



Together for the Europe we need PES Congress Resolution

Adopted by the Congress

We, the Party of European Socialists, are the party of progress, social justice, economic fairness, sustainable growth and active democracy. We believe that the challenges we face nationally must be answered with both national and collective action across Europe. Our Europe is a Europe of solidarity, of equality, and of freedom.

Since the onset of the crisis in 2008, Europe's ability to respond to people's needs has deteriorated. **Europe, as it is today, is not the Europe we need.** What the people of Europe need is a **Europe of solidarity not only of sanctions**, a Europe where all people, women and men, young and old, have the opportunity to flourish, where individual and collective rights, whether social, labour, democratic, or economic, are respected and protected. **A Europe that is inclusive, sustainable, fair, diverse, and forward looking. A Europe that is united in overcoming the current crisis and that strives for deeper integration.** In short: a progressive, socialist and social-democratic European Union, which would be a force for positive change in people's lives.

Over the past year, the electoral map across Europe has begun to change. **European socialists and social democrats are regaining power in cities, regions, Member States, and European institutions.** Successes of our member parties over the past year have shown how electoral victories at all levels of representative democracy can strengthen our influence on Europe's direction. We must capitalise on this momentum as a political family. Now, we have the opportunity to change Europe, through the action of our parties in government, who sit in the European Council, and by continuing to coordinate our action to change the overall political majority across Europe.

More than ever we must act together, to build the Europe we need. This is not merely an opportunity for our political family, it is also a question of the responsibility we have to women and men across Europe. The 2014 European elections are fast approaching and will be a defining moment; their results will determine Europe's direction. For Europe to work women and men need to know that their vote makes a difference and counts on every representative level. **Each citizen's vote, whether in a local, regional, national or European election has the power to change Europe.** As a European political party it is our responsibility to convince European citizens of that.

We must change the perception that the EU is a monolith. There are different, often opposing visions of what Europe should do, and what it should be. Decision making at the European level lacks transparency and legitimacy from voters. We need to continue our fight to strengthen democracy and accountability, in order to make sure that peoples' voices are heard and reflected in the European institutions. The direction the EU takes is defined by which political party is in a majority within the European Parliament, the Commission, and particularly, the Council. **We need to make sure that the public is aware of this.**

Decisions taken at the European level affect us all. Yet many people feel alienated from Europe, often seeing it as a cause of their problems rather than a solution. **The relationship between people and their representatives is the very core of our democracy.** At the local and national level, the link between a citizen and their representative is tangible. But at the European level that link is becoming obscured. To remedy this, greater accountability must be at the heart of European decision making and politics. **More transparency and accountability will lead to more responsible, and progressive, decision making at EU level.** It is key that the community method is followed, protected and strengthened. Unless we can rebuild trust between politicians and society we will not overcome the current crisis of confidence in Europe.

We need to convince people that a progressive European Union can be the answer to their problems. To do this we need to be a confident, relevant and visible political force. We need to create the conditions for our own success. Revitalised active democracy is needed to move the European Union forwards. Since the beginning of the crisis we have seen that despite feeling alienated from the establishment people do want to engage with what is happening in their societies. They want their voices to be heard. We must listen to what women and men across Europe are saying.

Conservative leaders have chosen to rely on intergovernmentalism rather than on including the European Parliament and the EU Commission in crisis resolution. Decisions were taken behind closed doors. In order to guarantee both the democratic legitimacy and the quality of the measures taken, we want the European Parliament to be fully involved in crisis management efforts. We need to exploit the full scope offered by the Lisbon Treaty to put the European Parliament on an equal footing with the Council and Commission in crisis management. We also urge the heads of states to let the European Parliament take part in the development of the future architecture of the European Union.

We aim to strengthen the socialist, social democratic, labour and democratic progressive movement and its values in the Union and throughout Europe, to strengthen the PES as a real European political party, open, transparent, and politically efficient, with clear and strong political objectives, strategies and actions, so that as a movement we can build a social democratic Europe. To do that, we must have the courage of our convictions. **We must show voters that electing a progressive majority in the European Parliament will have real positive consequences for their lives.**

The Conservative response to the crisis was often too little, too late or simply wrong. Conservative leaders insisted time and again on a flawed recipe of fiscal consolidation through austerity measures alone. In turn this has weakened the European project. Popular support for Europe has reached an all-time low, and many people now view the European Union as little more than a crisis management mechanism.

