

**FEPS**  
FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN  
PROGRESSIVE STUDIES

Annual Activity  
**REPORT 2022**





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# FEPS TEAM



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## MESSAGE BY THE PRESIDENT



2022 was marked by two very different series of events that required FEPS activities to get in full swing.

The first one was the terrible pandemic, its consequences, and the question of how to overcome them by preparing ambitious European and national plans for recovery and transformation with the European Green Deal, the European digital agenda and the European Pillar of Social Rights.

A new democratic impulse also emerged by asserting the rule of law with stronger EU instruments and by mobilising European citizens to take part in the unique exercise of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

This FEPS Annual Report displays several projects, publications and events undertaken to address all these issues, mobilising a large range of experts, policy-makers and civil society activists.

A second series of events was the invasion of Ukraine by Putin's Russia, and the question of how to quickly react to this new shock triggered by it. In particular, for Europe, this challenge was about receiving millions of refugees, providing military support to a brave resistance, organising the European defence in the framework of NATO, responding to the economic and social crisis with much higher costs of living and building a European energy union. Dealing with the large

geopolitical implications of the war on the global stage, notably with the concept of European strategic autonomy, became a compelling responsibility everywhere in Europe, and also for us.

Furthermore, a new big enlargement was announced as a new political and ethical duty of the European Union. This should also be prepared by an internal institutional reform.

FEPS, as a major hub of European progressive thinking, was swift to launch relevant projects and initiatives on all these topics, which are also displayed in this Annual Report.

At the same time, the FEPS training programme was gaining scale to strengthen progressive positions, particularly in a context where the new kind of populist hard right comes to the fore.

Making the case for progressive solutions meeting the level of our historical responsibility will remain our central task!

Maria João Rodrigues  
President

# FEPS IS THE EUROPEAN PROGRESSIVE POLITICAL FOUNDATION

The Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) is **the think tank of the progressive political family at EU level**. Our mission is to develop innovative research, policy advice, training and debates to inspire and inform progressive politics and policies across Europe.

We operate as a thinking hub to facilitate the emergence of progressive answers to the challenges that Europe faces today.

FEPS works in close partnership with its members and partners, forging connections and boosting coherence among stakeholders from the world of politics, academia, and civil society at local, regional, national, European, and global levels.

Today FEPS benefits from a solid network of 74 member organisations. Among these, 43 are full members, 26 have observer status, and 5 are ex-officio members. In addition to this network of organisations that are active in the promotion of progressive values, FEPS also has an extensive network of partners, including renowned universities, scholars, policymakers, and activists.

Our ambition is to undertake intellectual reflection for the benefit of the progressive movement, and to promote the founding principles of the EU – freedom, equality, solidarity, democracy, respect of human rights, fundamental freedoms, human dignity, and the rule of law.

## BACKGROUND

FEPS was created in 2008 as the European-level political foundation associated with – but independent from – the Party of European Socialists (PES) and the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament (S&D). Since its creation, FEPS has mainly been funded by the European Parliament.

FEPS was set up to "serve as a framework for national political foundations, academics, and other relevant actors to work together at the European level" (art. 1.4 of Regulation (EC) 1524-2007).

These credentials have made FEPS into an important stakeholder, recognised by foundations and international think tank rankings such as the Pennsylvania Global Think Tank Index. In 2020, FEPS was ranked fourth best party-affiliated think tank worldwide.

In August 2017, FEPS was officially registered with the status of European political foundation (number: EUPF 4BE0896.230.213).

In 2019, FEPS was honoured to be granted Special Consultative Status to the **United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, the highest status given by the UN to non-governmental organisations, thus allowing it to participate in the work of the UN.



# FOREWORD BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL



In 2022, the long-awaited post-pandemic rebound arrived for FEPS. The fifth and last Covid-19 lockdown ended, and our activities intensified, responding to the strong demand from our member foundations. The deconfinement and robust recovery were what we prepared for, but we could not, as no other actors in Europe could, properly anticipate the shock of 2022: the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

In all honesty, even the most experienced defence and security experts and Russia-researchers were surprised to see the return of war in Eastern Europe. Building on our hitherto project on EU-Russia relations, we organised public and closed-door conferences on this tragic new chapter of our history. We invited HRVP Josep Borrell to FEPS and staged a frank discussion about the way forward for EU foreign policy. And we covered the issues of military and economic warfare for our audience via the Progressive Post as well as the FEPS Talks podcast series.

It is not only that we returned to real-life conferences and other activities in 2023, but we also made further steps towards high-quality and impactful communication. Ahead of our General Assembly in June, the new FEPS website was inaugurated, allowing us to reach a much higher level in terms of content provision, aesthetics, flexibility and user-friendliness. The stronger presence of FEPS on social media has been clearly measurable, and we also produced more books than during the pandemic period.

Leaving behind the years of the pandemic did not mean that we would return to the pre-Covid-19 modus operandi. The transition to a new online management platform has been completed. To foster team cohesion, a two-day retreat was organised in East Belgium

(German-speaking community) where we familiarised with local traditions and politics. And to improve work-life balance, a structural telework scheme was introduced in the second half of the year.

Program-based project management and funding appeared as a new direction, starting with climate change and continuing with digital policy. Though this new management approach is still in the test phase and brings new lessons all the time, the efforts to bring more FEPS activities under this new umbrella, delivering greater security for multiannual planning and implementation seem to pay off, leading to new fields of policies or functions to be organised on this new basis.

From a financial point of view, 2022 was a major step towards a higher degree of resilience. On the other hand, from the point of view of human resources, a higher-than-optimal turnover of staff created a need to reflect on our organisational functioning, internal governance and management practices.

Altogether, 2022 left us with the lesson of the need to be prepared for shocks, even unlikely ones sometimes. Our progressive think tank can take pride in what we have delivered and how we overcame sometimes unforeseen difficulties, but it is key to improve further the capacity to plan and also to be prepared for tackling developments that nobody predicted.

László Andor  
Secretary General

# CORE MISSION FOR 2022

The Covid-19 pandemic generated a sense of solidarity in Europe which also benefitted Social Democrats electorally. However, the war in Ukraine brought new challenges and progressives experienced a bumpy year whether we look at the outcomes of national elections, or at European politics.

When building the annual plan of activities, FEPS remained focused on the annual priorities set out by our Framework Activity Programme 2022. To ensure consistency, also across the ten thematic fields and various partnerships, FEPS intended to connect all the aspects of its activities with each other. For that purpose, three transversal threads were established around the topics which would organise our work in 2022, and which would make FEPS stand out in 2022. These are:

- Shaping the recovery and building modern, resilient, and sustainable post-Covid-19 welfare states;
- Regaining the primacy of progressive ideas in the debate about internal and external challenges for the future of Europe;
- New models of society in Europe and beyond against the backdrop of advancing digitalisation, climate change and hyper-competitiveness.

This set of annual priorities turned out to be a good guide for our projects and publications in 2022. Some of these were linked to the Conference on the Future of Europe, which was concluded in May. The feedback we received, including at the Congress of the Party of European Socialists in Berlin, gave evidence that FEPS was on the right track and delivering the contributions which progressive organisations need in policy development, political education, and other elements of daily work.

We remained particularly attentive to legislative dossiers and flagship EU policies in which members of the S&D Group in the European Parliament were invested: from minimum wage coordination to regulating artificial intelligence, from energising the

EU integration of Western Balkans countries to the transparency of salaries to promote gender equality, and from the implementation of recovery funds to the much-needed revamping of fiscal rules.

It should not be denied though that this year of war redefined the political playing field in which progressive forces strive to achieve their goals. In this difficult period, Social Democrats have distinguished themselves by going beyond the necessary international solidarity and reconciling it with two further objectives: the fair distribution of the costs of the war within our societies, and the avoidance of unnecessary escalation and simultaneous preparation for peace and reconstruction instead. No other force seems to be concerned with this broader responsibility, which remains a distinctive characteristic of the political family FEPS is part of.

# KEY FACTS AND FIGURES 2022

2022 was a very dynamic year. On the one hand, the possibility to administer vaccines and immunise societies allowed us to gain the upper hand against the Covid-19 pandemic. This allowed for lockdowns and other limitations to be lifted. Subsequently, FEPS could resume in-person activities. Richer with the experience of online activism, we were inclined to develop a modus operandi mixing traditional, hybrid, and virtual events. It is worth mentioning that 2022 also saw the adoption of the FEPS Training Strategy – which added an important new layer to the foundation.

On the other hand, Russia's brutal invasion of Ukraine profoundly changed the entire context. From geopolitical to local dimensions, the war influenced everyone and everything. That meant that the focus on post-Covid recovery and the twin transition had to be broadened to also deal with questions as existential as the future of the European integration and the bloc's role in the world. Not even to mention the growing anxiety that right radical parties capitalised on, and the fact that defending democracy became an urgent mission.

These and others factors kept influencing FEPS' work in 2022. In these circumstances, its Framework Activity Programme 2022 Working together for Solidarity and Sustainability served us as a compass and gave the following directions:

## 1. POLITICAL EUROPE

Examining the potential for reforms of the architecture of the European Union, with a mission to deliver progressive ideas to contribute to the conference on the future of Europe and inspire the transition to a new model of integration.

## 2. DEFENDING AND DEEPENING DEMOCRACY

Analysing the main threats to democracy (nationalism, right-wing extremism and authoritarian tendencies) inside but also outside the European Union – to find ways to foster participatory and representative democracy.

## 3. DIGITAL AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY

The acceleration and its effects, notably the use of online platforms and algorithmic systems at work, school and in the public sector.

## 4. SOCIAL EUROPE

Monitoring the implementation of the European pillar of social rights and the related action plan, as well as identifying additional challenges brought by Covid-19, to accelerate the debate on public health (working towards a genuine European Health Union), decent work and social protection.

## 5. GENDER EQUALITY

Designing a post Covid-19 crisis economic development model, to forge policy proposals towards a job-rich recovery, fair transitions, and more investment-friendly European fiscal and governance rules.

## 6. ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

Addressing the climate emergency and supporting the implementation of the European Green Deal, committed to search for further equitable ways to attain ambitious climate targets, create new green jobs and a better mainstreaming of climate objectives.

## 7. EUROPE IN THE WORLD

Assessing the nature and effects of the accelerated digitalisation of European societies and economies, specifically in the area of public services, to explore how Europe can find an autonomous, progressive path towards technological development that serves broader social and economic goals, including sustainability, economic security, and democracy.

## 8. MIGRATION

Sustaining the debate with a special focus on defining the conditions for an efficient and humane management of migration between Africa and Europe, and in the context of a renewed EU-Africa partnership, preventing however the over-simplified idea of focusing development aid exclusively on curbing migration, and seeking adequate and more efficient integration policies that allow the inclusion of newcomers.

## 9. EUROPE IN THE WORLD

Supporting global efforts to build a new multilateral order to promote peace, human development and sustainability; for these goals to consolidate the EU capacity for external action; revitalising the EU neighbourhood and enlargement policies; promoting strategic solidarity and building strategic autonomy that allow the Union to uphold its international commitments and foster dialogue; and enable the EU to redefine strategic partnerships like the one with the US.

## 10. NEXT LEFT

Evaluating the positioning of social democracy, with a focus on its programmatic dilemmas, organisational difficulties and electoral struggles, with a commitment to help define paths for recovery and transformative governance.



FEPS  
EVENTS

80



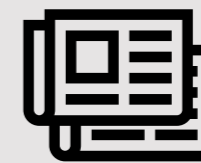
FEPS  
PUBLICATIONS

79



FEPS  
TALK PODCASTS

15



FEPS  
NEWSLETTER

116



WEEKLY  
NEWSLETTER

41



PROGRESSIVE  
PAGES

44



PROGRESSIVE POST  
MAGAZINES

3



FACEBOOK  
FOLLOWERS

16,9K



TWITTER  
FOLLOWERS

14,5K



LINKEDIN  
FOLLOWERS

3,21K



INSTAGRAM  
FOLLOWERS

1,35K

# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# ECONOMY AND FINANCE

### Ambition

The Covid-19 pandemic had forced European institutions to react promptly and to adapt their economic policy to support the emergency and the recovery. Both the financial instruments of the Union, with the novelty of the joint borrowing, and the fiscal framework, have provided a whole new setting. In addition, the economic crisis provoked by the war in Ukraine redirected some of the priorities to look at issues such as living costs while FEPS also continued its work on the need for more investment.

In 2022, we aimed to design a post-Covid-19 crisis economic development model, to forge policy proposals towards a job-rich recovery, fair transitions and more investment-friendly European fiscal and governance rules. Since the pandemic had turned out to be a magnifier of already existing inequalities, it only proved the inadequacy and inefficiency of the current economic model and the greater than-ever degree of mutual interdependence. To generate a post-Covid inclusive and gender-sensitive recovery and to ensure that the economies remain resilient in case of any new shock, FEPS looked at how the EU could reprogram and rearrange its governance structures and methods.

### Results

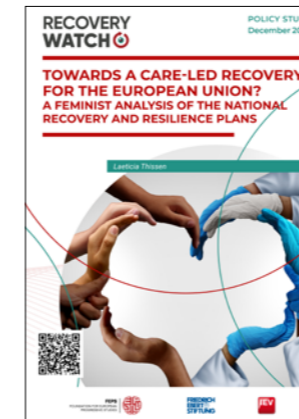
For NextGenerationEU and the other EU funds to bring the awaited results, there is a need to pursue consistent implementation and adequate investments while at the same time working towards a new approach to economic policy coordination and especially fiscal rules. Therefore, FEPS looked at the progress monitoring, particularly diverse indicators, which should also influence its new approach towards reforming the Stability and Growth Pact. An alternative fiscal framework is needed to progressively meet the Union's challenges in the coming years and decades.

We also looked at how the public sector, at both national and European levels, plays a stronger role in steering socioeconomic outcomes, which new instruments can be used to steer the economy in the direction of fair transitions and how the provision of public goods can be improved to make public services more accessible and more valuable to Europeans. FEPS network's role in 2022 was pivotal in organising a set of online and offline round-tables that helped forging mutual understanding on the path to recovery, on the need to strengthen solidarity across the Union, and on the role of the public sector in channelling investment towards key sectors.

As part of revising European economic governance rules and frameworks, FEPS contributed to discussions around the creation of a European fiscal capacity, particularly trying to reinforce the conceptual link between the EU Green Deal and the need of a new economic governance framework that overcomes the structural problem with sub-optimal investment. Through a policy study on the macro-development perspective of the euro area imbalances, FEPS also contributed to better understanding the link between external competitiveness, trade and current account imbalances. Unsurprisingly, the research points out that wage growth in countries with fiscal space can benefit the stability of the euro area. Besides the work in research therefore, the role of FEPS has been to provide ideas to improve the health of the Economic and Monetary Union towards progressive policymakers to help the emergence of a real economic alternative to the current system.

Throughout the online meetings of the Progressive Economist Network and several conferences in Berlin, including the Day of Progressive Economy and the Progressive Governance Summit, FEPS engaged first-rate lawmakers and their advisors and supported their action on inflation, public investment and fiscal policy thanks to the contributions by lead-experts and scholars.

The living costs crisis was an underlying issue of the political concerns addressed twice during a conference in Vilnius as well as the lead topic of FEPS annual Call to Europe which took place in Prague, during the Czech Presidency of the EU Council.



### CASE 1 // THE RECOVERY WATCH

The National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs) represent a new framework in which member states identify their development strategy, allocating the European and national resources to relaunch and modernise their socio-economic models after the pandemic. FEPS, in partnership with a network of 13 organisations and research centres, screened the NRRPs to assess their potential impact on key social outcomes. This informal observatory enables the exchange of information and monitoring the implementation of the recovery plans and the NextGenEU spending. Particularly, the objective is to ensure that the policy implemented in the climate, digital and social dimensions of the plans considers distributional

and equality matters and regional justice. The research is organised around four focus areas: Climate Action, Digital Investment, Welfare Measures and EU Governance. The Recovery Watch network gathered in Brussels first, to exchange with Commission's experts and lead government officials of the progressive family active in Belgium and Portugal. Finally, in December 2022, one year and a half after the Recovery and Resilience Facility entered into force, FEPS, FES, IEV and Forum Disuguaglianze e Diversità presented four policy studies at a conference in Rome to foster public debate and oversight on some of the social aspects of the NRRPs: the care sector, green jobs and early childhood education and care.

### CASE 2 // THE DAY OF PROGRESSIVE ECONOMIC POLICY

Finally, after the break imposed by the pandemic, the Day of Progressive Economic Policy could take place physically in Berlin. This important annual event, led by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES), in partnership with FEPS, the German Trade Union Confederation (DGB) and the Macroeconomic Policy Institute (IMK) represents a great opportunity to gather progressive policymakers, top economists, and trade unions around alternative economic

policy for Germany and the EU. With about 500 participants and eight different sessions, the conference proved to be an effective way not only to disseminate FEPS research but also to promote debate within the progressive movement and help new ideas to emerge. This year, top thinkers such as Michael Sandel, Ann Pettifor, Martin Sandbu could exchange with lead progressives involved in governments and parties.

# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

### Ambition

With the impacts of the polycrisis being felt more and more widely: from the pandemic, over the war, the cost-of-living crisis to the energy crisis, FEPS sought to outline a path for continued and reinvigorated climate action that would bring issues of fairness to the fore. As dire and challenging as the situation is, it offers an opportunity for putting in place quick, bold and deep transformations of our economies and societies that can both provide answers to the current crises and push us towards a more sustainable, carbon-free, and fair future. FEPS' ambition was to place people, solidarity and socio-economic fairness at the heart of climate action.

To achieve this ambition, three paths have been followed: i) a reflection on how to communicate climate action to bring people on board without compromising the support of the working class; ii) monitoring the inclusion of socially fair considerations and the territorial dimension in different EU climate files to ensure that the EU Green Deal and the Fit for 55 plan effectively respond to citizens living and working concerns; iii) broadening the understanding of the European role in climate and energy policy, in the context of a disrupted global order and an energy security crisis.

### Results

Under the framework of the Talking Green project, FEPS focused on best practices for communicating environmental and climate policies and based on the three national opinion polls (Hungary, Ireland and the UK). Some common lines and guidance have emerged in terms of addressing climate policy. It is for instance recommended to avoid too broad concepts such as the 'green industrial revolution' and focus on some of the more concrete and understandable opportunities in the green sector with reference to the construction sector or new clean technologies. More on this is featured below in case 1 to help the progressive family to improve its messaging for climate action. Further work for a positive narrative on climate action has been achieved through the publication of the book *The Circular Economy and Green Jobs in the EU and*

*Beyond*, edited by Janis Brizga and Saïd El Khadraoui. This book carries a foreword by Frans Timmermans, Vice-President of the European Commission and is the result of a collaboration with the Kalevi Sorsa Foundation, the Freedom and Solidarity Foundation, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, and the Fondation Jean-Jaurès. This work focused on the potential of new green jobs for citizens. It featured further insights on how to include social considerations across climate policies, supporting the European Parliament's S&D's Fit for 55 Task Force.

In close collaboration with the S&D Group, FEPS gathered a network of regional and rural policy experts to support the progressive's work on the conceptualisation of a new EU strategy for rural areas. The work culminated in a policy brief by Robin Huguenot-Noël and Cristina Vaquero Piñeiro who describe different avenues for just transition policies to revitalise rural communities. They also highlight the need to insist on the participatory aspect of local sustainable development. The regional and territorial dimension has also been addressed within the framework of the Recovery Watch through a study that assesses the local employment impact of some of the measures included in the climate session of the National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs), with specific attention to the energy and automotive sectors. The work carried out on the territorial angle of the green transition culminated in a very instructive and impactful gathering of activists and experts working on the Territorial Just Transition Plans, which saw FEPS, FES, Solidar and the CEE Bankwatch network collaborating to share experiences and good practices, whilst pushing together for more inclusiveness into the monitoring of the plan and its strategic design.

Finally, the results in the field of energy have to be mentioned, with reference to both the EU-internal policy debate with the need to address the energy crisis and the spike in energy cost and the international dimension of energy and climate policy with energy security becoming a major issue, next to climate justice, in shaping the new global order. A policy brief authored by Caroline Kuzemko in partnership with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung – *The Russia-Ukraine war: An inflexion point for sustainable energy transitions* – outlined the impact of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine on the EU's energy systems, and how this complicated emission mitigation.

As shown under case 2, by looking at knock-on effects, this policy brief identified solutions to protect citizens from the worst effects of the crisis while underlining the need for energy justice. The geopolitical aspects of the energy crisis have been further addressed thanks to a collaboration with the United Nations University, the Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies (UNU-CRIS) and the University of Cairo, which focused on the Euro-Mediterranean dimension of the twin transition. This collaboration has addressed the triple green, digital and geopolitical overlap represented by the 2021 New Agenda for the Mediterranean. Estimating its extent and potential implications on EU-North Africa relations, and its relevance for both parties, the study

formulates policy recommendations based on the need to foster a more comprehensive cooperation inspired by policy coherence. Thanks to the collaboration with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung and the Rafael Campalans Foundation the work carried out on the impact of the EU energy policy on the MENA region has been channelled to progressive policymakers working on these matters.

Finally, FEPS sent a delegation to COP27 in Sharm El Sheikh and organised a side event with the strategic objective of mobilising climate finance for a global just transition. This delegation sought to highlight the need for mutually beneficial partnerships that could equitably further climate action.

### CASE 1 // TALKING GREEN IN EUROPE

Talking Green is a research project that explores perceptions of climate action across Europe. Through surveys in Hungary, Ireland and the UK, FEPS – in partnership with the Fabian Society, TASC, the Szociális Demokráciáért Intézet and the Progressive Hungary Foundation – has developed an understanding of how the green transition is perceived especially by low- and middle-income people.

The collected data allows progressives to find the most effective ways to talk about climate change and develop participatory and effective policy proposals that address climate change while delivering a just transition aligned with people's concerns.

The publication and dissemination of the policy brief "Talking Green in Europe" by Andreas Dimmelmeier described how progressive actors can communicate about the climate crisis in a way that resonates with people from different backgrounds. It also showed that a reframing of the public discourse must accompany policy proposals for a just transition.

In terms of specific geographic scopes, the second iteration of "Talking Green: the UK survey" was published with a Policy Study on "Winning the argument for climate action", and the first policy brief on the Hungarian context focused on "Public Perception of a Just Green Transition in Hungary".

### CASE 2 // THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR: AN INFLECTION POINT FOR SUSTAINABLE ENERGY TRANSITIONS. With the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine was a game-changer on many levels. One of the most visible and impactful consequences of the war occurred in the energy domain. The disruption of the flow of hydrocarbons from Russia made Europe to face the double challenge of maintaining energy security while also living up to its commitments to address the climate crisis. It created a context in which measures and policies adopted are likely to have long-term repercussions that are not limited to the energy field. Amongst others, political and economic changes linked to energy could lead to major shifts in international trade, geopolitics and global efforts to address climate change.

Considering this, FEPS and partners have organised a first roundtable on The geopolitics of energy and the Green Transition as part of the Foresight Series. As a result, a Policy Brief was published on how Russia's war on Ukraine has led to a reorientation of EU energy policy towards phasing out Russian fossil fuel imports. This, in turn, has necessitated an ambitious and highly complex restructuring of these EU energy systems, markets and infrastructures already engaged in a comprehensive green transition.



At the same time, the high energy prices within the EU are being addressed through a series of social policies that focus on certain EU energy justice concerns. However, greater coordination and support for EU-wide demand-side policies are still required to protect citizens from high energy costs in the long term. EU policies on supply security also raise important questions about North-South energy and climate change relations. In recognition of the complex global knock-on effects of its policies, this Policy Brief proposed that the EU's global climate diplomacy strategy should include measures to help Global South countries.



# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# DIGITAL AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY

### Ambition

2022 was packed with digital regulatory activity by the EU. Flagship legislative procedures on digital services and the digital market were brought to fruition, creating a new regulatory environment for the large platforms that act like gatekeepers. Thereby, Europe has once again confirmed its role as a global rule-setter for the tech sector.

FEPS considered it essential to look beyond the immediate policy agenda and consider the broader and long-term trends of the digital transition for the digital economy and society, to investigate the effects of accelerated digitisation on European societies and economies, particularly in public services, and to explore how Europe can achieve a progressive and autonomous path towards technological development that serves broader social and economic objectives, including sustainability, economic security, and democracy.

Therefore, FEPS supported empirical work to investigate the actual effects of digitisation in public services, at the workplace and on the environment. The objective of FEPS' work on digital policy was also to explore how digitisation can facilitate important goals such as greening the economy, workplace democracy, social justice, the strategic autonomy of the EU and the recovery. This is why the interplay with other thematic blocs has been intense, particularly in conjunction with Recovery Watch, the European Strategic Autonomy project and the FEPS FES Climate program.

Among the relevant ambitions for the thematic bloc on digital policy, FEPS decided to engage Nordic partners for an ambitious joint program, which has been discussed throughout the second part of the year to, first, reignite FEPS collaborations with lead partners in Nordic countries, two, boost FEPS work on digital policies building on the Nordic model, and three, devise a joint program among many organisations to ensure higher impact and visibility.

### Results

FEPS collaborated with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung, the Fondation Jean Jaurès, Progressive Britain, and the Institut Emile Vandervelde, as well as with Fundació Rafael Campalans, the United Nations University and several other partners to publish reports and analysis on digitalisation. One rather innovative policy study examined the EU's twin green and digital transition agenda with a specific focus on the implications for the southern neighbours in the MENA region. Such policy work is useful to further a comprehensive cooperation to strengthen the twin transition as a shared agenda between the EU and North Africa. The international dimension of EU policymaking in the digital sphere was also the focus of three policy briefs, part of the European Strategic Autonomy project: i) on the EU's shortage of digitally skilled graduates, arguing for a coordinated approach to obtain the needed skills for a more autonomous digital economy and society; ii) on the ability of the EU to act as a global regulatory power and iii) on the need to develop strategic partnering in the digital sector to attain Europe's objectives. The analysis of the EU's regulatory prowess in emerging technologies suggests that the EU must engage in a coalition-building strategy and a self-standing, semi-open technology stack to retain a leading role in the future. FEPS work provides five policy recommendations to help the EU thrive in an increasingly competitive and strategic terrain. The digital and tech working group of the Strategic Autonomy project also put forward the need for the EU to build political support and industrial ecosystems in key technology areas to create strategic autonomy tech alliances, highlighting existing alliances for semiconductors and the cloud. Also, alliances could be launched in cybersecurity, quantum tech, secure 5G/6G, and supercomputing. More careful political, industrial, and technological reflections are required to establish alliances in artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things.

Relevant work has been done connecting the digital and the climate policy fields, particularly thanks to a policy study on a sustainable digital market design which proposed new market rules for generating, storing, accessing, and using product-related information to help connect stakeholders and create new collabora-

tive business models. The report suggests mandatory data-sharing obligations for suppliers, producers, and operators to lay the foundation for ecologically oriented innovation and circular value ecosystems.

Importantly, in 2022, a coalition of progressive organisations active in Nordic countries has been brought together and joint work for a digital program will kick off in 2023 covering different topics connected with the main ambition of addressing, understanding, regulating and improving 'algorithms at the workplace'.



### CASE 1 // FUTURE OF WORK:

Together with Progressive Britain, FEPS has worked on developing a new progressive narrative around the future of work and has organised several roundtables on the matter, in London and on the occasion of the annual UK Labour conference, which took place in Liverpool. Out of this process, European and British partners have produced a document that highlights the future of work in the EU and the UK, examining the challenges and opportunities of digitalisation, globalisation,

and demographic change comprehensively. The analysis points out that promoting decent work for all will remain a valid agenda for the years to come with ramifications in many policy fields besides employment: from health to industrial policy, from housing and urbanism to investment policy. This joint work advances some policy recommendations for a more inclusive, sustainable, and human-centred approach to the future of work.



### CASE 2 // DATA TALKS:

FEPS DataTalks were organised as two policy breakfast meetings focusing on data sharing in the public interest and sustainability. In cooperation with MEP Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, the events were held at FEPS' headquarters and featured prominent speakers who discussed the EU's proposed Data Act and its potential impact on businesses and public authorities.

The first meeting focused on data transfers from businesses to public authorities and whether the Data Act's framing was appropriate for an economy where data is central. Francesca Bria shared her experience at the municipality of Barcelona and reflected on the data public authorities need to guarantee the democratic and effective management of public spaces and services. Paul

Keller from the Open Future Foundation assessed the implications of a public-interest framework for data sharing on the Data Act.

In the second meeting, the discussion focused on data sharing for sustainability purposes. Philipp Staab and Dominik Piétron presented their FEPS Policy Study 'Sustainable Digital Market Design: A data-based approach to the circular economy'. Luc Hendrickx, Director at SMEunited, discussed aligning the Data Act's B2B provisions with the imperative of a circular economy. The events highlighted the potential of data governance frameworks for supporting sustainable production and consumption patterns but also raised questions about whether the Data Act is sufficient and what else is needed.

# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# SOCIAL EUROPE

### Ambition

The strains of the Covid-19 pandemic have highlighted the importance of social policies that ensure access to healthcare, affordable housing, and income support for vulnerable populations. In 2022, however, with the health emergency phasing out, the need to increase investments in social policies addressing socioeconomic inequalities and health and educational disparities also had to face the reality of a stagnant economy. In this context, protecting the European welfare model becomes a priority, and in the European Union context it means supporting the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the ambitions of the Social Action Plan that followed. A clear priority for FEPS was therefore to identify and support the initiatives led by the European Commission that could help give real grip to the Social Action Plan, with specific reference to the EU Child Guarantee, the EU Care Strategy (see the Gender and Equality thematic field), the adult skills agenda and minimum and adequate wages.

Quality employment is a key component to combatting poverty and is a crucial area where progressive forces can showcase their concrete relevance for the people. Across the EU, nearly 13.5 million people are unemployed, and states struggle to cope with long-term unemployment, youth unemployment, and unemployment of the low-skilled. These challenges have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and are likely to increase as digital and green transitions disrupt our labour markets. The ambition for FEPS is to collaborate with thinkers and policymakers to innovate in this field and explore opportunities that can deliver solutions and relaunch Social Democratic leadership in the field. It is a moment in which new ideas circulate: boosting and protecting wages, imagining a shorter working week, expanding social protection to atypical contracts and designing public sector-led job creation. FEPS has to remain at the forefront of social innovation and support the emergence of novel ideas and, whenever possible, help moving ideas to the realm of politically feasible actions.

Finally, policy recommendations and actions are needed at the EU level better to inform a coordinated approach to health in Europe.

Another important ambition for 2022 consisted in the work on health, which was inspired by two different lines of action: first, the wish to transform the initial cooperation on health that took place against the backdrop of the pandemic into a more structured and more coherent integration by developing a European Health Union that can fit people's expectations in the field. Second, the conviction that a new framework is needed in Europe to tackle mental health challenges in the member states, and how progressives can steer an upgrade of public health systems to ensure mental care coverage, access and affordability.

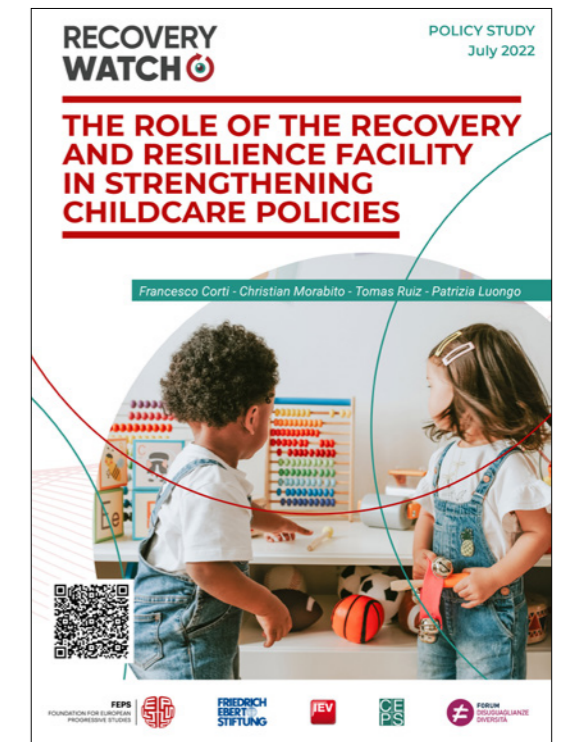
### Results

FEPS and its partners engaged during the year in research projects to investigate the pandemic's impact on society and particularly on inequalities, with, for instance, the launch of a book on the intersection of health and democracy in Palermo. The ambition for a strong European Health Union was discussed on different occasions, in collaboration with Hungarian and Lithuanian partners in particular, highlighting the need for the EU to boost minimum standards in health in member states, and address the imbalances that intra-EU labour mobility in the sector is causing. FEPS also focused on the need to push for a well-being agenda and better working conditions, including mental health. Analysis and policy proposals were formulated to understand how depression and psychological traumas can be better detected and addressed by the health systems with a more human approach to solving the plague of social exclusion and suicides that often come from mental illness.

Building on the important work carried out by the European Commission on childcare and care in general, FEPS, in close collaboration with PES and the Committee of the Regions and other progressive forces, has animated a network of child policy experts and organised training and learning opportunities for young politicians and elected officials of the progressive camp to increase their knowledge in the field and help Social

Democrats to spread the successful work carried out at the European level and facilitate the emergence of local measures that boost quality, inclusion and affordability of early childhood education and care. A community of practice on the Child Union also assessed the child guarantee national plans and shared initial inputs and recommendations to the PES network of child guarantee coordinators and the Commission's officials in charge.

