



OF PES WOMEN

By: Dr. Ania Skrzypek & Dr. Zita Gurmai

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20 YEARS

OF PES WOMEN



Half the Sky, Half the Earth, Half the Power *

Celebrating 20 years of PES Women

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FOREWORD

■ **Zita GURMAI**
PES Women President



20 YEARS OF PES WOMEN

While Europe is at a turning point with a new European Parliament and new European Commission being formed, it is important to take a step back and look at what Europe has achieved and what lies ahead. But it is also a good time to look at what we as a political family, and our women's rights organisation within the movement, have accomplished in our twenty years of existence.

Celebrating twenty years of the Party of European Socialists has highlighted that as a European political party we have evolved not only in number and size but also in our approach to doing politics at European level; the PES has grown from a network between sister parties to a political force articulating, adopting and affirming clear

socialist policies and visions on the European Project. Who would have imagined twenty years ago that in 2009, all member parties would have a manifesto and a common slogan 'People first' or that in 2014 we would have a common candidate for the European Commission Presidency.

Also for PES Women, twenty years ago it was hard to imagine that PES Women would transform from a platform of exchange within the PES to an active outgoing women's movement, with a real political influence on the European scene. Two important factors have led to this transformation and positive development into becoming an established power and actor. The first one is thanks to a gender

mainstreaming approach; in other words thanks to PES Women's stronger position within the PES through a real implication and participation at all levels of the PES. The second one is thanks to a strengthened cooperation within PES Women; a strong Bureau (with geographical balance) and liaison with sister parties at national level through frequent statutory meetings and focused and visible annual PES Women campaigns.

But what I have also learned during my ten year mandate as PES Women President is that PES Women's achievements would not have been possible without the following ingredients; feminism, women and men working together, intergenerational dialogue and gender equality as an integral part of the vision we have of our society. Indeed, as our friend José Luis Zapatero (PSOE) says: 'I'm a feminist because I'm socialist'. Not only does that underline that gender equality has always and will always be a core value of our political family - even though we have to continually remind political leaders about it - but that it is the responsibility and aspiration of women and men. As this publication shows, the work of PES Women is also the result of men's support for gender equality and women's rights. This is certainly highlighted when I talk to the youth; younger women and men want to have the same opportunities and chances to move forward in society, be it in the private, public or professional sphere, but need to be reminded that equality should never be taken for granted.

While young women and men today often enjoy more and better rights, it is important to remember that unfortunately still today, certain rights can never be considered as guaranteed. If the intergenerational dialogue is important, it is not only to create a link between role models that have laid the path for us and the youth that is building the

future, but also to remember what and how we as socialists and social democrats have achieved in welfare, social progress, justice, equality and democracy. This is also why, as a reminder, this publication is entitled "Half the sky, half the earth, half the power" recalling the first ever PES Women Campaign and paying tribute to all subsequent struggles.

This is why the next twenty years are as important if not more important than the last ones for our movement; we are witnessing a conservative backlash when it comes to gender equality and women's rights, but also when it comes to the European social model that we have defended so strongly. In twenty years, I hope to contribute to the next edition of this publication and say that a woman has been President of the Party of European Socialists, that we have contributed to closing the gender pay gap, that sexual and reproductive rights are a reality for all women in Europe, that violence against women no longer kills 7 women a day, that parity lists exist at all levels in Europe, that women are equally represented in decision-making bodies and that fathers taking parental leave and sharing the work when it comes to care is the norm and not the exception.



Zita Gurmai

President of PES Women

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CHAPTER

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FOUNDING THE PES WOMEN STANDING COMMITTEE

The beginnings of the greatest endeavours are often rocky, thankless and discouraging. It takes much idealism, strength of conviction and determination to persevere. It is usually only the record of subsequent groundbreaking achievements that becomes a “proud legacy”, which is kept alive in a movement’s memory thanks to the inspiration it offers to the next generations. But these accomplishments then seem to be “standing alone” as facts. Their shine overshadows the earlier genesis, which slowly transforms into a legend. It is re-told only upon very special occasions with a silent “once upon a time” – pointing out the days when the struggle was about the very sense of things: about “to be or not to be”.

The history of PES Women begins over 20 years ago. It would be impossible to identify one singular, specific moment marking

its establishment. This feature should not surprise, as this is not atypical for the launching of new organisations. Surely, however, the inclination to create a space where progressive women could come together on the European level had already existed towards the end of the 1980s.

This period is marked in the chronicles as the time of great changes. Within the global scale, the collapse of the Eastern Block and the changes of the regimes from behind the iron curtain were taking place. Within the European Community, there was a strong political will to accomplish the next step of the integration process. This meant that an enhanced exchange on how to achieve a Political Union was taking place, through which debates and negotiations the Treaty of Maastricht was effectively drafted.



