



SYRIZA

COALITION OF THE RADICAL LEFT

Published by the Sector of International
and European Affairs

Dear friends, with this first issue we would like to initiate our communication with ongoing activities and actions from Greece. We wish to establish and keep this contact during and after the pandemic lockdown by sharing our activities that concern our international friends. Please find the 1st edition of the SYRIZA International Department newsletter.



NEWSLETTER

May 2020



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SYRIZA PROJECT TO TACKLE THE ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE PANDEMIC APRIL 6, 2020



On 6 April, 2020, a press conference was organized, by means of a televised meeting of the President of SYRIZA Alexis Tsipras with the heads of SYRIZA Sectors in Parliament for Labor, Economy and Finance. Alexis Tsipras presented the party's overall proposal for handling the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on the Greek economy, employment and small and medium-sized businesses. The SYRIZA project is entitled "We Stay Standing", i.e. not subdued by the pandemic, introduced by Alexis Tsipras as follows:

The central idea of our program "We Stay Standing", with strong interventions and horizontal measures to be applied for as long as the pandemic lasts, is to support both supply and demand and to create the conditions required for stabilization and recovery.

The main objective of our proposal is to keep employment at pre-pandemic levels. That is, for the salary of people who are already employed to remain at the pre-pandemic level of February 2020, as well as labor relations as they had evolved before the crisis began. A critical magnitude is for jobs to be preserved in a country that found itself with 28% unemployment which in February was also high, at 17%. Here too our plan is the complete opposite of what the government is doing, which is to submit proposals intended to bring about a profound new restructuring of the labor market to the detriment of the working people. By suspending labor contracts and part-time employment, wages are reduced by some 50%.

Regarding time. "We stay standing" is a package with the obvious aim of dealing with disturbances of a rare and non-structural situation which, if left to the spontaneous drive of the market and the economy, would produce trends that are extremely difficult to reverse. If interventions are not lopsided but follow the logic of "wait and see" which the government has chosen, the consequences will be dramatic: a prolonged recession owing to the collapse of supply and demand, but also the loss of confidence in the economy. And many more loans will be required than those we propose today in order to prevent these developments, which will rapidly take the form of an avalanche. These multiple expenditures that we will require a few months from today, unless we act quickly, we will be unable to cover with any buffer, because, by then, they will have exceeded the limits of the buffer. And we will be obliged to cover them by borrowing anew. And under the conditions of a global economic crisis, this borrowing will not then be as easy then. And the nightmare of a return to the memoranda will be real again.

The measures we propose today within the framework of the program "We Stay Standing" are as follows:

1. Support for the National Health System with €1 billion additional financing – 4000 permanent jobs for health staff – adequate measures for protecting the people on the front line – central control of labor checks – special care for vulnerable categories of the population.
2. Extending protection of the first home after April 2020 and prohibiting auctions until the end of the year.
3. Immediate measures for social welfare and solidarity of €300 million with a 50% increase in disability payments and Social Solidarity Income (KEA).
4. Special social solidarity allowance in the form of a dividend of €1.5 billion to cover people working in insecure jobs – the known blocks, labor stamps etc. – but also the non-subsidized unemployed, for a total of 1.7 million beneficiaries.
5. Full coverage of salary, insurance contributions and Easter gifts for working people in the private sector until the end of May and subsidization of free professionals and the self-employed with an amount equal to 1/12 of their income last year for each month until the end of May. Level of funding: €8.5 billion.
6. Postponing payment of total tax obligations for six months.
7. Freezing loan repayments and other bank obligations for as long as the health crisis lasts.
8. Program of non-refundable support of €3 billion for small and medium-sized businesses that have no access to bank loans, with the criteria of turnover and number of employees.
9. Speeding up the outlay of payments for the public investments program.
10. An inspired Hercules plan, i.e. similar to the one being prepared for banks and businesses, which provides guarantees by the Greek state of €12 billion, corresponding to the ECB program, to strengthen their liquidity during the crisis.

