



PES Strategy 2007: Proposal for PES Presidency

Adopted by PES Presidency on 28th February 2007

The PES Congress of December 2006 has given the following mandate to the PES in its resolution on "Common European Ambitions: A Framework for PES Action 2007-2009":

*"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. [...] 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."*

The present strategy aims to detail the means for fulfilling this new mandate in this first year of implementation.

1. STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

The PES' strategy is based on a new mandate for the PES to shape changes in Europe's political environment, focusing the European Union on people's concerns and securing their future. Partnership will be the key to success of this strategy – a partnership between PES member parties, PES governments, and all organisations close to the PES and supportive of social democratic objectives.

The 2007 PES **Strategy** will be built on three pillars: **Our Political Agenda; Our Influence; Our Visibility**. These pillars are highly interdependent and thus equally important.

The **three objectives** of the 2007 strategy, on the basis of these three pillars, are the following:

- **To consolidate the PES' political agenda on political priorities of importance to Europe's people;**
- **To increase the influence of the PES;**
- **To strengthen the visibility of the PES.**



A. Our Political Agenda

The PES Congress has given the PES a renewed political agenda, notably the New Social Europe and Energy and Climate Change, but this agenda must be consolidated. Our political agenda should constitute a “people’s agenda”, reflecting the concerns and aspirations of Europe’s citizens.

The consolidation of the PES’ political agenda in 2007 should be considered an important contribution to the PES manifesto for the 2009 European elections.

B. Our Influence

Working methods must be honed to increase PES influence at EU level, through the consolidation of work within our own political family and with external actors:

- a. at the level of the European Council;
- b. in the Council of Ministers;
- c. in the European Parliament, in close cooperation with the PES Group in the European Parliament;
- d. in the Committee of the regions, in close cooperation with the PES Group in the Committee of the regions;
- e. in the wider EU and national policy communities.

This influence requires a combination of presence, networking and action at key points in the political agenda.

PES influence at the level of the European Council and Council of Ministers faces one country-specific issue to resolve in 2007, to encourage adherence of the new Italian Democratic Party to the PES, as soon as it is created.

C. Our Visibility

The PES must be more visible and present both within our own political family and in the outside world.

The visibility of the PES and its positions must be raised:

- a. within PES member parties;
- b. in the national and regional press;
- c. with national and regional stakeholders and opinion-formers, notably those close to our political family;
- d. amongst the EU policy community;
- e. within the European Parliament;
- f. within the Committee of the regions.



2. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

2.1. Consolidating the PES' political agenda

The PES Congress has given a mandate to develop the PES' political agenda, reflecting the real concerns of ordinary citizens ("Our Common European Ambitions").

The following five priority themes will be the focus of the PES' political agenda in 2007, and as part of the manifesto process:

A. New Social Europe

The PES' priority of the New Social Europe reflects the urgent need for progressive social democratic reforms in Europe's member states and for the EU to strengthen its social dimension. The PES will deepen its policy work, taking the PES resolution on "Ten principles for our Common Future" as our guideline. The following policy areas could be prioritised in this work:

- The fight against poverty and precariousness in living and working conditions;
- Labour market policy;
- Child care;
- Gender equality;
- Public services and the Internal Market;
- Diversity and Integration of immigrants;
- Corporate social responsibility;
- Education and lifelong learning.

B. EU Political Reform

Current discussions on the constitutional treaty and the budget for the future of the European Union demand engagement from the PES as a political family. It is important that the PES promotes frank debate between its member parties and contributes to creating the conditions for the best possible outcome for Europe's citizens.

C. Energy and Environment

Europe's citizens now view climate change as a priority concern and as a pre-eminent policy challenge. 2007 will be a crucial year for the definition of EU actions in this field. Thus, the PES will deepen its work on energy and climate change, on the basis of the PES resolution on "A new social democratic energy policy".

D. Economic Governance and Reform

The PES' Growth and Investment Strategy, adopted in October 2005, on the proposal of PES Finance Ministers, signalled the need for improvements in Europe's economic governance and priority objectives for the EU's budget. Since then, other issues of economic governance, including appropriate regulation of capital markets, have emerged as important political priorities. Thus, the PES must consolidate its work in this important field for Europe's sustainable economic growth and job creation.

E. Europe in the World

The European Union is an essential global player, whose role of promoting conflict resolution, peace, and sustainable development must be strengthened. The broad majority of European citizens believe that the EU's external actions could and should be bolstered. With the aim of focusing on policy action and delivery, the following priorities have been chosen for this year:



- Promoting dialogue in the Middle East;
- Strengthening links with EU candidate and neighbouring countries, notably Turkey and the Balkans;
- Converging global standards: from climate change to decent work, the emphasis of the PES will be on contributing to the convergence of global standards, taking the EU's approach to sustainable development as its point of departure for regional dialogue.
- Contributing to an "Alliance of civilisations", including promotion of dialogue between people; consolidation of the fight against human trafficking, terrorism and international crime while upholding fundamental rights;

The PES must deepen its work on these major themes – promoting productive debate and actions, developing new proposals for policy action and delivery for the PES manifesto - while anticipating institutional developments.