Following strong political pressure from our members of the European Council, and after key electoral victories by socialists and social democrats, growth oriented policies started to be seriously considered and implemented.

This shift is a victory for our family, but we must fight for the implementation of more ambitious and progressive measures. In order to secure that, European socialists and social democrats have an alternative agenda for Europe.

The Europe we need is a Europe of fair and sustainable growth. To return to growth and to achieve economic stability our economies and our banking and financial systems must once again serve society. The entire rationale for a fair economy is that we live in a society, not an economy. **We must overcome the social and economic tragedy of mass unemployment, particularly amongst our youth, as it is a defining challenge of our time.** Europe can only be a global leader if its strength rests in its social model. We want to develop a social union, based on the introduction of common and high social standards in particular the prevention of social dumping, improving workers' and unemployed peoples' protection, access to education, training and social mobility, guaranteeing equal access to universal, high quality public services and introducing decent minimum incomes.

We must efficiently manage environmental challenges in order to achieve a sustainable society. We believe that smart, green growth can successfully power our societies into the future, while protecting our planet.

The Europe we need respects human dignity, freedom, democracy, and equality as values that are never taken for granted. We must continue to be the frontrunners for women's rights and gender equality and need to continue to represent, promote and fight for these values and interests against a conservative backlash; not only through equal representation of women and men, but also by truly gender mainstreaming our policies. Today, our commitment to women's rights, especially, reproductive and sexual rights, should be stronger than ever to make sure that no steps back are taken in this domain. Therefore we support the PES Women Resolution adopted at the PES Women Annual Conference. As a global actor Europe must speak with one voice to protect and promote our unique social model.

Our Socialist and Social Democratic alternative

1. A Progressive Programme for Economic Recovery

The European economy is still in crisis and the debt crisis has yet to be fundamentally addressed. Our citizens are under increased pressure, with alarmingly high levels of unemployment, and falling living standards. We need more solidarity with the people that are most affected by the crisis. We stand against any attempts to use the crisis for scapegoating, finger-pointing and renationalization.

We must first of all **relaunch growth and employment for women and men**. In order to kick start the economy, growth stimulus through investment must be implemented. This is not an alternative but a pre-requisite for achieving sustainable budgets and viable economic growth, and we must use all the tools at our disposal. In order to finance these necessary policies, we will implement a European Financial Transaction Tax, if necessary using the method of enhanced cooperation. The financing capacity of European Institutions must be strengthened. So long as the ECB treats its mandate as solely maintaining artificially low levels of inflation neither investment nor unemployment levels can be addressed sufficiently in the short term. The leveraging of European resources as well as the implementation of investment instruments must be directed to support a European economic recovery. At the same time, better timed consolidation and the creation of fiscal space within national budgets for financing investment must be inherent to both fiscal consolidation programmes and to efforts for achieving sustainable budgets.

The costs of debt servicing must be brought back under control. We welcome actions by the European Central Bank to bring interest rates down in the short run, but we also recognize that bold political solutions are needed in the long run. We need to prevent the exit of any single country and stop speculation about a break-up of the Eurozone. We should have no taboos and must consider all the alternatives carefully. A European redemption fund or the development of Eurobonds are measures that promote solidarity and that could contribute to stabilising our currency and to restoring our competitive advantage as a united economic and monetary union able to attract foreign investment. Furthermore, in order to lower sovereign debt levels, those with higher income and wealth should make an adequate and fair contribution. As the financial crisis and social upheaval continue, this is not merely a matter of justice but of simple economic necessity. These instruments can only function if we complement the Monetary Union with a real political Union.

We need to strengthen the decision making powers of the EU, making sure that democratic control – primarily through a strengthened European Parliament– is reinforced. We need to develop and promote effective mechanisms and safeguards against tax evasion, tax avoidance and tax fraud, which not only severely reduce much needed public resources but also fuel illegal and illegitimate financial activities, which only serve to prolong the economic and political crisis we are facing today. Furthermore, we denounce the use of fiscal amnesty by some Conservative governments.

