



## **PES WOMEN ACTIVITY REPORT January 2007 – December 2009**

### **INTRODUCTION**

PES Women brings together women - MPs, MEPs and activists - from PES member parties to discuss and promote gender equality within and outside the PES. It promotes gender equality on two different levels.

Firstly, PES Women has strengthened the policy and campaigning dimension of its work, in terms of formulating and advocating policy recommendations on various issues. PES Women also actively contributes to PES policy papers and declarations to ensure that the gender dimension is taken into account across the PES policy spectrum.

Secondly, PES Women pushes for equal representation in PES bodies (such as working groups and high level groups) and supports the increase of women in decision-making in PES member parties and governments. The PES Women President is a full member of the PES Presidency and thus has the right to vote on PES decisions.

Since the last PES Congress and the subsequent PES Women elections, PES Women has reinforced its role in both of these respects and has entered a period of reinforced cooperation amongst its members. Its activities and campaigns, outlined in this report, demonstrate this positive evolution.

### **ELECTION OF PRESIDENT, VICE-PRESIDENTS AND BUREAU**

At an extra-ordinary statutory meeting at the last PES Congress (December 2006, Oporto) Zita Gurmai MEP was re-elected President of PES Women as well as the three vice-presidents (Anna Karamanou, Inger Segelström, Olga Zrihen). A new composition was formed among the eight-member bureau which assists in the preparation and follow-up of meetings (see annex for list of the whole Executive which comprises the President, Vice-presidents and Bureau).

At the first Statutory meeting of this new PES Women mandate (February 2007), three changes were made to PES Women's Standing Orders, in particular the adaptation of the PES Women's composition in line with the PES statutes, the creation of an ex-officio position for SIW President and the introduction of voting procedures (see annex)

### **STATUTORY MEETINGS**

PES Women members, who are nominated by PES member parties, meet three times a year to:

- Discuss strategic initiatives and specific policy themes.
- Agree on campaigns and resolutions.
- Share information on relevant European and national policies.

#### Equal Pay Action (22 February 2007, Brussels)

On 22 February PES Women launched the “Gender Pay Gap, shut it” action expressing its concern about the still existing pay gap and calling on the European Commission and the EU governments to eliminate the EU 15% pay gap between women and men. This 15% pay gap translates into a longer working period for women; to earn what the average man in the EU earned in 2006 the average woman would have to work until 22 February 2007! On this symbolic date, PES Women President also called on Social Affairs ministers and European Commissioner Vladimir Špidla for concrete actions to eliminate the gap. Moreover, Zita Gurmai invited everyone to wear the tag with the aim to encourage women and men across Europe to download the tag and to promote the action, especially in the run up to International Women’s Day.

#### Childcare: “Putting children first” (12 June 2007, Berlin)

PES Women welcomed the PES Childcare campaign that was launched at the PES Congress in Oporto (December 2006). PES’s choice for the campaign “Put Children first” underlined that childcare is not longer only a women’s issue. PES Women organized a seminar in Berlin in cooperation with SPD Frauen on 12 June 2007 to discuss existing European models and experiences in this field with the aim to draft, present and contribute towards concrete recommendations for childcare policies. With guest speakers from Germany, Finland, the Netherlands and Turkey, the seminar concentrated on childcare for 0-3 year olds and childcare as an integration factor.

#### Meeting on the fringes of the Portuguese Presidency Conference on Gender Equality (4 October 2007, Lisbon)

PES Women took the opportunity of the Portuguese Presidency Conference on Gender Equality to organize on the one hand a Statutory meeting followed by an Annual Conference on the conditions and obstacles, improvement of employability and entrepreneurship and on the other hand to organize a PES Ministerial Meeting underlining PES Women’s position on the issue of women on the labour market as well as urging Ministers to enhance childcare targets and priorities.