■ Confederation of Socialist Parties of the European Community

The changing circumstances were mutually dependent on the need of ever-closer cooperation, which also constituted an impulse for the partisan confederations to aim at consolidating and thereby substantially transforming their structures. This was naturally at the core of the discussions within the Confederation of Socialist Parties of the European Community (CSPEC, predecessor of the contemporary PES).

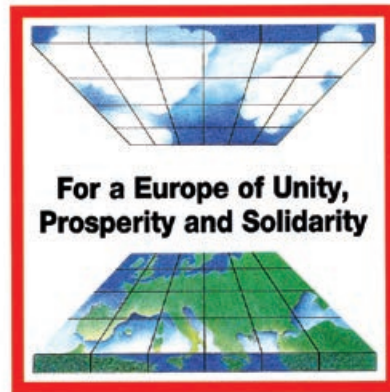
Anticipating the possibilities that the new Treaty was to open up, CSPEC launched a new consultation and reflection process. The main findings and the subsequent recommendations were then included in what is known in PES history as the “*Report of the Kok¹ Working party*”, which was presented by **Wim Kok** to the XVII Congress in Berlin on 8th and 9th February 1990. The document was officially introduced under the meaningful title “*Strengthening the Confederation*”. The importance of this for the future PES Women was that it included in point 7.3 the first ever reference to work done by women’s organisations in the context of European socialist cooperation.

The relevant part of the Report is quoted in Chapter 3.1.1; however what requires reiterating are the following points. First of all, it was acknowledged that a loose cooperation among the women’s organisations affiliated to or active within the sister parties had been taking place. It was underlined that it had an informal character, which is indeed true – if you do not count the occasional teamwork among women MEPs. Secondly, it stressed that more coordination and the eventual establishment of a women’s organisation would be very much to be desired, enabling not only further exchange, but also possibilities to formulate “women’s policies” and increase advocacy for them. Thirdly, the report was

¹ The name “Report of the Kok Working party” derives from the name of Wim Kok, who was entrusted by the CSPEC Bureau to lead and conclude these deliberations. Wim Kok, born 1938, is a former leader of the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA) and served as Prime Minister of the Netherlands from 1994 to 2002.



■ Wim KOK



Manifesto

**of the Confederation of the Socialist
Parties of the European Community**

Brussels, 10 February 1989

■ CSPEC Manifesto

very clear as far as the operational questions were concerned. It obliged the Confederation to enable the first truly official meeting among the socialist women organisation's representatives. It indicated four goals such a gathering would need to serve, including: a need to appoint a representative to the CSPEC Bureau; exploring the possibility of converging activities with those of the CSPEC; assessing existing cooperation; and identifying ways in which more organised and more institutionalised structures could be put into place.

The report was indeed of a pioneer character as far as the CSPEC was concerned. It drew attention to the area of activism, which had already been developed within some of the member parties – but which until that point remained rather unnoticed and hence also unaddressed at European level. It is important to add that the document takes on the “bottom-up” approach, without prescribing what sort of a format a cooperation among the women organisations would need to have in order to match the then existing operational configuration of the Confederation itself. This was not only because if parties had active women organisations within them then, they were respectively different from one another. The key point was rather that there was an implicit idea that such a European socialist women organisation, if it was to be established, would enjoy rights to self-determination and autonomy in designing its work. This principle has been proudly upheld by the later generations.

What the “*Strengthening the Confederation*” report does not include is the reference to the collaboration that had been developed among socialist women within the European Parliament. The hypothesis why that could have been the case is that while the efforts within the CSPEC were focused on how to enable the next step of this organisation's transformation and thereby make it less of the Secretariat deeply embedded within the one of the groups in the European Parliament. But regardless of this concern, it is worth a

special mention here, as it was a key step to the later establishment of the PES Women (Standing Committee).

A useful source to imagine what kind of character this teamwork within the Group could have is the report of the Socialist Group Chairman **Jean-Pierre Cot**. The document was presented at the same Congress in Berlin as the “*Report of the Kok Working party*”, and similarly to it is incorporated in this publication in Chapter 3.1.2. It re-emphasises the importance of women's agenda, making a case for what in today's political language would perhaps be called a “women-proofing” of all European policies. Then it was a symbol of a philosophy that dominated later the discussion in the 1990s, namely of “gender mainstreaming”. Therefore also the presentation of Cot's report indicated that the work towards equality of women and men should not be conducted only within one EP Committee, but should be transversal. That was especially because European unification was undergoing such a great transformation and it was desired that women would not become negatively affected by, for example, the completion of the “internal market”.