The financial crisis highlighted the need for stronger **financial market regulation and supervision**. The regulatory framework for creating a banking union, with enhanced supervisory and resolution rules must be at the centre of discussion. The banking sector must be reformed and recover its primary function, that of serving the needs of the real economy, amongst others by separating retail and investment banking. Financial liquidity must be restored and depositors' savings must be safeguarded to restore confidence, and the risk of major bank runs must be tackled. The shadow banking sector must be urgently regulated and consumer protection increased. Bank-like structures and products – including unnecessary derivatives, credit default swaps, and short selling need to be prohibited and traded only through central counterparties.

Moreover, the credit worthiness of Member States must be protected against financial market speculation; to do this a European Credit Rating Agency should be established.

The European Union Budget must be founded in solidarity and be regarded as an investment budget and an instrument for growth, aimed at re-launching the economy and ensuring social and territorial cohesion. Its funding capacity should correspond to these objectives. The Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) spending priorities must focus on growth and job creating investment. To achieve these growth enhancing goals the MFF must explore Europe's full revenue potential. The Financial Transaction Tax could contribute to the system of own resources in the countries levying this tax. These proposals would reinforce Europe's economic unity, whilst also increasing the Union's competences. Discussions on the size and nature of the EU Budget have an effect on all European citizens. Full democratic accountability and legitimacy must be granted by making the debate on the EU Budget an integral part of the European Elections.

The impact of the financial crisis has been severe. Solutions should be developed and implemented immediately. Europe needs to restore financial stability, assist its member states to restore viable economic growth and to achieve sustainable budgets. A long run solution to the crisis would entail tackling the strong divergences of the economies in the euro area through common economic policies and common investments in innovation, growth and decent jobs. We need to implement effective policies in order to halt the fiscal race to the bottom.

We must ensure that comprehensive reforms and progress towards a genuine Economic and Monetary Union happen as soon as possible, and that reforms in certain areas - such as banking union - are accompanied by progress in the field of integrated budgetary framework, coordinated sustainable economic policies, democratic accountability as well as employment and social dimension.

2. Generating employment and fair growth throughout Europe

Fair and sustainable growth and the creation of more and better jobs are preconditions for a healthy economy, budgetary consolidation, and higher living standards in society. Overcoming the crisis will only be possible, if states fulfil their function of providing the right framework conditions for fair growth and the financial, banking and private sectors show more responsibility for sustainable economic and social development. Due to the increased interconnection of our economies, Europe needs to play a key role in this process.

EU cohesion policy provides the main support to the EU's overarching EU 2020 Strategy for Growth and Jobs. Given the increasing economic, social and environmental challenges ahead, it is necessary to guarantee that cohesion policy will have the appropriate budgetary means within the EU's next financial framework 2014-2020. To allow for the establishment of a Social Union, at least 25% of the EU Cohesion Policy Funds in the Multi-Annual Financial Framework should be allocated to the European Social Fund. In addition, sufficient funds must be available for the Horizon 2020 package to considerably improve the innovativeness of Europe's economy, especially by supporting small and medium enterprises.

To put an end to mass unemployment and to return to the path towards full employment, a **European employment pact** must be implemented. European funds need to be used better and additional revenue should be generated to actively support the creation of new jobs for women and men. Member States must set the course to gradually reallocate funds from passive labour market policies to active labour market policies, creating opportunities for every woman and man to contribute to society and to the economy. Furthermore, a gender-sensitive working environment,

guaranteeing equal prospects and treatment for women and men, must be ensured. In addition, accessible, affordable and good quality childcare and elderly care services and facilities need to be created, in order to ensure the same opportunities for women and men, when implementing active labour market policies.

An immediate priority is overcoming **youth unemployment** throughout Europe. The PES recognises and welcomes the different policy proposals by member parties to tackle youth unemployment. A **European youth guarantee** must be gradually implemented in all Member States, giving a state guaranteed right to every young woman and man to a new job, training or further education at the latest four months after leaving the education system or becoming unemployed. A European Employment Programme of at least 10 billion Euros must be introduced immediately, financing the creation of new jobs and supporting better education and training. A strong gender perspective must be included in this programme in order to prevent bigger gaps between women and men in the labour market and across society at a later stage.