#### Preparation of PES Consultation/Manifesto Process and PES Women Publication (28 February 2008, Brussels)

In preparation of the European Elections in June 2009 and in line with the PES work, PES Women decided to engage as soon as possible in the election process to insure the best gender approach and women’s participation in the run up to the election period. On the one side, PES Women decided to gender mainstream women’s rights by contributing to each PES discussion paper within the consultation process as well concentrate on a specific women’s rights chapter. On the other hand, PES Women discussed the preparation of its publication “Europe through women’s eyes” which aimed at highlighting the social democratic achievements within Europe with respect to gender equality and women’s rights and which could be used as a campaign tool.

#### Seminar on women and economic independence (16 May 2008, Ljubljana)

In preparation of the Slovenian national elections in early autumn 2008, PES Women in cooperation with Slovenian Democratic Women held a seminar on Women and Economic Independence. Women from Trade Unions, Public Services, Health and Assurance Services came together to debate the importance of freedom and opportunities to achieve economic independence, reconciliation of professional life and family life and whether this is only a women’s compromise? What is the situation of women when employed or unemployed, active or retired? The debate demonstrated that simple women’s participation on the labour market is not sufficient, but that special policies and programmes have to be implemented

and women's participation in the political sphere are essential to achieve gender equality and economic independence of women

What place has gender equality in the European Socialist Programme?" (10 October 2008, Paris)

Prior to their statutory meeting and seminar, PES Women representatives were welcomed by Paris Mayor Bertrand Delanoë who hosted a meeting at Paris Town Hall. The mayor of Paris is known for improved gender equality policy implemented within Paris Council and its administration.

For PES Women statutory meeting the three main issues on the agenda were: PES Women position on the PES Manifesto; the different elections systems in Europe as regards women's participation in light of the Annual Conference of PES Women on the theme "Women in politics"; and the written declaration on children trafficking which was adopted by the European Parliament. Following the statutory meeting, a closing public debate on "What place does gender equality have in the programme of European Socialists", opened by Spanish PSOE Federal Secretary of Equality Issues Soledad Cabezón and French PS National Officer in charge of Women's Rights Laurence Rossignol at which several French political representatives attended.

PES Ministerial Meeting on Gender Equality (5 February 2009, Prague)

In light of the Czech Presidency's proposal to revise the Barcelona childcare targets and reconsider sending women back to work at home, PES Women expressed its deep concern and brought a statement that followed by a PES statement and several PES Member Party Statements. PES Women President also raised the matter at the PES ministerial meeting of ministers responsible for family policy on 5 February in Prague.

A Presidency paper claims the debate is necessary for "the best interest of the child and best quality of early care" but makes no reference to stepping up efforts to increase childcare services. PES Women fear it is an excuse to ditch commitments made in 2001 to increase pre-school childcare.

PES Women and the PES encourage the continuing development and support for improved childcare, urging the Council to reflect upon solutions on how to meet member states' targets and how to enhance quantity and quality of childcare while at the same time leaving the free choice for public or private childcare but with a guarantee of good quality affordable public childcare available.

**ANNUAL CONFERENCES**

Women on the labour market (3 October 2007, Lisbon):

On the fringes of the Portuguese Presidency Conference on Gender Equality, PES Women and Portuguese Mulheres Socialistas hold its Annual Conference on Women on the labour market. The meeting invited guest speakers from different fields such as trade unionist, women entrepreneurs, trainers, consultants and the European Commission debating legislation and practical examples of "Conditions and obstacles for women on the labour market. How can we enhance employability?" and "Why there are still so few entrepreneurs". Women's training, access to financial and practical tools and confidence building appeared to be the biggest obstacles for women to establish a strong position and move forward on the labour market. Especially the very practical examples on training for women encouraged the attending 120 women to debate and expand this issue at national level.

