based on civil rights, and by a coordinated

market economy guaranteeing the precedence of democracy over markets.”

Through its most recent platform, the Hamburg Program of 2007, the SPD sought to respond to the pressing concerns of a globalized 21st century. Drafted for nine years from 1999 to 2007, the Hamburg Program takes into account SPD's experiences in governing a united Germany. Bearing government responsibility, it had to guide the German people through a period in which the globalizing economy demanded innovative responses, new challenges in international politics forced a repositioning of foreign policy, and reforming the state and its capacity to provide security and opportunities for all proved a difficult task. The Program reflects the myriad of complexities in finding sustainable solutions to the issues in an era of globalization while drawing strength from social democratic values, visions and gains of the German society. The commitment to a democratic and social state, the primacy of politics over the market, a fair world order and a civil society based on solidarity provide directions for political action based on the principle of sustainability. Today more than ever, the program suggests, social democracy is called upon to shape a free and just society in solidarity.

Protokoll

über die

Verhandlungen des Parteitages

der

Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands.

Abgehalten zu Erfurt

vom 14. bis 20. Oktober 1891.

Berlin 1891.

Verlag der Expedition des „Vorwärts“ Berliner Volksblatt.
(12. Heft.)

Program of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, Erfurt 1891¹

The economic development of bourgeois society invariably leads to the ruin of small business, which is based on the private ownership by the worker of his means of production. It separates the worker from his means of production and turns him into a property-less proletarian, while the means of production become the monopoly of a relatively small number of capitalists and large landowners.

Hand in hand with this monopolization of the means of production goes the displacement of these fractured small businesses by colossal large enterprises, the development of the tool into a machine, the gigantic growth in the productivity of human labor. But all the benefits of this transformation are monopolized by the capitalists and large landowners. For the proletariat and the sinking middle classes – petty bourgeoisie and farmers – it means an increase in the insecurity of their existence, of misery, of pressure, of oppression, of degradation, of exploitation.

Ever greater becomes the number of proletarians, ever more massive the army of excess workers, ever more stark the opposition between exploiters and the exploited, ever more bitter the class struggle between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, which divides modern society into two hostile camps and constitutes the common characteristic of all industrialized countries.

The gulf between the propertied and the property-less is further widened by crises that are grounded in the nature of the capitalist mode of production, crises that are becoming more extensive and more devastating, that elevate this general uncertainty into the normal state of society and furnish proof that the powers of productivity have grown beyond society's control, that the private ownership of the means of production has become incompatible with their appropriate application and full development.

The private ownership of the means of production, once the means for securing for the producer the ownership of his product, has today become the means for expropriating farmers, artisans, and small merchants, and for putting the non-workers – capitalists, large landowners – into possession of the product of the workers. Only the transformation of the capitalist private ownership of the means of production – land and soil, pits and mines, raw materials, tools, machines, means of transportation – into social property and the transformation of the production of goods into socialist production carried on by and for society can cause the large enterprise and the constantly growing productivity of social labor to change for the hitherto exploited classes from a source of misery and oppression into a source of the greatest welfare and universal, harmonious perfection.

¹ Source: Protokoll des Parteitages der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands: Abgehalten zu Erfurt vom 14. bis 20. Oktober 1891 [Minutes of the Party Congress of the Social Democratic Party of Germany: Held in Erfurt from October 14-October 20, 1891]. Berlin, 1891, pp. 3-6; Translated: by Thomas Dunlap, <http://marx.org/history/international/social-democracy/1891/erfurt-program.htm>, accessed on 14 May 2009.

This social transformation amounts to the emancipation not only of the proletariat, but of the entire human race, which is suffering from current conditions. But it can only be the work of the working class, because all other classes, notwithstanding the conflicts of interest between them, stand on the ground of the private ownership of the means of production and have as their common goal the preservation of the foundations of contemporary society.

The struggle of the working class against capitalist exploitation is necessarily a political struggle. Without political rights, the working class cannot carry on its economic struggles and develop its economic organization. It cannot bring about the transfer of the means of production into the possession of the community without first having obtained political power.

It is the task of the Social Democratic Party to shape the struggle of the working class into a conscious and unified one and to point out the inherent necessity of its goals.

The interests of the working class are the same in all countries with a capitalist mode of production. With the expansion of global commerce, and of production for the world market, the position of the worker in every country becomes increasingly dependent on the position of workers in other countries. The emancipation of the working class is thus a task in which the workers of all civilized countries are equally involved. Recognizing this, the German Social Democratic Party feels and declares itself to be one with the class-conscious workers of all other countries.

The German Social Democratic Party therefore does not fight for new class privileges and class rights, but for the abolition of class rule and of classes themselves, for equal rights and equal obligations for all, without distinction of sex or birth. Starting from these views, it fights not only the exploitation and oppression of wage earners in society today, but every manner of exploitation and oppression, whether directed against a class, party, sex, or race.

Proceeding from these principles, the German Social Democratic Party demands, first of all:

1. Universal, equal, and direct suffrage with secret ballot in all elections, for all citizens of the Reich over the age of twenty, without distinction of sex. Proportional representation, and, until this is introduced, legal redistribution of electoral districts after every census. Two-year legislative periods. Holding of elections on a legal holiday. Compensation for elected representatives. Suspension of every restriction on political rights, except in the case of legal incapacity.

2. Direct legislation by the people through the rights of proposal and rejection. Self-determination and self-government of the people in Reich, state, province, and municipality. Election by the people of magistrates, who are answerable and liable to them. Annual voting of taxes.

3. Education of all to bear arms. Militia in the place of the standing army. Determination by the popular assembly on questions of war and peace. Settlement of all international disputes by arbitration.

4. Abolition of all laws that place women at a disadvantage compared with men in matters of public or private law.

5. Abolition of all laws that limit or suppress the free expression of opinion and restrict or suppress the right of association and assembly. Declaration that religion is a private matter. Abolition of all expenditures from public funds for ecclesiastical and religious purposes. Ecclesiastical and religious communities are to be regarded as private associations that regulate their affairs entirely autonomously.

6. Secularization of schools. Compulsory attendance at the public *Volksschule* [extended elementary school]. Free education, free educational materials, and free meals in the public *Volksschulen*, as well as at higher educational institutions for those boys and girls considered qualified for further education by virtue of their abilities.

7. Free administration of justice and free legal assistance. Administration of the law by judges elected by the people. Appeal in criminal cases. Compensation for individuals unjustly accused, imprisoned, or sentenced. Abolition of capital punishment.

8. Free medical care, including midwifery and medicines. Free burial.

9. Graduated income and property tax for defraying all public expenditures, to the extent that they are to be paid for by taxation. Inheritance tax, graduated according to the size of the inheritance and the degree of kinship. Abolition of all indirect taxes, customs, and other economic measures that sacrifice the interests of the community to those of a privileged few.

For the protection of the working classes, the German Social Democratic Party demands, first of all:

1. Effective national and international worker protection laws on the following principles:

(a) Fixing of a normal working day not to exceed eight hours.

(b) Prohibition of gainful employment for children under the age of fourteen.

(c) Prohibition of night work, except in those industries that require night work for inherent technical reasons or for reasons of public welfare.

(d) An uninterrupted rest period of at least thirty-six hours every week for every worker.

(e) Prohibition of the truck system.

2. Supervision of all industrial establishments, investigation and regulation of working conditions in the cities and the countryside by a Reich labor department, district labor bureaus, and chambers of labor. Rigorous industrial hygiene.
3. Legal equality of agricultural laborers and domestic servants with industrial workers; abolition of the laws governing domestics.
4. Safeguarding of the freedom of association.
5. Takeover by the Reich government of the entire system of workers' insurance, with decisive participation by the workers in its administration.