The simultaneous endorsement of the two reports by the CSPEC Congress had the following meaning. First of all, there was an attention drawn to socialist women activism and to the women's right's agenda. This was both due to the plans concerning the internal restructuring of the Confederation, and also due to external circumstances. In parallel, there was also a great push among the women NGOs to ‘get together’ – which soon resulted in the establishment of the “European Women's Lobby”². Secondly, the need to support women's participation in politics was at the forefront at that point and was a symbol of

² European Women's Lobby (EWL) was established in 1990 and remains one of the “longest-standing European NGO's”. The initial meeting had already taken place in London in November 1987, however it took another 3 years to consolidate forces. More on EWL can be found on <http://www.womenlobby.org>



■ Jean-Pierre COT

a very much needed modernisation of the CSPEC. The ongoing changes within the social structure, the massive entry of women onto the labour market – all those processes had not yet been really reflected by substantial changes in terms of representation. In 1990 women constituted only one fifth of the assembly.³

In the midst of the further negotiations regarding the new Treaty, and with it the establishment of the europarties – the process leading to the founding of the PES Women Standing Committee continued. It came to a successful end. By the time socialist parties gathered in The Hague on 8th and 9th November 1992 to found together the Party of European Socialists, the cooperation among women organisations was already so strong that, in parallel, the PES Women Standing Committee was recognised as an integral part of the new organisation.

The protagonist of the PES Women Standing Committee was **Karin Junker**. From 1989 until 2004 she served as a Member of the European Parliament. Because she was at the same time also a member of the SPD Presidium and since 1992 the President of the SPD Women Organisation – ASF⁴, she had already been actively involved in the work of SIW⁵. But, as she recalls⁶, organising a socialist women’s movement on the European level was particularly challenging: “The parties’ leaders and international secretaries

³ The percentage of women in the European Parliament has been steadily growing. The tendency is illustrated by the following table:

Beginning year	1989	1994	1999	2004	2009
Number of Member States then	EU 12	EU 12	EU 15	EU 25	EU 27
Percentage of women	19%	26%	30%	31%	35%

⁴ ASF – Arbeitsgemeinschaft Sozialdemokratischer Frauen.
⁵ IW – Socialist International Women.
⁶ Interview by A. Skrzypek on 17th February 2014, followed by an email exchange.



■ Karin JUNKER



■ PES Foundation Agreement (1992)

were meeting quite regularly, using that as an opportunity to debate the future of the Confederation and establishment of the PES. But there were no such meetings for women's representatives." Therefore, using her position within the European Parliament, Karin embarked on a mission to bring those women and their organisations together through meetings, conferences and seminars held with the support of the Socialist Group. The initial conversations touched upon common political priorities, exchange of information and the possibility of networking with one another. The tangible reference point was the work being delivered through the Women's Rights Committee in the European Parliament. It existed since July 1984 (as the EP Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities).

To that end, founding a European socialist women organisation presented itself as a great challenge. It is true that the parallel consolidation of the sister parties into a europarty was also demanding, but there had at least already been an existing practice of cooperation, some of whose patterns could be used. As far as socialist women were concerned, if their organisations existed within the respective parties, the differences among them were enormous and there was no reference point on how to fuse their distinctive cultures. Some of the divergences remain unbridged even today. *"This was learning by doing"* assesses Karin nowadays.

With no blueprint, Karin steered towards a known pattern – namely the SPD model of women's organisation within the party. Direct translation of this set up was neither possible, nor even desired – but it definitely served as an inspiration. With **Axel Hanisch**, who then served in the CSPEC (and then as the 1st Secretary General of the PES) and who was from SPD as well, she had an ally for this position

that envisaged creation of a Standing Committee within the PES. *"We didn't want to be a loose group of women within the party – we wanted to be an integrated component of it. This is what the name "Standing Committee" symbolised, even if later on it was so heavily criticised for the misleading combination "standing women" and eventually dropped. We wanted realisation of the gender equality principle, also within the very fabric of the party – we wanted quotas in praesidium, quotas for speakers' lists, etc. Of course, we could not even dare thinking that it could be achieved instantly – but step by step we became successful."*

These three years of groundwork leading towards the establishment of the PES Women Standing Committee were filled with hard work, endless talks and many travels. Karin recalls that every meeting, from a small progressive women's seminar in Salzburg or to a large Festa de l'Unità in Milan, these all had to be seen as potential openings that one needed to grasp as opportunities. The challenge was not only establishing contacts, but also changing mentality. It was hard, especially that even in the European Parliament she was encountering questions such as *"And then what? We will create women's organisation and then every minority will want a platform too?"*. They were not only unjust, but of course very hurtful – neither was there a danger for social democracy in organising themselves in different networks, nor were women 'a minority'. On the contrary – they were half of the society and they wanted to acquire adequate political rights.

Even though some of the memories may be making one angry even now, as Karin says, this was not the point. The focus has always been the mission and realisation of one is never easy. *"Sometimes it was*



■ A speech by Karin JUNKER

really painful" remarks Karin, but at the same time, during the interview she begins to laugh and offers the following anecdote. The day she needed to present the idea of a PES Women organisation to the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, she had a dentist appointment in the morning. It ended with a dental procedure, which resulted not only in a swollen cheek, but also with Karin arriving at the EP with a lot of gauze dressing in her mouth.