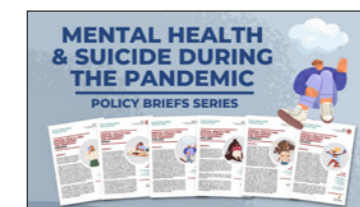
The year 2022 saw FEPS engaged in topics that had been largely elaborated in 2021, for instance, housing policy and the adult skills agenda and EU individual learning accounts, with targeted dissemination events. But in 2022 FEPS also started to explore new policy ideas to bring further the Social Europe agenda. For instance, taking inspiration from concrete practices around Europe, FEPS built a network of like-minded organisations and a policy brief on the EU Job guarantee, which then developed into a new policy idea for a European initiative on zero unemployment territories aimed at creating jobs for the green transition, the care sector and youth, in close collaboration with the social economy.



### CASE 1 // THE NEED FOR EU-WIDE HEALTH POLICIES: MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE

The right to health, including mental health, is a principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights that all EU member states have committed to uphold. This right, however, has been challenged by a mental health crisis across Europe, one which has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 public health emergency over the last few years. Given the importance of addressing cross-national concerns around mental health concerns in Europe, FEPS and the Think-tank for Action on Social Change organised a closed-door,

online roundtable to discuss what lessons can be drawn from the last few years and how the EU can respond to this ongoing mental health crisis. We examined how health systems and public support in Ireland, France and Poland responded to the reported rise in mental health issues provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic and public health emergency. It fed into the upcoming study comparing health systems' responses in the three countries to emerging mental health needs during the pandemic.



### CASE 2 // THE EMPLOYMENT WE WANT

In this series of policy breakfast meetings in September, European experts and policymakers presented potential policy solutions to tackle diverse aspects of employment. What can the EU do to stimulate job creation and help reduce unemployment? Through this initiative, FEPS built synergies across several topics, we also looked at other projects like the EU Jobs guarantee, and Care4Care. We started with a EU initiative for

Zero Unemployment Territories to discuss the role that job guarantee programmes in Europe could play in achieving this. Then we looked at the enforcement of data protection rules at work. The question of skills was also addressed to ensure that a just transition creates and preserves quality employment. Finally, we discussed the Pay Transparency and Gender Equality challenges in the workplace.

# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# GENDER EQUALITY

### Ambition

2022 has been the year in which Europe had to re-emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic. It has also seen the rise of a range of interlocking crises coming together. Besides the unsolved social care crisis and climate emergency with their direct gendered consequences, women's rights have been hanging by a thread across the globe.

Russia's war against Ukraine has inflicted terrible harm to Ukrainian women and girls, from heightened trafficking and gender-based violence to the loss of crucial livelihoods and rising poverty levels. The largely feminised nature of the resulting refugee flows posed new gendered challenges. In this context of disrupted energy and food supply, the gendered consequences were also hard felt worldwide, widening gender gaps, increasing rates of food insecurity and increasing energy poverty.

The ongoing repression of women's rights was epitomised by the tragic death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini at the hands of the Iranian morality police after her arrest for wearing her hijab incorrectly. This triggered nationwide demonstrations and international solidarity for all the women of Iran honoured as the 'heroes of the year' by TIME magazine for their fight for freedom. Since the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan, a system of governance based on the wholesale subordination of women has been established, institutionalising discrimination within the regime's political, legal and cultural structures. Amid growing calls for the situation to be recognised as 'gender apartheid' by the international community, Afghan women's resistance to the regime has remained tireless at the cost of their lives.

Countries where gender equality has been considered guaranteed by law, typically Europe and Western nations, are not immune to the gender backlash by far. The US Supreme Court's decision to reverse its landmark decision *Roe v. Wade* consecrating the right to abortion illustrates the inherent fragility of women's fundamental rights. As the EU entered the third year of the implementation of its Gender Equality Strategy, progress towards a Union of Equality is not only welcome, but an urgent necessity. Yet, 2022 was marked by several major breakthroughs: the adoption of the directive on gender balance

on company boards, after over a decade of blockage, the political agreement reached by the Council and the EP on the directive on pay transparency and the proposal for a directive on combatting violence against women and domestic violence. In addition, the EU made a strong commitment for a more caring Europe by launching its Care Strategy accompanied by two Recommendations adopted by the Council addressing childcare and long-term care. This section gives illustrative examples of how FEPS contributed with key actions aiming for a truly gender-equal society where everyone has the same opportunities regardless of gender.

Another important ambition for 2022 consisted in the work on health, which was inspired by two different lines of action: first, the wish to transform the initial cooperation on health that took place against the backdrop of the pandemic into a more structured and more coherent integration by developing a European Health Union that can fit people's expectations in the field. Second, the conviction that a new framework is needed in Europe to tackle mental health challenges in the member states, and how progressives can steer an upgrade of public health systems to ensure mental care coverage, access and affordability.

### Results

In light of the persisting challenges and policy developments in the field of gender equality, FEPS has attached great importance to this area seeking to inform the EU's gender policy approach through a progressive, feminist lens.

A significant issue at the heart of FEPS activities continues to be the elimination of gender-based violence which poses a major challenge to women's and girls' equal opportunities. This intolerable form of gender-based discrimination raises critical questions about the heavy structural barriers preventing the achievement of equality at work, in politics or at home. The 2022 edition of the Barbara Prammer Symposium, the annual feminist start-of-the-year rendez vous in partnership with the Karl-

Renner-Institut, SPÖ Frauen and SPÖ Parlamentsklub, acknowledged the potential of the Istanbul Convention as the most-far-reaching international legally binding instrument to ensure a Europe free from violence. Likewise, the policy study with NDI illustrates how violence against women in politics negatively affects their participation in democratic life and decisional processes.

A major area of FEPS activities have been the efforts to value better and politicise the issue of care. Informed by the FEPS-FES 'EU Care Atlas' and the continued Care4Care series with the special contribution of Jayati Ghosh, the FEPS-FES 'Care4Care Expert Seminar' offered a timely space for critical reflection just a few days after the launch of the much-awaited EU Care Strategy in September 2022.

FEPS work also addressed the increasing poverty rates for women. Namely, the Korčula School recognised how the multiple overlapping crises exacerbate gender inequalities

on all fronts, politically, socially, and economically. For this reason, the discussion focused, amongst others, on the challenges of the gender pay gap. This kind of fora have benefitted from the insights of the policy study *Creating momentum for fair pay: Assessing policies with leverage* with Fondation Jean Jaurès and FPI.

Last but not least, another dimension of FEPS efforts in the field concerns the application of a gender-mainstreamed approach across all policy areas. A good example can be found in our work carrying out gender-impact assessments of climate policy. The UN CSW66 parallel event with Fondation Jean Jaurès, PES Women and UN Women namely looked at how climate change is a feminist issue, whereas the policy brief *The EU's transition to climate justice and gender equality* argued that the main EU climate policy actions remain gender-blind despite the general awareness about the strong connections between gender inequalities and climate change.

### CASE 1 // EU CARE ATLAS

On the occasion of the International Women's Day in 2022, FEPS and the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) launched the EU Care Atlas, a new interactive data map to help uncover what the statistics are often hiding: how care deficits directly feed into the gender earnings gap and contribute to gender inequalities. While the attention is often focused on the gender pay gap (which averages 13 per cent in the EU), the EU Care Atlas brings to light the more complex picture of women's economic inequalities. The pay gap is just one of the three main elements that explain the overall earnings gap, which is estimated at 36.7 per cent. In other words, on average, women in the EU earn only two-thirds of what men earn in a year. The gender pay gap has dropped from 14.1 to 13 per cent, but this does not necessarily translate into a decrease in the economic inequality affecting European women.

The EU Care Atlas illustrates how the pay gap is just one of the components of the overall earnings gap (the difference between what men and women earn annually). Besides the pay gap, the EU Care Atlas looks also at the employment and hours gaps and provides a picture of unpaid work across Europe. Behind all these indicators lies the disproportionate burden of care work carried by women – paid and unpaid. The EU Care Atlas illustrates the urgent need to look beyond the mere gender pay, by showing the full picture of gender economic inequalities and their interplay with care imbalances.



### CASE 2 // CARE4CARE EXPERT SEMINAR. EU CARE STRATEGY: A CHANCE TO TRIGGER INCLUSIVE CARE FOR ALL?

Following the presentation of the EU Care Strategy on the 7 September 2022, FEPS, FES and CEPS co-hosted an expert seminar to discuss the ambition of the European Commission and to critically assess this new initiative. Europe is still facing an unfinished journey with view to the lack of adequate measures meeting care needs for all. Therefore, this multistakeholder discussion involving care experts from academia, civil society and policymaking contributed to informing our work in the field. The participants assessed whether the EU's Care Strategy lives up to the promise of ensuring cohesive action and whether it equips the EU to take leadership in care policy to better address the still ongoing care crisis.

It namely offered the occasion to have a deeper analysis of the main challenges in crafting a socially just care system, looking at the various care angles from long-term care, to gender equality, care receivers and givers' well-being, social welfare, and find ways to further social investment. Experts addressed, amongst others, the potential of other European instruments, such as the Recovery and Resilience Facility, which represents a unique opportunity for member states to expand the offer of services when it comes to early childhood education and long-term care.

# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# MIGRATION AND NEIGHBOURHOOD

### Ambition

The brutal invasion of Ukraine by Putin's Russia in February 2022 has affected the European Union on many levels, triggering an energy and inflation crisis, forcing to reconsider the wider geopolitical developments and Europe's role in this transforming international order, and changing or accelerating the EU's agenda in several fields.

The war in Ukraine also provoked the fastest and largest displacement of people in Europe since World War II, testing the EU's capacity to protect those fleeing war-torn Ukraine. Unlike recent previous humanitarian crises, like the one in the wake of the civil war in Syria in the mid-2010s, the European Union performed extraordinarily well. It quickly activated the Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) for the first time since its creation after the war in Yugoslavia, and established impressive instruments to receive refugees from Ukraine.

However, the unexpected war in Ukraine and the subsequent displacement of millions of people have also highlighted important implications for the management of asylum, migration and integration in Europe in general. The warm and welcoming treatment reserved for the Ukrainian refugees has stood in stark contrast to the one given to other third-country nationals. The double standards of the Union's migration and refugee policy reflect the increasingly closed attitude of the Union towards migration and migrants, and the need for European progressive forces to act to steer the EU towards more humane policies.

As migration continues to be an easy object of disinformation campaigns, the conflict in Ukraine also resulted in new opportunities for spreading fake news about migrants and refugees, re-launching the question of a narrative that looks at migration in more informed and objective terms.

Against the backdrop of the war, it was necessary to re-adjust ongoing analyses to take into account the repercussions that the war was having on migration and asylum policies. The main questions that have been addressed concerned, on the one hand, the

longer-term impact that the new humanitarian crisis would have on Europe's asylum policies – including the negotiations on the New Pact on Asylum and Migration – and, on the other, the actions to be taken to contrast ongoing disinformation campaigns and the pervasive anti-migrant narrative.

The war also had important consequences for the process of EU enlargement to the Western Balkans. The granting of candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova in June 2022 as a reaction to the war was largely symbolic and aimed to show the European Union's support toward Ukraine. The EU's opening towards the two Eastern European countries re-launched the debate on accession instruments and on the slowness and obstacles that characterise the Western Balkan countries' path towards European integration. Here, FEPS' ambition was to contribute to informing and revitalising the European and national debates on enlargement to the WB6.

### Results

The topic of the repercussion that the Russian war in Ukraine would have on the EU asylum system and the positive and negative lessons that could be learned from the experience of the Temporary Protection Directive have been at the centre of the discussion held in Villa Vigoni (Como Lake, Italy) on the occasion of the fourth edition of the international roundtable What is Progressive? organised in cooperation with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung Rome office and the Fondation Jean Jaurès. In particular, the debate – held under the Chatham House rule – revolved around the question 'The European Union asylum system in the aftermath of the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis: lessons learned and challenges ahead' and was informed by a policy brief drafted for this occasion in cooperation with CeSPI (The war in Ukraine, refugees, inclusion and human mobility). Participants were asked to identify the best practices of the TPD, if any, that could be applied in the EU asylum and management policies. Moreover, they were asked to assess the current shape of the New Pact on Asylum and Migration and evaluate whether

the experience of the Ukrainian humanitarian crisis could positively influence the outcome of the ongoing negotiations around this document. The results of the discussion, which looked at the Pact discouragingly, were summed up in a second policy brief, that highlighted different critical aspects and some relevant recommendations aimed to enrich a progressive policy agenda regarding the EU migration and asylum policies in the medium and long term.

FEPS, in cooperation with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung EU office and the European Policy Centre (EPC), has been working for a few years already on the topic of disinformation. The outbreak of the war in Ukraine and the resulting flow of refugees from that country offered the opportunity to analyse this humanitarian crisis as a case study for disinformation. The research results were published in the policy study Disinformation on refugees from Ukraine: Boosting Europe's resilience after Russia's invasion. The overall results of the three-year project and the relevant policy studies were also presented in Brussels, Berlin and Rome.

The impact of the war on the enlargement process to the Western Balkans, and in particular the French proposal to establish a new intergovernmental forum, the European Political Community, was among the topics that participants to the network Friends of the Western Balkans tackled during two meetings in Sarajevo and Prague, in June and November. The network – which will continue to work in 2023 – is composed by members of national parliaments and members of the European Parliament assisted by experts and members of the national foundations. The project aims first to animate an informed debate about accession and to support the MPs' and MEPs' advocacy in favour of enlargement in the respective countries of origin. This advocacy activity materialised in the issue of two declarations ahead of the June European Council meeting, which was to deliberate on Western Balkan-related issues and ahead of the EU-WB summit in November 2022. Finally, the activity of analysis around the WB was realised by means of the project Balkan Focus, that aimed at offering a platform to gather analysis as well as information about political developments and events.

### CASE 1 // DISINFORMATION ON REFUGEES FROM UKRAINE: BOOSTING EUROPE'S RESILIENCE AFTER RUSSIA'S INVASION

For over three years, FEPS in cooperation with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung and the European Policy Centre (EPC), has led a research project aimed at investigating and contrasting disinformation about migration. The last of the policy studies produced within the framework of this project focuses on Ukraine as a case study and examines which disinformation actors spread false claims about Ukrainian refugees and how.

Russia's war on Ukraine caused the fastest and largest displacement of people in Europe since

World War II, and soon the EU became the epicentre of an information war. A large share of disinformation relating to the war in Ukraine concerns refugees. This disinformation depicts migrants and refugees as a threat to Europeans' health, wealth and/or identity, appealing to people's anxieties. This policy study sheds light on why migration-related disinformation is so pervasive and how disinformation narratives change over time and space. It also examines which audiences are more susceptible to online disinformation.

### CASE 2 // FRIENDS OF THE WESTERN BALKANS

Friends of the Western Balkans (FoWB) is a network of members of European national parliaments and members of the European Parliament who wish to advocate for the EU's enlargement towards the Western Balkans. It was established in cooperation with Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung Dialogue South-East Europe, Fondation Jean-Jaurès, Fondation Max van der Stoep, Masarykova demokratická akademie, Olof Palme International Center, Progresiva, Renner Institut, and with the support of CeSPI. Thanks to the engagement of the national foundations, the support of external experts and the lively discussion with regional stakeholders, the members of the group can participate more actively in the national debates, explaining to other decision-makers and public opinions the benefit that would come from the WB accession. In 2022, the FoWB met twice, once in Sarajevo where participants

discussed the cost of non-accession, a proposal of staged accession process and the political situation in BiH. And during the second event, which was held in Prague, the topic addressed were the European Political Community (EPC), the result of the elections in BiH, the Kosovo-Serbia dispute and the lessons that can be learned from the Slovenian and Czech accession.



# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# EUROPE IN THE WORLD

### Ambition

Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 became the most pressing and direct challenge Europe has faced within the last decades. The war has not only destabilised the European security architecture putting its own territory under threat, but also affected a broad range of areas of EU policymaking as well as Europeans' lives and livelihoods. Due to the significance of the war and its multidimensional repercussions, a major part of FEPS' work in the thematic field "Europe in the World" in 2022 centred on this major event and its implications on different dimensions of international affairs. By providing research and fostering exchanges among progressive policymakers, experts, and civil-society actors, FEPS work has aimed at 1) better understanding the long-term implications of this war, 2) discussing and identifying tools for Europe to become more resilient to future crises and achieving its strategic autonomy ambitions, and 3) critically reflecting the EU's role in the world, as well as its visions for a more effective and just multilateral order. This war has also seriously affected other regions of the globe, raising an urgent discussion about EU's relationships with partners and its role in reshaping the global governance architecture. For this reason, FEPS has also conducted work on the transatlantic relations and on reforming the multilateral system. In 2022, FEPS was well-placed to take the opportunity of major international developments – such as the war in Europe's doorstep, the new Biden administration, and the process leading to the UN Summit of the Future in 2024 – to provide policymakers with insights and to shape the main issues of global politics from a progressive perspective.