GRUNDSATZ PROGRAMM

DER SPD

Basic Program of the Social Democratic Party of Germany²

Adopted by an Extraordinary Conference of the Social Democratic Party held at Bad Godesberg from 13-15 November 1959

This is the *contradiction* of our time:

Man has unleashed the power of the atom and now fears the consequences of his own creation;

Man has developed the productive forces to a point hitherto unknown, and amassed tremendous wealth, but has failed to give everyone a fair share of the common achievement;

Man has conquered the earth and brought continents closer together but power blocs armed to the teeth separate peoples more than ever before, and totalitarian systems threaten his freedom.

This is why man, warned by wars of destruction and barbarism in the recent past, is afraid of his own future, because at any moment, somewhere in the world, human failing may throw the human race into the chaos of self-destruction.

Yet this is also the *hope* of our time:

Man can make his life easier in the atomic age, free himself from anxiety and distress and create prosperity for all if he uses his ever growing power over the forces of nature solely for peaceful ends;

Man can secure world peace if he establishes the rule of international law, reduces mistrust between peoples and stops the arms race;

For the first time in history it will then be possible for everyone to develop his personality in a securely-founded democracy and to broaden his cultural outlook free from want and fear.

All men are called upon to solve this contradiction. In our hands lies the decision as to whether man advances towards a happier future or towards self-destruction.

Only a new and better order of society can open man's way to freedom.

Democratic Socialism strives to achieve this new and better order.

Fundamental Values of Socialism

Socialists aim to establish a society in which every individual can develop his personality and as a responsible member of the community, take part in the political, economic and cultural life of mankind.

Freedom and justice are interdependent, since the dignity of man rests on his claim to individual responsibility just as much as on his acknowledgement of the right of others to develop their personality and, as equal partners, help shape society.

² Source: Basic Program of the Social Democratic Party of Germany. Bonn: the Social Democratic Party of Germany, 1959, p. 5-17, 20-22,
http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=3049, accessed on 14 May 2009.

Freedom, justice and solidarity, which are everyone's obligation towards his neighbours and spring from our common humanity, are the fundamental values of Socialism.

Democratic Socialism, which in Europe is rooted in Christian ethics, humanism and classical philosophy, does not proclaim ultimate truths – not because of any lack of understanding for or indifference to philosophical or religious truths, but out of respect for the individual's choice in these matters of conscience in which neither the state nor any political party should be allowed to interfere.

The Social Democratic Party is the party of freedom of thought. It is a community of men holding different beliefs and ideas. Their agreement is based on the moral principles and political aims they have in common. The Social Democratic Party strives for a way of life in accordance with these principles. Socialism is a constant task – to fight for freedom and justice, to preserve them and to live up to them.

Basic Demands for a Society Worthy of Man

From the acceptance of Democratic Socialism follow certain basic demands which must be fulfilled in a society worthy of man.

All peoples must submit to the rule of international law backed by adequate executive power. War must be ruled out as a means of policy.

All peoples must have equal opportunities to share in the world's wealth. Developing countries have a claim to the help of other peoples.

We are fighting for democracy. Democracy must become the universal form of state organisation and way of life because it is founded on respect for the dignity of man and his individual responsibility.

We resist every dictatorship, every form of totalitarian or authoritarian rule because they violate human dignity, destroy man's freedom and the rule of law. Socialism can be realised only through democracy and democracy can only be fulfilled through Socialism.

Communists have no right to invoke Socialist traditions. In fact, they have falsified Socialist ideas. Socialists are struggling for the realisation of freedom and justice while Communists exploit the conflicts in society to establish the dictatorship of their party.

In the democratic state, every form of power must be subject to public control. The interest of the individual must be subordinated to the interest of the community. Democracy, social security and individual freedom are endangered by an economic and social system in which striving for profit and power are the distinguishing features. Democratic Socialism therefore aspires after a new economic and social order.

All privileged access to educational institutions must be abolished. Talent and achievement should be the sole criteria of advancement.

Freedom and justice cannot be guaranteed by institutions alone. Technology and organisation are exerting a growing influence on all areas of life. This creates new dependencies which threaten freedom. Only diversity in economic, social and cultural life can stimulate the creative powers of the individual without which man's mind is paralysed.

Freedom and democracy are only thinkable in an industrial society if a constantly growing number of people develop a social consciousness and are ready to help shoulder responsibility. A decisive means to this end is political education in its widest sense. It is an essential objective of all educational efforts in our time.

The Order of the State

The Social Democratic Party of Germany lives and works in the whole of Germany. It stands by the Basic Law of the German Federal Republic. In accordance with the Basic Law it strives for German unity in freedom.

The division of Germany is a threat to peace. To end this division is a vital interest of the German people.

Not until Germany is reunited, will the whole people be able freely to determine the content and form of the state and society.

Man's life, his dignity and his conscience take precedence over the state. Every citizen must respect the convictions of his fellow men. It is the duty of the state to protect freedom of faith and freedom of conscience.

The state should create the conditions in which the individual may freely develop his personality, responsible to himself but conscious of his obligations to society. Established fundamental rights do not only protect the freedom of the individual in relation to the state; they should also be regarded as social rights which constitute the basis of the state.

The social function of the state is to provide social security for its citizens to enable everyone to be responsible for shaping his own life freely and to further the development of a free society.

The state becomes a truly civilised state (*Kulturstaat*) through the fusion of the democratic idea with the ideas of social security and the rule of law. It depends for its content on the forces prevalent in society, and its task is to serve the creative spirit of man.

The Social Democratic Party affirms its adherence to democracy. In a democracy the power of the state is derived from the people and the government is always responsible to Parliament whose confidence it must possess. In a democracy the rights of the minority as well as the rights of the majority must be respected; government and opposition have different tasks of equal importance; both share in the responsibility for the state.

The Social Democratic Party aims to win the support of the majority of the people by competing under equal conditions with other democratic parties in order to build a society and a state that accord with the essential demands of democratic Socialism.

Legislature, executive and judiciary should operate separately and it is the duty of each to serve the public interest. The existence of three levels of authority—Federal, State, and Local – ensures the distribution of power, strengthens freedom and through co-determination and co-responsibility gives the citizen manifold access to democratic institutions. Free local communities are vital to a living democracy. The Social Democratic Party therefore supports the principles of local self-government which must be extended and given adequate financial support.

Associations in which people of different groups and sections of the population unite for common ends are necessary institutions of modern society. They must be democratically organised. The more powerful they are, the greater is the responsibility they carry, but the greater also is the danger of their abusing their power. Parliaments, administration and courts must not be allowed to come under the one-sided influence of vested interests.

Press, radio, television and cinema fulfill public tasks. They must be independent and free to gather information wherever they wish, to comment on it and to distribute it, and to form and express their own opinions. Radio and television should remain under the control of public corporations, and be directed by free and democratic boards. They must be safeguarded against pressure from interest groups.

Judges must have outer and inner independence if they are to serve justice in the name of the people. Lay judges should play an equally important part in jurisdiction. Only independent judges can pass judgment on criminal offences. Neither wealth nor poverty should have an influence on people's access to courts or on jurisdiction. Legislation must keep pace with the development of society if justice is to be done and if the people's sense of justice is not to be violated.

National Defence

The Social Democratic Party affirms the need to defend the free democratic society. It is in favour of national defence.

National defence must be adapted to the political and geographical position of Germany and therefore stay within the limits imposed by the necessity of creating the conditions for an easing of international tensions, for effectively controlled disarmament and for the reunification of Germany. Protection of the civilian population is an essential part of a country's defence.

The Social Democratic Party demands that the means of mass destruction be banned by international law in the whole world. [. . .]

The Economy

The goal of Social Democratic economic policy is the constant growth of prosperity and a just share for all in the national product, a life in freedom without undignified dependence and without exploitation.

Second Economic Expansion

The Second Industrial Revolution makes possible a rise in the general standard of living greater than ever before and the elimination of poverty and misery still suffered by large numbers of people.

Economic policy must secure full employment whilst maintaining a stable currency, increase productivity and raise general prosperity.

