

Pittella: The EU cannot be held hostage by the CDU-CSU's electoral interestsBERNAS, Jan | 21/02/2017 | [Jobs and growth instead of austerity and recession](#), [Economic union that works for you](#), [Social rights in Europe](#) | Share it [f](#) [t](#)

On the second leg of his tour of European capitals this week, following Spain yesterday, Gianni Pittella visited Lisbon today. Accompanied by S&D vice-president Maria João Rodrigues, he met Portuguese prime minister António Costa. **Speaking following the meeting, President Pittella said:**

"Europe cannot be held hostage by the electoral interests of the CDU-CSU. We strongly reject any attempts coming from the usual, well-known hawks of austerity – Mr Schäuble in particular, though not only him – to put pressure on the president of the European Commission to turn the upcoming summit in Rome into merely a window-dressing exercise, rather than the turning point the EU so greatly needs. Europe comes first and for us preserving the autonomy and credibility of a political Commission is key for the future of the European project.

"We shared this clear stance with the Portuguese prime minister, António Costa, whose government has shown brilliant results through a clear and concrete progressive programme. We also shared with Mr Costa our call for a new progressive European platform based on five priorities: a growth- and public investment-oriented economy; a social and youth agenda; fiscal justice and a resolute policy against tax evasion; a common and shared EU migration policy; and a real defence policy.

"This is the way to relaunch the European project. This is the way to make the European progressive forces into a real and co-ordinated alternative to the right-wing parties and to the populist, anti-European and xenophobic forces."

S&D vice-president Maria João Rodrigues said:

"The S&D Group gave full support to the Portuguese prime minister to make sure that the upcoming roadmap on the future of the EU includes an ambitious reform of the Economic and Monetary Union, with the aim of restarting upward economic and social convergence across Europe. This should also include a strong European pillar of social rights in order to improve living and working conditions, and achieve broadly shared prosperity."

MEPs INVOLVED



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