### Results

Against the background of key major international events in 2022, starting with the war in Ukraine, over the rise of China, the consolidation of its alliance with Russia, and growing tensions with the US, also including the mid-term elections in the US in November, FEPS delivered publications, organised public events, and expert meetings around four major axes:

1. European Strategic Autonomy: pathways to progressive action
2. Foresight and the long-term implications of the war in Ukraine
3. EU-Russia relations
4. State of the Unions, the US-EU relations

In addition to the outputs related to the priority projects mentioned above, in 2022, FEPS continued its annual collaboration with Israeli partners through the organisation of the seminar "The Green Transition in Europe and the Middle East", which took place on 5-6 November 2022 in Tel Aviv, Israel. In September 2022, FEPS went on a mission to New York during the 77th Session of the UN General Assembly, expanding its global network and contributing with a European and progressive perspective to the ongoing discussions on reforming multilateralism. Additionally, in collaboration with the Foundation Max van der Stoep (FMS), FEPS co-organised a major event on Africa, the Afrikadag, which took place in Amsterdam on 29 May 2022. During the Afrikadag, FEPS conveyed two expert panels on the topical discussions of migration and tackling global inequalities from a perspective of EU-Africa relations. Regarding the Russia-Ukraine war, FEPS contributed with analysis and insights through various activities in the course of 2022, such as several episodes in the podcast 'FEPS Talks'. The episodes to be highlighted on this issue were the one with the participation of Arne Westad (Yale University), on "China-Russia cooperation and the war in Ukraine: a complex relation", the one with Julia von Blumenthal (European University Viadrina) on "Universities in war and peace", and the episode with Jens Südekum (Heinrich Heine University Düsseldorf) on "Sanctions on Russia: the German and wider debate". Finally, in 2022 FEPS launched the new project "Foresight and the long-term implications of the war in Ukraine" in which two of a series of roundtable discussions were already organised, while others are planned for 2023. Such roundtable discussions featuring high-level experts and policymakers have investigated factors and actors that might shape developments ahead, uncertainties and potential wildcards on multiple dimensions of international affairs, focusing on the implications for the EU. The first meeting happened on 27 September and addressed "the geopolitics of energy and the green transition". In contrast, the second one focused on "prospects for global governance in an age of disruptions", on 7 November.

## CASE 1 // CONFERENCE: STATE OF THE UNIONS

### "The US Mid-term elections: implications for US democracy, the EU, and global politics"

The succession of Donald Trump by Joe Biden in the White House and the US "return to the world" has given a fresh impetus to the transatlantic relations. However, the deep frictions in US society and the persistent signs of democratic erosion persist despite the change of administration. Both Europe and the US continued to face major political, economic, and social issues. Against this backdrop, the US mid-term elections in November 2022 were crucial to defining the state of democracy in the US, its influence and ability to shape international politics,



as well as the terms of transatlantic relations in the coming years. In the context of rising polarisation, divisions, and contestation, what did the mid-term elections reveal about the state of US democracy? How have Europeans interpreted the outcomes of the elections? To answer those questions, FEPS and the German Marshall Fund of the United States (GMF) brought together leading European and US experts and policymakers at the **5th State of the Unions conference**, in Brussels, to engage in a debate about

the vote that took place in the other side of the Atlantic, but which would also have global repercussions. The first session, titled "A polarised democracy and the future of US politics" focused on analysing the results of the elections. The panel featured Colin Woodard (Author and Journalist), Laurence Nardon (Head of the North America Program at the French Institute

of International Relations (IFRI)), Arun Chaudhary (Political Messaging Expert, and former Creative Director of Bernie Sanders), and Ian Lesser (Vice-President, GMF) in a debate on what the results revealed about the state of US democracy and the divisions within US society. The second session, "Implications of a new US Congress for the EU and

global politics" went beyond the domestic dimension and assessed the impacts of the new US Congress on the future of US foreign policy and transatlantic relations. This panel had the participation of Peter Kmec (Member of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, and former Ambassador of Slovakia to the US), Miapetra Kumpula-Natri (Member of the European Parliament), Steven Erlanger (Chief Diplomatic Correspondent in Europe from The New York Times) and Uwe Optenhögel (Vice-President, FEPS).

## CASE 2 // EVENT

### "The EU and its Eastern Neighbours: Between the threat of Russia and solidarity with Ukraine"

The Russian military invasion in Ukraine provoked a profound shift in the EU, member states, and Social Democratic parties when it comes to approaches towards eastern neighbours and the European security architecture, including the abrupt interruption of relations with Russia, a unprecedented response in terms of sanctions by the West, and clear solidarity with Ukraine. The dramatic developments that led to the loss of many lives, injuries, and victimisation of millions of people, and pushed many to seek refuge abroad, saw the destruction of communities and infrastructures, and continue to escalate. This war has had profound consequences for both countries involved in the military conflict and for the rest of the world. The EU stands in solidarity, unwaveringly pursues the agenda of sanctions, and is committed to being part of the forces engaged in the reconstruction of Ukraine. The war was a turning point – which we instantly discussed at the FEPS Review Meeting in the presence of Josep Borrell, the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/ Vice-President of the European Commission. The situation has become a drive to intensify the efforts focused on resilience and strategic

autonomy. It has given impulses to revive geopolitical matters such as enlargement and to look at internal reorganisation. Nevertheless, although the EU has put in place diverse mechanisms, the energy crisis, the cost-of-living crisis and the political solstice in several countries remain among the direct consequences. Against this background, FEPS, Amicus Europae, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, Renner Institut, Fondation Jean Jaures, Fondazione Gramsci, and the Foundation Max van der Stoep organised a two-day event held as the last session of the project on EU-Russia relations, founded in Autumn of 2019. The event also allowed stakeholders to examine closely the developments of the last months and try to anticipate on how things may unfold, with a view on how to ensure resilience, the path to peace, self-determination, and reconstruction of Ukraine. Furthermore, it involved senior politicians, academics, and experts in exchanges that facilitated the transformation of our common initiative to a project more directly focused on Ukraine itself and future reconstruction. Therefore, a field visit in Ursynow (district of Warsaw) allowed to understand policy responses adopted at the local level, and to meet with representatives of human rights organisations who have been directly involved in the efforts to provide support to Ukrainians seeking refuge.

# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# POLITICAL EUROPE

### Ambition

2022 was certainly a significant year for the debate about the future of the European Union and the possible trajectories for European integration. First, following the pandemic and the establishment of the Next Generation EU, new tools have been provided to discipline the member states to abide by the EU principles and follow the commonly agreed objectives. The so-called 'conditionality mechanism' provided to be a relevant option and strengthened the possibilities for decisive action on the side of the European Commission: finally, it had a way of standing taller in the disputes over the rule of law. Secondly, the Day of Europe saw a monumental event that provided the closing of the Conference on

the Future of Europe. It brought a new kind of impetus and a better understanding of how to improve participatory democracy inside of the Union, as also what the citizens believed to be the content of 'pro-Europeanism' in all the diverse regions of Europe the participants came from. And thirdly, after the first shock related to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the EU understood that in the rapidly changing geopolitical context, it must get stronger, more resilient, and more capable of acting. This included considerations on the EU competencies and resources, the scope of common action and the methodology of taking decisions, and the intensity of inner-EU relations and geographical outreach.

### Results

Against this backdrop, FEPS and especially FEPS President Maria João Rodrigues, have been active in providing expertise and proposals on what could be done regarding EU reform and enlargement. The FEPS President continued promoting the so-called 'Blue Book', *Our European Future*, which at the time of release had been the only publication of that kind on the mar-

ket and, upon extensive demand, had been translated into French, German, and Spanish. Furthermore, the President has also chaired a High-Level Expert Group inside of FEPS and made several speaking commitments, including a keynote at the occasion of the FMA annual event (Former Members of the European Parliament Association).

## CASE 1 // THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

Formed in 2021 under the leadership of Maria João Rodrigues, the FEPS Expert Group on the future of Europe continued to reflect on fundamental questions on how to reform the EU to make the European project fit for current and future challenges within and beyond Europe. It did so primarily in two ways. Firstly, by looking through the lens of European public goods, citizenship, and democracy, the FEPS Expert Group identified the most necessary treaty changes. Based on the expertise of constitutional law, political science, political economy and other social sciences, the Expert Group singled out targeted treaty

changes in policy areas such as foreign affairs and European security, environmental and energy policy, health policy, gender policy, social policy, and the digital transformation. Secondly, the Expert Group discussed the importance of enlargement and deepening for the future of the European project. It did so in various reflection rounds and, supported by the Global Progressive Forum, in particular during a fringe event at the 2022 PES Congress by addressing questions on how a new approach for combining enlargement and deepening should look like and which approach should be advocated by progressive forces in Europe.



## CASE 2 // TRANSNATIONAL PARTIES

The FEPS Working Group on transnational parties and politics has been growing and significant, and in the years 2021-2022, its work focused on two themes: the reform of the rules for the functioning of the Europarties (involving in the conversation, among others, two former MEPs: Jo Leinen and Richard Corbett, and two current ones: João Albuquerque and Gabriela Bischoff) and the reform of the European electoral law (which has been done in close collaboration with the S&D rapporteur on the topic, Domènec Ruiz Devesa, and Francesco Cerasani from the S&D Secretariat Team). As a result of deliberations (mostly completed as hybrid events), there was a volume edited by Ania Skrzypek with a foreword by Maria João Rodrigues under the title "*Transforming the Political Union - Reinforcing Europarties ahead of the European elections*" was released in the spring of 2022. It included eleven research papers, which looked at possibilities of reforming PES (including leading it to become a more egalitarian, gender-sensitive organisation) and making PES a political protagonist at the next European elections. Among the authors were Jo Leinen, Lucy Kinski, Isabelle Hertner, Anna Paczesniak, Tapio Raunio, Luciano Bardi, Christopher Lord, Friedrich Puckelshein and Michael Kaeding. The book was further promoted, especially during the 30 years of the PES and the

Congress in Berlin, at the meetings of PES Women, and during several discussions with visiting students (particularly from the University of Düsseldorf).



Another contribution to the debate about the PES's future was a FEPS Progressive Page – *Time for grand narratives not for the footnotes*, written by Ania Skrzypek at the occasion of the PES 30 years jubilee.

# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# DEFENDING AND DEEPENING DEMOCRACY

### Ambition

The state of democracy in Europe and the European Union in 2022 was marked by both progress and setbacks. On the positive side, citizens have shown a remarkable willingness to participate in the democratic process. For instance, the Conference of the Future of Europe saw people from different parts of the bloc come together to formulate progressive European proposals for the future and call for a convention to discuss much-needed structural changes at EU level. Additionally, the European Year of Youth brought together thousands of young people to discuss critical issues like climate change, social justice, and digital democracy. Youth-led movements such as Extinction Rebellion, as polarising as they may be, also played a vital role in raising awareness about the urgency of addressing climate change and holding governments accountable.

However, there are worrying trends of democratic backsliding and authoritarianism in several EU member states, which threaten the foundations of democracy and the EU itself. In Italy, for instance, a far-right, previously fascist party emerged as the leader of the government following election results. Similarly, in France, a radical right party narrowly lost the presidential elections. The European Parliament also declared that Hungary can no longer be considered a democracy, highlighting the severity of the situation.

Against the background of these challenges, the EU has taken steps to safeguard democracy and media freedom. It adopted a media freedom act to guarantee that the European media sector can operate without political interference, and with stable funding to provide quality information to citizens. Additionally, the European Commission proposed measures to protect journalists and human rights defenders from manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings. The EU also triggered the conditionality mechanism against Hungary for breaching the Rule of Law, cutting off EU funding. This move followed a verdict of

the European Court of Justice, which ruled in favour of the mechanism's legality. Finally, the September 2022 State of the Union speech saw the announcement of a Defence of Democracy package, promising to update the Democracy Action Plan that currently marks the EU's main policy framework on democracy.

### Results

In 2022, FEPS has seen the consolidation of the Democracy portfolio, which would focus on gaining relevance in three fields: youth participation in politics, electoral behaviours and fight for the rule of law inside of the EU.

One of the significant issues at the heart of FEPS activities is the concerns and hopes of the young generations. As part of its flagship initiative, Builders of Progress, FEPS launched two seminal policy studies. In May 2022, FEPS published the results of a large, multi-country survey on young Europeans' opinions on the war in Ukraine. The study showed the unwavering support of young Europeans for Ukraine and EU policies to provide humanitarian and military support. In October 2022, the project's main report was launched in Brussels, reflecting on young Europeans' opinions more broadly. Reflecting the spirit of the 2022 European Year of Youth, it showed the strong desire of young people to be more involved in EU affairs. It also exposed economic concerns such as decent jobs, employment, protection from poverty and marginalisation, alongside climate change as their top priorities after several years of a global pandemic.

Furthermore, FEPS has been invited to participate in the process to influence the shape of the EU's democracy defence package. In a consortium of civil society organisations and think tanks on democracy, FEPS will continue its work on this topic in 2023, with a EU Commission proposal expected in June 2023.

## CASE 1 // BUILDERS OF PROGRESS

On 11 October 2022, FEPS launched its Builders of Progress reports, summarising two years of extensive research, and more than 18,000 responses making it the biggest survey on young Europeans' political opinions.

The study explores young Europeans' views on the shocks posed by the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. According to the results, job security, health and climate change are the main concerns of young people. They also believe all these challenges can best be addressed through unity and cooperation.

According to the report, the pandemic has shown that health systems in the EU are underfunded, which young people see as a key investment priority for EU recovery funds. Covid-19 has significantly exacerbated young people's worries about education, training, and access to decent work and employment. 61 per cent of young Europeans reported mental health concerns. Despite this, the proportion of those who have sought professional mental health care remains low, with only 10 per cent reporting having seen a psychologist.

With EU leaders continuing to debate further actions to address inequalities, 69 per cent of young people

want the EU to guarantee fair minimum wages and ensure the provision of decent and affordable housing. 40 per cent of youth in Europe think reducing pay gaps will have the greatest impact on gender equality in Europe, making it the most popular policy measure on the topic. Furthermore, almost half of young Europeans see maintaining the assistance provided to those most in need throughout the pandemic as the top long-term funding priority for the coming years.

In addition to launching the report on 11 October at the FEPS headquarter with more than 70 participants, including several MEPs, the study was also presented at country events in Slovenia, Spain and Switzerland with FEPS member organisations. It also attracted the attention of several Directorates-General of the European Commission, leading to presentations in DG Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and DG Research and Innovation. Hence, it made a timely contribution of providing fresh data on young people's opinions to EU stakeholders during the European Year of Youth. While the project officially ended in 2022, dissemination will continue due to the ongoing external interest in the project and its results.



## CASE 2 // VOTING DURING PANDEMICS

The pandemic was a tough experience, and while it lasted it often was a factor in the way the political participatory processes were organised. In some cases, it led to some positive developments. Initially, they were steered by a deeper reflection of how to enable people to get involved despite existing sanitary limitations and frequently ended with more measures that would facilitate participation of all in general. In some others, the limitations were used as a pretext to alter the conditions of electoral competitions in ways that would benefit those in power. All in all, this has been an area of reflection that have been frequently overlooked, and which FEPS together with ISI – Institut for Social Integration (in Bulgaria), as also with the support of CID from Poland, ISD from Romania, MDA from Czech Republic, Progressiva from Slovenia and Policy Solutions from Hungary

decided to explore. The focus was specifically on the Central and Eastern European countries, whereby the researchers focused on three dimensions: law (how the electoral rules were changed and with what impact), organisation of the elections (from the perspective of the political campaign as well), and finally the governmental negotiations (from the angle of how the pandemic may have influenced the process and institutional dynamic). The result of this work was an original volume edited by Ania Skrzypek with the support of Céline Guedes and released in March 2022 within FEPS Paper Series under the theme "Voting during pandemics. Making democracy resilient in turbulent times. Experiences from Central – South – Eastern Europe". The publication featured 12 articles and remains to that day a "one-of-the-kind" on the market.

# FEPS AT WORK: RESEARCH AND STUDIES

## MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

# NEXT LEFT

### Ambition

The thematic field 'Next Left' features several initiatives, of which the leading one is the *Next Left Research Programme* – which is FEPS' longest-lasting project and has been continued with the generous support of the Renner Institut since 2009. Since the relaunch in 2019, it has been chaired by Andreas Schieder, MEP and Chair of the SPÖ delegation in the EP, and consisted of several features, including Focus Group, High-Level Conversation, and the Next Left Book series.

In parallel, Next Left is the only pan-European programme that features in a complex, coherent, transversal, and transnational way the ideological, political, and organisational questions on the future of Social Democracy. Therefore, inside FEPS, it became a hub for several offspring initiatives – resulting in several conferences (such as FEPS-Fabian New Year Conference) round tables on the national level, providing space for political consultancy, and further publications (in the form of pamphlets and books). The networks it features also contribute to the other aspects of FEPS' work, with the EPO (European Progressive Observatory), the Next Left dossier in the Progressive Post, and FEPS Talks among the key examples. Finally, Next Left is well-established: not only internally but also externally it is considered a reference point. An example of therefore was the invitation to the Next Left stakeholders to hold the keynote address at the University of Gothenburg International Symposium on Social Democracy (June 2022) or the interview featured in the 'Samenleving en Politiek' (December 2022).