To enable all people to take part in the country's growing prosperity there must be planning to adjust the economy to the constant structural changes in order to achieve a balanced economic development.

Such a policy demands national accounting and a national budget. The national budget must be approved by Parliament. It is binding on government policy, provides an important basis for the policies of the autonomous central bank, and establishes guiding lines for the economy which keeps its right to make independent decisions.

The modern state exerts a constant influence on the economy through its policies on taxation, finance, currency and credits, customs, trade, social services, prices and public contracts as well as agriculture and housing. More than a third of the national income passes through the hands of the government. The question is therefore not whether measures of economic planning and control serve a purpose, but rather who should apply these measures and for whose benefit. The state cannot shirk its responsibility for the course the economy takes. It is responsible for securing a forward-looking policy with regard to business cycles and should restrict itself to influencing the economy mainly by indirect means.

Free choice of consumer goods and services, free choice of working place, freedom for employers to exercise their initiative as well as free competition are essential conditions of a Social Democratic economic policy. The autonomy of trade unions and employers' associations in collective bargaining is an important feature of a free society. Totalitarian control of the economy destroys freedom. The Social Democratic Party therefore favours a free market wherever free competition really exists. Where a market is dominated by individuals or groups, however, all manner of steps must be taken to protect freedom in the economic sphere. As much competition as possible – as much planning as necessary.

Ownership and Power

A significant feature of the modern economy is the constantly increasing tendency toward concentration. Large-scale enterprises exert a decisive influence not only on the development of the economy and the standard of living but also on the structure of the economy and of society. Those who control large industrial concerns, huge financial resources and tens of thousands of employees do not merely perform an economic function but wield decisive power over men; wage and salary earners are kept in a position of dependence, and not only in purely economic and material matters.

Wherever large-scale enterprises predominate, free competition is eliminated. Those who have less power have fewer opportunities for development, and remain more or less fettered. The consumer occupies the most vulnerable position of all in the economy.

Increased power through cartels and associations gives the leaders of big business an influence on politics and the state which is irreconcilable with democratic principles. They usurp the authority of the state. Economic power becomes political power.

This development is a challenge to all who consider freedom, justice, human dignity and social security the foundations of human society.

The key task of an economic policy concerned with freedom is therefore to contain the power of big business. State and society must not be allowed to become the prey of powerful sectional groups.

Private ownership of the means of production can claim protection by society as long as it does not hinder the establishment of social justice. Efficient small and medium sized enterprises are to be strengthened to enable them to prevail in competition with large-scale enterprises.

Competition by public enterprise is an important means of preventing private enterprise from dominating the market. Public enterprise should safeguard the interests of the community as a whole. It becomes a necessity where, for natural or technical reasons, economic functions vital to the community cannot be carried out in a rational way except by excluding competition.

Enterprises, which are built up on a voluntary collective basis and whose purpose it is to satisfy demand rather than earn private profits, help to regulate prices and serve the interests of the consumer. They perform a valuable function in a democratic society and should be supported.

Large-scale publicity should give the people an insight into the power structure of the economy and into business practices in order that public opinion may be mobilised against abuses of power.

Effective public control must prevent the abuse of economic power. The most important means to this end are investment control and control over the forces dominating the market.

Public ownership is a legitimate form of public control which no modern state can do without. It serves to protect freedom against domination by large economic concerns. In these concerns power is held today by managers who are themselves the servants of anonymous forces. Private ownership of the means of production is therefore no longer identical with the control of power. Economic power, rather than ownership, is the central problem today. Where sound economic power relations cannot be guaranteed by other means, public ownership is appropriate and necessary.

Every concentration of economic power, even in the hands of the state, harbours dangers. This is why the principles of self-government and decentralisation must be applied to the public sector. The interests of wage and salary earners as well as the public interest and the interests of the consumer must be represented on the management boards of public enterprises. Not centralised bureaucracy but responsible co-operation between all concerned serves the interests of the community best.

Distribution of Income and Wealth

The competition economy does not guarantee by itself just distribution of income and wealth. This can only be achieved through measures of economic policy.

Income and wealth are distributed unjustly. This is not only the result of mass destruction of property through crises, war and inflation but is largely due to an economic and fiscal policy which has favoured large incomes and the accumulation of capital in the hands of a few, and which has made it difficult for those without capital to acquire it.

The Social Democratic Party aims to create conditions in which everybody is able to save part of his rising income and acquire property. This presupposes a constant increase in production and a fair distribution of the national income.

Wage and salary policies are adequate and necessary means of distributing incomes and wealth more justly.

Appropriate measures must ensure that an adequate part of the steadily growing capital of big business is widely distributed or made to serve public purposes. It is a deplorable symptom of our times that privileged groups in society indulge in luxury while important public tasks, especially in the fields of science, research and education, are neglected in a way unworthy of a civilised nation.

Agriculture

The principles of Social Democratic economic policy apply also to agriculture. The structure of agriculture, however, and its dependence on uncontrollable forces of nature call for special measures.

The farmer is entitled to own his land. Efficient family holdings should be protected by modern laws on land tenure and leases.

Support of the existing system of co-operatives is the best way of increasing the efficiency of small and medium sized holdings whilst maintaining their independence.

Agriculture must adjust itself to the changing economic structure in order to make its proper contribution to economic development and to assure an adequate standard of living to the people working in it. These changes are determined not only by technical and scientific progress, but also by the changes in the location of the market within the framework of European co-operation and by the fact that the German economy is increasingly linked with that of the rest of the world. The modernisation of agriculture and its efficiency are a public responsibility. The interests of the farming population are best served by the integration of agriculture into an economy with high productivity and an ever more widely distributed mass purchasing power. Price and market policies necessary to protect agricultural incomes should take into account the interests of the consumers and of the economy as a whole.

The cultural, economic, and social condition of the entire farming population must be improved. The lag in social legislation must be overcome.

Trade Unions in the Economy

All wage and salary earners and civil servants have the right to free association in trade unions. They would be helplessly exposed to those in positions of command in enterprises and concerns unless they were able to confront the latter with the united force of their free and democratically organised trade unions and freely to agree on working conditions.

Trade unions fight to secure wage and salary earners a fair share of the country's wealth and the right to a voice in decisions affecting economic and social life.

They fight for greater freedom and act as representatives of all working people. This makes them an important element in the constant process of democratisation. It is the unions' great task to enable every employee to shoulder responsibility and to see to it that he can make use of his abilities.

Wage and salary earners whose contribution to production is decisive have so far been deprived of an effective say in economic life. Democracy, however, demands that

workers should be given a voice and that codetermination be extended to all branches of the economy. From being a servant the worker must become a citizen of the economy.

Co-determination in the iron and steel industry and in coal mining marks the beginning of a new economic structure. The next step should be the establishment of a democratic organisational structure in all large enterprises. Co-determination by employees in the independent administrative bodies set up in the economy must be secured.

Social Responsibility

Social policy must create the essential conditions which allow the individual to unfold himself freely in society and which determine his life according to his own responsibility. Social conditions that lead to individual and social hardship cannot be accepted as inevitable and unchangeable. The system of social security must correspond to the dignity of responsible individuals.

Every citizen has the right to a minimum state pension in case of old age or inability to earn a living, or at the death of the family's provider. This pension is supplemented by other personally acquired pension claims. In this way the individual standard of living will be sustained. Social allowances of all kinds, including pensions for war-disabled and their dependents, must be regularly adjusted to the rise in earned incomes.

Technology and modern civilisation expose people to many dangers to their health. They threaten not only the living generation but future generations as well. The individual is unable to protect himself against these hazards. The Social Democratic Party therefore demands comprehensive health protection. Health policy must be perfected, and the conditions and ways of living must be shaped in a way conducive to making life in sound health possible. Public health protection, especially protection at work and effective methods of preventing damage to health in individuals, must be developed. A sense of personal responsibility in respect of one's health must be aroused and the doctor of one's choice must be given full facilities for the preservation of health and prevention of illness. The professional freedom of decision of doctors must be ensured. The provision of adequately equipped hospitals is a public task.