Read the full statement here: <https://www.syriza.gr/article/id/91295/Syriza-project-to-tackle-the-economic-consequences-of-the-pandemic.html>



SYRIZA-PROGRESSIVE ALLIANCE DELEGATION IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

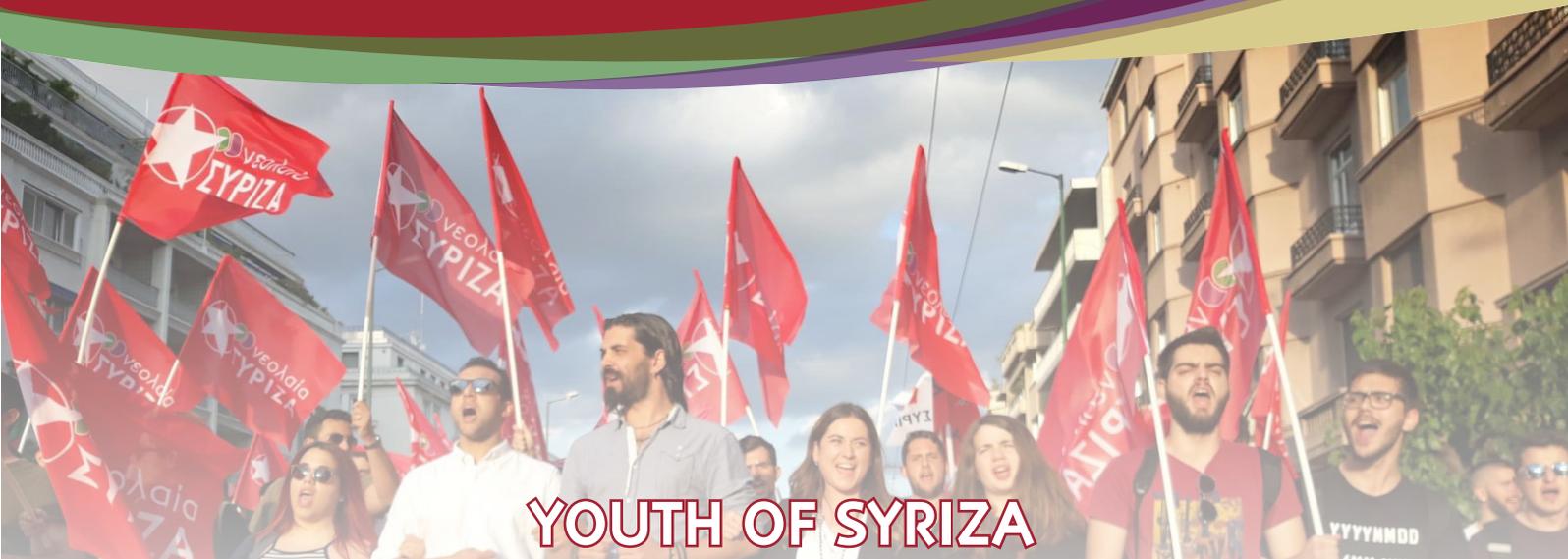
A European Emergency Response and Social Relief Plan against the Coronavirus Pandemic

The coronavirus crisis questions the very essence of the global and European structures. Beyond the loss of thousands of people, this pandemic threatens critical systems of public health, food security, civil protection, economic and financial stability, regional and social cohesion, the fundamental rights and rule of law, employment, sustainable development and the environment and democratic government. The COVID-19 pandemic demands swift and unprecedented action at European scale. The depth of the crisis and the scope of the response mean that choices being made right now will shape our society for decades to come. As we take steps to ensure immediate relief and long-term recovery, it is imperative that we consider the interrelated crises of wealth inequality, democratic legitimacy and ecological decline, which now risk being even more exacerbated.