Women in politics (29 November 2008, Madrid)

The Annual Conference entitled "Women in politics" at the eve of PES Council and European Elections brought together more than 250 people from over 30 countries attended the event and 23 speakers contributed to a stimulating debate between PES Women members, Spanish PSOE activists, experts from NGOs, trade unionists, women leaders of European

public institutions, and people active in the political world and civil society. Women's participation in politics was questioned throughout three roundtables. The first panel discussed whether democracy is possible without parity. Then, contributors gave an overview of different European models towards parity (Norway, Austria, Spain, France and Belgium). The third panel highlighted women's strategies in getting to high-level positions through an interactive session. Solidarity was the key word of the day: between women, between women and men, including feminist men such as Zapatero to strengthen women's work. Besides solidarity, communication is a crucial instrument to let people know what women do and achieve, but also what social democrats have achieved for women's rights and what they plan for further progress.

To reach gender equality in the political field, quota is a good starting tool to foster women's participation, but it has to be complemented with real empowerment and real political engagement: women have to be given the chance to deal with all kinds of issues, not only gender equality, once they have got the power. Also young political engaged women underlined the need to strengthen common work between women of different ages.

## **CAMPAIGNS**

### Support in the pro-abortion campaign for the Portuguese Referendum (January 2007, Portugal)

PES Women President and PES Women Members went to Portugal to join and support the PS comrades in the campaign for the referendum in favour of lifting the ban on abortion in Portugal, a decision of Portuguese Prime Minister José Socrates to change the law on abortion.

### "Gender Pay Gap, Shut it!" Equal Pay Action (22 February 2007)

On 22 February PES Women launched the "Gender Pay Gap, shut it" action raising awareness and expressing its concern about the still existing pay gap and calling on the European Commission and the EU governments to eliminate the EU 15% pay gap between women and men. This 15% pay gap translates into a longer working period for women; to earn what the average man in the EU earned in 2006 the average woman would have to work until 22 February 2007! On this symbolic date, PES Women President also called on Social Affairs ministers and European Commissioner Vladimir Špidla for concrete actions to eliminate the gap. By doing this action, PES Women wanted to underline that the problem is not only women being paid less compared to men for the same job but it is the fact that more women work part-time, work in the lower-paid public and care sectors, and do not get into managerial and other senior positions. The underlying issue is that not enough is done to enable women to combine work and family duties, and not enough is done to encourage men to take a fairer share of family duties.

Moreover, Zita Gurmai invited everyone to wear the tag with the aim to encourage women and men across Europe to download the tag and to promote the action, especially in the run up to International Women's Day. This action is based on the Belgian Equal Pay Day concept ([www.equalpayday.be](http://www.equalpayday.be)).

### Childcare campaign: "Putting Children First" (2007)

PES Women welcomed the PES Childcare campaign that was launched at the PES Congress in Oporto (December 2006). PES's choice for the campaign "Putting children first" underlined that childcare is not longer only a women's issue. PES Women organized a seminar in Berlin in cooperation with SPD Frauen on 12 June 2007 to discuss existing European models and experiences in this field with the aim to draft, present and contribute towards concrete recommendations for childcare policies. With guest speakers from Germany, Finland, the Netherlands and Turkey, the seminar concentrated on childcare for 0-3 year olds and childcare as an integration factor. Apart from the meeting in Berlin, PES Women President as well as other PES Women members contributed towards several

events organized by PES Member parties and the PES Group in the Committee of the Regions across Europe. These meetings highlighted the existence of diverse childcare system across Europe, the still strong burden on women on the one hand to reconcile private and professional life and on the other side to have full responsibility in care issues and potential to have not only European but also regional cooperation on improving childcare service.

#### Stop Cervical Cancers Association (January 2008 and 2009)

In cooperation with Mel Read former MEP and President of European Cervical Cancer Association (ECCA) and Glenis Willmott MEP, PES Women supported in 2008 and 2009 their campaign by signing the Stop Cervical Cancer Petition in order to raise awareness and put pressure on governments about developing effective prevention programmes which could prevent almost every cervical cancer case. Every year in Europe, 50,000 women develop and 25,000 women die from cervical cancer. PES Women President also presented this action to the Gender Equality Ministers.