Since all people should have an equal chance to live, all must have access to the treatment made available through modern technical research when they are in need of it, regardless of their financial position. Such medical treatment must be supplemented by adequate economic assistance in the case of illness.

Working hours should be progressively shortened without prejudice to income levels and in step with the development of the economy.

In order to cope with particularly difficult situations in life and in special cases of need, the general social allowances must be supplemented by individual care and social aid. Social aid should be given in co-operation with independent voluntary welfare

organisations and institutions for mutual aid and self-help. The independence of free welfare organisations must be protected.

All labour and social legislation should be ordered and compiled in a surveyable code on labour legislation and a code on social legislation.

Everyone has a right to a decent place in which to live. It is the home of the family. It must therefore continue to receive social protection and must not be the mere object of private gain.

The housing shortage must speedily be eliminated through effective building programmes. Public housing must be encouraged and social considerations must be taken into account when determining rents. Speculation in real estate should be prohibited and excessive gains from the sale of real estate taxed away.

Woman–Family–Youth

Equality of rights for women should be realised in the legal, economic and social spheres. Women must be given equal opportunities in education and occupational training, in the choice and practice of professions and in earnings. The special psychological and biological characteristics of women should not be disregarded because they have equal rights. The work of the housewife should be recognised as an occupation. The housewife and mother is in need of social assistance. Mothers of children of pre-school age and school-age should not be compelled by economic need to seek gainful employment.

State and society must protect, support and strengthen the family. By supporting the material security of the family, society recognises its moral value. Effective help should be given to the family by generous tax allowances for parents, and by maternity benefits and family allowances.

Young people must be enabled to manage their own lives and grow up ready to assume their responsibilities towards society. It is therefore the task of state and society to strengthen the educational function of the family, to supplement it where it does not suffice, and, if need be, to provide an alternative. A system of grants and scholarships must ensure that special abilities and aptitudes of young people are fully developed in their vocational and professional training.

The protection of the young workers must be adjusted to present-day social conditions and educational experience. If the young people are entrusted at an early stage with a share in the work and responsibilities of adults, they will become well-informed and determined democrats. Progressive youth legislation should guarantee the young people's right to education and development of their personality. In all areas of life which concern education or the encouragement and protection of youth, the welfare of youth must have priority over all other considerations.

Cultural Life

The creative powers of the individual must be given a chance to unfold freely in a full and diverse cultural life. The state should encourage and support all forces willing to make a contribution to cultural progress. The state must protect the citizen against all attempts by power groups or sectional interests at making the people's spiritual and cultural life subservient to their own purposes.

Religion and Church

Only mutual tolerance which respects the dignity of all men regardless of differences in belief and conviction, offers a sound basis for political and human co-operation in society.

Socialism is no substitute for religion. The Social Democratic Party respects churches and religious societies. It affirms their public and legal status, their special mission and their autonomy.

It is always ready to co-operate with the churches on the basis of a free partnership. It welcomes the fact that men are moved by their religious faith to acknowledge their social obligation and their responsibilities towards society.

Freedom of thought, of religion and of conscience, and freedom to preach the gospel must be protected. Any abuse of this freedom for partisan or anti-democratic ends cannot be tolerated.

Education

Education must give an opportunity to all freely to develop their abilities and capacities. It must strengthen the will to resist the conformist tendencies of our time. Knowledge and the acquisition of traditional cultural values, and a thorough understanding of the formative forces in society, are essential to the development of independent thinking and free judgment.

School and university should bring up youth in a spirit of mutual respect. Youth should be taught to appreciate the values of freedom, independence and social responsibility as well as the ideals of democracy and international understanding. The aim should be to encourage tolerance, mutual understanding and solidarity in our society in which so many philosophical viewpoints and systems of value exist side by side. The curricula of schools should therefore pay proper attention to education for citizenship. [. . .]

The International Community

The greatest and most urgent task is to preserve peace and protect freedom.

Democratic Socialism has always stood for international co-operation and solidarity. At a time when all interests and relationships are internationally linked, no nation can any longer solve its political, economic, social and cultural problems by itself. The Social Democratic Party is guided by the realization that the cultural economic, legal and military tasks of German politics must be solved in close co-operation with other peoples. [. . .]

Democratic states must express their solidarity especially with the developing countries. Half of the world's population still lives in extreme poverty and ignorance. So long as the wealth of the world is not redistributed and the productivity of developing countries raised considerably, democratic development is in jeopardy and peace continues to be threatened. All people are obliged to fight starvation, misery and disease by a common effort. Their economic, social and cultural development must be inspired by the ideas of democratic Socialism if they are not to become the victims of new forms of oppression.

Our Way

The Socialist movement has an historic task. It began as a spontaneous moral protest of wage earners against the capitalist system. The tremendous development of the productive forces with the help of science and technology brought wealth and power to a small group of people, but only destitution and misery to the workers. To abolish the privileges of the ruling classes and to secure freedom, justice and prosperity for all was and remains the essence of the Socialist aim.

The working class had to rely on its own resources in its struggle. It acquired self-confidence by becoming conscious of its own position and by its determination to change this position by united action and the experience of success in its struggle.

Despite heavy setbacks and some errors the Labour movement succeeded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in winning recognition for many of its demands. The proletarian who was once without protection and rights, who had to work sixteen hours a day for a starvation wage, achieved the eight-hour day, protection at work, insurance against unemployment, sickness, disability and destitution in old age. He achieved the prohibition of child labour and night work for women, the legal protection of youth and mothers, and holidays with pay. He successfully fought for the right to assemble and to form trade unions, the right to collective bargaining and to strike. He is about to obtain the right to co-determination. Once a mere object of exploitation, the worker now occupies the position of a citizen in the state with equal rights and obligations.

In several countries of Europe the foundations of a new society have been laid under Social Democratic governments. Social security and the democratisation of the economy are being realised to an increasing extent.

These successes represent milestones on the march forward of the Labour movement which has demanded so many sacrifices. The emancipation of the workers helped to enlarge the freedom of all men. From a party of the working class the Social Democratic

Party has become a party of the people. It is determined to put the forces unleashed by the industrial revolution and the advance of technology in all spheres of life to the service of freedom and justice for all. The social forces which built the capitalist world cannot tackle this task. Their historical record is one of impressive technical and economic advance, but also of destructive wars, mass unemployment, inflation which robbed people of their savings, and economic insecurity. The old forces are unable to oppose the brutal Communist challenge with a better programme for a new society, in which individual and political freedom is enhanced, and economic security and social justice guaranteed. This is why they cannot satisfy the claims for assistance and solidarity from the young states which are about to throw off the yoke of colonial exploitation, to shape their destinies in freedom and to insist on participation in the world's wealth. These states are resisting the lure of Communism which is trying to draw them into its sphere of influence.

Communists are radical suppressors of freedom and violators of human rights and of the self-determination of individuals and peoples. The people in the countries under Communist domination are increasingly opposing the Communist regime. Even in those countries changes are taking place. Even there, the longing for freedom is growing which no system can wholly suppress in the long run. But the Communist rulers are fighting for their own survival. They are building up military and economic power for which their peoples have to pay the price and which represents an increasing threat to freedom.

Only the prospect of a society based on the fundamental values of democratic Socialism can offer the world new hope, a society resting on respect for human dignity, on freedom from want and fear, from war and oppression, which is built in co-operation with all men of good will.

This message is addressed to all men and women in this country as well as in other parts of the world.

In Germany, Socialists are united in the Social Democratic Party which welcomes to its ranks all who accept the fundamental values and demands of Democratic Socialism.



Hamburger Programm
Das Grundsatzprogramm der SPD.