Improving the **competitiveness of European companies** is essential for Europe's economic success. Instead of the Conservative recipe of weakening social protection and lowering wages, the following structural reforms must be pursued:

- Investment in education, training and active labour market policies should be increased.
- Europe's industries must play a central and dynamic role in transforming our economies and developing our regions by fostering world-class innovation and green growth. Therefore, a reindustrialisation process must be launched. The manufacturing sector, especially Small and Medium Enterprises, as well as microenterprises - which represent a motor of the European economy, need to receive more support and a high-quality infrastructure must be built, for example on access to clean, reliable and affordable energy, broadband networks and transport. To this end, a growth-oriented review at EU level of the relevant state aid schemes is necessary.
- Energy and resource use must be reduced with an emphasis on reducing carbon emissions.
- More efforts are needed to support all dimensions of innovation and more resources need to be invested in research and development.
- The representation of male and female workers in companies must be strengthened, giving them an active role in the economy. We need to remove barriers to women's entry to the labour market. Furthermore, we have to provide women with equal opportunities to access decision-making positions within companies.

3. Developing a Social Union

Everyday life has become more difficult for people across Europe since the beginning of the crisis. Inequality and social deprivation have increased. Unemployment in the EU has reached an unprecedented dimension and the number of people living in poverty continues to rise, especially women and children. **To overcome the crisis and to allow for long-term fair and sustainable growth, the Stability and Growth Pact and the Fiscal Compact have to be balanced by a Social Pact. This Social Pact must be a genuine counterweight to the macroeconomic measures, and one of the major elements of a Social Union.**

In a **Social Pact**, minimum social expenditure levels on a high level need to be defined for Member States, preventing a competition for the lowest social standards and social dumping. Amongst others, expenditure for education should aim to reach at least 6% of GDP and 6 % of the European budget should be dedicated to education and training.

In a Social Union, implementing economic freedoms in the European Union must not result in a disrespect of **social rights**. The principle that the protection of social rights should not be subordinated to economic freedoms should be enshrined in European primary and secondary legislation. The respect of the Charter of Fundamental Rights must be guaranteed by the European Court of Justice and the other EU institutions. Throughout European policies and programmes, social concerns, including gender equality and the aim of reaching full employment, need to be mainstreamed.

Overcoming social and gender inequalities and allowing every European citizen the same level of well-being and social protection must be a major objective for the European Union. In a Social Union, **common** and high **social standards** must be defined on the European level and enacted in every Member State:

- A decent wage needs to be ensured in every member state. Adequate minimum wages should be introduced either by law or through the process of negotiating collective agreements.
- Everyone in Europe needs to receive the same wage for the same work in the same place. This requires a review of the posting of workers directive leading to a possible revision, and better monitoring and protection from social dumping in all member states.
- The gender pay gap needs to be eliminated immediately. A binding target must be introduced for all Member States to reduce the gender pay gap by 2% each year.
- Common standards on the protection of workers need to be defined, ensuring that they work in a healthy and adequate environment. Amongst others, this requires a strengthening of the working time directive in order to enhance the social protection of workers throughout the European Union.
- Labour market policies in Europe should be adapted to the 21st century. We must invest in life-long learning and make sure that senior workers will be able to participate fully in our societies.
- Based on the Europe 2020 target to reduce the number of people living in poverty, every Member State needs to develop plans and set binding targets to reduce the number of people suffering from social deprivation. Universal access to decent and affordable housing needs to be ensured. Poverty still disproportionately affects women; as such these plans must include a strong gender perspective.
- Common standards for the adequacy, reliability and affordability of public services should be introduced, allowing every citizen equal access.
- Universal access to affordable and high quality education at all levels, with special measures to decrease the numbers of early school leavers, needs to be ensured throughout the EU.