The EU needs an Emergency Response and Social Relief Plan, which will protect lives, job, social rights and incomes. We face an unprecedented, global public health emergency. We need an unprecedented response. Old recipes based on neo-liberal policies and lack of solidarity among member-states have failed in the past. The EU needs common policies based on solidarity and social justice, in order to immediately support all people (especially the most vulnerable), our health systems and other public services, employees, enterprises (especially SMEs) and the self-employed. The EU after this enormous crisis will not be the same again. The EU must emerge resilient.

While we have welcomed most of the measures already taken by the EU institutions, we believe that they are nowhere near sufficient to deal with the scale of this crisis. The SYRIZA-Progressive Alliance delegation in the European Parliament calls for a massive, coordinated European Emergency Response and Social Relief Plan, whatever the cost.

Read the full statement here: <https://www.syriza.gr/article/id/89970/SYRIZA-EU-Delegation:-A-European-Emergency-Response-and-Social-Relief-Plan-against-the-Coronavirus-Pandemic.html>



YOUTH OF SYRIZA



**We are #strongertogether in
the coronavirus crisis-
Solidarity in all Europe**

As a response to this pandemic, drastic measures must be taken by all European governments and the EU itself in favor of healthcare system, labour, and the economy's sustainability. They must design and implement policies to support workers and small and medium-sized businesses, enhance welfare state, take care of the most vulnerable parts of the population and the refugees, and in the same time, state and European funds must be directed to the support of public infrastructure and public healthcare systems in each country. We have to create today a strong system of solidarity for the protection of people's life and dignity in opposition to the neoliberal policies and market forces.

The coronavirus pandemic also highlights the fundamental and universal right to free access to healthcare for all people. Health is a social good that only if provided by the state its access can be guaranteed to all. The key characteristics of public goods are their non-excludable and non-rival nature. A strong National Healthcare System with adequate staff and equipment will be the shield against any future health threat. Pandemic crises have no borders; they do not discriminate against deserving and undeserving citizens. Any individual can be affected regardless of their socio-economic or racial background. Thus, governments throughout the world shall provide free and quality healthcare to all people in their territory without any exception. At the same time, immediate measures should be taken to protect employment and labor rights so that workers are not unequally burdened by this crisis. We must protect the students, and the young people in general, who will be forced to deal with this crisis under even harder conditions.

One of the most effective measures to limit the spread of this pandemic is social distancing. However, not all of our fellow humans have the luxury to do so. The homeless, incarcerated individuals as well as refugees and asylum seekers are automatically and disproportionately vulnerable to the virus. We want to bring your attention to refugees in the Greek Aegean islands. We call all European countries to implement a fair responsibility-sharing mechanism of refugees in proportion to their population and economy size. We finally call on the Greek government to immediately transfer the people trapped in the Aegean islands to the mainland in order to effectively protect these individuals from the spread of the virus.

All of us shall be part of a front, which defends human life and dignity against the conservative and neoliberal policies implemented during this crisis.

Read the full statement here: <http://neolaiasyriza.gr/we-are-strongertogether-in-the-coronavirus-crisis-solidarity-in-all-europe/>



**PROTECT THE PEOPLE, NOT THE SYSTEM!
CHANGE POLITICS IMMEDIATELY**

PARTY OF THE EUROPEAN LEFT

The people have to be protected – socially and economically. Thousands of workers and employees are at risk to lose their jobs and their income. The most affected are those working under precarious conditions, in particular the cleaning personnel and care workers. The virus hits the weakest the hardest. While governments across Europe are calling on employees to work from home, this does not apply to everyone. Workers in essential services or essential production lines who have to be present on site need guaranteed protection from the spread of the virus. Many people fear for their health and professional existence. We need an economic rescue plan for workers and their families. In case of income loss, financial compensation is needed. Those who cannot, should not pay rents or mortgages. We object to any attempt to worsen working conditions like the suspension of collective agreements and to curtail workers' rights. We need emergency action not just for businesses, but in particular for small, medium enterprises and autonomous workers and the people. This is not only a task for Europe but the whole world. The countries of the global South need financial support to protect their people and to improve their health care systems.

