

Our web interview with Dimitris Tzanakopoulos, Secretary of the Central Committee of SYRIZA-Progressive Alliance and MP of the Hellenic Parliament.

The Corona-virus has hit the EU unprepared, but in different ways and with different effects depending on the countries. Most severe were the effects on those countries whose healthcare and social systems have been emaciated by decades of austerity policies. Thus, the pandemic has increased inequalities not only inside the states but also between the Member States of the EU. This presents the parties of the radical left with a challenge and calls for a re-examination of their strategies.

The main focus of the discussions will be the impact of the pandemic on the economic, social, political, and cultural life of particular countries. We have observed that the EU's failure to address the health crisis and provide support to the most affected states has changed the way the Union is perceived in parts of Europe. To what extent and with what consequences does this apply to the countries whose parties our interviewees represent? How can the left cope with the economic and social crisis and the recession that is very likely to come in its wake? How do the left parties connect their national strategies to global problems, in particular the influx of refugees and the answers urgently required by the global environmental crisis.

Dimitris Tzanakopoulos is a lawyer with a master's degree in Philosophy of Law from the Athens Law School. Tzanakopoulos served as Youth Secretary of of Synaspismos from 2005 to 2010. In 2012 he interrupted his doctoral studies abroad and returned to Greece to take up the post of legal adviser to the leader of the opposition, Alexis Tsipras. From 2015 until end of 2016 he served as Secretary General to the Prime Minister. In November 2016, he was sworn in as Minister of State and appointed Government Spokesperson. He remained in this position until June 2019 when he was replaced in order to take part in the national elections in which he was elected as an MP with Syriza-Progressive Alliance in Athens. After the elections of 7 July 2019, he took up the position of parliamentary representative of Syriza in which capacity he served until the 6 September 2020 when he was elected Secretary of the Central Committee of Syriza-Progressive Alliance. His writings have been published in a collective volume by the Nicos Poulantzas Institute as well as in various magazines and newspapers.

interviewed by

Walter Baier, economist in Vienna, was National Chairman of the Communist Party of Austria (KPÖ) from 1994 to 2006. He was an editor of the Austrian weekly Volksstimme and from 2007 until 2020 he has been the coordinator of the network transform! europe.

and Danai Koltsida, Greek lawyer and political scientist and currently the director of Nicos Poulantzas Institute and Vice President of transform! europe. Her scientific interests include electoral behaviour, political representation and political personnel, electoral systems, local and regional government and constitutional and political history. She is member of SYRIZA.