- In every Member State, citizens must be guaranteed access to the necessary active labour market policies, allowing female and male employees and those who are unemployed to either directly find a new, decent job or to receive the necessary training, to do so.
- To ensure that those who are excluded from the labour market, especially the long term unemployed, can also have a decent standard of living, a European framework directive on minimum income schemes should be adopted, stipulating that such schemes be established in all Member States and defining minimum criteria on adequacy and accessibility.
- Decent minimum pension levels need to be defined for the entire EU, based on the average income level or the cost of living. Structural reforms must be introduced, allowing every citizen to receive at least the minimum pension.
- The gender pension gap has to be tackled in order to ensure equal rights for elderly women and men. Member states should for example embrace the concept of care-credits; credits that provide pension benefits to women and men that opt for career-breaks in order to care for children or parents.
- Health care and long-term care systems need to be reformed and financed in a way that everyone has a right to adequate care. Common standards for care systems, including health care and long term care, need to be introduced, reforms implemented and the financing improved, to ensure a decent standard of living to those citizens who cannot take care of themselves on their own and who need support. The number of people who cannot participate in the labour market due to health reasons or because they care for family members needs to be reduced. Family support cannot be seen as an alternative that substitutes the shortcomings of a weakened welfare state.

The process of introducing common social standards must not lead to a reduction of welfare in any country; instead it should allow every Member State to rise to the standards of leading member states. The involvement of social partners and an institutionalized social dialogue are considered by the PES as key elements to reach sustainable social agreements.

These objectives and the overall aim of sustaining and strengthening the quality of welfare states will not be achieved with Conservative austerity-only policies. Instead of further weakening our welfare states, the necessary reforms to strengthen them need to be pursued and financed to allow every woman and man the opportunity to contribute to the society in which they live and to developing fair growth in Europe.

4. Protecting our environment: A sustainable use of resources

Greening Europe's economy is not only a precondition for halting climate change, but it is essential for making our companies more competitive, for creating new, decent jobs for women and men and for fostering growth. The European and national budgets must contribute more to greening our economy, for example by ensuring sufficient investments in green technologies. Policies on the European, national and regional level must be implemented to ensure that the agricultural sector contributes to green growth, a reduction of emissions and sustaining biodiversity.

The amount of energy and resources used in production processes must be reduced and ambitious and binding targets on reduction of carbon emissions must be implemented. Introducing the respective European and national regulations will reduce the price of European products and the EU will be less dependent on resource imports.

To this end, recycling and energy efficiency must be improved and a major programme to improve the energy efficiency of houses, including social housing, must be introduced. Increasing the share of renewable energy has already produced very positive results and needs to be further accelerated, for example by making the European Emission Trading Scheme more effective and by introducing strong national legislation to prioritise renewable energy and the Europe-wide introduction of a carbon tax coordinated at EU level, to make renewable energies more competitive and to accelerate the move away from carbon intensive energy production.

Still today, more than a billion people in the world go to sleep hungry every night. This we cannot accept. We must ensure that Europe's biofuels policy is not harming food security of vulnerable people and communities. Europe should take the lead in creating a socially just food and agriculture strategy. On the path to sustainable development, greater efforts are needed to halt the reduction of biodiversity in Europe and abroad.

Every measure must be taken to ensure that women and men contribute to and benefit fully and equally from the process of greening Europe's economy, developing a sustainable future and fighting climate change, and that the gender impact of these policies is taken fully into account.

5. Safeguarding and strengthening Democracy

Democracy is one of our core values. It is part of the European Union's foundation, and is our main instrument for Europe's regional and international influence. But European democracy is in crisis. Populist movements have been able to flourish amidst the social anguish caused by the crisis and people's disappointment in Conservative politicians' responses.

However, it is not only these movements who are putting in question democratic standards. There are attempts by some political forces in different European countries to undermine democracy, including local democracy, to curtail the independence of the judiciary, to eliminate political opposition and to take away the most basic possibility of citizens' political participation: the right to democratic elections. Freedom of expression and information is compromised, be it by the state or by powerful private corporations, be it in broadcasting, written press or on the internet.

We need to combat right-wing extremism, xenophobia, racism and authoritarian tendencies, which have emerged in Europe and threaten our fundamental principles and values. Europe needs to continue setting a global example of respecting and protecting gender, ethnic, religious and sexual rights.

Today, the balance between the economy and the political system is out of sync, to the detriment of democracy, as financial markets and actors exercise tremendous influence over the state's ability to take autonomous decisions.