### Results

In 2022, there have been several important publications released within the scope of FEPS' Next Left. To begin with, there were two volumes (12 and 13) of the Next Left book series released by FEPS and Renner Institut. They looked at *Progressivism after Covid-19: Experiences, Impulses, Ideas and Progressive proposals for the turbulent times: how to boost the political, organisational and electoral potential*. Edited by Andreas Schieder, László Andor, Maria Maltschnig

and Ania Skrzypek with the support of Céline Guedes, they included almost 30 peer-reviewed articles with suggestions on how to draw the lessons from tough times, grasp momentum and seek progressive primacy of politics anew. Secondly, a book was edited by Katharina Hoffman de Moura, Ania Skrzypek and Robin Wilson – based on a cooperation between FEPS, FES and the Social Europe Journal. Entitled *Towards a Social Democratic century? How European and global social democracy can steer a course through the crisis*, it featured 20 contributions, a part of which focused on national case studies. They were also available in video format. Finally, there has also been a pamphlet by FEPS and the Fabian Society – edited by Kate Murray and Ania Skrzypek – which, under the theme *Enduring values. How progressives across Europe can win*, included twelve papers – each of which looked at a respective Social Democratic value or principle and tried to provide an answer to the question how its content could be translated into a successful policy proposal.

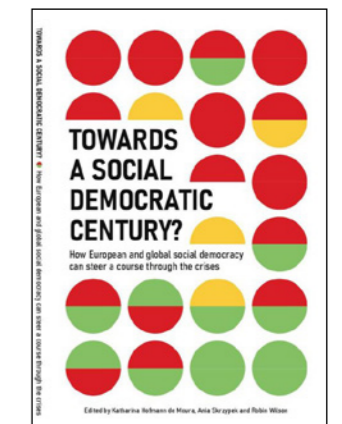
In 2022, two main features of the FEPS and Renner Institut Next Left Research Programme were the Focus Group and High-Level Conversation. The first was composed of a group of academics, who, in a smaller circle, procured original research and offered another peer-review in four rounds – following the completion of which the two new Next Left volumes were published and promoted. Once the cycle was finished, the Focus Group was recomposed and, in its smaller format, met in Vienna in October 2022 (and then online in December), setting new research questions – which would focus on *Social Democracy and tough choices*, with the objective to prepare another publication before 2023 and still contribute to the process of drafting the PES Manifesto in 2023-24. The second stream of work featured 45 senior academics and think tankers, who engaged in an exchange inspired by lectures held by one among them – with Colin Crouch, Suzi Meret, Hans Keman and Donald Sassoon. The intense debates will be summarised in a Next Left memo, which is foreseen to be launched in 2023 as well.

# ← NEXT LEFT →

### CASE 1 // 7<sup>TH</sup> OXFORD SYMPOSIUM

After the pause caused by the pandemic, the FEPS, Progressive Britain and Renner Institut Oxford Symposium – the flagship initiative within the FEPS Next Left – was relaunched. It took place, as traditionally designed, in the first week of July in the hospitable premises of St. Catherine's College in Oxford. The intense programme started with an impressive lecture by Ian Goldin, who described the pertinent and long-term challenges for the progressive movements in the world and Europe against the backdrop of quickly changing realities. Following that opening, the seminar featured debates

on the state and future of the centre-left in Europe, on the changing geopolitical context after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, on new progressive proposals for the welfare state and a green transition, as also on what should be priorities for Social Democrats in the EU and within the EU-UK relations post Brexit. The impressive list of speakers featured: Philippe Marlière, Alison McGovern, George Robertson, Konstantin Vössing, Eunice Goes, Patrick Diamond, Tomas Patrick, amongst many others.



### CASE 2 // NEXT LEFT LECTURE

Following the new concept for the FEPS-Renner Institut Next Left Research Programme, there was a pilot event of what is meant to become the new 'Next Left Lecture series'. The activity included a presentation that was offered during a closed-door seminar hosted by Andreas Schieder, Chair of the Next Left, for the Progressive senior stakeholders in the European Parliament. While the lecture will be publicly available, the discussion after – first inside of the EP, and then in a hybrid format for the Next Left High-Level Conversation members – was closed to ensure the most direct, instructive exchange.

The inauguration lecture, *Lost in Fragmentation – European Social Democracy between crisis and opportunities*, was delivered by Tarik Abou Chadi from Nuffield College, Oxford University. The discussion, which also involved other MEPs (such as João Albuquerque), representatives of the S&D Group's President's Office, of S&D, PES, PES Women, YES, PES in CoR and others – was well received, and it triggered a lot of follow-up of it in direct emails and via social media. It continued as the podcast with Tarik Abou Chadi was released in February 2023.



# FEPS AT WORK: OUTREACH

# FLAGSHIP PROJECT

## EUROPEAN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY: PATHWAYS TO PROGRESSIVE ACTION

In collaboration with the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) EU-Brussels office and the Fondation Jean-Jaurès, FEPS continued its timely work on the flagship project 'Strategic Autonomy – pathways to progressive action', aimed at investigating the concept of 'European strategic autonomy' (ESA) and tools to achieve this ambition. The war in Ukraine gave a new impetus to the debate on strategic autonomy, based on the idea that Europe must increase its ability and means to enhance its freedom from a set of external dependencies – and also to enhance its freedom to conduct its policy autonomously and in line with its fundamental values and interests. While the EU had taken steps toward strategic autonomy even before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the war highlighted the need to better understand the EU's capacity and agency to really set priorities and make autonomous decisions in its external action. This project discussed questions such as 'What are the political, institutional, and material requirements to achieve strategic autonomy, and on which dimensions is the EU expected to make more sovereign decisions?', looking into three thematic areas of strategic autonomy: 'Security and Defense', 'Economy & Trade', and 'Digital & Technology'. In 2022, nine policy briefs were published as part of the series.

In addition, a series of virtual Policy Breakfast sessions was organised between 5 and 7 July 2022, focusing on the three thematic areas of the ESA project and featuring high-level policymakers and experts, including Elina Ribakova (Deputy Chief Economist, Institute of International Finance), Kathleen Van Brempt (Member of the European Parliament), Paul Timmers (Research Fellow, Oxford University), Julia Anderson (Economist, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development), Ana Juncos (Professor of European Politics at the School of Sociology, Politics and International Studies, University of Bristol), and Pol Morillas (Director, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs).

**POLICY BRIEF**  
February 2022

**ELEVATING THE EU'S ADDED VALUE AS A SECURITY PROVIDER**

**STRENGTHENING THE UNION'S PEACEBUILDING CAPABILITIES**

**ABSTRACT**

Current debates about European strategic autonomy have tended to focus on narrow conceptions of autonomy, where the concept is solely understood in military and defence terms. Envisioned in such a way, strategic autonomy equates to a 'Tutle en avant' which fails to resolve existing shortcomings in EU external action. This brief argues that it is in the areas of conflict prevention, mediation, post-conflict peacebuilding and resilience-building where the real EU's strengths lie and that any vision of strategic autonomy should take this as the starting point. Otherwise, this debate only risks increasing the existing gap between the Union's ambition as an international security actor and its practice. The policy brief identifies four distinctive areas where the EU's added value lies: namely, in relation to its integrated approach, the emphasis on multilateralism, its relative adaptability and flexibility, and a normative approach which has privileged non-coercive means and increasingly bottom-up approaches to conflict prevention and resolution. The purpose of this brief is to identify the strengths of the EU in these areas, but also shortcomings so that current debates about strategic autonomy can be generalised to address these problems. Specifically, the brief argues that the EU and its member states should focus on strengthening the EU's engagement in key areas, improving co-ordination within the EU but also with other actors, and ensuring buy-in from member states by promoting inclusivity, but also differentiation within this policy area. Placing the need to strengthen the Union's peacebuilding capabilities at the centre of the debate could thus help shift the existing narrative towards one that is more sensitive to the comparative advantages of the EU as an international security provider.

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**POLICY BRIEF**  
March 2022

**BEYOND THE BRUSSELS EFFECT**

**LEVERAGING DIGITAL REGULATION FOR STRATEGIC AUTONOMY**

**ABSTRACT**

The paper analyses Europe's alleged primacy in the regulation of emerging technologies and assesses whether the so-called 'Brussels effect' can help the EU achieve prominence as a global regulator in the digital space. It finds that the Brussels effect, while existing, is not only circumscribed in public debate but is also at risk of gradual erosion over the coming years. Moreover, current trends in global technology governance suggest that unilateral rule making will not be a viable strategy in the future and that the EU will be able to retain a leading role only if it develops a coalition-building strategy, as well as a self-referential, semi-open technology stack. The paper provides five policy recommendations that may help the EU thrive in an increasingly competitive and strategic terrain.

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**POLICY BRIEF**  
July 2022

**PARTNERSHIPS AND EUROPEAN STRATEGIC AUTONOMY**

**HOW TO TURN THEM INTO A WIN-WIN APPROACH**

**SUMMARY**

To become more strategic and autonomous, the European Union has to better use its global partnerships. Managing external security threats today requires active and reliable partnerships, first and foremost with more capable and like-minded partners. Moreover, partnerships can increase the Union's capacity to act in Europe and beyond. Today, the EU has several technology stacks. While the number has grown over the last decade, their palpable use in the security and defence domain has rarely been demonstrated.

But the pressure on the EU to deliver more in the field of international security is growing. The Russian war against Ukraine is a watershed for European security, by pressing both EU institutions and members to unprecedented collective decisions, such as sanction packages on Russia and the delivery of weapons to Ukraine. The European Peace Facility, Russian military aggression adds to ongoing security challenges around Europe, from instability in the south to transatlantic challenges. While the US administration is strongly committed to supporting Ukraine and European defence, America's focus on the system ready with China remains a structural trend that risks turning EU attention away from Europe again.

Internally, the narrative of strategic autonomy has been pushed mainly by France and the European Commission led by Ursula von der Leyen. The 2022 Strategic Compass operationalises that ambition through four lines of action: Act, Secure, Invest and Partner. The importance of partnerships as an enabling tool is hence growing. To order to deliver EU partnerships with NATO, the US and the UK have to be prioritised and justified. The EU should focus on identifying its interests, engage partners and invest in implementation.

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**POLICY BRIEF**  
May 2022

**EUROPEAN INDUSTRIAL POLICY**

**A CRUCIAL ELEMENT OF STRATEGIC AUTONOMY**

**ABSTRACT**

A sea change in the geopolitical environment and the green and digital revolutions are forcing Europe to rethink its approach to industrial policy. Russia's war in Ukraine has ushered in a new era for Europe's economic diplomacy, supply security and military spending. The war poses a fundamental challenge, and the EU has also set ambitious goals on decarbonisation and digitalisation.

The EU's past approach to industrial policy mostly assumed a absence of great power rivalry, a limited relevance of economies of scale, and benign approaches by other countries to international trade. But other countries are now weaponising economic dependencies and markets for many advanced and emerging technologies when these technologies are used in high concentration and have significant spillover effects within the home country of dominating firms.

The EU needs to recalibrate its approach and focus on the emergence of key industries and key supplies, and provide key infrastructure in Europe. The right balance between selective protectionism and openness to trade and investment needs to be struck. The goal of industrial policy should not be to produce everything at home, but to preserve the capability of production. To this end, Europe should target new products or technologies rather than existing ones, enhance market competition rather than unproductive ones. The EU could do this with strategic regulation, FDI screening, public procurement and other tools, all while shielding policies from special interest and inefficiency.

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**POLICY BRIEF**  
June 2022

**COUNTERING ECONOMIC COERCION**

**HOW CAN THE EUROPEAN UNION SUCCEED?**

**SUMMARY**

This policy brief assesses how the EU can bolster its response and defence mechanisms against foreign economic coercion. At its inception, the EU benefited from a world order where economic, foreign policy, and geopolitics were less intertwined than they are today. However, as global economic power has shifted, these lines have been blurred. Furthermore, many global economies have decided to look after their interests outside multilateral frameworks and increasingly are multilateral institutions as outlined. Today, the long forgotten concept of economic sovereignty is back on the agenda. The EU has been forced to become more 'geopolitical' instead of just an economic union. While it is a large market, a lack of coordination among EU members makes pursuing a common foreign policy and economic agenda challenging. Nonetheless, in this paper we present specific and realistic policy measures to defend the autonomy of EU foreign economic policy and ensure that it can pursue progressive goals abroad. The EU should recalibrate its strategic dependencies, strengthen its ability to deliver more externalised standards, and improve mechanisms for investment and export controls. While we provide links between other areas of economic policy and national security, this paper focuses on the areas where the EU is particularly exposed – sanctions and the global financial architecture.

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**POLICY BRIEF**  
January 2022

**STRATEGIC AUTONOMY: NOT WITHOUT INTEGRATION**

**SUMMARY**

One dimension of strategic autonomy has been fairly decided upon since the EU created its Common Security and Defence Policy in 1999: the projection of military force outside the borders of the EU. That is also the dimension that must, and can, be acted upon in the very short term.

Autonomy is a mindset. An actor that does not think autonomously will never act autonomously, regardless of its capabilities. Five components of that mindset are essential. First, member states must see the EU as a great power, in the same league as the US, Russia, and China. Second, the EU must take the lead in stabilising its own periphery – nobody will do that for it. Third, the only meaningful level of ambition remains the headline goal of up to 60,000 troops. Fourth, autonomy can only be achieved in a European grouping, not by any member state alone. Finally, autonomy requires integration of national forces, not just interoperability between them. While the weak argue amongst themselves – 'Do we have strategic autonomy?' or 'Do we want strategic autonomy?' – the strong exercise their autonomy. There is no time to waste, therefore.

Those member states that share this mindset can create a set of permanent multinational formations, with national brigades, wings, and air squadrons as building blocks. They can do that now, so that when the EU adopts its Strategic Compass in March 2022, it can unveil a real capability initiative at the same time.

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**POLICY BRIEF**  
July 2022

**EUROPE NEEDS HIGH-TECH TALENT**

**INVESTING IN PEOPLE TO COUNTER OLIGOPOLISTIC DYNAMICS AND DEPENDENCIES IN TECHNOLOGY MARKETS**

**ABSTRACT**

A few firms in the US and China control key layers of the digital supply chain. This geographic and economic concentration creates dependencies for the EU. So far, the block has focused on regulating firms to mitigate the risks. Yet it has neglected educating people to support genuine independence. The EU courts too few digitally skilled graduates, and too many leave the continent to join other tech hubs. This shortage restricts market concentration, as the biggest firms pay the most competitive salaries and attract a large share of the global talent. It also hampers ongoing regulator efforts: the EU cannot police technologies it does not understand.

The EU acknowledges the need for more skills, but fails to propose adequate remedies to address the issue. Its flagship digital strategy focuses on a number of ICT specialists – a target that is much too broad to meaningfully support strategic autonomy objectives. The EU needs to refine its success metrics and track unmet employer demand for specific advanced digital skills and unmet student demand for specific programmes. EU action plans, including the European Skills Agenda and Digital Education Action Plan, could help address this. The lack of state-level accountability tools for their effective implementation.

Obtaining the requisite skills for a more autonomous digital economy and society requires a co-ordinated approach within and between EU countries – one that leverages a wide range of policy areas and exploits linkages between them. High-tech talent is drawn to vibrant digital centres and while dynamic digital markets will not exist without a skilled workforce, a skilled workforce without local market dynamism is a recipe for brain drain.

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**POLICY BRIEF**  
June 2022

**LEVERAGING TRADE POLICY FOR THE EU'S STRATEGIC AUTONOMY**

**ABSTRACT**

In a context of increasing weaponisation of interdependence – highlighted by the pandemic and Russia's invasion of Ukraine – Europeans must actively reduce their critical dependencies. The objective of strategic autonomy for the EU is becoming pressing to prevent supply disruptions and ensure the resilience of value chains. While strengthening European production capacities for certain essential goods, the objective of strategic autonomy calls for a shift of European trade policy, which should now be leveraged to secure access to essential inputs when foreign markets are closed. A major turning point has already been reached with the new European level playing field agenda, which is progressively equipping the EU with autonomous defence tools to protect the interests of its businesses. But EU member states are slow to agree on the Chinese point to China, the level of dependence on the Chinese market they are willing to accept, and the role the EU should play in the context of the US-China decoupling. They also need to ensure that the political rhetoric of reducing European strategic dependencies and the decisions of private companies that have no mandate to secure European supply. Supporting companies' efforts to diversify their supply calls for the EU notably to negotiate more closely with companies to develop collective intelligence on strategic dependencies. It also calls for the EU to promote European standards more actively, to initiate new bilateral negotiations for access to strategic raw materials, and to support an international effort to limit export restrictions.

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**POLICY BRIEF**  
April 2022

**STRATEGIC AUTONOMY TECH ALLIANCES**

**POLITICAL-INDUSTRIAL COLLABORATION IN STRATEGIC TECHNOLOGIES**

**SUMMARY**

The EU has embarked on the road to more 'strategic autonomy', notably in digital technologies. A significant number of digital technologies are essential for our economy, technology and democracy. It is not feasible, or is it desirable for the EU to become self-sufficient in each of these. The nature of the game, therefore, is to work in partnership or globally, rather than in a zero-sum game.