Hamburg Program

Principal Guidelines of the Social Democratic Party of Germany³

Adopted at the Federal Party Conference of the SPD in Hamburg on October 28, 2007

Introduction

Progress and justice in the 21st century

The future is open – full of new opportunities, but also full of threats. Therefore we must fight for progress and social justice by democratic means. Committed to the people, in the proud tradition of democratic socialism, with sense for reality and energy, the German Social Democrats are accepting their tasks in the world of the 21st century, for permanent peace and safe ecological foundations in life. For a free and fair society in solidarity. For equality and self-determination of all people – independent of origin and gender, free from poverty, exploitation and fear.

We are aiming at a free and fair world order. We are favouring the strength of law to overcome the law of the strongest. A social Europe must become our response to globalization. Only in joint security and responsibility, only in solidarity and partnership will peoples, states and cultures shall we be able to safeguard the survival of humankind and our planet.

We are working for sustainable progress combining economic dynamism, social justice and ecological reason. We want to overcome poverty and exploitation by means of qualitative growth enabling good work for all and counteracting the menacing climate change. The natural foundations for life shall be safeguarded also for future generations and the quality of life need to be improved. To this end we want to put the opportunities of scientific and technical progress into the service of humankind.

We are developing the preventive welfare state combatting poverty, offering people equal opportunities for a life in self-determination, granting fair participation and providing reliable security for major risks in life. We are favouring togetherness of the generations and equality of women and men. We are dedicating our support to families, focusing our special support on the weakest groups in our society. We want a healthy life and good education for all. We do not want to leave behind any child.

³ Source: Hamburg Program

Principal Guidelines of the Social Democratic Party of Germany, adopted at the Federal Party Conference of the SPD in Hamburg on October 28, 2007,
http://www.spd.de/de/pdf/parteiprogramme/Hamburger_Programm_engl.pdf, accessed on 14 May 2009.

We are favouring the strengths of civil society in solidarity. With the creative power of democratic policy we want to strengthen cohesion in our country enabling a sense of belonging and being at home. We want to promote a culture of recognition in Germany: people shall live together in mutual respect of dignity, culture and contribution of their neighbours. We are working for our social and democratic constitutional state granting security in freedom.

In our times of rapid change many people are searching for orientation and perspective. We know that millions of people in the entire society are sharing our values and goals. We want to win over this majority in solidarity for our social democratic policy.

1. Our lifetime

The 21st century is the first really global century. Never before, people relied on each other so much worldwide. With the collapse of Communism the division of our country and the political split of the world were overcome. Since then we have experienced the most profound historical change since the industrial revolution. Science and technology are driving change. [. . .]

The contradictions of globalization

The world is growing together. Digitalized media and other technical developments have revolutionized the relevance of space and time.

For the first time in history we are experiencing worldwide division of labour involving major parts of mankind. Globalization, open borders and markets are not only the result of technical innovations but also of political decisions. This offers the chance to overcome famine, poverty and epidemics. World trade brings new work and wealth for many people. At the same time, however, global capitalism is characterized by a lack of democracy and justice. Thus it is opposed to a free world living in solidarity. It enhances old and creates new injustice. Therefore we fight for a policy defining a social response to global capitalism in our own country, in Europe and in the world.

Global capitalism is heaping up large quantities of capital which, however, do not necessarily create new wealth. Raging finance markets bring speculation and expectations conflicting with sustainable and long-term economic action. If the sole target is rapid and high return on capital jobs are destroyed and innovations prevented many times. Capital must serve the purpose of value added and wealth. With globalization the world increasingly amalgamates in one single market. Economic power is concentrated in global corporations, banks and funds. Transnational corporations plan their profit-making strategies worldwide undermining democratically legitimized decisions. Nation states, even the largest amongst them, run the risk to become mere locations competing for investments of global capital. Therefore nation states must join forces and strengthen their influence together. Europe has adopted this course. [. . .]

Where borders fall chances increase for peaceful togetherness of peoples and cultures. However, the more the world is growing together the more it becomes vulnerable. We are experiencing the disintegration of states, the development of breeding grounds for anarchy and terrorism and the arbitrary division of the world in good and evil by religious and political fundamentalists. Privatized denationalized violence and the dissemination of weapons of mass destruction are creating new hazards. All of this jeopardizes peace.

After two murderous world wars and the Holocaust the peoples of Europe have created a continent of peace and open borders. The peaceful revolutions of 1989 have overcome the division of Europe in East and West. German unification has brought freedom and democracy for our entire country. People are enjoying wealth and quality of life as never before, not only in Germany but almost all over Europe. At the same time, however, Europe is experiencing a crisis of confidence amongst citizens. People in the states of Europe, even in Germany, want more consideration of social concerns, more respect of national identities and cultural traditions. Therefore Europe must be more than a confederation of states, it must become a social and democratic alliance of its citizens.

Profound changes in the world of employment and in society

For the first time there is worldwide competition of services and labour parallel to the world market of capital and commodities. [. . .] Our working society is undergoing profound change. Speed of innovation and variety of employment are increasing. Qualifications and knowledge are becoming increasingly important. New creative occupations are developing. Traditional normal employment contracts, permanent and with regular working hours, are losing importance. Working life is now characterized by a change between employment, unemployment, phases of family work and self-employment.

These changes, often experienced as constraint, may overstrain and frighten people. Many people are afraid of being left behind and being neglected or even forgotten by politics. Older workers and people with lower qualifications are more excluded from the labour market than others. Even women with excellent qualification still do not get fair access to career making opportunities and paid employment to make a living. Those in work frequently fear that their quality of life is jeopardized because of increasing pressure, fiercer competition and the demand for permanent availability.

After the Second World War Social Democrats, trade unions and social movements made major progress in the Federal Republic of Germany. [. . .]

Our society has progressed far on the way towards equal opportunities for women and men. The traditional role assignment, however, has not yet been overcome. Legal equality in itself does not mean equal opportunities. In the world of work and occupation old discriminations continue to exist. Compatibility of family and occupation still is predominantly a problem of mothers, women earn less than men, are more threatened by loss of job and by poverty. [. . .]

Globalization also has a cultural dimension. Religions and cultures are meeting more than ever before. Nowadays almost everywhere in the world, people find members of their culture, products from their home countries and media helping them to stay in touch with their countries of origin. On the other hand they meet members of other cultures in their home countries. Foreign worlds are approximating with the chance to understand them. Wherever the fear of the foreign predominates there is an increasing risk for prejudices to become conflicts. Where cultural conflicts are enhanced by social antagonisms violence will spread. Cultural variety, however, is nowadays a characteristic element of successful societies.

Democracy and Politics

Globalization reduces the possibilities of the nation state to shape life. At the same time politics has to accept new tasks like climate protection, social integration of millions of people and demographic change. Many people sense the state's loss of power in the global era. They do not believe any more that things can be changed by politics. The most crucial tasks of Social Democrats are therefore reestablishing the confidence of people that society can be shaped, encouraging them to accept their destiny in self-determination and solidarity. [. . .]

The great task of the 21st century is to shape globalization by democratic policy. We are looking ahead.

2. Our core values and core convictions

The German Social Democratic Party, the oldest democratic party in Germany, has always been part of an international liberation movement. After its foundation it was both emancipation movement of workers and democracy movement supposed to overcome the authoritarian state. In Germany it continued the ideas of the French Revolution and the revolution of 1848.

In Germany the history of democracy cannot be separated from the history of the Social Democratic Party. It brought rights of freedom and democracy, it fought for women's rights and rejected any dictatorship. Early on it realized the hazard of National Socialism rejecting the Act of Empowerment in the Reichstag. Many social democrats offered resistance and fell victim to the NS terror. The will to freedom made the break with the communists inevitable.

The refoundation of the Social Democratic Party in the GDR became a signal of freedom. The Social Democratic Party developed as part of the labour movement. It fought for workers' rights, developed the social welfare state, and together with the trade unions it enabled disdained proletarians to become self-confident state citizens with equal rights.

