

"Timișoara - Declaration" by KOLPING EUROPA on the elections to the European Parliament from 6 to 9 June 2024

KOLPING EUROPA is a Catholic social organisation with more than 200,000 members in 20 European countries. As a democratic and intergenerational member organisation, KOLPING EUROPA unites national associations in EU member states, EU accession candidates (Albania, Serbia, Republic of Moldova, Ukraine) and in an EU candidate country (Kosovo). The organisation's commitment to European policy is also reflected in its 50-year participatory status with the Council of Europe. In connection with the 2024 elections to the European Parliament, KOLPING EUROPA is calling for a democratic, solidary and social Europe.

Kolping stands up for a democratic Europe

The European Union must stand up for its values

The European Union must stand up for democracy, the rule of law and human rights both internally and externally. Individual national governments threaten the rule of law from within. The EU must therefore consistently implement ongoing procedures to uphold the common European values as adopted in the Lisbon Treaty.

An asylum and migration policy based on human rights is the responsibility of all member states. Legal escape routes and life-saving measures at Europe's external borders must be provided jointly and in a spirit of solidarity. Democracy, the rule of law and human rights must not be dependent on nationality.

Democracy, the rule of law, human rights and European solidarity must be defended against dictatorships and authoritarian countries.

Observe the principle of subsidiarity

The principles of subsidiarity and proportionality are enshrined in the European treaties. It is of great importance to ensure that citizen-centred regulations can also be made at local, regional or national level in the future if necessary.

Strengthening democratic forces in the EU

The European Union must work towards sustainable support for democratic civil society. At the same time, we call on all democratic MEPs to refrain from adopting extremist, nationalist and misanthropic positions. The EU peace project is currently under massive pressure from right-wing populist and extremist endeavours. It must be the goal of all of us to protect and strengthen the European promise of peace, freedom and democracy.

Strengthening the participation of EU citizens

In order to promote democratic participation within the European Union, the competences of the European Parliament in particular should be strengthened. Decision-making processes must be organised democratically and transparently. EU citizens should be better informed about opportunities for participation. The EU must be accessible and visible in the everyday lives of its citizens.

Kolping stands up for a Europe based on solidarity

The European Union must speak as one in a multipolar world

The EU's prosperity and security depend on it being united internally and speaking with one voice externally. The European states would not be able to master today's major challenges on their own.

Combating climate change and promoting environmental policy

In order to stop climate change and the destruction of the environment, the EU must work closely with all other countries in the world and set a good example. It is essential to strive for a reorganisation of climate and energy policy that is based on European responsibility and solidarity with the global South. This also includes the joint financing of measures to adapt to climate change and the development of legal regulations that recognise the climate crisis as a reason for flight.

Solidarity with Ukraine

It is essential that the EU member states present a united front towards Russia and make it clear that they stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people. In addition to military support, this also includes the promotion of Ukrainian civil society as well as protection and prospects for Ukrainian refugees in the EU.

Protecting refugees

The EU urgently needs a solidarity-based and humane refugee reception system that guarantees the rights and standards of people seeking protection across Europe. This also includes the creation of legal and safe escape routes. Letting people drown at the external borders contradicts a Europe that is founded on Christian values.

Kolping places the protection of the family at the centre of its own association's work, which is why we demand that special protection must be given to refugee families.

Promoting partnership with Africa

Solidarity must not end at Europe's external border. The EU must work towards a partnership of equals with its neighbouring continent of Africa. This includes coming to terms with its own colonial past and standing up for fair economic relations. We see a strong and effective EU supply chain law as the first step in this direction.

Kolping stands up for a social Europe

Strengthening Europe's social cohesion

Based on Catholic social teaching, the EU should not only be a common economic area, but also an area of social cohesion, which is why social rights must be strengthened.

Understanding migration as an opportunity

The European Union needs a common migration policy. A constructive migration policy is of central importance for overcoming the shortage of skilled labour in the EU. Migration and freedom of movement are seen as outstanding values within the European Union. It is also important to give people from non-EU countries uncomplicated access to the European labour markets.

Expanding the economy and the common market

The internal market, i.e. the free exchange of goods, services, people and capital, must be further expanded in order to secure the location of European companies and jobs and to promote new technologies.

Offering young people prospects

The EU must offer young people and young adults future-oriented career prospects. Youth unemployment within the European Union is still twice as high as the average unemployment rate. This makes it clear how important it is to strengthen Europe's social dimension.

We call for the EU Youth Guarantee to be strengthened and for the education and youth support programmes Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps to be further developed in line with needs in order to make them accessible to all young people. We also call for sufficient funding for young people's self-advocacy organisations and their inclusion in political processes at EU level.

The EU should be a community of peace based on common values.

Adopted at the meeting of the Executive Board of KOLPING EUROPA on 13 January 2024.

For the Executive Board of Kolping Europe

Vasyl SAVKA
Chairman

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European Praeses

Erich REISCHMANN
European Secretary

Anton SALESNY
European Representative

Kolping Europe

In 1849, the Catholic priest Adolph Kolping founded an association in Cologne for unmarried journeymen craftsmen with the aim of helping them to cope with the problems arising from the industrial revolution, which were summarised under the term "social question". From very small beginnings, Kolping International has developed into a Catholic worldwide social association in more than 60 countries with today about 9,600 local groups and more than 400,000 members worldwide. This growth has been achieved because the Kolping Society has always faced up to new social developments and circumstances in the most diverse ways and thus always contributes to the solution of the social question, both on a national and international level.

KOLPING sees itself as a Catholic social association which supports the development of the personal potential of its members in a special way, offers its members and society help in life and promotes the common good in the Christian sense through the activities of its members and groups. Kolping's work is oriented towards the whole person. He should be able to receive help and stimulation in all areas of life, but also have the opportunity to contribute with all his worries and problems, but also with his knowledge and abilities. It is precisely the close interconnectedness and interrelation between the individual areas of life that is the starting point for the Kolping Society in its service to the holistic development of the human being to approach its own work comprehensively.

From this approach, KOLPING's work focuses on the areas of work and profession, marriage and family, society and state, culture and leisure. As a democratically structured association, KOLPING sees itself as jointly responsible for the promotion of democracy and stands up for the special dignity of the human being in every phase of life and for the inalienable and inviolable human rights.

KOLPING EUROPE is a continental association of „[Kolping International](#)“. **Kolping is present in Europe in the following countries:** Albania, Germany, Italy, Kosovo, Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Switzerland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and the Ukraine. As part of a democratic and cross-general membership association, it takes on the challenges of the present and the future.

KOLPING EUROPA in - from its historical development and its programme - feels particularly committed to the idea of Europe and works intensively with the Council of Europe and the European Union or the European Parliament, whereby it has held "participatory status with the Council of Europe" (Council of Europe / Conseil de l'Europe) <https://www.coe.int/de/web/portal> in Strasbourg since 20.3.1974 as an INGO (non-governmental organisation). The Kolping Society has contributed to the European discourse in more than 50 Declarations on Europe. <https://www.kolpingwerk/Erklaerungen>

A special expression of these intensive European efforts were the one-week Europe Seminars held annually from 1979 to 2011 at the headquarters of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament in Strasbourg, which conveyed the idea of Europe to more than 2.500 leaders on the spot.

<https://www.kolping / Europaseminar> / https://www.kolpingwerk-europa.net/europa_seminar.html

Further Information:

„**Kolping Europa**“ <https://kolping-europa.eu/> und www.kolpingwerk-europa.net
<https://www.google / Kolpingwerk Europa>

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