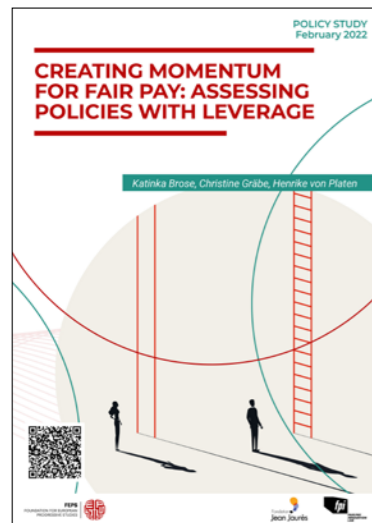
But to do that, Europe needs to bring together political support and industrial ecosystem alliances can only be used to build strategic autonomy tech alliances. This will allow the EU to build strategic autonomy tech alliances, capacities, and control in strategic areas that are considered key for the EU's economic and democratic future, this is, for sovereignty in the EU.

This policy brief reviews the landscape and concludes that strategic autonomy tech alliances can only be made in three areas: where there are strategic tech alliances, where there are strategic autonomy tech alliances, where there are strategic autonomy tech alliances. In the case of cybersecurity, quantum tech, space, and high performance computing, there are areas, but they are not yet fully developed. In the case of artificial intelligence and secure 5G/6G, and high performance computing, there are areas, but they are not yet fully developed. In the case of artificial intelligence and secure 5G/6G, and high performance computing, there are areas, but they are not yet fully developed.

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## FEPS AT WORK: OUTREACH

# POLICY CONTRIBUTIONS



### Creating Momentum for Fair Pay: Assessing Policies with Leverage | Policy Study

This Policy Study, authored by Katinka Brose, Christine Gräbe and Henrike von Platen, demonstrates that a mandated analysis of remuneration systems is key to achieving fairness for all. Pay gaps can be monitored and decreased, and neutral job evaluation systems implemented. Those policies targeting remuneration systems on corporate levels are most effective, as putting fair pay into practice is a systemic issue and not an individual burden.

The European Union and many others have realised the need for political action on fair pay. It takes bold leadership to push for far-reaching policies that target structural impediments. Many hope that the European Commission and France among others will take exactly this role – against all backdrops on gender equality. The most effective levers for fair pay are corporate action, regular analysis of pay systems, and benchmarks combined with fines – including the drive to get better with every analysis. The aim is not to close pay gaps, but to keep them sustainably closed.

The goal of this policy paper is to assess the different policy instruments to ensure fair pay across Europe and the world as well as to discuss their leveraging effects.

This paper was published in collaboration with the Fondation Jean-Jaurès and FPI Lab.

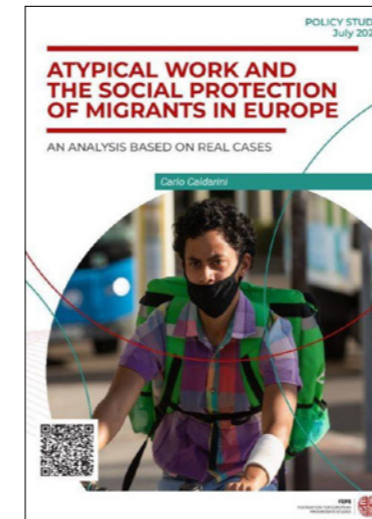


### A Macro-Development Perspective on Euro Area Imbalances | Policy Study

This policy study by Juan Montecino provides a macro-development perspective on the euro-area imbalances. Drawing on insights from development economics, the author provides an overview of the link between external competitiveness, current account imbalances and the economy's long-term productivity growth.

The study argues that recent macroeconomic trends in the Euro Area suggest that Germany's current account surpluses are responsible for a 'Dutch disease'-style deindustrialisation in periphery economies. There are also tentative signs that the loss of competitiveness may leave lasting scars on these economies' levels of productivity. How do we address this phenomenon? The author of the study concludes with some tentative policy recommendations to help alleviate these structural imbalances. On the core country level, these include adopting an expansionary fiscal stance and pursuing wage growth. On the European level, re-engineering industrial policy and using targeted subsidies could re-align the real effective exchange rates of core and periphery countries and contribute to solving the problem.

This research is a result of a cooperation between FEPS and the Initiative for Policy Dialogue (IPD), based at Columbia University, founded by Nobel Laureate Joseph E. Stiglitz.



### Atypical Work and the Social Protection of Migrants in Europe | Policy Study

In what cases, and according to which criteria, can the contractual relationship between an employee and his/her employer be defined as standard, hybrid or atypical? Why do social security institutions in European countries sometimes consider periods of work the person has done in other countries and sometimes not? And above all, what specific impact can work with non-standard contracts have on the migration path of a person moving from one European country to another? For a migrant, can a non-standard job ultimately be a good stepping stone to a more stable professional integration or, on the contrary, does it entail the risk of being trapped in a second-class relationship?

This Policy Study, authored by Carlo Caldarini, is based on real cases, analyses the effect that atypical contracts have on social protection rights and the rights of migrants connected to their 'foreigner' status, such as access to host country nationality, family reunification, and right of residence.



### The EU and North Africa: Towards a Just Twin Transition? | Policy Study

In an era marked by a deficiency in sustainable growth and a profusion of novel digital tools, the implementation of mutually-reinforcing green and digital policies is a promising avenue to address the climate emergency. The European Union has therefore developed a twin green and digital transition agenda that seeks to harmonise these previously autonomous policy areas. This new strategy is both inwards and outwards looking as it bears a geopolitical dimension. The 2021 New Agenda can exemplify this for the Mediterranean which extends the geographical scope of the project to the EU's Southern neighbourhood.

This study, authored by Mauro Santaniello, Amira El-Shal and Reinhilde Brouckaert, focuses on the Euro-Mediterranean dimension of the twin transition. It estimates its extent, its potential implications on EU-North Africa relations, and its relevance for both parties. To this end, it first presents a historical overview of the evolution of the EU's digital and energy policies towards its Southern neighbours. It also examines the reception of the EU's digital and energy policies by North African countries. It then assesses the applicability of the twin transition project to the North African context. Based on its findings, this research formulates policy recommendations revolving around the main conclusion that comprehensive cooperation is a prerequisite for successfully implementing the twin transition.

This publication was published in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, the United Nations University – Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies, and presented at the 'Figuring out the Twin Transition' event in Barcelona with the partnership of the Rafaels Campalans foundation.

## FEPS AT WORK: OUTREACH

# POLICY CONTRIBUTIONS



### The Circular Economy and Green Jobs in the EU and Beyond | Book

The circular economy is a model of production and consumption underpinned by a transition to renewable energy and materials. It is a resilient system that is good for business, people and the environment. 'The Circular Economy and Green Jobs in the EU and Beyond' examines what the circular economy means, why the transition from a linear economy to a circular one is important, and how it can be achieved.

The book offers clarification of the meaning and the implications of the circular economy across different contexts – economic, social, cultural, legal and international. In doing so, it goes beyond simply arguing in favour of a circular economy and critically assesses the political and distributional choices that are made during this transition. Particular emphasis is placed on the implications for jobs and different business models and on questions of equity.

Edited by Janis Brizga and Saïd El Khadraoui and with a foreword by Frans Timmermans, Vice-President of the European Commission, this book is the result of a collaboration with the Kalevi Sorsa Foundation, the Freedom and Solidarity Foundation, the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, and the Jean-Jaurès Foundation.



### How to Address Europe's Green Investment Gap | Policy Brief

This policy brief presents the combined findings of the three policy studies on climate investment in the European Union that have been published as part of the research project 'A fiscally sustainable public investment initiative in Europe to prevent climate collapse'.

Combining the results of the three policy studies, Rafael Wildauer discusses the European Union's investment needs to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels as well as two funding options to raise the revenues for the direct provision of green infrastructure. Concerning the investment needs, the analysis concludes that the European Commission's modelling of required investment needs is overly optimistic as the EU faces an investment gap of €11,670 to €16,320 billion between 2020 and 2050.

To close this investment gap, two funding options are explored: A European wealth tax with the potential to raise revenues of between €164 billion and €357 billion annually, while not increasing inflationary and Covid-related pressures on low- and middle-income households; and the issue of government bonds, capable of raising revenues instantly, generating a significant economic impulse, and with enough magnitude that it will allow public finances to improve in the long term.

This Policy Brief was published in collaboration with the Renner Institute.



### Just Transition & Revitalisation: A New EU Strategy for Rural Areas | Policy Brief

How can EU actions support the revitalisation of rural areas? How can EU institutions put rural and remote areas at the centre stage of the just transition? This Policy Brief, authored by Robin Huguenot-Noël and Cristina Vaquero Piñeiro, contributes to the reflection launched by the Commission's work towards a "Long-term Vision for the EU's Rural Areas" and aims at supporting and enriching the EU agenda promoting the revitalisation of rural and remote areas.

After reviewing some of the potential risks facing the EU's strategy for rural areas as it stands, the authors of this report put forward concrete policy and governance recommendations to make rural development in the EU both environmentally and socially sustainable. The recommendations build on exchanges with experts and identify 'best practices' that can be scaled up and replicated to bolster sustainable agriculture and champion the energy transition, attract investment, nurture innovation systems, promote community ownership, and boost social vitality.



### A Job Guarantee for Europe | Policy Brief

How can the EU create employment that reflects society's needs? As Europe faces structural unemployment, this policy brief by MEP Aurore Lalucq and Pavlina Tcherneva proposes the establishment of a public Job Guarantee for job creation in areas of unmet social need, prioritising care and environmental services. This guarantee would reduce the significant costs and deleterious effects of unemployment while providing the labour force and public sector the capacity to tackle social and environmental challenges.

The European Job Guarantee is ambitious in scope and scale, but it is also based on real-world experiences. Many direct employment programmes worldwide have provided employment to the most vulnerable. They have increased economic stability and reduced scarring effects. Moreover, evidence shows that the Job Guarantee enjoys significant public support.

The programme also serves as a powerful macroeconomic stabilising mechanism: it strongly contrasts traditional stabilisation policies, especially on the supply side, which have failed to stimulate job creation and left almost 13.5 million people unemployed in the EU. Ultimately, the job guarantee programme is an opportunity to create a transformative employment policy that provides lasting, quality employment while delivering social and environmental good.

## FEPS AT WORK: OUTREACH

# PROGRESSIVE POST FAMILY

The Progressive Post is the printed and online magazine of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies. Established in 2016, its mission is to look at trends and changes occurring at national, European and international levels through the lenses of progressives and Social Democratic values, and to offer informed and thought-provoking analyses of European debates, challenges and developments. This is done thanks to the contributions of progressive policymakers, academics, experts and activists, to whom the magazine is also addressed.

Besides the printed magazine, the Progressive Post family has other lively and flexible tools that aim to reach a wider audience using different platforms and media: the Progressive Page, FEPS Talks, the European Progressive Observatory and the Progressive Yearbook.

### Progressive Post: the magazine

The Progressive Post's main goal is to reach out to European progressives, offering them tools to understand better the debates that revolve around key European issues, while at the same time being a showcase for the wide analytical work done by and within FEPS. The magazine regularly features a special coverage and a focus, as well as dossiers, interviews and book reviews.

In the course of 2022 (issues #18, #19 and #20), the focus has been on the war in Ukraine and its consequences on the EU's defence, multilateralism, migration patterns and policies and energy policies. Different aspects of the European Union have also been analysed, from the emerging Health Union to the state of integration 30 years after Maastricht. In 2022 the Progressive Post also addressed social issues such as housing policies, migrants' integration and cohesion policies towards rural areas and international issues, such as the state of the enlargement process towards the Western Balkans.

- **Issue #18** Winter/Spring edition  
EU Defence: A turning point
- **Issue #19** Summer edition  
Europe's energy challenge. The end of oil?
- **Issue #20** Autumn/Winter edition  
Towards a healthier Union



### Progressive Page

The Progressive Page is a short opinion page (about 800 words) that is published weekly on the Progressive Post webpage and disseminated by a dedicated newsletter. It is written alternatively by FEPS authors (President, Secretary General and directors) and outstanding guest authors (renowned policymakers, academics and experts). In 2022, the Progressive Page was authored by (among the many other outstanding experts) several members of the European Parliament, like Jonas Fernandez Alvarez, Agnes Jongerius, Thijs Reuten, Andreas Schieder, personalities such as Jean-Marc Ayrault, Fabrizio Barca, Arancha Laya Gonzales, Enrico Letta, or Esther Lynch. In 2022, we published 44 Progressive Pages tackling a wide range of issues from the war in Ukraine to the minimum wage, from the Green Deal to the cost-of-life crisis, from abortion to defence, from the rule-of-law to the energy crisis.



### FEPS Talks

The Progressive Post tries to appeal also to those who have less time to read, but some time to listen to interesting and stimulating conversations, while they drive, take a bus or do some jogging. FEPS Talks are podcasts of 20-25 minutes, each featuring a dialogue between the FEPS Secretary General or FEPS Policy Analysts and prominent progressive policymakers, members of the academia or civil society. In 2022, FEPS recorded 15 podcasts, with outstanding European and international personalities such as Anneliese Dodds, Chair of the British Labour Party, Cedric Wermuth, Co-Chair of the Swiss Socialist Party, Stefan Füle, Former EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement, Mohammed Chahim, Vice President of the S&D Group, and Jess Philips, Labour MP for Birmingham and Shadow Minister.



### European Progressive Observatory

The European Progressive Observatory (EPO) aims to cover elections in Europe and key elections elsewhere. In the course of 2022, EPO has offered its readers a sharp and timely analysis of elections in Portugal, Malta, Hungary, Slovenia, France, Sweden, Italy, Latvia, Bulgaria and Denmark. EPO articles are published on the Progressive Post website and disseminated via a dedicated newsletter.

## FEPS AT WORK: HIGHLIGHTS

# FEPS PRIMERS

FEPS started a new series of publications designed with an educational purpose and it became a prominent tool in the new FEPS Training Strategy. FEPS Primers stand for opening up towards new audiences and also for conquering space on the market.

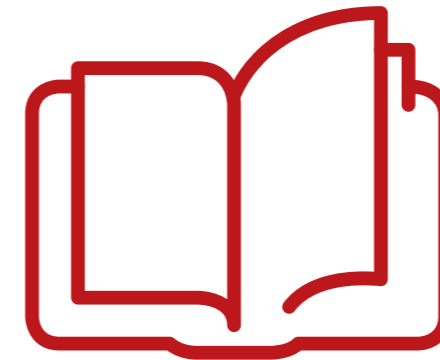
The two first primers: *The Progressive Potential of the European Union*, by Richard Corbett, and *The EU and gender equality*, by Agnès Hubert, were presented in the FEPS Annual Autumn Academy 2020 and published in Spring 2021. In FEPS AAA 2021, FEPS introduced the 3rd book of this series: *Climate progress in the EU and the world*, by Stephen Minas, and the handbook *Charting a Path Toward Making Trade Work for All*, by Arancha González Laya and Yanis Bourgeois. Both volumes will be launched in Spring 2022.