This all meant that she had a very limited ability to articulate. Nevertheless that day seemed to be a "now or never" point for a cause that she had been fighting for. So she stood up and made her case, as scheduled – having to repeat certain bits, which did not pass through the gauze. But she did it, she made her case. Hearing this story now, one has difficulty resisting an impression that this moment was somewhat iconic. It featured a woman who, with power of conviction, with her mouth almost completely gagged, spoke up for the cause of all those who at least figuratively had their lips gagged for so many decades.

It is important to underline, that though establishment and recognition of the PES Women Standing Committee at the first PES Congress in The Hague in November 1992 was groundbreaking in itself, it was not "just about" being present. The ambition has always been much more profound. It was about creating and profoundly transforming the political, social and economic reality. Therefore the PES Women Standing Committee inaugurated its existence as an institution with two key political messages (see Chapter 3.1.3).

The first one was a demand that gender equality should become a mainstreaming feature of all community policies. It argued that without empowerment and thereby participation of women, the European

Community as such is “weakened” in terms of growing to its full potential. The fact that this call became an integral part of the founding declaration of the PES (article 3.2) was at the same time a symbol of change – especially because previous documents hardly ever included reference to “women and men”, or “women” specifically. Rather, their narrative addressed “all” or “everyone”, if it addressed anyone at all.

Secondly, the founding Congress also adopted “upon the request of socialist and social democratic women” the “*Resolution on Women*”. It was most probably the first such complex document setting out the priorities of the women’s agenda in the context of European integration. Being a certain Decalogue (composed of 10 points), the document included a call for the Congress to reaffirm that the gender equality agenda is a fundamental part of the overall socialist agenda.

It also pleaded for recognition of women’s rights and contributions, for ensuring their adequate position and power over decision-making processes; for the guarantee of equal opportunities and particularly equal rights on the labour markets; for solutions within the welfare states that would enable women to work and reconcile their professional and private choices. The text was significant, as it went beyond the scope of the European Community’s policies, reaching even beyond the Equal Opportunities Action Programmes⁷.

The fact that the women’s agenda was both included in the main Congress resolution, and was also presented through a separate

statement was in line with the tendency that one could already observe while analysing the Kok and the Cot reports respectively. There was a drive to make gender equality an overarching issue, while at the same time there was also a desire to bring more attention to and focus specifically on “women’s issues”. These two objectives, which were not mutually exclusive, would however at a later time lead to a constructive tension between the mainstreaming feminist and the specifically women’s-only approach. It reflected the dual approach that the EU was soon to adopt, focusing on both gender mainstreaming and specific measures to prevent discrimination against women.

While looking at the document today, even if the language of resolutions has most obviously changed – it is necessary to acknowledge its complexity, its ideological integrity and its boldness of tone. What may appear somewhat ironic is that then, just as now, socialist women were naming similar grounds of discrimination and the same examples of injustice. They were beginning the struggle for equal representation in the PES too, which even today is still a subject of debate and is not always observed in the composition of the delegations. Though the situation has undoubtedly improved thanks to their efforts, it is most important to look at these beginnings as a great inspiration. These women back then paved the way and set an example – the way to honour them is not only to remember, but to continue their fight until the egalitarian ideal, perhaps nowadays still utopian, is achieved.



⁷ The first was covering years 1982 – 1985.



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1992/2012

■ 2.1 PES Women Standing Committee under the leadership of Karin Junker (1992-1999)

After the impressive launch of the PES Women Standing Committee at the first PES Congress, the developments started speeding up. As well as the power of motivation and mobilisation of the comrades involved in consolidating the Committee at that time, there were a number of external contributing factors. To begin with, there were the

upcoming European elections on the horizon. They would take place within just eighteen months after the foundation of the PES. As such, they were seen as the first serious test for the newly established structures. In their context, it was anticipated that the europarty would present a manifesto. Today it may appear to be self-evident, but one needs to keep in mind that in those days it was not yet a well-established practice.

To briefly recall the previous experiences and and so offer an explanation for the statement above, the Confederation (CSPEC) had only successfully managed to vote through two manifestos. The scary spectre of the document which had been rejected in 1979 and had subsequently been replaced with a short “Appeal to the Electorate,” was still relatively vivid in the memories of the contemporaries. Moreover, even though it is becoming common

that every time European elections arrive they are called “the most significant turning point ever”, in case of the vote of 1994 it was a very truthful statement indeed. The newly established Union was battling the devastating consequences of a recent financial and economic crisis. The growing unemployment and poverty required answers and it was clear that the previous strategies simply would no longer deliver them. These socio-economic challenges were also accompanied by preoccupations of an institutional nature. Though the Treaty of Maastricht of 1992 was a profound step forward in terms of European integration, it was already then obvious that it was insufficient to fully realise the pledge of establishing a real Political Union. Consequently, there was a drive to look at the possibility of updating it and thereby perhaps even achieving a new Treaty.

