



WORKERS' PARTY OF BELGIUM
PARTI DU TRAVAIL DE BELGIQUE
(PTB-PVDA)

INTERNATIONAL EDITION

 **PTB**
Les gens d'abord, pas le profit

What is the DNA of the Workers' Party of Belgium (PTB-PVDA)? Its objectives? Its principles, its values? How does the PTB organise itself to reach its objectives? This brief presentation of the PTB aims to answer these questions.

THE PARTY OF THE WORKERS

The PTB, founded in 1979, is in the first place the party of the working class, of the wage-earners. They are the fundamental force in the class struggle for reforms and for a change of society.

It is only by organizing itself that the competition within the working class can be halted. Separately, the fingers of the hand are fragile. Together, they form a fist. We want to invest in the first place in the workplace, there where the battles take place, being in the centre of today's class struggle. Because it's from there that the forces emerge that could unleash the real changes of tomorrow.



AN ACTIVE PARTY

A party active in more than 140 towns and villages and in 120 workplaces. A party active in very diverse fields. Class struggle in the factories, jobs and housing, health and the environment, education and democratic rights, the fight against racism and discrimination, international solidarity and peace.



DIVERSITY

The PTB wants to be the representative of the whole of the workers of Belgium, without distinction of sex, nationality, origin, sexual orientation or belief.

This is what a journalist remarked at the elections of October 2018:

"Doctors, jurists, managers and lawyers, yes, you may also find them among the PTB/PVDA representatives. The difference with the other parties however, is that the communists will also send supermarket cashiers, cleaners, welders, construction workers, unemployed and garbage collectors in the local councils. The social background of their new town council members is particularly diversified."

A PARTY WHERE PEOPLE FEEL AT HOME

A party of 15,000 members. A party where people feel at home, whether they are manual workers, office staff, civil servants, self-employed, unemployed, youth, intellectuals, pensioners, with special needs... A party where values such as humanism, solidarity and justice really mean something.

UNITY

The only national party of the country. In Wallonia as well as in Flanders and in Brussels. Together, we are stronger.



PETER MERTENS
PTB CHAIRMAN

RAOUL HEIDBOUW
MP AND SPOKESPERSON OF THE PTB

A MARXIST PARTY

Karl Marx is even more relevant today than two hundred years ago because capitalism is now fully developed. The 2008 crisis has reminded us of the relevance of the Marxist crises analysis. Concerning the causes but also about the way in which capitalists overcome their crises by preparing even bigger ones. The PTB bases itself on Marxism as the explanatory frame of capitalism but also as a tool to construct an alternative society. Marxism is a guide for social action and aims for a fundamental change of society. It is necessarily creative and opposed to all dogmatism.

FOR A SOCIALIST SOCIETY

The PTB is a communist party of its time. It unites all those who aspire to a socialist society, without exploitation of man by man, with a sustainable management of nature. Against the uniform stifling vision which dominates today, we need a different horizon. The climate crisis, the growing danger of war, people who flee their country, the growing tendencies of authoritarianism and militarisation of society, the tax havens and the parasitic character of monopoly capital, all this demands a global answer.

It's not about changing a detail here and there, to reform a doomed system on the margins. It concerns the future of humanity and the planet. Today we need a change of paradigm, another way of looking at the world, humankind and nature. We are convinced that a contemporary socialism, a socialism 2.0 in the 21st century, becomes not only possible, but also necessary.



WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

Internationalism is in our DNA. The PTB is part of the international communist and workers movement. It is in this general framework that we defend our own creative and contemporary interpretation of the big emancipation project that is socialism. We want to help gathering from everywhere the best experiences of class struggle in Europe and in the world. We want to help to create a real counter power to the domination of the multinationals. We want to learn and bring our contribution by exchanging and collaborating with other parties of the genuine Left.



RED IS THE NEW GREEN

The climate problem is a system problem. As long as we count on carbon taxes, on a CO2 market and on green capitalism, the battle against climate change will be destined to fail. Under the pressure of the giant energy monopolies, the parties of the system persist in fossil energy exploitation to make the economy work.

We want to change the priorities. This requires a long-term planning: the transition to renewable energy, urban heating and insulation, towns and production methods that are neutral for the climate, more public transport whilst developing employment and social justice and at the same time advancing towards socialism 2.0.



FIRM ON THE PRINCIPLES AND FLEXIBLE

In a fast changing world, we need a solid back bone. Our Marxist analysis and our commitment for socialism determine the identity of our party. At the same time, we need flexibility and openness to be connected to the reality of the people, of the workers.

CONVERGENCE

Convergence with the trade unions, the big social organisations, and with everyone who defends social progress, democratic rights, international solidarity, peace and the protection of the environment.

STREET-COUNCIL-STREET

Since 2014, the PTB has two members of the national parliament, two members of the Walloon regional parliament and four members of the Brussels regional parliament. At the 2018 local elections, we have broken through in several big and medium sized towns in all of Belgium and obtained 157 local council members and 12 members of provincial councils. Our elected members apply the principle “street-council-street”: they transmit the voice of the social, ecological, democratic and the broader cultural battles. The work of our elected members has as purpose to increase the mobilizing capacity, the organisational force, the awareness of the party and the striking power of the labour movement.

RAISING AWARENESS, ORGANIZING, MOBILIZING

Our discourse is not “We are going to solve this for you”, but rather “Take your destiny in your own hands. Become aware, organize yourself, mobilise yourself!”. Our role as a party is to help raise awareness, organize and mobilize. It is the people themselves, in the office or at school, in the factory or in the neighbourhood, who take action to impose change, whether big or small. It is through these battles that one discovers the strength of the collective.

LISTENING

Through basic party groups, the party is listening to what lives amongst the population, at the workplace, in the neighbourhood, at school... They involve the people in the decision making, with questionnaires, people’s assemblies, petitions and actions.

AN AUTHENTIC LEFT

We do not talk on the left and act on the right, as some politicians do, earning 10,000 euro a month. But we act on the left in a consistent way, with members of parliament, council members and senior staff who live with an average worker’s salary.

“He who does not live as he thinks, will start thinking as he lives.”

SOLIDAIRE

Solidaire is the magazine of PTB. Solidaire carries a marxist view on the world and develops also daily news on solidaire.org.

MEDICINE FOR THE PEOPLE



It is at the initiative of PTB that Medicine for the People has started: eleven community health centres that employ more than two hundred staff, doctors, nurses, social assistants, psychologists,

physical therapists, dieticians as well as volunteers. They provide free quality healthcare, accessible to all, in Wallonia as well as in Flanders and the Brussels region.



THE PARTY OF THE YOUTH

Youth is the future of society. They carry change within themselves. Since the foundation of the party, we have created our own youth movement so that they would have a venue of their own. A venue where to meet, to understand the world and have their first experiences to change it, to learn the collective values and solidarity. Today we have developed three youth organisations: the PIONEERS for the children, REDFOX for the adolescents and COMAC for the students.

MARIANNE, THE PTB'S WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

Marianne, the women's movement of the PTB, carries the fight against sexism and for equality between men and women. Marianne advocates the 30-hour working week, and acts against violence against women, the pay gap and hyper-flexibility at work.



ManiFiesta is the biggest solidarity festival in Belgium. Organized by the PTB magazine Solidaire and Medicine for the People, the event aims to bring together thousands of workers, trade-unionists,

progressive people of Belgium and elsewhere to discover a world as it should be.

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Youth organisations

Comac

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