



Adopted resolution

Our common European Ambitions A Framework for PES Action 2007-2009

The future of Europe's Member States, of the European Union, of Europe's peoples is a fundamental matter for progressive politics today.

The PES and its member parties insist on pursuing our common goals and ambitions on behalf of people all over Europe. In essence, Europe's socialists and social democrats are working for the same cause in each of our four democratic houses: local, regional, national, and European. We have decided to strengthen our cooperation within the PES, making our ultimate goal clear for all – to give people a **new connection** to social democratic political leadership and decision-making. The same, clear connection wherever we are.

Two years ago, we were entering a new and fascinating phase in Europe; the PES was ready for this new start. The PES was taking its place in the driving seat of European policy-making; our political voice in the chorus of Europe has become clearer because we have renewed our commitment to engaging with people and their concerns for the future, in tandem with member parties at national level.

Today, the European political environment has changed. The world is changing faster than ever before. We are going through difficult and challenging times. Both risks and opportunities are high.

More than ever before, Europe stands as an essential global player, due to its history, its geopolitical position, its economic weight, its common values. More than ever before, our cooperation inside Europe, our agenda, our goals, are of decisive importance for the future of Europe's people.

The PES is here to shape these changes, on the basis of social democratic values, to benefit ordinary people throughout Europe. We know that the European Union is a key for maximising opportunities and managing risks, as a vital complement to local, regional and national politics. Shared sovereignty in the EU has helped individual nation states regain part of the sovereignty they lost to globalisation. The EU has provided its member states with vital additional political capacity. We can now act to form new, coherent policies that tackle our common challenges. But only if we, as Europe's socialists and social democrats, act together: if we are united. We know that there is an enormous potential for a better future in Europe. We know that Europe can do a lot more.

However, many of our citizens do not perceive the future in this way. Despite Europe's economic strength, many Europeans are anxious about the future. A feeling of insecurity overshadows the political climate in many member states, which gives fuel to new nationalist parties who try to gain votes by promoting inward-looking and reactionary attitudes.

There is an increasing risk of permanent social divides in our societies – between those who are well-educated, employed, gaining new wealth through the opportunities generated by globalisation, and those who are low-skilled, unemployed, struggling to make ends meet.

In their daily lives, people at work are increasingly faced with the difficulties and risks attached to an ever more intense competitive working environment. Balancing work with family life remains a real problem in most countries. And those who are unemployed feel more and more marginalised, while their chances of finding a new job remain generally low as long-term unemployment remains persistently high in many member states.

People's exposure to these social realities combines with a whole set of other perceived threats to their quality of life, encompassing painful labour market and pension reforms, the ageing of society, illegal migration, terrorism, global warming, energy security or nuclear proliferation.

The **cohesion** of our societies is at stake. We need a **new common direction** for our welfare societies as well as in the European Union as a whole.

There is a clear case for the PES to have a common line of action at European level for the EU and its member states. The only obstacles to creating a new direction for Europe's future are the hesitations and short-sightedness of conservative governments who would limit EU action to market deregulation rather than tackling the real challenges with which Europe is faced.

As long as political priorities are not clearly laid down as part of an overall European political project inspired by people's main concerns, the European Union will fail to meet legitimate expectations.

This is exactly where the PES comes in – and where our new common ambitions begin. The PES is committed to making the political choices for Europe's future clear and understandable – not only in our nation states, but also at the European level. The European Union will not survive as a democratic system if people perceive its policy-making as inherently “a-political” or distant from their daily lives. It is our common responsibility and our common ambition, as the PES, to set out the political choices to be made in the European Union in pursuing the common values and vision of European social democracy.

This second term until the European elections of June 2009 will be crucial for people and for the PES in our efforts to revitalise Europe **our way**.

The European Union must address people's concerns

The political choice of the PES – and our objective in the European Union - is to **invest in people**.

The European Union must focus its efforts on addressing the key problems which people face in their daily lives. This must be achieved in a combined and coherent effort by all actors at the local, regional, national, as well as the European levels. We need all democratic forces to join in these efforts. The ultimate objective is to harness globalisation and allow people to progress and remain confident in a world of permanent economic change.

In recent years, the European Union has proven that it can set out policy guidelines and establish policy evaluations in a range of fields. However, there has been an insufficient impact on the ground, as the implementation of policies agreed at European level has often been limited at national level. This has not been overcome by information campaigns. Words will not do without common actions and **delivering results**.

The European Union must succeed in demonstrating in concrete terms and on a daily basis what it contributes to the improvement of people's lives across its territory. This is what European citizens rightly judge Europe on. This is the way to create stronger citizen engagement.

People only take an interest in institutions and in political processes which impact on their lives – where they can clearly see the political struggles, understand that the political battles in Europe are of the same kind as in their Member States: between progressives and conservatives; between the left and the right. We believe that many of those who question Europe or who are hostile to the pooling of national sovereignties in a range of areas can be convinced of its worth. But only if Europe firmly roots its priorities in people's concerns and only if Europe's common ways of doing things are made far more effective, transparent and relevant.

