

FOREWORD

From war to where?

FEPS presents the fourth edition of the Progressive Yearbook after a year that was dominated by a single unexpected development: Russia's invasion of Ukraine. This war has not only pushed various EU policies onto a new track, from defence to energy, but has also sent shockwaves around the rest of the world.

The first reaction to a war next door is humanitarian support to the victims. It was therefore a very obvious choice for us to nominate as the FEPS Progressive Person of the Year someone who has been a leading actor in supporting Ukrainian refugees on the ground. This is of course just one example of solidarity, which must be replicated and multiplied, in economic as well as military fields, until a comprehensive and lasting settlement is reached in this conflict.

When we look back at 2022, the consequences of the major crises that took place still need to be assessed, including those of the Covid-19 pandemic. But it is already clear that there has been a major effect on global politics, where progressives have preserved principles and developed new concepts to defend international cooperation, reform multilateral institutions, and transform the world order so that effective solutions to the common problems of our societies are now found faster than in the past. For this, the conservative barriers to progress have to be dismantled in thinking as well as in political struggles.

As always in our Progressive Yearbook, we do not only look back but also forward. We therefore asked our contributors for predictions regarding some of the critical policies of the EU (economic governance, migration, the rule of law) and also regarding some of the dynamic regions far and near (the Western Balkans, South-East Asia). In addition, we continue our series on country case studies, this time with Sweden (holding the Council presidency in the first half of 2023) and with Greece (where economic instability then gave way to political instability, with extraordinary elections being scheduled for the coming summer).

Following a positive cycle of social democratic success in 2021, the dominant trend in 2022 became a shift to the right and significant gains for the far right. However, both the Party of European Socialists and the Socialist International have elected new leaders, which have now opened a new chapter in political action – a chapter of rebuilding our global movement and sharpening our messages in order to address the key concerns of humanity, from the cost-of-living crisis and social inequalities to climate change.

Social democrats in the EU institutions are not starting 2023 from an easy position. Yet we are confident that FEPS publications, starting with the Progressive Yearbook, will contribute to fresh thinking and to revitalise political activity, paving the way for successful European Parliament elections in 2023.

László Andor, Ania Skrzypek and Hedwig Giusto