#### 50/50 For Diversity Campaign (September 2008- June 2009)

In September 2008, the European Women's Lobby launched their Campaign "50 – 50 for democracy" together with Margot Wallström, Vice-President of the Commission and some other prominent people including PES Women President. The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness and put pressure on the governments to increase the women's representation on the electoral lists and women's participation for the European elections of 2009 based on the idea that it is a democratic value and that the political sphere should represent the citizens and the interest of all citizens, including 50% of the population which are women.

#### European Election Campaign (2009)

Although PES Women President has been actively involved in the European Election campaign since its launch in Toulouse in April 2009 until the election day on several topics visiting more than 10 countries to give her support to PES member parties, PES Women President also dedicated a whole day on gender equality issues. On 8 March 2009, across Europe, Social Democrats hold their first European Day of Action highlighting their commitment to women's rights. Over 2 days PES member parties organized events in 17 EU member states including Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Poland, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. PES President Poul Nyrup Rasmussen joined Zita Gurmai, President of PES Women, at a large public event in Budapest organized by the Women's Section of the Hungarian Socialist Party and the Women's Section of the Hungarian Trade Unions Association in the presence of at the time Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany.

#### **PUBLICATIONS**

At the PES Women Annual Conference of 2009, PES Women launched the book "**Europe through women's eyes**"<sup>1</sup>, distributed for the first time at the PES Council in Madrid on 1 December. A compilation of 35 contributions, this PES Women publication shows what social democratic women have achieved and will do at European level. It is a valuable tool to make women's voice heard all over Europe during the European election campaign.

#### **PES WOMEN PRESIDENT**

PES Women President, Zita Gurmai, was present at all PES Leaders and Presidency meeting. Apart from these regular PES meetings, she also attended conferences and seminars on behalf of PES Women on topics ranging from Social Europe, to Energy Issues,

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.pes.org/downloads/Europe\\_through\\_womens\\_eyes\\_EN.pdf](http://www.pes.org/downloads/Europe_through_womens_eyes_EN.pdf)

to the financial crisis, ECOSY Seminars, FEPS events and several meetings with Commissioners to discuss gender issues.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Venue</b>
<b>2007</b>		
30/01	Equality Summit - Opening of the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All	Berlin
07/02	ECOSY winter university	Brussels
22/02	PES Social Affairs Ministerial - PES Women Statutory Meeting - Pay Gap Action	Brussels
28/02	PES Presidency	Brussels
07/03	Campaign Rally Ségolène Royal – Childcare event	Dijon
14/03	PES Childcare reception	Strasbourg
15/03	EDEK Congress	Cyprus
30/03	ECOSY Congress	Warsaw
02/04	Portuguese PES Activists Meeting	Lisbon
11-12/04	BSP Childcare and Election campaign event	Sofia
21/04	PDS Childcare Conference	Romania
08/05	Committee of the Regions Childcare conference	Brussels
12/06	PES Women Childcare conference - Statutory Meeting	Berlin
01/07	SIW Executive Meeting	Geneva
04/07	PES Group: European Year of Equal Opportunities for All	Brussels
20/07	Festá del Unita	Milano
07-08/09	SIW bureau - Centenary meeting + PES Women Executive	Stuttgart
21/09	PSOE summer university	Madrid
27/09	PES Manifesto presentation	Budapest
02-04/10	PES Women Statutory Meeting - Annual Conference - PES Ministerial Meeting	Lisbon
09/10	Committee of the Regions Childcare Event	Brussels
20/10	Anna Lindh Seminar	Stockholm
25/10	50 Years of Equal Opportunities Conference by European Commission	Brussels
07/11	PES Women Executive meeting	Madrid
21/11	PES Presidency	Sofia
22-23/11	PES Council	Sofia
<b>2008</b>		
22/01	Eurocadres Conference: Women in decision making seminar	Brussels
22/01	PES Women Executive meeting	Brussels
22/01	STOP Cervical Cancer Petition Action	Brussels
31/01	PES Gender Equality Ministerial meeting	Ljubljana
13/02	PES Presidency and New Year's Reception	Brussels
15/02	Global Progressive Forum	Geneva
26/02	Debate in support of PSOE election campaign	
28/02	PES Women Statutory meeting	Brussels
05/03	ECOSY Winter University	Brussels
05/03	PES Group International Women's Day Debate	Brussels
06/03	PSOE Mujeres event	Valencia
29/03	Conference on the future of social democracy	Tallin
10/04	PES Presidency	Brussels
26/10	Hungarian Socialist Party event presenting Manifesto	Budapest