The respect for human dignity, freedom, human rights, democracy, equality, including gender equality and the rule of law are not to be taken for granted – they need to be monitored, protected and constantly fought for. The PES is ready to fully engage in this fight.

For the PES, the European Union is and shall continue to be a union of values. If any of these values are threatened in one of the Member States, it is not simply a matter of internal politics, it has consequences for the whole Union. Therefore the answer to these threats shall be of national and European nature at the same time. The PES and its member parties are committed to strengthening democracy everywhere in Europe.

We believe that this should include a proper European mechanism of monitoring the democratic standards defined in the Copenhagen Criteria and enshrined in the Treaties, together with adequate sanctions, which shall apply not only to EU candidate countries but to Member States post accession as well. In order to achieve this, the European Union must make full use of the existing institutional mechanisms, and adopt new mechanisms if necessary.

The PES believes in active citizens whose right to make informed choices is guaranteed and who are willing to use this right. **We want to re-establish people's trust in and ownership of democracy.** A fundamental element of this is to emphasize that all members of our political family work according to the highest ethical and moral standards, and actively combat corruption in all levels of society. The reinforcement of the transparency of political decision-making and the accountability of political actors are paramount to ensure effective democratic control by the citizens. In this respect, regular dialogue with civil society and representative associations should be also promoted.

We prioritize fighting against corruption and for democracy and transparency in our own parties. Only if we live up to our own standards we will be able to gain the trust and support of people.

It is also crucial to be more open to the participation of all, in order to build a democracy which truly represents the diversity of our societies. Therefore to protect the rights and be more open to the representation and participation in every field of democratic life of people of all genders, all ages, all ethnic backgrounds, all religion and all sexual orientations as well as disabled people, **an inclusive approach towards citizenship should be promoted and implemented.**

We need to strengthen democracy, establish a broad European debate and initiate a Convention elaborating reforms that favour a Europe of solidarity, equality, progress and democracy, leading to a renewed European Union. We will oppose any attempts by conservatives to push towards more intergovernmentalism. Instead we want a stronger democratic dimension for Europe. We believe that the role national parliaments is central to the democratic life of the Union. Furthermore we will prepare concrete proposals to strengthen the European Parliament at the heart of European democracy. These include the full right of legislative initiative and strengthening the budgetary rights of the European Parliament.

Democratic legitimacy presupposes popular acceptance and recognition. **Besides providing real political representation, increasing citizens' participation in decision-making is of crucial importance to ensure the legitimacy of any legislative process, on regional, national or European level.** For this an in-depth reflection on alternative means of participatory democracy is also needed, especially taking into account new communicational technologies and platforms. The PES will work towards equally engaging all people in democratic participation. We have a responsibility to ensure that a real European political debate about how Europe affects people's lives continues to develop. The PES is committed to give the citizens' voices a bigger weight. Therefore, we fully support the European Citizens' Initiative, a new EU citizenship right that can contribute to reduce the democratic deficit of the European Union.

We will continue to work towards a progressive and comprehensive migration policy and mainstream migration issues across policy areas in the spirit of a just and democratic society. Migration needs to be managed efficiently, taking into account the needs of both sides – migrants and host communities. Such a policy should work hand in hand with countries of origin and transit, to address the root causes of migration and develop a common approach and combat irregular migration. It should also harness the economic and social benefits of migration for European societies, which include positive effects on demographic challenges, labour market shortages or the sustainability of our social security systems. **Integration should be a cornerstone of our progressive approach, as should be the safeguarding of fundamental rights for both**

citizens and non-citizens. We need to guarantee migrants' rights in the society they live in, giving them the adequate tools to integrate such as language courses, education, employment, health care and housing. All residents should have a right to vote and run as candidates in local elections, according to conditions set on a national level.

We are committed to giving refugees and asylum seekers fleeing their countries the possibility to find safety and protection in Europe. Policies and standards should be harmonised so that asylum seekers receive the same recognition, reception and support wherever they are in the Union. We will fight against inhuman or degrading treatment, and ensure that vulnerable groups, such as pregnant women, children, torture victims, trafficking victims or persons with health problems receive the necessary support.