Externally, the situation was complicated as well. The geopolitical situation was changing rapidly with the processes of dissolution of the “Eastern Block”. That meant change of regime in some countries, proclamation of independence for others and above all a search for a new path for all. In many cases these states embarked on a crusade towards liberalisation of all their policies, which was carried by the new political forces and could not be effectively counteracted by the opposition. The opposition was composed either by parties returning from exile, by a new political entity or by the “reformed communists” (who frequently would take the decision to transform their parties into social democratic ones). These political developments were complex and required multi-tier answers about the future of those countries and their societies in relation to the EU, as well as the political affiliation of the national actors. Amongst other things, the socialist family

also had to deliberate and determine the criteria of eventual rapprochement, integration and unification with partners who were previously “on the other side of the Iron Curtain”.

With those “*grand preoccupations*” monopolising the political focus, the task of then pursuing the agenda of gender equality was a great challenge. The PES Women Standing Committee had to work very hard to ensure that it would be imprinted both in the transformations within the EU, as well as those within the PES itself. But this seemed to have been hardly discouraging. In fact it appeared to be to the contrary. Even though back then the phrase “never waste a good crisis” did not yet belong to the *bon ton* of political conversations, PES Women Standing Committee seized the momentum and saw it as an opportunity to make a difference. In that sense, they used the reformist approach, arguing that the Union’s approach towards women at this point was anachronistic, unjust and therefore unsustainable.

The new Treaty of Maastricht followed the old principle of the Treaty of Rome. Consequently, it spelled out ‘only’ the *right to equal pay for equal work for women and men*. This was hardly sufficient to answer even just the societal and economic changes connected with the increasing participation of women in the labour market. Furthermore, among the many directives existing then¹, there were only three that related to the questions of women’s rights:

¹ Nowadays the European Commission lists a total of 15 directives, which had been adopted between 1975 and 2010 regarding the issues related to ensuring gender equality. Source: Gender Equality in the European Union., European Commission / Justice, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/index_en.htm

- *Directive of 19th December 1978 on the progressive implementation of the principle of equal treatment for women and men in matters of social security;*

- *Directive of 11th December 1986 on application of the principle of equal treatment between women and men engaged in an activity, including agriculture, in a self-employed capacity and on the protection of self-employed women during pregnancy and motherhood;*

- *Directive of 19th October 1992 on the introduction of measures to encourage improvement in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breast-feeding.*

An obvious conclusion was that this was not enough either to acknowledge different developments, or to enable further emancipation and empowerment of women. And that critical evaluation served as a constructive inspiration for the PES Women Standing Committee in its initial years. Bridging between the overall preoccupations and the specific women’s agenda, they underlined the fact that the real modernisation of the Union could be accomplished only when it embraced the principle of gender equality. That is why it had to be an integral point of the Treaty revision. Consequently, it was essential to get involved in the judicial debate and change the law. And that focus became the prior one.

■ 2.1.1 Preparing for the European Elections of 1994

For the PES Women Standing Committee the core question for the 1994 European elections was about what the new, evolving European Union should be able to offer to women. In its essence this was relatively synonymous with the search for arguments why women should identify themselves with the European cause, should participate in the elections and more specifically why they should support the socialist efforts within the EU.

Despite the evidence that the Union’s legislation was still lagging behind socioeconomic processes in Europe, there was a need to emphasise that this could be changed and that there had been efforts already undertaken on that particular field. Consequently, the internal evaluation within the PES Group and PES Women Standing Committee enabled the Socialist Group Campaign publication “1989 – 1994. *Our political achievements. Group of the Party of European Socialists.*” to be enriched with the then quite famous “Chapter 3”. Its content was devoted to the theme “*Winning for Women*”.

The corresponding text is quoted in Chapter 3.1.4 of this volume. Nevertheless it is still important to highlight its main points briefly here too. To begin with, the Group’s publication enumerated socialist initiatives that found a successful completion within the expiring legislative mandate of the European Parliament. They ranged from guarantees regarding maternity leave, recommendations on childcare, promoting equality in employment and education,



■ PES Leaders meeting (1994)

to a European Code of Conduct on sexual harassment. The report underlined the fact that there was a need to encourage further participation of women in politics – from the grassroots level to the European Parliament.

While reading this record now, it is hard to resist an impression that sadly the same challenges continue to persist nowadays within the areas just mentioned. Nevertheless the significance of the Report was in presenting a new approach that would from that point onwards guide the socialist struggle for equality of women and men in Europe. The subjects touched upon and the provisions demanded – these reached far beyond the existing legislation. As such they were no longer confined to the areas mapped by the Treaties, but on the contrary showed evidence that socialists sought to expand their scope. This can be said even in relation to the reform of the European Social Fund² debated and executed in 1993. With this, they aimed not only at recuperating the gap between the existing rules and social developments. They insisted that another, better Social Europe could be put in place to enable further social progress for women.