10/05	Meeting with Portuguese PES Activists	Faro
16/05	PES Women Statutory meeting- Debate Women and Economic independence	Ljubljana
24/05	PSD campaign event	Fetesti
04/06	FEPS Bureau Meeting	Brussels
09/06	PES Employment and Social Affairs Ministerial meeting	Luxembourg
25/06	PES Presidency	Brussels
26/06	PES Women Executive meeting	Athens
27/06	SIW Congress	Athens
05/07	PES activists meeting	Vienna
19/07	PSC Congress	Barcelona
30/07	ECOSY Summer Camp	Carpentras, Avignon
30/08	PS France Summer university	La Rochelle
09/09	PES Women Executive meeting	Brussels
10/09	Committee of the Regions Mobilising for democracy: elections turnout and voting behaviour	Brussels
09-10/10	PES Women Statutory meeting – Meeting with Paris Mayor Mr Delanoë	Paris
16/10	PES Presidency	Brussels
24/10	Parity and quota systems conference	Warsaw
05/11	PES Leaders meeting	Brussels
17/11	PSD Childcare conference	Bucharest
25/11	PES Presidency	Brussels
29/11	PES Women Annual Conference	Madrid
30/11	FEPS Activists meeting	Madrid
01-02/12	PES Council meeting	Madrid
<b>2009</b>		
27/01	PES Women Executive	Brussels
04/02	PASOK women conference: Handling the economic crisis	Athens
05/02	PES Gender Equality Ministerial meeting	Prague
11/02	PES Manifiesta	Brussels
12/02	PES Presidency	Brussels
19/02	PES Women Statutory meeting	Brussels
04/03	PES Women and PES Group: International Women's Day Debate From Quota to Parity	Brussels
19/03	FEPS seminar: Philosophy of feminism	Brussels
19/03	PES Leaders and Prime Ministers Meeting	Brussels
01/04	ECOSY dinner	Brussels
02/04	Global Progressive Forum	Brussels
03/04	Let's get our Europe back conference	Barcelona
24/04	PES Leaders meeting - PES Campaign launch	Toulouse
06/05	PES Women executive meeting	Strasbourg
15/05	SPD Campaign Rally: Women in Politics	Berlin
16/05	Meeting SPÖ Women: preparation campaign	Graz
18/05	PD Event on Women in Politics	Milano
19/05	PS France Campaign Event	Marseille
26/05	PES Campaign event	Vilnius
12/06	PES Presidency	Brussels
17/06	PES Women Executive meeting	Brussels
27-29/06	SIW	Podgorica

18/07	IUSY Summer Event	Budapest
23/09	PES Women Statutory meeting	Brussels
08/10	PES Presidency	Brussels
15/11	PES Women Statutory Meeting	Stockholm
19/11	PES Presidency	Brussels

### **GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN THE PES**

PES Women actively contributes to PES policy documents in order to guarantee that the gender dimension of all policies is taken into account. A specific adviser in the PES Secretariat is the reference point for these contributions under the direction of the PES Women President. This adviser was particularly involved in the party's work on the New Social Europe, and previous to that the PES report on demographic challenges.

Leaders' Declaration: At the Leaders' meeting in June 2008, PES Leaders supported actions to increase equality between women and men, stating "We commit ourselves to doing all possible to increase the participation of women in the European elections, both as voters and as candidates, as back-benchers and as candidates for senior posts."