### The EU and gender equality

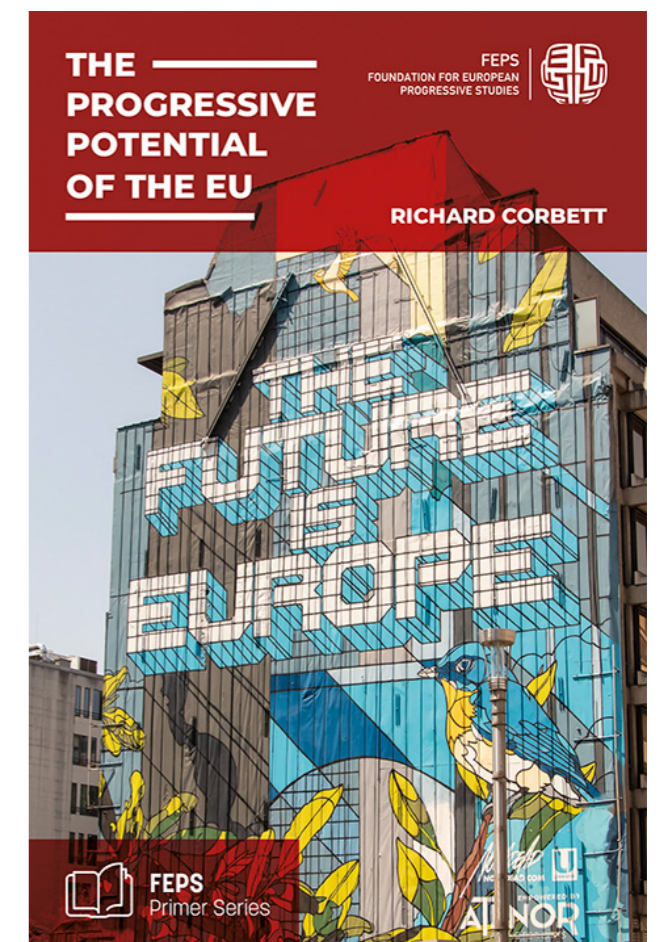
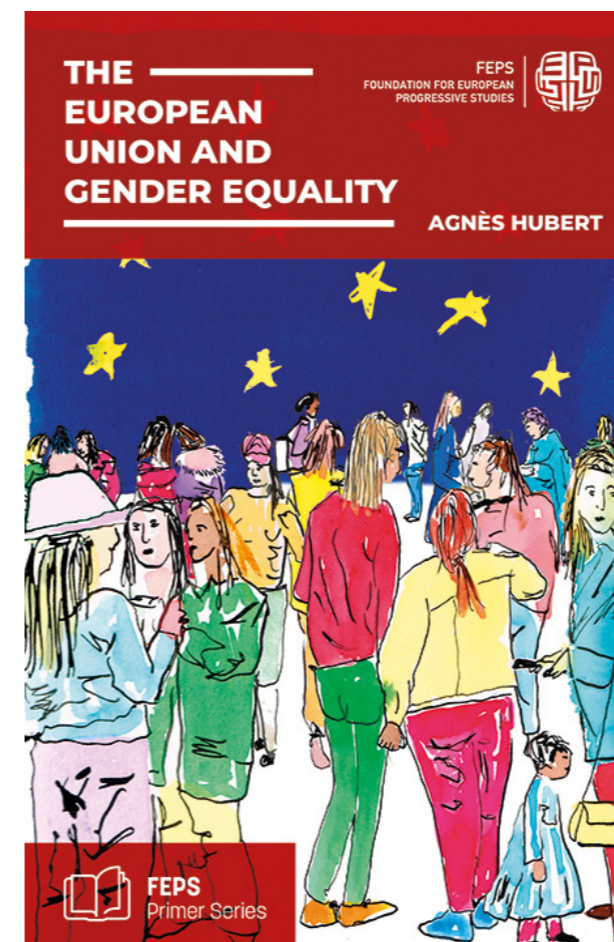
In this second volume of the FEPS Primers Series, Agnès Hubert gives a detailed progressive overview of the history of gender equality in the EU, feminist policies, key actors, institutions, the cooperation of women's networks and organisations, the efforts, obstacles and occasional setbacks on the way to a more equal EU. It highlights the main milestones along the way, from equal pay to protection against gender-based violence, from the first legislative measures to the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on gender equality.

### The progressive potential of the EU

In the first volume of the FEPS Primers Series, Richard Corbett offers a comprehensive look at the history of the EU, its main policies, institutions, functioning and decision-making structures. It takes a look at areas worthy of reform, lists important centre-left figures in the EU's founding and development, and the most important terms of EU jargon.



# FEPS Primer Series



## FEPS AT WORK: HIGHLIGHTS

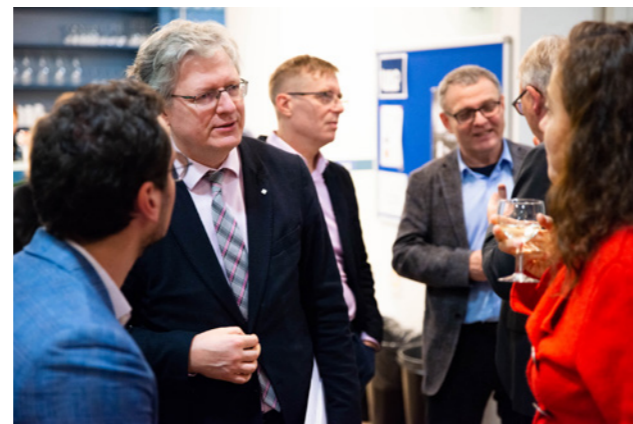
# CALL TO EUROPE – PRAGUE EDITION

### ADDRESSING THE CRISES: COSTS, COVID-19, CLIMATE AND CONFLICT

On 28 November, FEPS, the Masarykova Demokratická Akademie, and the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung organised the Call to Europe Conference in Prague. We brought together current and former progressive policymakers, academic experts, and activists to discuss not only the current state of play for Social Europe but also how European social and economic policy should be shaped moving forward so that all Europeans can have a decent quality of life.

A panel of experts debated how to address the crisis of living costs we currently face. The discussion was followed by a keynote speech from EU Commissioner for Jobs and Social Rights, Nicolas Schmit. During the event, László Andor, FEPS Secretary General, presented his latest book *Europe's social integration*. It examines the four factors that have challenged the fate of welfare states and social standards in Europe: neoliberal globalisation, monetary union, Eastern enlargement and digitalisation.

Before the public conference, FEPS member foundations were invited to join a meeting during which a discussion on Social Democracy in central and Eastern Europe took place. This was followed by a closed-door roundtable on the energy crisis in the afternoon.



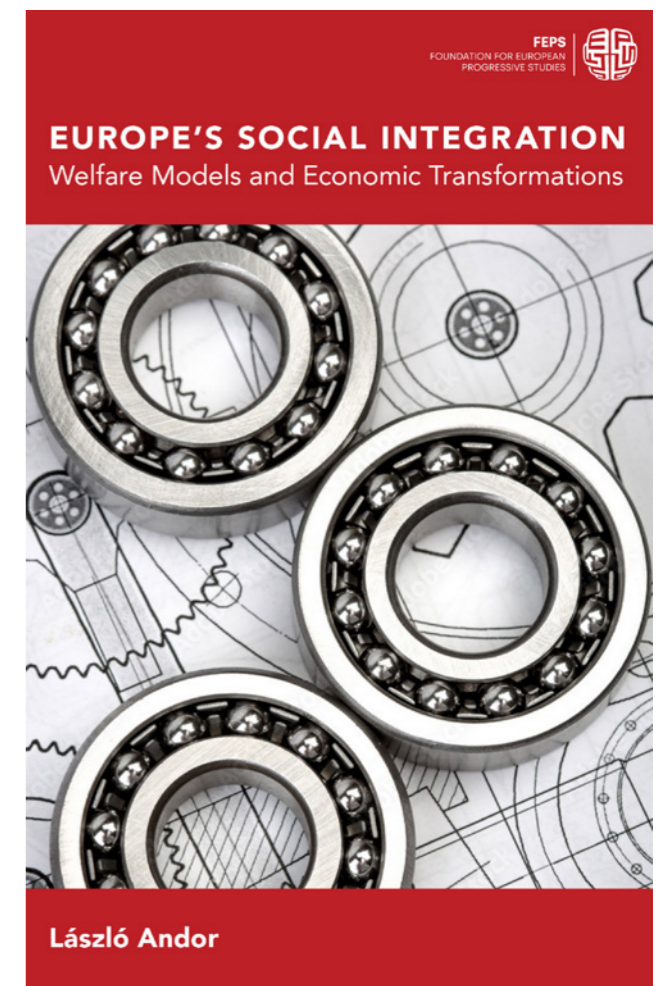
# BOOK *EUROPE'S SOCIAL INTEGRATION*

The 'European social model' has been the subject of many diverse debates, often doubting its very existence or announcing the end of such a model. In October 2022 FEPS, in association with the London Publishing Partnership, published the book *Europe's social integration. Welfare models and economic transformations*, written by FEPS Secretary General, László Andor. The book examines the four factors that have challenged the fate of welfare states and social standards in Europe: neoliberal globalisation, the monetary union, Eastern enlargement and Digitalization.

Andor's book offers both first-rate analysis and imaginative ideas for the reforms needed to cope with these four factors. He leads us through the 'ups' of post-World War II policy design in the West, and the bold initiatives for a 'Social Europe' by Jacques Delors, before going on to examine the EU-wide 'downs' due to cultural neo-conservatism, the ill-conceived free market experiment in the East and the trajectory of EU macro governance.

Having taken stock of some of the main threats to Europe's social models, the book delivers an explanation of how the EU social dimension was strengthened in response to two recent crises: first, the 2009 great recession and the subsequent eurozone crisis, and more recently the Covid-19 pandemic.

It appears that major economic transformations and, in particular, the risk of intra-EU imbalances, divergence and polarisation drive social policy integration among European countries. The author highlights where common EU policy can be part of the solution, rather than part of the problem – which had been too often the case in the past.



## FEPS AT WORK: HIGHLIGHTS

# REVIEW MEETING

"FROM WAR TO RECONSTRUCTION:  
TOWARDS A NEW EASTERN POLICY OF THE  
EUROPEAN UNION"

*With Josep Borrell, high Representative of the European Union  
for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.  
Vice President of the European Commission*

On 23 May 2022, right after the full invasion of Ukraine by Russia, FEPS organised a timely expert meeting on the topic of the war with the participation of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/ Vice President of the European Commission for A Stronger Europe in the World, Josep Borrell. High-level experts, activists and policymakers provided inputs to FEPS work and progressive policymaking in the EU, including in the areas of Eastern policy, EU-Russia relations, the role of the EU in the reconstruction of Ukraine and the changing European security landscape. The meeting was organised in two sessions. The first part of the discussion concentrated on the state of play, the poli-

cy options ahead of the EU, including the dynamics of sanctions, and the prospects for peace. Participants discussed the causes and developments of the conflict and the challenges and prospects for ceasefire and peace negotiations. Looking forward, the second part of the meeting covered aspects of the future reconstruction of Ukraine, including how to promote a deeper security integration in the EU and what a new EU Eastern policy could look like.

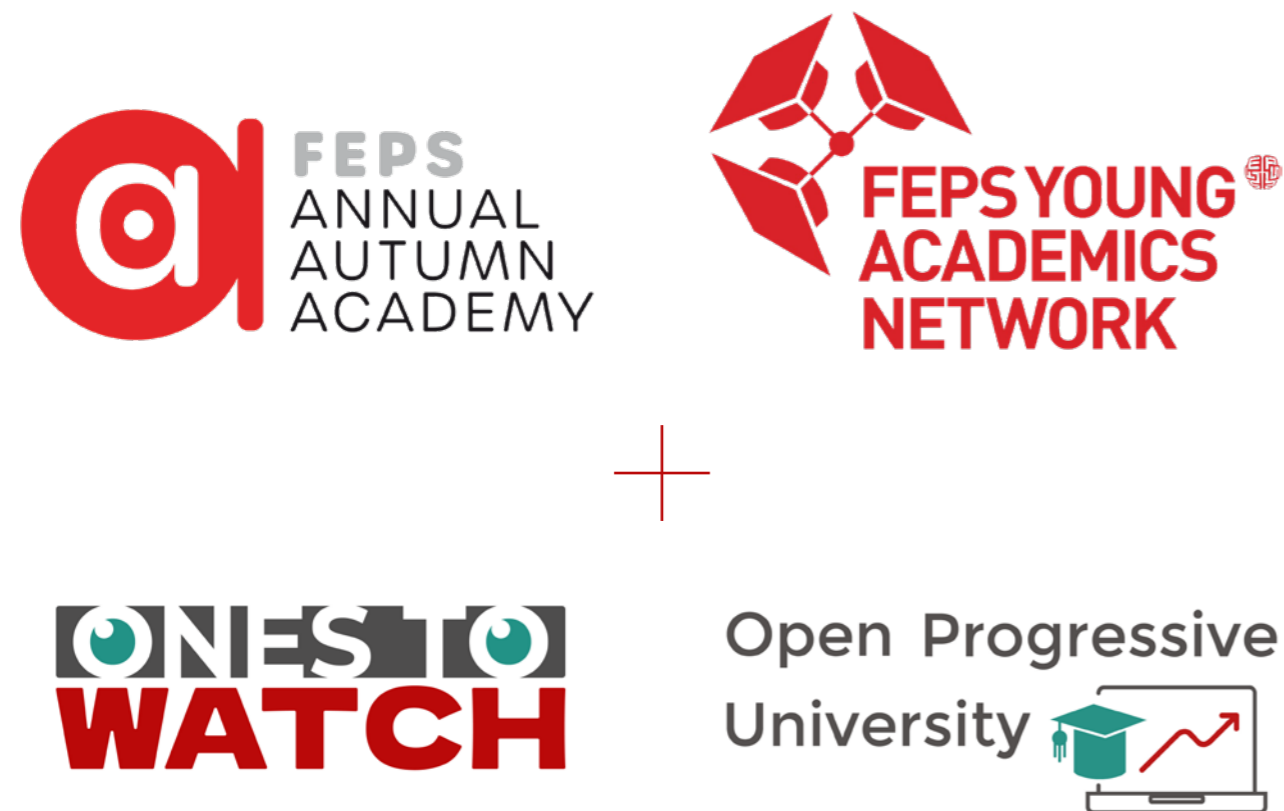


# FEPS AT WORK: TRAINING

In January 2022, the FEPS bureau approved the Training Strategy. This ambitious outline was consolidated in an inclusive and participatory process, within which FEPS governing bodies, FEPS members, and experts working on civic education were consulted. The process took almost two years, and its leading question was how to put forward an ambitious, coherent programme that would cater to diverse audiences within the progressive movement and would also be of added value to the existing, well-established training activities.

Therefore, the FEPS Training Strategy was drafted to serve as a compass for all the initiatives within the organisation aiming to provide opportunities for education, learning, training, skills, and competence development. It was designed to rely on FEPS'

strengths, such as the accumulated knowledge about European affairs, expertise, networks and publications. Consequently, the strategy would rest upon three building blocks: (1) empowering – knowledge, (2) equipping – skills, (3) enabling – networks. And within those, the most prominent activities would encompass: (a first ever!) an Open Progressive University, an Annual Autumn Academy, a Ones to Watch Programme, the FEPS Young Academics Programme, schools, and academies organised with the member foundations, a training toolkit, and series of publications (including so-called 'primers').



## CASE 1 // ANNUAL AUTUMN ACADEMY

Since its inception in 2019, the FEPS Annual Autumn Academy (FEPS AAA) has evolved, becoming a flagship training activity and a strong reference point within the FEPS Training Strategy. FEPS AAA is eagerly awaited every year as the event that marks the opening of a new political season. Through good practice, a unique FEPS AAA methodology has been consolidated, which, as László Andor, FEPS Secretary General, says "allows to teach effectively in three days a content equal to what is provided within an academic semester". The ambition is always to accelerate and reach new levels of excellence, and the 4th edition was no exception. Its' programme was developed in a way to build on a specific EU momentum (the European Youth Year). Consequently, the leading title was 'For a Youthful European Future', referring to a junction of two reflections – on the further prospects of European integration on one side, and on the other on the dreams that young generations of Europeans cherish, and the expectations they have concerning the EU. This approach meant that the FEPS AAA 2022 looked at the European youth policies from the perspective of their role in making the Union rise to

its historical promise of providing peace, stability, and prosperity on the continent and beyond. The methodology was focused on balancing between inputs and interactive moments, as also a great effort went into making the programme exceptional, and innovative and providing enough space for networking. To ensure the latter, FEPS contacted the FEPS members with an open invitation to support the search for this year's nominees – who would be the most promising, young progressive politicians from across the Union. With the network's support, it was possible to welcome almost 50 of them for the four days in Brussels (23–26 October 2022). Furthermore, FEPS had the privilege to count again on the invaluable support of the sister organisations (S&D Group, Workers' Group at the EESC, PES, PES in CoR and YES).







## CASE 2 // ONES TO WATCH

The 'Ones to Watch' (O2W) programme was created in 2016 and is a unique initiative directed towards already elected politicians from the region of Central and Eastern Europe. Among the participants are those who are 30-45 years of age and who by the nominating FEPS member foundations are considered 'the most promising'. The community of O2W programme encompasses 80 members, 40 of whom are currently active and joined the two seminars that took place in 2022 in Warsaw in March (organised with the generous support of Amicus Europae and Centrum im. Ignacego Daszynskiego), and in Bratislava in October (hosted by ProForum with the support of the Prague-Bratislava office of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung). This was an important re-launch of the in-person sessions, which during the launch of the cycle in 2020-2021 were replaced by online seminars due to the pandemic. Traditionally, per design, each of the O2W sessions is meant to enable learning from one another, to discuss the EU affairs from the specific regional perspective, and to build strong connections among the new generation of Progressives in the region. The spring

session in Warsaw was taking place instantly after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which is also why the meetings were strongly focused on the consequences of the attack (for the EU neighbourhood and security policies), as also on the situation of the Ukrainian refugees. The political debates with experts, among others, saw a session hosted by Krzysztof Gawkowski, Chair of the Lewica Parliamentary Club in the Sejm. Next to this, there was also an exceptional and formative experience of visiting the district of Bielany upon the invitation of its Mayor, Grzegorz Pietruczuk, whose team not only explained what had been done to help people arriving from Ukraine, but also showed the refuge dormitories and temporary housing, the first aid points and the dispatch centres. The fall session in Bratislava was focused on the rise of right-wing extremism in Europe, and featured several debates on the general trends, the state of democracy and more particularly political situation in Slovakia. The O2W participants paid respects to the victims of fascism, visiting the museum established on the site of a former concentration camp.