The tools for consolidating the PES' political agenda will be the following:

- a. PES priorities for the EU agenda;
- b. Policy positions and statements by PES ministers;
- c. PES policy work within PES working groups/ high level groups;
- d. PES statements agreed by the PES Presidency and PES Leaders' meetings: appropriate statements could be made at the March and Spring Leaders' meetings and the PES Council in November;
- e. The proposed political foundation linked to the PES;
- f. The PES manifesto process (see separate paper).

2.2. Increasing our Influence

In order to increase the influence of the PES in 2007, the PES should:

- A. Identify clear objectives and tasks for each PES ministerial and spokespersons' coordination**, corresponding to PES priorities. Meetings should take place at least at every other Council meeting. More preparatory political work will be undertaken between ministerial advisers and the PES secretariat in advance of meetings.
- B. Revive the Prime Ministers' network** by organising regular informal meetings before the European Council (a consultation of PM cabinets will be undertaken 6-8 weeks before each European Council to identify the desirability of holding the meeting). Deputy Prime Ministers, from those governments in which we are in coalition, will be associated to the network. Specific political work may be developed at the level of the PM and Deputy PM sherpas.
- C. Establish close cooperation between the PES and PES governments** (including coalition governments) **holding the Presidency of the EU**. This year Germany and Portugal hold the Presidencies of the EU, which gives the PES a unique opportunity to cooperate informally on issues of political importance.
- D. Support member parties in national and European elections**, in order to consolidate PES presence in the European Council, Council of Ministers and European Parliament. In 2007, there will be a number of national elections (Belgium, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland) and two European elections in Bulgaria and Romania. This



could be achieved through joint events, activities and exchanges of best practice between member parties.

- E. **Ensure that the PES Presidency exercises its role of fixing the political guidelines** of the PES during the period between Congresses and Councils, undertaking political debates for this purpose and issuing timely statements and positions, where necessary. A summary of organisational decisions taken by the PES coordination team will be presented to the PES Presidency without debate in order to allow more time for political debate and decision-making.
- F. **Develop further the work of PES working groups/ high level groups**, for example, the Lisbon Network under the leadership of Hans Eichel, associating ministers and members of the PES Group as much as possible;
- G. **Launch a new phase of cooperation with the PES Group in the European Parliament**, agreed by the first joint PES Presidency-PES Group Bureau meeting and implemented by the respective secretariats. This cooperation should encompass the PES priorities for the EU agenda, particularly energy policy and services of general interest. Climate change and hedge funds are two further areas for cooperation. PES working groups/ high level groups/ ministerial coordinations should associate MEPs. The leaders of these groups/ coordinations should have some presence in the PES Group of the European Parliament: for example, consulting Group members on draft positions and activities (eg. prior to extra-EU visits, during the preparation of policy papers). In addition to the permanent membership of the PES Group President, the PES Presidency may invite individual Members of the PES Group, on an ad hoc basis, to report on priority political issues.
- H. **Continue strengthening cooperation with the PES Group in the Committee of the regions, PES Women and Ecosy**, notably through joint events and activities.
- I. **Promote PES policy positions in and cooperation with the EU and national policy communities**, including think tanks, media and civil society organisations: through representation at policy events, the organisation of debates, and dissemination of policy papers.
- J. **Reflect the policy priorities of member parties**: the PES needs a better understanding of current national issues in order to represent better the concerns of national parties, and their members, at European level. The PES will cooperate with member parties in order to establish better bottom-up information and dialogue.

2.3. Increasing our Visibility

In order to increase the visibility of the PES within our member parties and externally, the PES should:

- A. Develop **visits of the PES President in member states**, focusing on thematic priorities.
- B. Develop the **role of the chairperson of each ministerial coordination and PES working or high level group** as a spokesperson on behalf of the PES in relation to their work area.



- C. Make **political action** a regular part of ministerial meetings and PES meetings, where possible. Examples include open letters, press conferences, photo events, to be reported on the PES website and in the media.
- D. Roll out **PES campaigns** on the internet and through public events nationally and in Brussels, in a collaborative effort with member parties, the PES groups in the EP and in the Committee of the Regions, PES women & ECOSY. The child care campaign is our first campaign for 2007. It should be promoted as part of the New Social Europe project.
- E. Continue the development of the **PES website**, linking it further with national party websites and expand the circulation of the PES newsletter to new audiences.
- F. Develop **PES activists** as a central part of the PES identity and activity.
- G. Highlight relevant initiatives, policies and actions of member parties** on the PES website and in the media.
- H. Ensure presence and visibility at **member party congresses** when possible, for example with a stand to explain the role of the PES to party members.
- I. Develop the visibility of the PES amongst **EU and national policy communities** (notably think tanks, foundations, and civil society organisations).
- J. Introduce a monthly PES **EU policy brief**, focusing on EU policy developments in relation to our key priorities, to be circulated within our political family.

