

**“The EPP’s path forward: a Europe of opportunity and strength”**

*Adopted by the EPP Congress of 30 April 2025 in Valencia, Spain*

**I. EPP in the lead**

The EPP is leading Europe. We are the largest group in the European Parliament; we lead the European Commission with President von der Leyen and fourteen commissioners; and we have twelve leaders at the Council table, with further expansion on the way. People vote for a centre-right, pro-European, forward-thinking and pragmatic Europe. They vote for the EPP. This powerful position comes with great responsibilities.

Our success comes from listening to citizens, building a programme they trust and fighting for a lead candidate who embodies that vision. As a result, our Bucharest Manifesto now shapes the Commission’s work programme. From boosting economic competitiveness to strengthening security to protect freedom and democracy and to defend our values, we are turning promises into action: appointing the first-ever commissioner for defence, promoting technological neutrality, making Europe competitive, and fighting illegal migration with a new Return Regulation and a Mediterranean Pact. We are not just the party of bold ideas; we get things done.

Our success comes also from a lively democracy within our party. Our EPP congresses make the key decisions, as the Bucharest Manifesto shows, and reflect the dedication of our members at every level. EPP summits ensure leader-level coordination before European Council meetings, aligning strategy and maintaining unity ahead of crucial decisions. Our EPP ministerial meetings and our parliamentary groups coordinate and shape the EU legislative process. Our political assemblies set important initiatives and keep the party dynamic, while leaders’ retreats shape our long-term vision and set the agenda, reinforcing the EPP’s role as the party of leadership and direction. We show that we are a family, and that the EPP’s party democracy is alive and strong.

**II. Our compass**

To navigate the challenging times we live in, we need a strong political compass. As the EPP, we are rooted in the Christian and democratic values that have shaped Europe for generations. We stand for unity, responsibility, respect for each individual and human dignity, believing that true leadership builds a better future for all, not just for some. Humanism, personalism and Christian social teaching protect each person’s dignity in an era of technological disruption and growing societal divisions. We stick to families and communities against rising isolation. Subsidiarity drives our political action because every great battle is won from the ground up, not from the top down.

While populists misuse Christian symbols to sow division, we live our Christian values. While technocrats dictate from the top, we keep people at the centre, listening to their concerns and prioritising their needs. While others focus on what they liked in the past or dislike in the present, we are committed to shaping the future. We reject the politics of division and blame. We believe that the key to addressing Europe's most pressing challenges lies not in describing problems, but in delivering real solutions. That is why we remain committed to practical, common-sense approaches, not ideological rhetoric. We also present credible leaders people can trust. In a world in turmoil, trust is the most valuable currency in our societies.

### **III. We are driving Europe's future**

The future of Europe does not lie in one ideological or rhetoric solution that fits all and ends up being useless. It lies in bringing together diverse priorities: balancing prosperity with fairness, security with openness, and climate protection with competitiveness. The EPP is the bridge builder.

We are committed to making Europe safe from both internal and external threats. In a time of war on European soil and rising authoritarian powers, security is the foundation of our European way of life. We will strengthen Europe's defence capabilities, both within NATO and through a European Defence Union, as far as the national security and defence policies of Member States allow.

We will ensure the resources and strategic vision to respond to emerging threats. This entails enhancing Member States' defence capabilities, creating a single defence market and launching projects like a joint missile- and drone-defence shield, satellite reconnaissance, a cyber-defence brigade and closer cooperation through initiatives like an EU rapid-deployment force. A true European Defence Union is the historic task of our generation. To further strengthen our security and our global role, Europe must also speak with one voice on foreign policy. We must continue to support Ukraine against Russian aggression and prioritise Enlargement as a strategic tool to strengthen our Union, advancing the EU accession paths of Ukraine, Moldova and the Western Balkans.

Security also means tackling crime and illegal migration. We will strengthen border security, enhance cooperation among law enforcement agencies, fight cross-border crime and ensure migration is managed in a way that prioritises safety and the rule of law while also protecting the rights and dignity of those seeking refuge. We will continue to promote policies which will tackle demographic challenges across Europe.

The promise of Europe is one of prosperity and opportunity, and we are committed to upholding it. To secure its future, Europe must regain its economic strength and remain a global leader. As the largest single market in the world, the EU will protect its producers, consumers, entrepreneurs, farmers and workers from unfair competition. We will create an environment where SMEs can thrive, reducing red tape in order to foster growth, and a competitive industrial policy to support innovation in key sectors like AI, biotech and traditional industries. For example, we envision creating a European equivalent of CERN for AI, to lead the global AI revolution. At the same time, we will ensure climate protection by balancing innovation and

industry, establishing a model that leads the way for the rest of the world. We also want to increase trade with partners who share our commitment to a rules-based world order. As Christian democrats, we believe Europe thrives as a social market economy, balancing free markets with social responsibility. Our social market economy ensures inclusive growth, promotes sustainable development and guarantees social fairness. We will also work to reinforce health and social security systems, ensuring all Europeans have access to quality healthcare and protection. For Europe to succeed, every region, village and community must thrive. As the EPP, we take pride in being the party with the largest number of mayors, governors and local administrators. We are committed to bridging the gap between urban and rural areas through innovation – turning brain drain into brain gain. We are committed to continuing our efforts to reduce disparities between regions and Member States through our Cohesion Policy and to building a Europe where no one is forced to leave their home in search of opportunity. We stand for freedom of movement, but also for the freedom to build a future at home.

When you walk through a European city – with its centuries-old heritage, lively cafés and rich traditions – you immediately sense a unique way of life shaped by centuries of culture, values and identity. Our European way of life is more than just a reflection of our past; it guides the decisions we make and the priorities we set for the future. Freedom, democracy, rule of law, diversity with equal opportunities for all, not having a death penalty, the social market economy, ecological responsibility – all this the European way of life. These basic principles give us the confidence that Europe can withstand turmoil, continue to progress and grow ever more united. We not only live by these values; we offer them as a model for others to follow.

At our last EPP congress in Bucharest in March 2024, before the European elections, we promised to make Europe a safe and secure place for its people – a home that can weather both good and bad times, offering freedom and opportunity for all. The people of Europe trusted us and gave us a mandate to build a Europe that protects our planet, competes globally, keeps its citizens safe and always puts people first. In Valencia, we are proud to say we are keeping that promise and are ready to lead Europe in the years to come.