Closing the EU's borders cannot be the answer. The EU needs to strengthen the common external entrance/exit approach to ensure that people entering any Member State are entering under the same conditions and that their rights are respected. At the same time, we must protect the Schengen Acquis, which has produced great economic, social and cultural benefits, and safeguard the role and prerogatives of the European Parliament. The crisis must therefore not be a pretext to re-introduce internal EU border controls due to populist or protectionist demands. Equally, European states need to show solidarity and find true mechanisms to share responsibilities so as to avoid a situation where certain Member States are disproportionately affected by illegal migration flows.

6. A Just World

Europe has to be a main international political actor with a single voice committed to peace, democracy and human rights, the rule of law and multilateralism. Goals as the eradication of poverty, the pursuit of sustainable growth worldwide, the fight against climate change and nuclear nonproliferation are the main guidelines of our progressive foreign policy.

Together we are stronger in the world than alone. Especially now other superpowers, like India and China, are playing an increasingly important role, and global problems are increasingly interconnected, it is crucial to join forces. Europe is more than just a market. It is also a community of values which stands for human rights and democracy. These values always have to be reflected in the foreign policies of the EU.

While facing an important crisis within its own borders, the EU is at the same time confronted by new global challenges. The global financial crisis, increasing poverty and threats to human rights, the Arab Spring and the Syrian crisis, the intensification of Free Trade Agreements and the emergence of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa); these are only some of the issues the EU has to address today. The emergence of the BRICS has shown a new balance of power at the international level.

The global crisis has put several trends into a sharp perspective. It is time, after the adoption of the Lisbon Treaty and the nomination of the High representative, to have a deep reflection on EU foreign policy. We cannot talk about EU influence, EU bilateral relations and EU presence in multilateral fora without looking at the wider landscape; objectives, interests, instruments and partners.

The EU must maintain pressure to make world trade rules work for social justice and sustainable growth, achieve binding global agreements on action against climate change, abolish tax havens, promote the FTT and tame financial markets. As progressives, we must offer **solutions to global imbalances and global inequalities**. It is unacceptable to see that, when the world has never

been so rich, poverty, disease and injustice continue to increase. We need a long-term agenda, a **Global New Deal**.

The EU must continue its successful enlargement policy and continue the integration of Western Balkan countries. We must pledge to continue a merits-based further enlargement based on the respect of the Copenhagen criteria. European perspective can be built only through cohesion, unification and comprehension and strengthened cooperation with our European neighbours. The EU should continue to strengthen its neighbourhood policy. Europe should be judged by its effectiveness in its own neighborhood. It is about our credibility in the world. The PES strongly supports a just and viable solution of the Cyprus problem on the basis of the resolutions of the UN and of the values and principles of the European Union.

The PES has been strong in supporting **the aspirations for dignity, democracy and freedom in the Arab World**, ensuring a successful democratic transition, fostering the emergence of strong and modern progressive parties in the region and acknowledging and helping to strengthen the role of women in democratization and peace processes. The PES was the first European political family to organize Arab Spring conferences in Tunisia in 2011 and 2012, bringing together representatives of the Tunisian opposition as well as guests from North Africa, the Middle East and Europe. The PES therefore encourages the EU to promote a democratic development in the region by linking the Association Agreements to these values. Political reform and social and economic development are crucial factors to create hope for the future. We will continue to support the spirit of hope and dignity that forms the bedrock of the Arab spring movement.

The EU commitment to the Southern Mediterranean should go hand in hand with an active cooperation with the Eastern neighbors in support of democracy, respect of human rights, social and economic progress. EU has to further develop and deepen the process of approximation with the countries of the Eastern Partnership, taking into account also the provisions of Art. 49 of the EU Treaty.

The **strategic partners of the EU** are of enormous importance when committing to provide adequate and sustainable responses to global challenges. As the PES we must work with our **progressive partners worldwide**. The Global Progressive Forum is a key instrument for progressives and we look forward to our **next World Conference in Brazil next year**. In addition, we have to continue a strong cooperation with the Socialist International.

Standing before the new global distribution of power, the EU must speak with one voice to raise its profile and to promote peace, sustainable development and environmental protection as well as the European social model, human rights, women's rights and gender equality, labour rights, decent work and democracy.

