

SYLVIE GUILLAUME



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Interview with Sylvie Guillaume, member of the French Socialist Party, and of the Party of European Socialists.

Vice-president of the European Parliament

What are the lessons of the last European parliamentary term ?

- **Greatest success of the 2014-2019 parliamentary term (collective or personal)?**

S.G.: « As a group, the greatest success of the European Parliament has been its **political assertion** over the last few years. It took full hold of powers granted by the Lisbon Treaty and established its role as a pugnacious **co-legislator**. I was happy to be elected and re-elected vice-president of the European Parliament. It has allowed me to take our proposals to the highest level as a member of the European group of social-democrats. I found myself in charge of relations with citizens. This allowed me to work in close contact with several parliamentary information offices, and to engage fully with communication policy. We are doing everything we can to bring the Union closer to the people. »

- **Greatest failure of the 2014-2019 parliamentary term? Is there something you regret?**

S.G.: « I believe our greatest failure was the way we attempted to **reform the European asylum policy**, and more broadly the Union's **migration policy**. After the failures and selfishness of Member states during the 2015 humanitarian crisis, the European Commission was not able to articulate an ambitious reform. Its failure is now complete, as the Dublin regulation was jettisoned during the last JHA council, while other policies that had looked more promising have just been put on hold. This is a collective failure for the Union, but first and foremost it is a human tragedy involving populists striking hard with toxic narratives, VISEGRAD states turning their backs on European solidarity, and finally and above all, the thousands of people who have died in the Mediterranean sea. »

Biography

1993-2003: First secretary of the Rhône Department Federation of the Socialist Party (PS)

2001-2003: Chair of the Socialist Party's national council

2012-2014: Vice-Chair of the Socialists & Democrats Group

2014-present: Member of the European Parliament, Vice-President of the European Parliament

• Any forecast for your political group for 2019's European elections?

S.G.: « It is very difficult to predict the future. It is certain that these elections will not be simple for the Socialists and Democrats. But a little less than a year before the vote, gauging power and influence ratios between political groups is risky and could jinx the outcome! I wish for voters to be aware of our record at the European level, for our **values** to remain **cohesive**, and for our propositions to be legible. It is important considering the rise of the extremes. »

• Greatest challenges for the EU for the 2019-2024 parliamentary term?

S.G. : « Without any doubt, migration policy - which I would rather qualify as a perennial issue pertaining to **human mobility** - but also **environmental and social matters**. The question of protection will be central, in that it addresses what I would call "answering the needs of European citizens".

• What will the EU look like in 2030?

S.G.: « Depending on the abilities (or inability) of its institutions, on the **democratic solutions** they propose for regular citizens, and on how they manage to implement them in practice, the EU will be strengthened or...destroyed! An example of how catastrophic thing may get can be found across the Channel with Brexit! **Institutional evolutions** are therefore essential, along with critical political choices. Indeed, a Union on several level should not be entirely ruled out, with a central core of states cooperating on a large number of topics, while others commit to a lesser degree to common policies. All of this while continuing to respect the Union's founding values. »

« **The greatest success of the European Parliament has been its political assertion these last few years. It fully got hold of the powers invested in it by the Lisbon Treaty and managed to take the place of a pugnacious co-legislator. »**

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Interview conducted by Lucie Solem - President of EuroCité