“1989 – 1994. Our political achievements. Group of the Party of European Socialists.” was in fact the foundation on which the electoral Manifesto was drafted. Its text was adopted at

² The European Social Fund (ESF) was created in 1957 by the Treaty of Rome and as such is one of the oldest structural funds. The 1993 reform “made sure that aid was not just targeted at women returning to work after childbirth, but also at low and under-educated women who were in danger of being unemployed or socially excluded. It also helped women to become enterprisers/ The introduction of a specific Community initiative, New Opportunities for Women (NOW), between 1991 – 1999 gave a clear indication of the women’s participation in the labour market”. http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/esf/docs/50th_anniversary_book_en.pdf

the Extraordinary PES Congress in Brussels on 6th November 1993. This coherency was not a simple consequence of the organisational circumstances, though of course it is true that the Socialist Group and PES Secretariats were still *de facto* one body within the European Parliament. Regarding the specific Chapter 3, the consistency of the message should be rather credited to the personal involvement on the political level. The majority of the PES Women Standing Committee Executive’s members served as deputies in the EP at that time. What is more, the President was also the member of the PES Presidium. These engagements and representation were decisive in terms of advocating for the same priorities on all the internal ‘fronts’, whilst at the same time they contributed to the change of culture in policy making. **Karin Junker** (then the President of the PES Women Standing Committee) recalls ironically “*you would not be able to imagine today how boring it had been before. It would seem that all the meetings are the same, with the same men all the time! The party leaders were all men at that point, and even when there were high level women in the room from time to time – they would feel either excluded or offered a podium debate only on very specific, limited list of topics.*”³

Subsequently, in the 1994 Manifesto “*Europe at the Crossroads. A challenge for Democratic Socialism.*” There was one specific chapter devoted to the cause of “*Equality for men and women*”⁴. It was the third out of 9 text sections in total. And as such, it marked a significant change of approach in comparison with the previous Manifestos issued by the Confederation. To illustrate the

³ Email interview with K. Junker on 17th February 2014.

⁴ For the relevant text please see Chapter 3.2.1 of this book.

difference and consequently its relevance, it is important to recall that in 1984, the CSPEC Manifesto featured 5 chapters – and only a subsection of the first one referred to women’s agenda. Five years later, in 1989, the Manifesto “*For A Europe of Unity, Prosperity and Solidarity*” also did not have a special chapter on gender equality. Instead, it referred to it in one of the subsections – in the fourth of six chapters, to be precise.

Looking at the content, in the Manifesto of 1994, the Socialists reiterated their commitment to the principle of equality for women and men “in economy, in society and in politics”. This reflected the three-dimensionality of their overall ideological proposal for Europe – where the Union was supposed to become a social, political and economic one. In that sense, the approach mirrored the struggle for gender sensitiveness and gender mainstreaming of all the potential reforms. Furthermore, in the introduction the Socialists underlined the fact that women’s emancipation was not yet matched by adequate EU policies, whilst at the same time women were the group that had been especially affected by the recent crisis. This echoed yet again the already explained mismatch between the existing legislation and the reality towards which a united Europe had to provide appropriate answers.

Finally, in the conclusion of this Chapter, the PES committed itself to 5 principles, which they would work towards within the next Parliamentary mandate. Since Europe was still battling with the result of the economic and financial crisis, the Socialists wanted to focus on “putting it back to work”. This had a double meaning, as it referred both to the functioning of the Union, as also to boosting employment within it. That further underlined the focus

on equal opportunities within the labour market. It was therefore acknowledged to be the first of the pledges.

Consequently, employment creation, boosting skills and enabling life transitions – these themes were to continue being at the top of the Socialist agenda through the 1990s. As for the particular angle of gender equality and the follow up to the pledges made in the Manifesto, it is worth also quoting the subsequent PES Leaders’ Declaration adopted on 9th December 1993. In the two specific points: the section “*A New Deal for Europe: Our Strategy – Security for individuals in a changing society*” and the subsection “*Invest in equal opportunities*” it directly discussed the issue⁵.

In summary, it is important to recall that the immediate period after the creation of the PES Women Standing Committee was marked by visible change in both political agenda and organisational culture. The policies started including a specific focus on equality of women and men. The statements were aiming at broadening the horizons of the contemporary political and legislative imagination, paving the way to the new, more complex approach towards gender equality by the Union. To that extent, more attention and effort were paid to enabling a greater participation and representation of women within the PES.

⁵ For the respective text, please consult Chapters 3.3.3 and 3.3.4 of this publication.