The coronavirus pandemic clearly shows the failure of the predominant neoliberal economic and social model. As a consequence of the neoliberal austerity policy through the privatization of public services, the health care systems do not correspond to the requirements posed by the coronavirus pandemic. The capacities are not sufficient by far. Any effort is necessary to increase the functioning of the health care systems. Austerity policy has to be ended. The crisis gives enough reasons to question our socio-economic model and to change policy radically. As an immediate measure we need more investment in public services. Additionally tax justice is very much needed in order to build up welfare systems which are able to cope with a crisis like this. Furthermore the ECB must finance a European investment plan, capable of launching employment and guaranteeing the environmental and social conversion of production and the economy. At the same time, any discussion on the European Stability Mechanism (ESM), which represents an unnecessary and harmful way of intervening on the public budgets of the various European countries, must be cancelled.

In the long run, we need a general change of politics. We need an economic model oriented towards the public welfare. The immense accumulation of capital by only a few must be stopped. For the many not the few! The EL is eager to associate all the organizations taking part of the European Forum of left, progressive and ecological forces to work together on a progressive answer to the current crisis in the interest of the peoples. Read the full statement here: <https://www.european-left.org/el-pie-reclama-medidas-urgentes-para-una-salida-social-de-la-crisis/>



Measures to combat domestic violence during quarantine due to Covid 19

DEPARTMENT OF FEMINIST AND GENDER POLITICS OF SYRIZA

No woman should be facing domestic violence alone in this pandemic period

- Upgrade and effective functioning of the "Department for the Protection of Abused Women and Children" at the Hellenic Police Headquarters and the "Offices for Combating Domestic Violence" at the Prefectural Police Departments (which had been institutionalized by the SYRIZA government).
- Staffing of all police departments with the necessary personnel to deal with incidents of violence against women.
- Training of all police officers on the new laws and the New Police Order to tackle domestic violence.
- Continuous Psychological Testing of the police officers who carry gun.
- Upgrading the Network of structures and services for the support and protection of women facing domestic violence in the new conditions of quarantine by using teleconferencing, telephone appointments, etc.
- Upgrading the existing SOS (15900) telephone line, so that it can also receive via sms the complaints from victims of domestic violence, because during the confinement of women in the same house with their abusers, telephone communication is not easy for them.
- Health care for women and men working in structures and services, as well as for hosted women and their children in hostels.
- Increased funding for hotel rooms rental for the victims of sexual exploitation and domestic and gender-based violence during the pandemic period due to the increase in incidents which cannot be covered by the existing reception centers.
- Recruitment of additional suitable personnel for the staffing of the rented rooms.
- Increasing the medical and nursing staff of the public hospitals and providing appropriate information to deal with the cases of abused women so that they are properly referred to the competent Structures of the General Secretariat for Gender Equality and the Police Departments for Combating Domestic Violence.
- Ensuring "emergency alarm points" in pharmacies, hospitals and grocery stores, the only ones that are allowed to stay open, in order to assist women to seek help safely without being noticed by their abusers -for example, by using a "code word" that a woman can say when she is not alone, in order to give the signal that she is being abused.
- Immediate health check for women who will be entering a Hostel for the first time, so that their hospitality is not prevented due to fear of coronavirus.
- Special care for the protection of vulnerable groups of women (refugee, immigrant, Roma, hospitalized in psychiatric hospitals and institutions, imprisoned, homeless, drug addicts).
- Highlighting the real cause of domestic violence and the characteristics of the male abuser in order not to reproduce new stereotypes (eg. he got angry because of the confinement and beat her, etc) but also focusing on the social dimension of domestic violence with varied actions.
- Continuous viewing of television and radio messages informing women and the general public on the social structures that provide assistance (SOS 15900 helpline, Counseling Centers and Shelters).