There is **only one political way forward**: each and every day, the European Union must address the concerns of ordinary people. We must join all our forces to strengthen the inclusiveness and cohesion of our societies. The European Union must be a strong partner in this endeavour. Otherwise people will lose and we will lose people.

We share common European ambitions

The Party of European Socialists is determined to invest all its energy in addressing the key challenge of rooting the European Union in people's concerns and securing their future. These are our common European ambitions.

Since the beginning of the current political term in 2004, the PES has systematically brought forward **political priorities for Europe**, starting with our declaration on "Developing Europe 2004-2009", and followed by our annual PES priorities for 2006 and 2007.

A new step forward was taken last year with the adoption of “**Acting together and simultaneously: Higher Growth and More Jobs**”, setting out how the EU and its Member States could pro-actively obtain higher sustainable growth and millions of new jobs.

The PES has now taken the lead in determining the most progressive path for ensuring the future of Europe’s welfare states in the twenty-first century: **a New Social Europe**. This Congress has adopted a roadmap of **ten principles** for the New Social Europe. A roadmap that will ensure that Europe will never engage in a devastating competition among states or social dumping. Our roadmap based upon progressive reforms, active growth policy, job creation and the strengthening of solidarity, based on social modernisation within inclusive, active welfare states.

Europe must be strengthened, not weakened

In the run-up to the next European elections, the European Union faces an unprecedented responsibility towards its citizens to deliver on policies that respond to their expectations. Time is running out, with the 2009 elections providing a new key test as to the credibility and legitimacy of the European project. We face a serious risk of an even lower turnout than in 2004, coupled with a larger vote for nationalist and anti-European forces. Such an outcome would have important negative consequences for Europe’s ability to act at a crucial time. We need a stronger Europe, not a weaker Europe. We need a sustainable constitutional basis for a coherent and effective political Europe. The PES has decided to build up broad support across Europe for a new, better treaty than the inadequate Nice Treaty. We expect that the European politically deepening process will be placed back on track, starting with the German Presidency of the European Union from 1st January 2007. We will actively contribute to achieving the entry into force of a new treaty through a suitable political settlement.

The European Union must be strengthened:

- to speak with a stronger, common voice on global affairs
- to fight terrorism, human trafficking, international crime and illegal immigration through a stronger cooperation in justice and home affairs;
- to combat climate change and ensure sustainable energy for Europe;
- to pursue stronger economic cooperation for more and better jobs;
- to include the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and promote a Europe with a clear commitment to the welfare state.

European citizens instinctively feel the scale of the challenges ahead. By taking the lead in formulating new European policies, the PES, together with our national parties and governments, will be able to promote the institutional changes needed in the European treaties.

Europe needs a people's agenda – rights and duties for all

A stronger Europe cannot be achieved by political elites anymore, but only through popular support across the continent. Political priorities must clearly and directly reflect people's main concerns.

We, the PES, are committed to vigorously promoting a true European people's agenda, to ensure that the European Union gets both its priorities and its policies right.

As is the case in national welfare states, European policies must be based on inclusiveness, rights and duties, and a strong social dialogue. In a common, new European people's agenda, the PES will focus its own action:

- **JOBS.** More and better jobs are the best road out of poverty for millions of people and the basis for new and better welfare. The PES will reinforce its efforts to promote our growth and investment strategy and ensure the right priorities in the integrated guidelines of the Lisbon Strategy.
- **EDUCATION.** Building a knowledge-based society – including all citizens - will be the basis for employment, innovation and competitiveness in the global economy. But there is an increasing risk of educational divides in Europe. Those who need high quality education most are those who get it least. Through our roadmap for the New Social Europe, the PES will promote the benefits of education and training should be available to all from early schooling to lifelong learning throughout the European Union.
- **CHILDCARE.** High quality childcare – available to all those who need it – will be essential if we are to maximise the life chances of our children and break generational patterns of low educational achievement. Childcare will allow both parents to work and reconcile better work and family life, while also fighting child poverty, promoting gender equality, sharing care responsibility and meeting the demographic challenge.
- **SOCIAL PROTECTION AND COHESION.** In our roadmap for the New Social Europe, the PES sets out its commitment to renewing the European social model to meet the challenges of a globalised world. Making the right reforms, combining social security with advanced competitiveness as pre-conditions not contradictions. Ensuring that cohesion is strengthened and poverty is eradicated in the European Union. These imperatives should also be reflected in the implementation of Europe's policies, including the Lisbon Strategy. We need better not fewer social policies.
- **MIGRATION.** Immigration concerns all societies in Europe. The PES must insist on diversity and tolerance as fundamental values for our Europe. This is the clear signal of this Congress. Along with immigration comes the duty of integration. Clear guidelines must be set out for the rights and duties of immigrants, as for all other citizens, based on common European values. Illegal immigration must be dealt with in the right way, tackling its root causes. Europe should engage in partnership with their countries of origin. Legal migrants should be included in a shared purpose for their home country's development while contributing to the development of Europe. We will promote an **alliance of civilisations**, fostering mutual respect and understanding.
- **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.** Jobs, social protection and security will be unsustainable in the future without a profound change in our production and consumption patterns. We must favour long term gains over short term costs. Environmental policies can be a formidable driver for technological progress through research and innovation. The European Union needs a common energy policy to achieve short and long term energy security. However, this is only part of the solution.