■ 2.1.2 Political challenges for the PES Women Standing Committee (1995-1999)

The results of the European elections 1994 were positive for the Socialist Group. Within the enlarged European Parliament they held the position of the largest faction, holding onto 198 out of 567 mandates. This meant not only an electoral encouragement, but also acted as a factor catalysing further consolidation of the Group’s structures alongside the political agenda outlined in the Manifesto. As previously, the work of the PES Women Standing Committee would be then predominantly carried out within the framework offered to the PES by the Socialist Group in the European Parliament.

Therefore, at that point, its focus was dictated by the on-going negotiations around the future Amsterdam Treaty of 1997. Additionally, there was another momentum that the organisation needed to grasp. It was the process leading to the “Beijing Conference” of 1995, from which the famous Declaration originates⁶.

The “Beijing Conference” was in fact the 4th United Nations World Conference on Women. It took place on 4th – 15th September 1995⁷. Its preparatory work was accompanied by a lot of excitement, and actions such as a solidarity train bringing women to the venue across Eurasia naturally also gained much attention. In terms of the European Socialists, the representation included 3 members: **Lissy Gröner** (then Coordinator within the PES Group in the EP),

⁶ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/declar.htm>

⁷ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/fwcwn.html>



■ Lissy GRÖNER

Barbara Schmidbauer (Chair of the Intergroup for Disabled) and Karin Junker (then the President of the PES Women Standing Committee). Karin's recollection of the time is typical of the challenges faced: *"While Lissy was accredited by the EP and Barbara through NGOs, I was finally there illegally, as my registration disappeared and I could not get any status there. What came next was that the Chinese government refused to issue visas for us three, which only after the intervention of the Foreign Ministry of Germany and a row of press conferences it was possible to overcome. The visas came, and even though I was, as said, quite illegal there – I still managed to take part in all the meetings. To be perfectly honest, some of the members of the German Bundestag, who could not stay the entire time at the spot, simply spared me their passes – and having three of them I was successful in sneaking in. Even though the photos and the names on the respective badges were different, but fortunately nobody checked that thoroughly. What is more, as the solidarity among us was really tangible at that point, the Spanish socialist Minister, to give an example, was the one who opened many doors for us to enable herewith the first real external action of the European socialist women."*

The Declaration and the "Beijing Platform" which it created was of course not a "one time show". It needed to be followed up, and though there had been so much eagerness ahead of the event – the translation of the pledges into the actual legislative agenda still proved to be challenging. Nevertheless, certain successes were noted – among them the European Commission's Fourth Equal Opportunities Action Programme, the content of which was heavily "inspired" by the Beijing debate. This particular strategy reaffirmed the Union's commitment to promote equal opportunities for women and men, translating its pledge into legislation. What is more, it was declared that its implementation should be further monitored at all levels – from the pan-European to the local level.



■ Barbara SCHMIDBAUER



■ PES Congress (1992)

Though the Action Programme was welcomed and again mirrored a certain step forward, the actual opportunity to ensure gender mainstreaming was still associated more with the ongoing negotiations around the new Treaty. The PES Women Standing Committee was mobilising and lobbying very hard to contribute toward using the momentum to forge a real difference, and hence once again the close links with the Socialist Group in the EP (the largest faction, as previously mentioned) were most valuable in achieving that.

Following the PES Manifesto of 1994, the clear objective was to expand the existing prerogatives of the European Union. This was dictated by the critical assessment that both the Treaty of Rome and Treaty of Maastricht were far too minimalistic for equipping the EU with rights and tools to act in favour of the progressive women's agenda. Following the Messina Conference on 2nd June 1995, the lengthy process began. In its course, inspired by the Beijing experience (amongst others) and reinforced by the PES Women Standing Committee Declaration of 1997⁸, the PES Women Standing Committee still noted many ups and downs in delivering on their mission. What was however very helpful in particular was the fact that the general ambition behind the negotiations was to build a more functional Political Union, in which context the Intergovernmental Conference had to take a closer look at the individual rights and ways of empowering citizens. This was precisely what facilitated putting the proverbial “foot in the door”. In the end, strife brought good results. The Treaty of Amsterdam ensured a change of approach⁹,

⁸ Please see Chapter 3.3.1.2 of this publication.

⁹ http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/brochure_equality_en.pdf

specifically including the principle of gender equality (article 2) and shifting that away from the area of social policy only. The principle of “gender mainstreaming” would be upheld in all EU policy areas and at all levels. What is more, the Treaty made guaranteeing equality for all one of the tasks of the European Union. Therefore it was relevant that the Treaty incorporated a new article 13. It empowered the communitarian institutions to act in order to combat discrimination.