Unlike other parties the Social Democratic Party always had both an international and European orientation. This is why we are still working on the project of a united Europe

which used to be a vision in the Heidelberg Programme of the SPD which can now be complemented.

Although many wholehearted pacifists considered the Social Democratic Party their political home it has never been a pacifist party but it has always been immune to chauvinism and militarism. In power it served peace. We are proud that we have never brought war, oppression or dictatorship to our people.

From the onset the SPD was the party of democracy. Social Democrats decisively shaped the political culture of our country.

Women and men of various origins, religious and philosophical convictions are cooperating in it. Since the Godesberg Programme of 1959 they considered themselves the people's party of the left with roots in Judaism and Christianity, Humanism and Enlightenment, Marxist analysis of society and the experience of the labour movement.

The people's party of the left owes many impulses to the women's movement and new social movements. We know that each time requires its own solutions to social and political issues. In our strife for contemporary programmes of social development we profess open debate. [. . .]

Our concept of humankind

Equal dignity of all people is the starting point and aim of our policy. People have diverse inherent potentials that are neither inherently good nor evil. They have the gift of reason able to learn. Therefore democracy is possible. Everybody is responsible for his/her own life. [. . .]

Our core values

„Freedom, equality, fraternity“, the basic demands of the French Revolution, are the foundation of European democracy. Ever since the goal of equal freedom has become the epitome of justice in modern times, freedom, justice and solidarity have been and continue to be the core values of democratic socialism in freedom. They remain our criterion to assess political reality, the yardstick for better social systems and orientations to actions of Social Democrats. Social Democrats have always aimed at establishing both material and legal conditions of freedom and equality of law, in parallel to equal participation and opportunities in life hence, social justice. [. . .]

Justice is grounded on equal dignity of every person. It is a synonym for equal freedom and equal opportunities, independent of background and gender.

Therefore justice means equal participation in education, work, social security, culture and democracy as well as equal access to all public goods. Where unequal distribution divides society into people giving and following instructions it infringes upon equal freedom and is thus unfair.

Therefore justice requires equal distribution of income, property and power, since major inequality in distribution jeopardizes equal opportunities in life. Therefore social democracy is necessary. Equal opportunities in life do not mean uniformity but space for the development of personal predilections and capabilities.[. . .]

Solidarity means mutual attachment, belonging and assistance. It is the readiness of people to stand up for each other and provide support between the strong and the vulnerable, between generations and peoples. Solidarity creates strength for change. This is the experience of the labour movement. Solidarity is a strong force that ties our society together – in spontaneous and individual readiness to give assistance, with common rules and organizations, and the welfare state's solidarity guaranteed and organized by politics.

Democratic Socialism

Our history is shaped by the idea of democratic socialism, a society of free and equal people where our core values are realized. It requires a structure in economy, state and society guaranteeing civil, political, social and economic basic rights for all people living a life without exploitation, suppression and violence, hence in social and human security. [. . .]

In our understanding democratic socialism remains the vision of a free and fair society in solidarity. Its realization is a permanent task for us. The principle for our actions is social democracy.

Primacy of Politics and the Principle of sustainability

Since we are abiding by this aim we are insisting in the primacy of democratic policy rejecting the subordination of political to economic interests. In doing so we are applying a wide notion of the political domain, which must not be reduced to the state but includes alliances and networks of civil society but also free action of people in self-determination. Politics must guarantee that certain goods are not reduced to mere commodities: law, security, education, health, culture and natural environment. [. . .]

In view of the challenges of the 21st century, in view of globalization and ecological crisis we consider sustainability the sole core principle of political and economic action. The principle of sustainability means thinking in terms of the future, resisting the primacy of short-term orientation giving preference to economy purely based on the logics of business management.

It means applying the concept of society shaping politics and democratic variety, ecological sustainability, social integration and cultural participation as guiding concepts of social democratic policy.[. . .]

Politics of Social Democracy

The Social Democrats are contrasting the economically curtailed concept of society with the image of people oriented towards human values of equal dignity and respect. People are not only competing with each other, they also need one another.[. . .]

The Social Democrats are not only guaranteeing civil, political and cultural basic rights for all people but also social and economic rights. This safeguards equal social participation of all by social democratization, especially by codetermination, by the preventive social welfare state based on civil rights, and by a coordinated market economy guaranteeing the precedence of democracy over markets.

3. Our aims, our policy

A peaceful and fair world

The international policy of the German Social Democratic Party aims at preventing conflicts and creating peace. Our principles for this aim are mutual understanding, international solidarity and common security by cooperation. We are favouring the conviction that power must be subjected to law.

For the first time in its history, humanity can solve central problems only together. Comprehensive security can only be achieved together. This requires developing a world domestic policy with strong United Nations and creating a fair world economic order. Europe shall play a key role in the attempt to reach both aims. The European Union must become our political response to globalization.

Social democrats want all nations, peoples and human beings to benefit from peace and wealth. The SPD want to make sure that cooperation becomes the keyword of the new century. Social Democrats are aware of Germany's growing responsibility for peace in the world. We are actively adopting this international role. The SPD is a peace force in Germany and Europe. We are rejecting any form of wars of aggression and prevention.

The indivisibility and universal validity of all human rights are non-negotiable for us. Our Basic Law, the European Charta of Basic Rights, the Charta of the United Nations, the General Declaration of Human Rights, the International Humanitarian Law and the Millennium Development Goals are the guidelines for our international policy.[. . .]

Strengthening global and regional cooperation

To achieve peace in the world common interests, alliances and organizations need to be strengthened. For this reason we want to strengthen the United Nations to become the supreme instance of a global legal system. We want to create and enforce global law. For this purpose international jurisdiction must be strengthened. International law will only become binding able to solve conflicts if sanctions can be enforced. [. . .]

International institutions and organizations like the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization must be measured with the yardstick of economic, social and ecological sustainability, human rights and the rights of working people.

Their decisions must be transparent. The distribution of votes must more strongly consider the interests of developing countries, especially the poorest ones.

Comprehensive Security Policy

Peace means more to us than the absence of war. Peace is the principal foundation for a civilized development of our global society. Crisis prevention is the most efficient policy to overcome root causes of conflicts like famine, poverty and lack of resources. War shall not be a means of politics.

In our understanding a fair world economic order and development cooperation in partnership are not only a necessity of humankind but building blocks of a comprehensive security policy. Step by step we therefore want to increase our funds to fight poverty and underdevelopment to 0,7 percent of the gross domestic product by 2015. Fighting corruption, promoting good governance, fighting AIDS/HIV and epidemics, as well as systematic debt relief of developing countries are important aims in the fight against poverty.

In many societies women are bearing the main responsibility for social and economic development. Without equal participation of women in the entire world democracy, global justice and sustainable development are impossible.

We need more justice in world trade. The developing countries do not want alms – instead they want fair opportunities on the markets. To this end the industrialized countries within the scope of the World Trade Organization must open their markets by gradually reducing and finally stopping the subsidization of their agricultural exports.

Disarmament and non-proliferation

Increasing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction requires a new policy of efficient arms control, arms limitation and disarmament. [. . .]

Arms are no ordinary commodities. Compliance with human rights, good governance and a ban on arms delivery to conflict regions are decisive criteria for export licences. Arms exports to developing countries shall be rejected since they jeopardize the sustainable development of countries.

Responsibility for security and peace

Scarce resources and climate disasters have an enormous conflict potential. Climate protection and access to energy, raw materials and water are outstanding issues of global

security in the global era. Renewable energies and improved energy efficiency are keys to peaceful development.

The decay of states leads to the dissemination of anarchy and lawlessness. Germany must be prepared to take responsibility in reestablishing statehood and structures of civil society.

The most dangerous form of denationalized violence is terrorism. The struggle against terror is not war but fighting crime. This is the task of police, judiciary and secret services. Only when they are overstrained in the international fight against terrorism will the military be the last option. Even in view of terrorism we are rejecting any softening up of international law.