- A truly sustainable energy policy is a vitally needed contribution to the fight against climate change. In our **PES declaration on Energy and Climate Change**, European energy policy must commit itself to raising the share of renewable and bio-energies, making traditional sources of energies as clean as possible, increasing energy efficiency and savings. The public and business should engage themselves in a new alliance for green growth.

Europe's people cannot live in isolation from the rest of the world. The PES will commit itself to giving Europe a renewed global responsibility:

- **SECURITY.** New forms of violence at local and at global levels are spreading fear among people and societies across the continent, especially in urban centres. Combating terrorism urgently needs a strong, coordinated European response. It is of the utmost importance to implement the decisions already taken at European level and to take further steps to guarantee the security of Europe's people. Human trafficking, cross-border crime and corruption must also be tackled more effectively through reinforced European cooperation. Another challenge to people's security is the violence occurring as a result of social exclusion as well as the failing integration of minorities. This has to be addressed in new ways through community regeneration and new policies for positive integration and employment. We urgently need to develop a progressive approach to addressing the root causes of violence and extremism in our societies, before the extreme right gains ground and generates further conflict.
- **PEACE.** The European Union must not spare efforts in building a peaceful world. Too many conflicts across the globe, some of which at our doorstep, continue to take the lives of thousands of people and destroy often still fragile economic and social development. Europe has a huge global responsibility in this respect, not least with an ambitious European Neighbourhood Policy. We expect the European Union to develop the full range of its capacities for peace-building and to further build up its own capacity for conflict resolution to play an active role in peace efforts across the world. Among all the burning issues and needs for engagement, Europe has a particularly urgent job to do for peace in the Middle East, particularly in contributing to the launch of new peace talks through an International Conference on the Middle East. Global peace will depend on the capacity of global powers to define a new global order in the course of the coming decades. We believe in multilateralism, not unilateralism. We believe that the EU should work closely with the United Nations, and support the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals and promote the Alliance of civilisations. We believe that the European Union has an essential contribution to make to the global challenge: by drawing on its own historic experience and by building stable international partnerships and alliances with other world regions. The PES will make its contribution to this major imperative.
- **DECENT WORK** We know that lasting peace must be built on social and economic development. Europe's engagement in fighting global poverty must be reinforced. In particular, member states must deliver on their promises to further raise development aid. Decent work must be placed at the core of global development. As social democrats, and as Europeans, we must systematically and forcefully fight for decent work as a global objective.



- There can ultimately be no future for a social Europe in a purely competitive world in which social and labour rights are restricted to the lucky few. The PES will actively engage in the **new global alliance for Decent Work**.

Our common ambitions for the PES – we can change through unity

We are strongest when we stand united. The PES will continue strengthening our working methods and our role as a European political actor. In this spirit of unity, we will pursue the development of the PES, reinforcing the common influence of member parties to achieve more together than we could ever do individually.

- We commit ourselves to working for a solid understanding of the shared problems European societies face and on an extended capacity to generate new ideas and policy solutions. The envisaged creation of **European political foundations** will provide a new basis for well-documented analysis, insights, perspectives and policy proposals.
- The PES and our member parties will strengthen our political channels at the highest level. Leaders' meetings will take a greater political role. We commit ourselves to **better coordination** amongst socialist, social democratic, and progressive heads of state and government in the run-up to European Councils.
- The **political influence** of the PES and our member parties over key elements of the EU agenda will be reinforced. Progress has been made and, in the next phase, we will give an even higher priority to strengthening and revitalising our coordination, meetings amongst socialist and social democratic ministers and spokespersons prior to Councils. This is of highest relevance for all the European political priorities of the PES – from economic political cooperation, to foreign, energy or employment policies.
- A break with the past is needed when it comes to the preparation of our 2009 electoral platform. A new, bottom-up approach is essential, within which our national parties will dispose of the innovative working methods and time to develop common ideas and objectives. This process will be defined in detail right after our Congress to be put in practice progressively during the whole of 2007 and 2008: **a new PES manifesto** for people will be essential for our 2009 election campaign to the European Parliament.
- The PES will also strengthen itself through greater transparency, openness and debate, including ongoing dialogue with grassroots members of our parties who have become PES activists. The PES will foster strong links with progressive organisations, trade unions, opinion-formers, civil society, academic and arts communities in order to strengthen their role within European society.
- The PES is aware of the importance of the young generation in forming our common European future. Therefore we will address young people and attract them towards the idea of European integration

In order to live up to our common European ambitions, we need a strong and effective PES. All European political parties are called upon to play an active role in strengthening European democracy. Together with our member parties and our group in the European Parliament, the PES intends to realise our common European ambitions.