Read the full statement here: <https://www.syriza.gr/article/id/91294/Department-for-feminist-policy-and-gender-of-SYRIZA:-Measures-to-combat-domestic-violence-during-quarantine-due-to-Covid-19.html>

STATEMENT REGARDING THE CONSTITUTIONAL UPSET IN HUNGARY

International and European Affairs Sector of SYRIZA

Developments in Hungary have aroused the justified concern and opposition of all democratic forces in Europe. The extraordinary powers assigned to Orban, the indefinite closing of the Hungarian parliament, the suspension of laws, the prohibition of elections, but also any publication that is contrary to this government's view regarding the pandemic are phenomena proper to a dictatorial regime. The coronavirus pandemic cannot and must not constitute an opportunity or justification for suspending a state's democracy and justice anywhere in the world. Especially in the heart of Europe. The response to the pandemic should be to strengthen solidarity and democracy. On the contrary, events in Hungary constitute a violation of the founding precepts and values of the European Union. The Commission should stop turning a blind eye and send a strong message that this crude violation of the fundamental rules of democracy is unacceptable. The EPP should stop "caressing" the Fidesz party, which remains in its bosom and has not been suspended as was stated. But also Greece's New Democracy party, which belongs to the same European party as Orban's, should take a position immediately and condemn the constitutional deviation by their foster brother. Read the full statement here: <https://www.syriza.gr/article/id/90823/International-and-European-Affairs-Sector-of-SYRIZA:-Developments-in-Hungary-have-aroused-the-justified-concern-and-opposition-of-all-democratic-forces-in-Europe.html>

Two symbolic actions of SYRIZA

On April 13, Alexis Tsipras, the President of SYRIZA, taking into account the significant shortages observed by the hospital in Kastoria (city close to the border with North Macedonia) and the pressure exerted on it by patients infected with the virus, and after consulting with the hospital's technical service and its administration, proceeded to make a symbolic but also substantial donation:

1. **A 400-litre steam furnace for sterilization**
2. **A portable x-ray machine.**

This donation was made with funding by SYRIZA's Parliamentary Group, including the MEPs. In addition, SYRIZA submitted a proposal to the Hellenic Parliament regarding the obligatory deposit of 50% of Parliamentary compensation for three months, in the special account for dealing with the pandemic. Obligatory, not voluntary – as proposed by the New Democracy government decision – because the working people as well, by a government decision, lose half their salary, obligatorily and not voluntarily. Our proposal was not accepted by the Mitsotakis government.



MAY DAY 2020: PUBLIC WELFARE AND SOCIAL EUROPE ARE THE KEY TO CLIMATE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Covid-19 crisis clearly shows the failure of the predominant neoliberal economic and social model. Years of unsustainable growth, of wrecking the environment, of deregulation of labor market, and unfair and unbalanced taxation in favor of capital income, have materially weakened the right to work and live in proper, safe and healthy conditions.

This tragedy shows how insecure and unjust it could be a world in which profits have priority over people's health, and in which workers' rights have been dismantled and access to proper public health has been reduced along with the worsening of workers' conditions and their exploitation. The EL is on the side of the European workers and citizens who are today doubly threatened by pandemics because they have lost their job, or they are dramatically exposed to loss of income, or to unhealthy and unsafe work conditions.

The EL is on the side of those women oppressed by unequal rights and domestic violence, and for whom freedom of movement would have been safer. The EL is on the side of the workers exploited in non-essential production, and on the side of all those citizens, especially those of marginalized groups, including migrants and refugees, who are suffering from the lock-down.

Indeed we are at a turning point in history. The world will dramatically change after this public health emergency. The pandemic has worsened the situation in war zones, while other societies will have to cope with the worst recession since the Great Depression.

The European Left calls all workers and citizens to celebrate – even through previously unseen modalities – the crucial role that their struggles and mobilization will have to overcome this non-solidary Europe, and to obtain social and climate justice. Today the EL celebrates the importance of solidarity among citizens and among workers, which has been historically crucial to obtain decent working conditions and proper public provision of healthcare, together with a safer and more just world.

In 2020, we are called to commemorate the importance of workers' struggle for a more equal and just society in a different way because of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has resulted in a tragically large number of human lives being lost.