The PES Manifesto for the 2009 elections had a gender mainstreaming approach in the chapters on social and economic policy, on climate issues, on EU in the world and migration issues, as well as a whole chapter dedicated to women's rights entitled "championing gender equality in the EU".

### **INTERNATIONAL WORK**

#### Global Progressive Forum

PES Women in cooperation with the GPF organized a panel on Equal Rights for All Women at the Brussels GPF Event on 2-3 April 2009, where Namrata Bali, Aïcha Belarbi, Sharan Burrow and Taslima Nasreen attended. Their contributions covered the issues of the Beijing Platform, decent work and the eradication of poverty, the issue of women's empowerment through employment and political participation, the financial crisis and women's situation and migration issues.

PES Women President attended also several other GPF events such as the Geneva Group meetings and the World Social Forum meetings.

#### Socialist International Women

Socialist International Women (SIW) President, Pia Locatelli, and PES Women President, Zita Gurmai, agreed about ex-officio of SIW President on PES Women Executive in order to enhance the complementary work delivered by both parties. SIW President has been informed and invited to all PES Women activities and PES Women Executive meetings. PES Women President attended the SIW Executive meeting in Geneva (July 2007), the SIW Bureau and Centennial Meeting in Stuttgart (September 2007), SIW Congress in Athens (June 2008) and the Council in Podgorica.

## **ANNEX 1: List of PES Women Bureau Members as of elections 7 December 2006, Porto**

### **President**

Zita Gurmai - MSZP (Hungary)

### **Vice-Presidents**

Olga Zrihen - PS (Belgium)

Anna Karamanou - PASOK (Greece)

Inger Segelström - SAP (Sweden)

### **Bureau Members**

Britta Thomsen - SD (Denmark)

Marianne Mikko - SDE (Estonia)

Laurence Rossignol - PS (France)

Karin Junker - SPD (Germany)

Saskia Duives - PvdA (the Netherlands)

Edite Estrela - PS (Portugal)

Rovana Plumb - PSD (Romania)

Teresa Riera - PSOE (Spain)

## **ANNEX 2: Adopted procedures and timetable of the PES Women Elections December 2009**

### **When:**

- Prior to PES Women Annual Conference, 5 December 2009, Prague, Czech Republic

### **Who:**

- PES Women members interested in running for President (1), Vice-President (3) or member of the Bureau (8-10) should notify the secretariat ([pes.women@pes.org](mailto:pes.women@pes.org)).
- Incumbents may stand again.

### **Requirements:**

- Each candidate should present a personal programme explaining their motivation for running for the position and what their contribution will be.
- For incumbents, apart from the programme, they should also provide a short written personal activity report outlining how their activity in their current position has contributed towards PES Women's achievements since the last elections in December 2006.
- In both cases, candidates should receive full support from their party in written form.

### **Timeframe:**

- PES Women President, in agreement with the Executive, will present the adopted procedures for elections at the next statutory meeting in November 2009.
- Interested candidates will be requested to send their candidacy and the nomination from their party no later than 14 November 2009 to the PES Secretariat ([pes.women@pes.org](mailto:pes.women@pes.org)). This will give the PES Women President the opportunity to inform the Presidency on 19 November 2009.
- The list of candidates and their contributions will be circulated from 19 November 2009 amongst PES Women members in preparation for the elections.

### **Elections:**

- All candidates will be listed
- Each full member party PRESENT at the statutory meeting on 5 December 2009 will have ONE VOTE.
- The actual vote will take place in 3 parts for the 3 types of positions; President, Vice-Presidents and Bureau members.
- The candidate running for the position of President with the most votes will be elected President of PES Women.
- The candidates running for the positions of Vice-Presidents will be elected according to the 3 highest results. Note that the composition of the Vice-Presidents should represent a geographical balance.
- The candidates running for the positions of Bureau members will be elected according to the 10 highest results.