



ADOPTED

PES Women Resolution

My Body, My Rights: Solidarity between European women to ensure Sexual and Reproductive Rights for all Women

Over the past 3 years, the PES adopted in the framework of its Re:new-process its Declaration of Principles¹ (September 2011) and its Fundamental Programme² (June 2013), stating the values of our political family and our vision of the European Union and its society. Gender equality and the defence of women's rights are an integral part of our values and vision for a new Europe. The PES Manifesto for the 2014 European Elections – which will be adopted in the coming days by the PES Congress – reiterates our political family's unequivocal commitment to 'A Union of equality and women's rights', in the firm belief that gender equality must be at the heart of our actions, including when it comes to the promotion of women's free choice and access to sexual and reproductive rights.

It is in this context and spirit that PES Women wishes to extend its solidarity with the Spanish women and reiterate its engagement, as expressed in the PES Women 2010 Warsaw Declaration 'My Body, My Rights: Equal Sexual and Reproductive Rights for all women in Europe'.

The recent adoption in Spain of the "Draft Bill for the Protection of Unborn Life and Pregnant Woman's Rights" and the rejection by the European Parliament of the Edite Estrela Report on Sexual and Reproductive Rights are symptomatic of a serious conservative backlash, which constitutes a direct attack to women's freedom and a clear setback for reproductive rights. Adopting the Spanish proposal for a legislation would translate in multiple constraints for women to have access to abortion, making the voluntary interruption of pregnancy almost impossible.

Considering that these latest developments go well beyond health issues, PES Women reiterates its firm stance that Sexual and Reproductive Rights are basic human rights and as such, they contribute towards women's social, economic and political empowerment, not least in the light of the economic crisis.

Any attempt to curtail women's rights harms not only women but the society as a whole. All women should have access to safe and legal medical services and assistance in all Member States so that the principle of equal opportunities and social justice is guaranteed throughout the EU.

This is why PES Women urges for access to unbiased information; sex education for girls and boys; medical assistance, including abortion; medical infrastructure; the promotion of prevention and contraception methods, such as female condoms and emergency contraception; and counseling tools in all EU Member States.

¹ http://www.pes.eu/sites/www.pes.org/files/declaration_of_principles_web_en_0.pdf

² http://www.pes.eu/sites/www.pes.org/files/pes_fundamental_programme-22-06-2013_en.pdf

PES Women is committed to involving all PES member parties and the European Parliament in the debate. We recommended to the European Institutions that the 1st of February could be designated as the “European Day for Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for all Women”. This will build on the political momentum created by the mobilization of Spanish women and the big demonstration that took place in Madrid to defend women’s freedom. It all started with two small women’s associations in the north of Spain, who decided to go by train to Madrid to defend their rights. The so-called “Freedom Train” started as a single train coming from Asturias, and many other similar actions were organised by thousands of women and men all over Spain, as well as other parts in Europe. Recognising the importance of this initiative, PES Women wishes to be fully associated so as to make sure that the latest Spanish legislation does not come into force and that Europe remains a true area of freedom for its women.