Conflict solving by military means must be the last resort. Therefore we are favouring a peace policy based on preventing conflicts. [. . .]

Democratic Europe

The European Union has gained traits of its own statehood. More and more areas of life are affected by European decisions. We want to create a Europe of the citizens. We want to venture more European democracy. Our model is a political union granting all European citizens democratic rights of participation. [. . .]

Social Europe

Europe has created the largest single market in the world and even introduced its common currency. This happened in the interest of Europe's citizens. Neither in Germany nor in Europe, however, we shall accept that market economy leading us into a market society. After the Europeanization of the fiscal and monetary policy we are pleading for growth and employment oriented coordination of economic, fiscal and monetary policy. This requires generally binding economic rules. The European Social Union must be juxtaposed to the Economic and Monetary Union on equal footing. [. . .]

Civil society based on solidarity and democratic state

Democracy lives by its citizens' commitment. Therefore we want a strong and vital civil society where people make use of their freedom of opinion and association. The democratic state is the political self-organization of the citizens. A lively civil society may and is supposed to control, correct, stimulate, relieve and complement state action. It cannot substitute it. [. . .]

Security in freedom

Freedom and constitutionality are yardsticks of social democratic legal and domestic policy. In our understanding constitutionality means unconditional respect of human and civil rights by all powers of the state, granting independent jurisprudence within reach for

all people. People need security. They can even use their freedom only if they feel safe. The constitutional state has to care for security. In Germany it is jeopardized by crime through extremists and terrorists, even organized in international networks.

We fight it with the means of the constitutional state. Police and judiciary are immediately responsible for it. We reject domestic missions of the Federal Army. People who want to ward off enemies of the constitutional state must never abandon its principles. It is not the defence of civil rights and rights to freedom but their restriction which requires justification.

The prohibition of arbitrariness and torture applies in absolute terms. However, we shall only win the fight against violence, hatred and crime if we fight its root causes with the same consistency.

We are granting the right of self-determination by information standing up for effective data protection. [. . .]

Forced marriage, forced prostitution and so-called murders of honour must be prevented and persecuted. There is no space for extremism substantiated by religion. Even by referring to religious rules or tradition human rights cannot be put out of force. Here we draw our separating line of tolerance versus other cultures.

Integration and immigration

Germany is a country of immigration. Immigration has enriched our country in business and culture and will continue to do so, and we want to prepare our society for it. We need more qualified immigrants.

Immigration requires integration as joint effort. Both sides must be prepared for it. Immigrants must integrate themselves, and we must give them all opportunities to take part in the life of our society. Therefore integration requires fair chances but also clear rules.[. . .]

Public and media

Democracy needs publicity. [. . .] We are defending media independence from state intervention and economic interests of power. We do not dispense with effective self-control of the media and ethic standards of journalism. In our understanding broadcasting under public law indispensably belongs to democratic publicity as crucial corrective element versus increased commercialization of the media. We are rejecting manipulation, political bias and harm to the youth. We are fighting sexist, racist and violence adoring content.

We are in favour of a dialogue among cultures. It serves the purpose of domestic and external peace but also integration. If peaceful globalization shall succeed we need a culture of recognition counteracting the exclusion of minorities and the formation of

parallel societies. We want cultural variety instead of fundamentalist constriction and politicization of religious and cultural differences instead of global monoculture. Only a vital culture of recognition enables a society where we can be different as human beings without fear.

Peaceful variety is only possible if we safeguard our mental roots in Jewish Christian tradition as well as Humanism and Enlightenment - influenced by Greek philosophy, Roman law and Arab culture. Only a value based and tolerant culture is able to withstand temptations of abusing culture and religion as means of exclusion. For the dialogue of religions and peaceful living together in Germany the contribution of Muslims living in Germany is indispensable.

Culture is a public good. It is the task of civil society and state to promote it. [. . .]

Churches and communities of faith and conviction

We profess the Judeo-Christian heritage of Europe and tolerance in issues of religious conviction. We defend freedom of thought, conscience, faith and proclamation. Foundation and yardstick for this is our Constitution. In our understanding the work of churches and communities of faith and conviction cannot be substituted by anything, especially where they encourage people to take responsibility for others and the community, and where they impart virtues and values characterizing democracy.

We want to talk with such organizations cooperating with them in free partnership on joint projects. We are respecting their right to organize their internal affairs autonomously within the scope of generally applicable law.

Gender equality

The Social Democrats want to build a society for women and men with equal rights and opportunities – not only on paper but in daily life. We are fighting for a society in which men and women can live together in equality, freedom and solidarity.

Sustainable development and qualitative growth

Wealth and high quality of life have always been priorities in the Social Democrats' economic policy. In the past progress was mainly understood in terms of quantitative growth. Nowadays we are forced by rapid climate change, overstrain of the eco systems and growth of the world population to give development a new future oriented direction to turn development into progress. We want sustained progress by combining economic dynamism, social justice and ecological responsibility. This requires qualitative growth in combination with reduced consumption of resources.

People shall have a chance to earn their own living by good work without fearing exploitation. Every person shall receive a fair share in wealth creation. We want to safeguard the natural foundations of life also for future generations. We are favouring

scientific and economic progress, education and qualification to enable sustainable development. [. . .]

Social market economy in the 21st century

In the 20th century, the social market economy has become our outstanding model for success. It combines economic strength with wealth for broad strata of society. Social market economy, predominantly shaped by social democrats and trade unions, turned participation and codetermination of workers into a productive force promoting social peace. However, global finance and capital markets without borders are challenging this tested structure. [. . .]

In our understanding strong trade unions are indispensable. When shaping working conditions we abide by the tested division of tasks between legislators, parties to collective labour agreements as well as works and personnel councils. Freedom of collective bargaining applies without any restriction. We want to strengthen industry wide collective agreements. We are safeguarding workers' rights including protection against unlawful dismissal.

Functioning state and active growth policy

Social democracy needs a functioning state. Only rich people can afford a poor state. The state needs sufficient reliable income to shape by political means.

In our understanding sound finance policy means that today we should not live at the cost of future generations. However, we must not leave weak infrastructures to coming generations due to excessive consolidation of public budgets. Our obligation to future generations means lowering the indebtedness of public budgets and at the same time investing more money in education, research and infrastructure.

Corporations and private households must take part in funding state tasks in line with their performing capability. This means that we are professing the tested progressive income tax. We want fair taxation of large capital and inheritance.

We want to finance social welfare systems more through taxes than by levies on all types of income.

High domestic demand creates more employment. Therefore it is not only fair but also economically necessary to orientate wage increases at least to productivity and inflation. We need minimum wages to avoid exploitation and safeguard fair competition.

Our fiscal and monetary policy in Germany and Europe is targeted to consolidating the business cycle and promoting strong consistent growth. By means of national and international stabilization policy the state must care for overcoming crises of the business cycle. The public sector must spend money to provide impulses for the business cycle and to enable the entire society to benefit from it. Sustainable growth development

requires consistent increase of public investment in education, research and infrastructure.

Capital and finance markets: using opportunities, controlling risks

A modern, globally interlinked national economy requires well-functioning finance and capital markets. We want to tap the potentials of capital markets for qualitative growth. Our policy grants young innovative enterprises better access to venture capital.

If finance markets only want to generate short-term profits, they jeopardize long-term growth strategies of enterprises which destroys jobs. By means of tax and shareholder law, among other things, we want to strengthen investors focusing on long-term commitments instead of quick profit.

We need rules for investors and funds preventing lopsided profit orientation to the detriment of the long-term substance of enterprises. With increasing international inter-linkage of commodities and finance markets their international regulation becomes increasingly crucial. Stable national and international finance markets are important public goods.

We want joint action with other states and international institutions to improve predictability of legal decisions and trust. By means of clear rules and efficient supervision risks to stability and erroneous development doing damage to national economy shall be prevented. Wherever possible we want to support this by national tax and stock corporation law. [. . .]