Read the full statement here: <https://www.european-left.org/el-pie-reclama-medidas-urgentes-para-una-salida-social-de-la-crisis/>

SAVE THE DATE!

4TH European Forum of Progressive, Ecological and Leftist forces: 27th–29th of November, Athens

Manolis Glezos, The first European partisan

With a total of 16 years in prison, numerous death sentences, torture and exile, Glezos' constant presence as a defender of fundamental European ideals, made Glezos a true European hero in the fight against fascism and one of the greatest larger-than-life personalities ever to have graced the plenary chamber of the European Parliament.

He was born in 1922 in Apeiranthos, a small village on the island of Naxos in the Aegean Sea. His family moved to Athens a few years later, where he studied at the School of Economics. General Charles de Gaulle described him as "the first European partisan", and the painter Pablo Picasso spoke up for him. It was during the Nazi occupation of Greece, in 1941, when the then 19-year-old Manolis Glezos, was condemned to death for tearing down the Nazi flag from the Acropolis in Athens. His act of heroism, under the noses of German guards celebrating Hitler's takeover of Crete near the Parthenon, made Glezos a household name and news of his exploits spread across the world.

He joined the Greek resistance movement and remained a member until the country's liberation in 1945. During the Greek Civil War, Glezos, member of the Communist Party of Greece, was accused by the government of espionage and was again condemned to death no less than three times: in 1947, 1948 and 1952. An international outcry forced the then Greek authorities to commute his death sentence to life imprisonment, in 1950. While still in prison, he was elected to the Greek Parliament in 1951 and again in 1961. In 1959 he was sentenced to a further five years in prison.

His imprisonment again triggered an international wave of support in his favour, led by the French writers Albert Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre. It was thanks to that campaign that he was released in 1962 only to be re-arrested in 1967 by the country's new military junta. He finally achieved his liberty in 1971. When democratic government was restored in Greece in 1974, he returned to the political scene as an elected Member of the Greek Parliament. But it wasn't until he joined forces with SYRIZA, the political party of the Left that governed Greece from 2015 to 2019 that he was elected to the European Parliament, becoming its oldest member at the age of 91.

He dedicated his entire life to the international struggle against repression and inequality, to the never-ending fight against fascism. He will be remembered as a politician who was respected by all democratic political forces as, for many decades, he was politically active at European, national and local level.

Manolis Glezos set a great example for future generations. He was a fighter from the moment he opened his eyes, until his very last moment, when he closed them forever.

As an ultimate act of honour and remembrance, the GUE/NGL group has asked Parliament's President David Sassoli to honour Glezos by giving his name to a European Parliament chamber and to hold an event in his memory there as soon as conditions permit.



Message from the President of SYRIZA, Alexis Tsipras, upon the death of Manolis Glezos

When the death of Manolis was announced, Alexis Tsipras posted the following statement:

Generous, upright, a fighter to the last moment, Manolis Glezos has come to the end of his unique path.

He was a great fighter for democracy and social justice in Greece and internationally. Humankind has lost the man who was the first to stand up to Nazism, by bringing down with Apostolos Sandas Hitler's flag from the Akropolis,

We of the Left, all of us, feel like orphans today. But we also feel fortunate to have walked with him.

Manolis Glezos will remain in eternity as the symbol of a fighter who knew how to sacrifice himself for humanity.

May you rest in peace, comrade Manolis!



GUE/NGL Campaign for permanent Manolis Glezos honour in EU Parliament

As it is customary for Parliamentary conference rooms to be named after European personalities of historical significance, co-presidents Manon Aubry and Martin Schirdewan & Parliament's Vice President Dimitris Papadimoullis have proposed in [a letter](#) to President David Sassoli that the conference room used by GUE/NGL should be renamed in Glezos's honour. Given his lifelong achievements based on European and democratic values, and his decades-long struggle against fascism, the co-presidents believe that such a proposal fully meets the Parliament's criteria.