Our tools

To build this progressive, socialist and social democratic Europe we need to change the overall political majority in Europe. We are doing this by winning elections, which is allowing us to change the balance of power in the European Council. The next step is to win the 2014 European elections. This is how we will ensure that the next President of the European Commission comes from our family.

Our party has been a frontrunner for a more democratic EU. The decision taken at the Prague Congress in 2009 to present a common candidate for the European Commission Presidency was historic. We will elect our candidate through an open, transparent and democratic competitive process, which will give him/her a strong mandate to be the frontrunner in our campaign and become the President of the European Commission. **Providing citizens with a personality to carry our programme will be one key to our election campaign for 2014.**

We are preparing the 2014 campaign now. The PES is in a unique position with, for the first time, a common candidate, who will be selected in an open, transparent and democratic process, and a common programme, developed by all member parties together. **We will develop a common strategy that will be of benefit to all our parties, aiming to provide member parties with the tools they need to succeed nationally.** We will be the first European party family to run a truly European electoral campaign, which is visible all over Europe with common messages and a common visibility.

Also at the Prague Congress in 2009 we embarked upon a vast programme of renewal: *Our Vision for Progressive Societies in the 21st Century*. We are now half way through that process. The Declaration of Principles was adopted last year and the Fundamental Programme will be adopted next year. These documents have strengthened the Party's intellectual backbone. They will now be developed into a Manifesto which will be the basis of a relevant programme for governing the EU. In tandem, the work of our Modernising Politics Network, the second pillar of our renewal process, is making us an efficient campaigning Party.

Where we are in government we must further strengthen how we work together. This is already being done through **well prepared, regular and well attended European Council Preparation meetings** for our Prime Ministers, Deputy Prime Ministers and Presidents of European Institutions where they are from our family. We commit to developing this method of **defining common policies for the European Union and influencing the decisions of the European institutions.** We must ensure that the democratically elected European Parliament retains its influence in forming of policies and European future.

We will strengthen our Ministerial meetings, to enable Ministers to exchange on their policy areas, to **coordinate our major political actors, and to allow them to better influence European decisions relevant to their area of expertise.**

Parties in opposition today will be in government tomorrow. **We commit to developing the manner in which our parties in government and opposition liaise.** This is already being done through regular, strategically planned Leaders meetings. In addition we will reinforce the PES thematic policy Networks for national party representatives to develop common policy positions reflecting our values on all issues, to exchange best practices, and coordinate action.

To genuinely be actors of change we need to create the conditions for our own success together. The PES has to be the instrument to reach these goals in 2014. **We must further strengthen our support to each other in national election campaigns.** To do that we will provide a platform for

member parties to share best practice on campaigning, party organisation and exchange policy ideas. There are areas in which some of our member parties have detailed knowledge and expertise that could be of enormous benefit to other parties, particularly in the context of a national election campaign: a support system to enable this type of exchange must be developed.

To increase the visibility of the European Party we need to improve our engagement with members of our member parties, and organisations who should be included in PES projects and events. **This can be done through further developing and training of PES activists. All members of our member parties should be PES activists. Besides, we need to improve the integration of the PES and its member parties and organisations at each organisational level**, ensuring that members of PES bodies can better coordinate with national parties political structures and activities, not only on policies but also on timing of actions and campaigns.

Our parties must be the image of the society we wish to create. **We aim to promote solidarity, equality, diversity and equal representation in society and as such in our internal bodies and meetings we must also do so**, especially for women, young people and people from ethnic minorities, we must also encourage their active participation. In itself this is a tool to allow us to be a more relevant political force.

To truly transform European politics we must be both coherent and courageous. **Without a shared vision, we will fail to implement our agenda.** National electoral success can only affect change at the European level if we work together to advocate our family's solutions to the problems we face. It is in this way that our aims and objectives will be best realised. The strength of the Party of European Socialists lies in what its members contribute to it. We have achieved a lot, but there is a lot more to be done. Building the PES and building a progressive Europe go hand in hand. In this time of crisis, we have a duty to relentlessly pursue our agenda for change. We cannot let people down. Our movement has a long and proud history of solidarity. **Today we must stand together for the Europe we need.**