Knowledge and ideas as productive forces

Inventiveness, good ideas and innovations deriving from them are the most important productive forces of our country. Developing them and caring for skilled workforce we consider a major joint task of enterprises, trade unions and politics. Product and brand piracy are not only harmful for economy and its innovative strength, they also endanger consumers by goods of minor quality. Therefore we want to protect intellectual property and safeguard copyright. This includes the freedom to offer one's own intellectual property to the public. Creative business is gaining importance. In our opinion the recipe for more innovation, creativity and value creation is the right combination of technology, talent and tolerance. [. . .]

Change in energy policy and environmental protection

Energy, just like air and water, is the living foundation of our civilization. In future we cannot waste energy and resources like now. Therefore, in our understanding, changing our energy policy is a key task of the 21st century. We are consistently driving the change from exhaustive to inexhaustive and from toxic to non-toxic resources. Our aim is the epoch of solar energy. [. . .]

Renewable energies are the largest permanently available indigenous energy potentials everywhere. Increasing efficiency, saving resources and shifting to renewable energies requires varied new technologies and storage media. They are creating numerous new jobs in industry, crafts and services as well as in agriculture and forestry. We want to move away from oil and other exhaustible energies where we rely on imports. As a bridge to the solar energy epoch we favour modern coal and gas power plants with highly efficient combined heat and power production. In industry too we want to substitute exhaustible raw materials by renewable ones. [. . .]

Sustainable agriculture and rural areas

The internationalization of agricultural markets continues. We want strong agriculture in Germany even in future. It shall maintain man-made landscapes, protect natural foundations of life and contribute to sustainable development of rural areas. We are promoting a type of agriculture which is apt to cover growing demands for healthy high-quality foodstuff, also from ecological production, at the same time sparing natural resources. Farmers and consumers have the right to claim cultivation free of gene technology.

We want a type of agriculture where environmentally and animal compatible production are paying. Enabling farmers to strengthen their position versus highly consolidated food retail business they need new forms of cooperation in combination with traditional organizations.

Rural areas have their own development opportunities which can be linked with sustainable cultivation. This includes tourism and renewable raw materials.[. . .]

Good work for all

Every woman and every man has the right to work. Work is the key to participating in social life. It provides sense in life and recognition. Work prevents social exclusion enabling self-determined life. Unemployment, however, mostly not self-induced, impairs human dignity, it excludes and makes sick.

very work well done deserves respect, but not every work is good work. Work belongs to a dignified life but it must also live up to human dignity.

We want work with fair pay, enabling full participation in social security systems, offering recognition, not making sick, using and enhancing gained qualifications, guaranteeing democratic participation and enabling compatibility of occupation and family. [. . .]

Work for all

We want to enable good work for all people. We do not abandon the aim of full employment, even after decades of high unemployment in Germany. We know that it is not easy to achieve this aim.

Globalization is changing the labour market: on the one hand, there is an increasing supply of workers looking for employment outside their home countries. On the other hand locations – even in one and the same group of companies – are competing with each other. Often short-term company strategies are in the foreground. The constraint of permanent availability goes hand in glove with increasing precarious working conditions. Due to limited contracts, outsourcing, contract labour and the massive increase of employment for low pay there is no reliable foundation for life any more. Growing economic dynamism brings the need for people to change their jobs or even occupations and they must learn constantly. [. . .]

Participating by having a say

Together with the trade unions we are fighting for a fair share of the workforce in the yield of social work and the right of codetermination in economic and social life. Freedom of collective bargaining is a precious good.

In Germany employers and employees decide on wages and working conditions in their own responsibility. This remains untouched. We want strong and functioning trade unions able to strike representing large parts of the workforce. [. . .]

The preventive social welfare state

The social welfare state is a great achievement of the 20th century. It combines civil rights of freedom with social civil rights. Therefore democracy and social welfare state belong together. The social welfare state freed millions of people from the shackles of their origin, protected them from hardships of the market and opened opportunities for a life in self-determination. It is a decisive foundation for economic dynamism creating our wealth.

The social welfare state is organized in solidarity between the strong and weak, the young and old, the healthy and sick, people in work and the unemployed, the non-disabled and disabled. Even in future, the foundation of the social welfare state guarantees social security and participation, sueable legal claim for social benefits and workers' rights. Global capitalism is widening the gap between rich and poor. Even in our society social antagonisms are enhanced. Some countries accept this as a fact of destiny. However, successful social welfare states protect people from poverty enabling social rise. [. . .]

To renew the promise of security and rise in our time we are developing the social welfare state to become a preventive welfare state. It combats poverty enabling people to master their lives in self-determination.[. . .]

Health

The Social Democrats' preventive health care wants to prevent diseases, maintain health and overcome differences in health opportunities. We are aiming at healthy living conditions for all people promoting health aware behaviour. [. . .] We do not want a two-class society. Therefore we want the insurance of citizens in solidarity with contributions by all. [. . .]

Safe and active in old age

In future people will live longer. Since people will also enjoy a longer healthy life a third extended phase in life will follow the life of gainful employment. We want to shape the transition to pension with more flexibility. In old age every person shall have the chance to take an active part in social life and in the world of work. Commitment and experience of older people enrich our country's economy, politics and culture. Statutory pension insurance remains the pillar of poverty-proof security in old age. [. . .]

Better education, society suitable for children, strong families

[. . .] We want equal opportunities in life for all. First and foremost education and family decide on equal opportunities in life. Therefore we want to enforce better education for all and strengthen families. Our aim is a society suitable for children. Education is decisive for our future, it is the most crucial social issue of our time. It is education only enabling people to set goals for themselves in self-determination and to realize dreams. [. . .]

Education for all

The state has to make sure that everybody has equal access to education independent of personal origin. Exclusion by lacking educational opportunities is injustice. Better education requires higher expenditures. [. . .]

Promoting study and research

We want to improve the quality of teaching and research at our universities and create more places for studies. [. . .]

Strengthening children and families

Children stand for joyful expectation of the future. They are the foundation of each society. We want a society offering best chances for families with children and a climate of openness towards the needs of children. Successful children and family policy belongs to the key issues of our country's preparedness for the future. We are favouring families where mothers and fathers are equally responsible for maintenance and care. [. . .]

We must make it easier for young couples to fulfill their wishes for children without lagging behind in occupational life. [. . .]

We want to grant this by means of good and reliable care, family compatible working times and financial aid. Even the business world has responsibility for families. Precarious gainful employment impairs decisions in favour of children.

Families suffer where the ever available workforce becomes the ideal. After all, working times orientated towards the needs of parents also benefit the economy. We want a world of work suitable for families enabling parents to combine occupational life with family to have more time for children. [. . .]

4. Our way

The Future is open. We do not promise anybody to turn a world rampant with conflicts and contradictions into a paradise on earth. We acknowledge realities without accepting conditions as they are.

We want to go the way into a future worth living.

We want to qualify our country for the future.

We want a fairer and more peaceful world.

We want a social and democratic Europe.

We want a society of citizens in solidarity, a culture of respect and recognition as well as a functioning democratic state.

We want to realize equality of the genders. By means of qualitative growth, we want to enable wealth and quality in life for all and protect our natural foundation for life. We want good work and fair pay for all.

We want the preventive welfare state granting security, participation and equal opportunities in life. We want better education in a society suitable for families and children. History told us that conditions are changed by people, not by systems. A better future does not come by itself, we must create and shape it. A political party can only be as strong as the people sharing its values and supporting its aims. Many people are committed in trade unions, societies, associations, churches, social movements and networks. Many people want a better and fairer society. The majority in Germany wants to live in solidarity.

We want to win over this majority in solidarity for our policy. We are canvassing support encouraging for active participation. The Social Democratic Party of Germany is fighting for sustainable progress and social justice in the 21st century.