## CASE 3 // FEPS YOUNG ACADEMICS NETWORK

FEPS Young Academics Network (FEPS YAN) is a flagship FEPS initiative. Since it was established in 2009 by FEPS and the Renner Institut, has been a consolidated hub for progressive PhD candidates and post-doc scholars. The policy studies corresponding to the 7th cycle were published in January 2022, a moment that also saw the launch of a call for new members for the subsequent cycle. The response was overwhelming, and then the personal interviews with the candidates and the selection process took place between March and June. The first seminar was organised in Vienna, on the premises of Renner Institut, from 11-14 July 2022. The two days discussion on the individual abstracts led to the form and consolidation of six different working groups: EU Fiscal Policy, Inequalities and Democracy, Ecosocialism, Digital Democracy, Migration and Labour, and Progressive Geopolitics. The new cycle was designed to include some of the successful items of the FEPS YAN methodology, which featured, among others, the mentorship experience. For this new round, the academic mentors include: Dimitris Tsarouhas, Associate Professor at Bilkent University, Turkey and Adjunct Professor at George Washington University; Kuba Jablonowski, Research Fellow and Lecturer at the University of Exeter; Carlo D'Ippoliti Associate professor at the Sapienza University of Rome; Eunice Goes, Professor at Richmond University, The American International University in London and Thomas M. Fröhlich, Research Fellow at King's College London. While at the same time, there

is also a great lineup of political mentors from among S&D MEPs, helping each group to link the content of the study with the policy proposals: Jonás Fernández, Evin Incir, Alex Agius Saliba, Gaby Bischoff, Andreas Schieder, Niels Fuglsang. With their outstanding help, the year 2022 finished seeing the WGs finalising the abstracts, which will be base for the papers on which the work would follow in 2023.

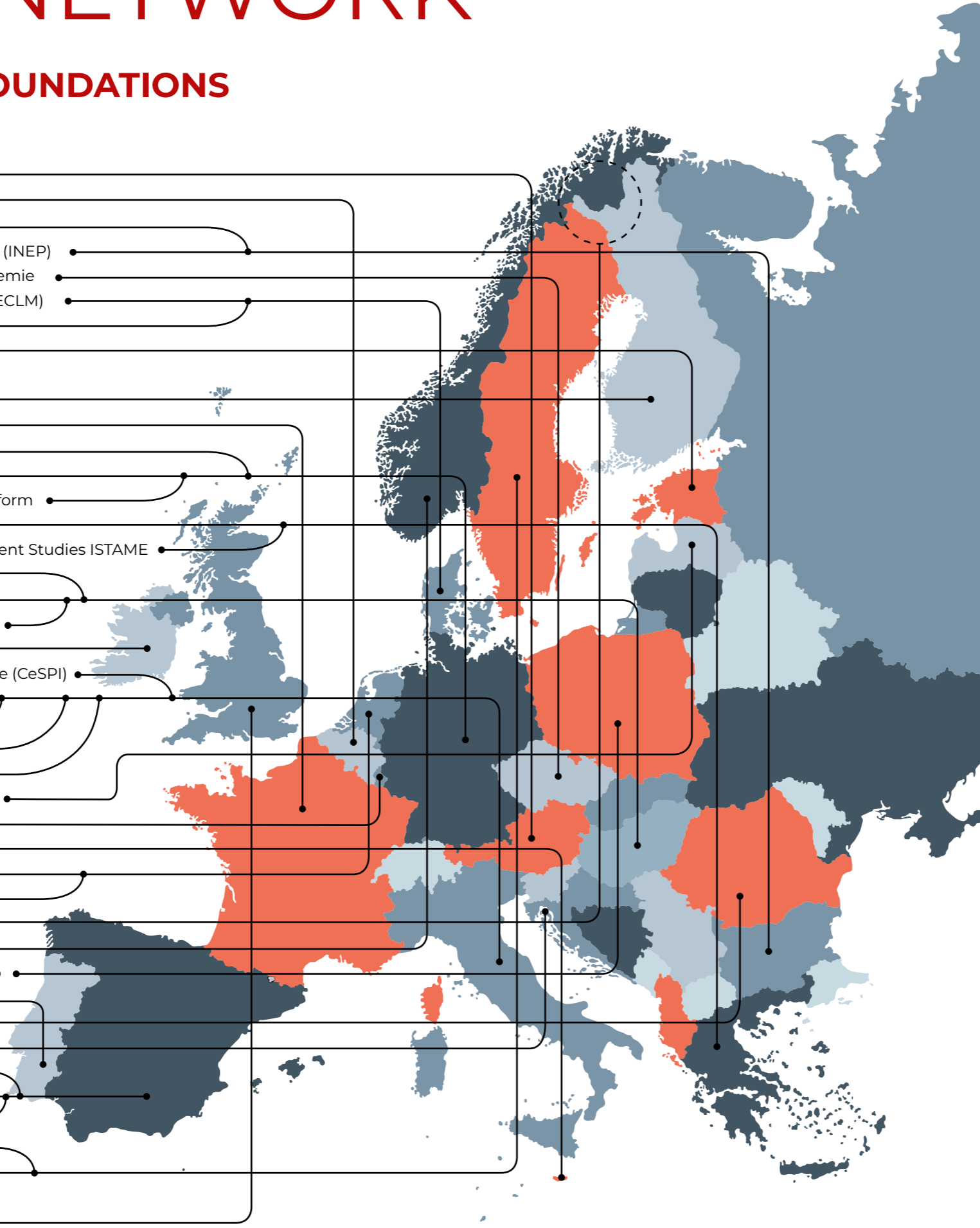




# FEPS NETWORK

## NATIONAL POLITICAL FOUNDATIONS AND THINK TANKS

- AUSTRIA** Karl Renner Institut
- BELGIUM** Institut Emile Vandervelde
- BULGARIA** Institute for Social Integration
- BULGARIA** Institute for New Economic Progress (INEP)
- CZECH REPUBLIC** Masarykova Demokraticka Akademie
- DENMARK** Arbejderbevaegelsens Erhvervsrad (ECLM)
- DENMARK** Cevea
- ESTONIA** Johannes Mihkelson Centre
- EU** SOLIDAR Foundation
- FINLAND** Kalevi Sorsa Säätiö
- FRANCE** Fondation Jean-Jaurès
- GERMANY** Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
- GERMANY** DPZ (Das Progressive Zentrum)
- GERMANY** Humboldt Viadrina Governance Platform
- GREECE** TO DIKTIO
- GREECE** Institute for Strategic and Development Studies ISTANCE
- HUNGARY** Policy Solutions
- HUNGARY** Tancsics Mihaly Alapitvány
- HUNGARY** Institute for Social Democracy (ISD)
- IRELAND** TASC Europe
- ITALY** Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale (CeSPI)
- ITALY** Fondazione Socialismo
- ITALY** Fondazione Gramsci
- ITALY** Fondazione Italianieuropei
- ITALY** Fondazione Pietro Nenni
- LATVIA** Freedom and Solidarity Foundation
- LUXEMBOURG** Fondation Robert Krieps
- MALTA** Fondazzjoni Ideat
- NETHERLANDS** Foundation Max Van Der Stoel
- NETHERLANDS** Wiardi Beckman Stichting
- NORDIC COUNCIL** SAMAK
- NORWAY** Tankesmien Agenda
- POLAND** Centrum im. Ignacego Daszyńskiego
- PORTUGAL** ResPublica
- ROMANIA** Foundation for a Democratic Left
- SLOVENIA** Progresiva
- SPAIN** Fundación Felipe González
- SPAIN** Fundació Rafael Campalans
- SPAIN** Fundación Pablo Iglesias
- SWEDEN** Tankesmedja Tiden
- SWEDEN** Olof Palme International Centre
- UNITED KINGDOM** Progressive Britain
- UNITED KINGDOM** The Fabian Society



## OBSERVER NATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

- ALBANIA** / Foundation Qemal Stafa (FQS)
- AUSTRALIA** / Chifley Research Centre
- CANADA** / Broadbent Institute
- CHILE** / Salvador Allende Foundation
- CROATIA** / Novo Drustvo
- CROATIA** / CEE Network for Gender Issues
- GREECE** / Institute for the Social Democracy – InSocial
- HUNGARY** / Foundation for a New Republic
- ISRAEL** / The Macro Center for Political Economics
- ITALY** / Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI)
- ITALY** / Fondazione Di Vittorio
- REPUBLIC OF NORTHERN MACEDONIA** / Progress Institute
- MEXICO** / Foundation of Progressive Political, Economic and Social Studies
- NETHERLANDS** / European Forum
- NEW ZEALAND** / The Helen Clark Foundation
- PORTUGAL** / Fundação Mário Soares e Maria Barroso
- SERBIA** / Center for Democracy Foundation
- SERBIA** / Democratic Dialogue Network
- SLOVAKIA** / Progressive Forum – Proforum
- SWITZERLAND** / Anny Klawa Morf Stiftung
- TURKEY** / SODEV Sosyal Demokrasi Vakfi
- TURKEY** / Progressive Thought Institute
- UNITED KINGDOM** / Greenwich Political Economy Research Centre (GPERC)
- UNITED KINGDOM** / Sheffield Political Economy Research Institute (SPERI)
- UNITED KINGDOM** / Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR)
- UNITED STATES** / Centre for American Progress (CAP)

## EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

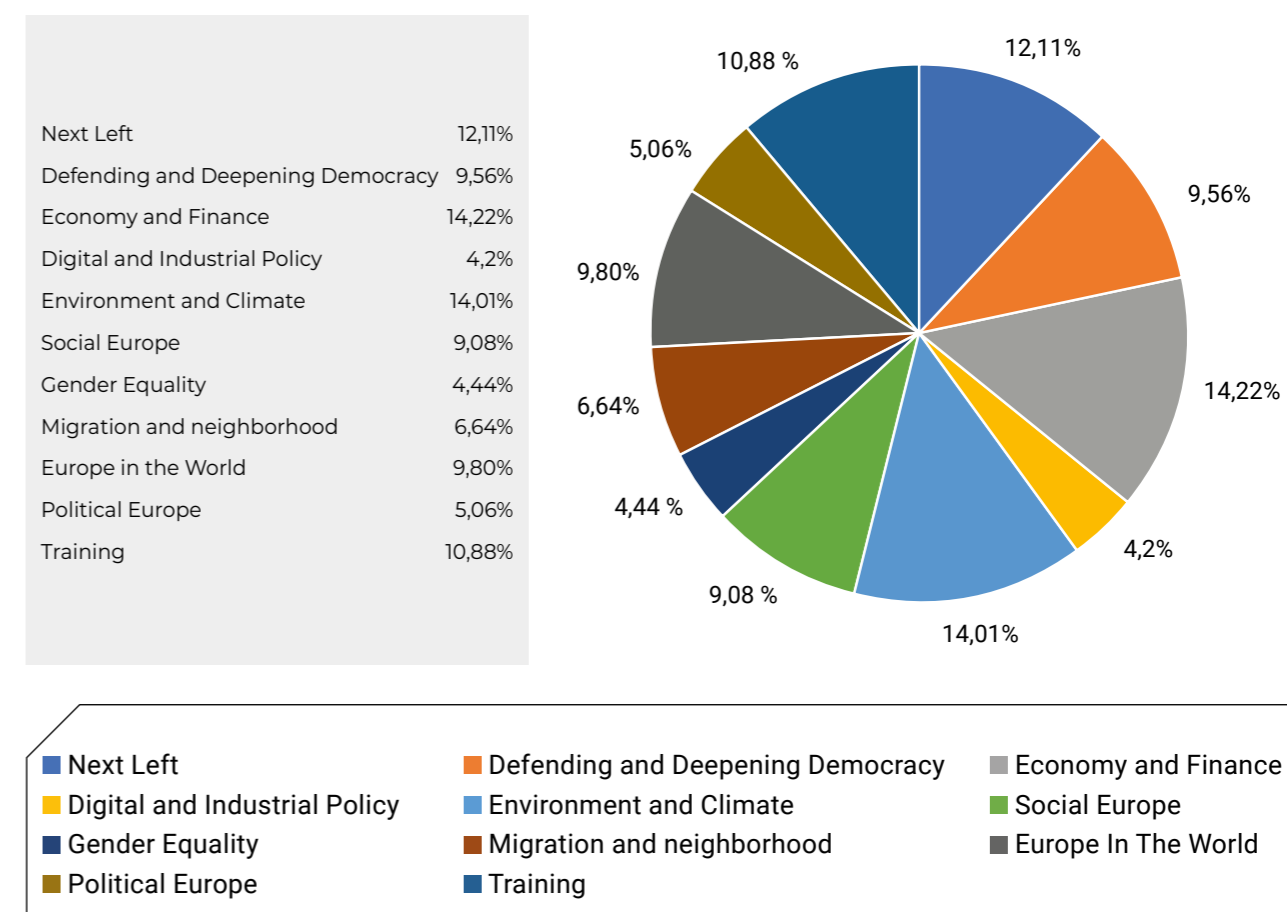
- EU** / Party of European Socialists
- EU** / S&D Group in the European Parliament
- EU** / PES Group in the Committee of the Regions
- EU** / PES Women
- EU** / YES - Young European Socialists

# FEPS AT WORK: FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

COSTS		
Reimbursable costs	Budget	Actual
<b>A.1: Personnel costs</b>	<b>2 374 914</b>	<b>2 708 815,05</b>
1. Salaries	2 137 423	2 249 226,17
2. Contributions	118 746	237 934,50
3. Professional training	29 686	8 900,38
4. Staff missions expenses	29 686	14 354,70
5. Other personnel costs	59 373	198 399,30
<b>A.2: Infrastructure and operating costs</b>	<b>664 095</b>	<b>767 537,80</b>
1. Rent, charges and maintenance costs	200 284	305 748,18
2. Costs relating to installation, operation and maintenance of equipment	229 233	137 390,53
3. Depreciation of movable and immovable property	175 206	250 654,55
4. Stationery and office supplies	17 812	30 545,44
5. Postal and telecommunications charges	35 624	43 199,10
6. Printing, translation and reproduction costs	2 375	0,00
7. Other infrastructure costs	3 562	0,00
<b>A.3: Administrative costs</b>	<b>1 474 020</b>	<b>1 176 344,94</b>
1. Documentation costs (newspapers, press agencies, databases)	8 906	8 056,09
2. Costs of studies and research	1 420 585	1 125 741,68
3. Legal costs	26 718	28 632,17
4. Accounting and audit costs	14 843	13 915,00
5. Support to third parties	2 969	0,00
6. Miscellaneous administrative costs	0	0,00
<b>A.4: Meetings and representation costs</b>	<b>1 283 034</b>	<b>1 347 357,94</b>
1. Costs of meetings	1 227 223	1 295 273,62
2. Participation in seminars and conferences	47 498	52 084,32
3. Representation costs	2 375	0,00
4. Costs of invitations	2 375	0,00
5. Other meeting-related costs	3 562	0,00
<b>A.5: Information and publication costs</b>	<b>260 000</b>	<b>241 032,31</b>
1. Publication costs	232 461	179 526,23
2. Creation and operation of Internet sites	2 504	10 725,11
3. Publicity costs	20 028	7 282,37
4. Communications equipment (gadgets)	5 007	395,07
5. Seminar and exhibitions	0	0,00
6. Other information-related costs	0	43 103,53
<b>A.6. Allocation to "Provision to cover eligible costs of the first quarter of year N"</b>		<b>337 370,00</b>
<b>A. TOTAL ELIGIBLE COSTS</b>	<b>6 056 064</b>	<b>6 580 902,04</b>
<b>Ineligible costs</b>		
1. Provisions		
2. Exchange losses		0,00
3. Doubtful claims on third parties		14 095,47
4. Contributions in kind		0,00
5.1 Expenditure from previous years		8 915,23
5.2 Financial charges		1 869,45
<b>B. TOTAL INELIGIBLE COSTS</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>24 880,15</b>
<b>C. TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>6 056 064</b>	<b>6 603 338,19</b>

REVENUE		
	Budget	Actual
<b>D.1. Dissolution of "Provision to cover eligible costs of the first quarter of year N"</b>	<b>1304000</b>	<b>1 319 040,00</b>
<b>D.2. European Parliament funding</b>	<b>4 996 447,00</b>	<b>4 996 447,00</b>
<b>D.3. Membership fees</b>	<b>15 000,00</b>	<b>41 000,00</b>
3.1 from member foundations	15 000,00	41 000,00
3.2 from individual members		
<b>D.4 Donations</b>	<b>0,00</b>	<b>26 413,40</b>
4.1 above 500 EUR		26 413,40
<b>D.5 Other own resources</b>	<b>247 971,00</b>	<b>546 212,83</b>
Support from members of FEPS towards activities	247 971,00	542 061,90
Non-operating revenue		4 150,93
Reserve accumulated in the previous years		
D.6. Interest from pre-financing		
D.7. Contributions in kind		
<b>D. TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>6 563 418,00</b>	<b>6 929 113,23</b>
E. profit/loss (D-C)	507 353,80	325 775,04
F. Allocation of own resources to the reserve account		325 775,04
G. Profit/loss for verifying compliance with the no-profit rule (E-F)		0,00

## Activities by thematic blocks





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