In achieving this change and in ensuring that the socialist agenda would be given a fair chance for implementation, the cooperation within the PES Women Standing Committee and among the different women representatives in the European and national institutions was crucial. The success resulted from solidarity, mutual responsibility for one another and subsequent support. As Karin Junker recalls “To offer the example, Swedish social democrat **Anita Gradin**¹⁰ used her position as European Commissioner to introduce the debate on trafficking of women. In the 1990s it was still to a large extent a taboo, even though with the changes in Europe the numbers were rising especially as far as trafficking between East and West was concerned. It was important to work together lobbying for a debate to open and subsequently change to come. And eventually this topic entered the debates after the UN Human Rights Conference in Vienna in 1997 (...) This is why the creation of the PES Women Standing Committee was so relevant. We were no longer individuals fighting for a cause – we were a movement.”¹¹”

¹⁰ Anita Gradin was EU Commissioner between 1995 and 1999.

¹¹ Interview by A. Skrzypek - email response by K. Junker on 17th February 2014.



■ Anita GRADIN

■ 2.1.3 Organisational development of the PES Women Standing Committee (1992-1999)

Each of the accomplishments served as a motivation to strive further, as each of the detours was also an incentive to work even harder and consolidate the structures of the PES Women Standing Committee further. This was the way to influence the PES from the moment of its creation, and also to claim more of a say about the political agenda of the European socialist family.

Although the PES Women Standing Committee existed since 1992, until at least the second PES Congress its relations with the party itself were more a matter of practice than a statutory rule. This changed in Barcelona in 1995, when the PES Women Standing Committee was introduced into the PES Statutes. The rule stated that it would have an executive, which would be composed of up to 4 members and would meet 4 times a year. Its main responsibility was the development of policies that would contribute to ensuring equal opportunities within the EU, as well as becoming a debating forum. It was also specified that the PES Women Standing Committee would run its own campaigns.

There are three observations to be made in this context. First of all, including the rule on the PES Women Standing Committee cemented its position in the partisan structures. Secondly, the fact that it was done together with the statutory reform that made achieving “equality between women and men” one of the top priorities of the PES already proved that the Committee had been successful in its first two years. Thirdly, as the Congress

in Barcelona was finishing on the 8th of March – the statutory change was adopted at the same time as a Declaration “*Solidarity between the sexes: towards a society based on partnership.*” Hence one could say that the change in the culture of the PES as an organisation was becoming more than apparent¹².

It is extremely unfortunate that, there are not too many documents preserved that would reflect the work of the PES Women Standing Committee between 1995 and 1999. Nevertheless from the available sources, as well as memories kindly shared by the witnesses of the time – it is possible to imagine the second half of the 1990s as a very challenging period for this organisation. There was still a challenge to consolidate the structure. As mentioned previously, there were numerous different traditions regarding how women organised themselves within the respective sister parties. This is also why different working methods would have to be applied in order to comply with the goals set for the Committee in the statutory reform of the PES in 1995.

To begin with, the campaigns proved to be a useful way to engage women in a common action on the European level. In the first years two were successfully concluded. The first of them continued the initial action launched in 1994, and for another year, promoted a slogan “*half the heaven, half the earth, half the power*”. Karin Junker recalls that the core action was about disseminating the posters and postcards, which for that campaign had been developed by female artists from the 12 then EU Member States. The later, 1997

campaign, would be designed under the theme “*Women’s rights are human rights – our Europe on your side*” – which referred to the on-going deliberations on the Amsterdam Treaty.

The other way to involve different women politicians in the work of the Committee was through seminars. They would take place either on the occasion of the PES meetings (such as Congresses), or would be self-standing like the one on 9th February 1998 – which was held in order to enable brainstorming on the new Socialist Women’s Charter and on the new electoral Manifesto of 1999. These events were not yet taking place within any particular schedule or with any degree of regularity. There were many reasons for this, including financial ones. The PES Women Standing Committee was benefiting from the Socialist Group’s support; however it had hardly any budget at its disposal. The achievements were possible thanks to the exemplary and outstanding dedication of the President, Executive Members and the only Advisor working for the PES Women Standing Committee from the Group: **Brigitte Bataille**.

Even with limited resources, the achievements of these years were most impressive. The influence on the policy agenda, and especially on the core debate on Social Europe and future of the labour market, was undisputable. It is clearly reflected in the documents adopted by the PES during those years – such as the reports “*A Fair Deal for Employment, the Environment and Equality*” and “*A European Employment Pact for a New European Way*”¹³.



■ Brigitte BATAILLE

To that extent, the scope of the socialist debates on women’s rights also broadened in those years thanks to the Committee’s efforts. Among them were occasional releases (like the ones to celebrate International Women’s Day), but also the ones drawing attention to specific political developments involving particular suffering for women (such as in the consequence of the war in Bosnia)¹⁴. They all remain as evidence of the great activism that the PES Women Standing Committee cultivated from its inception.

Asked about the main political themes of her times, Karin Junker lists: equality between genders, fighting violence against women; gender mainstreaming; Beijing Conference, UN Human Rights Conference in Vienna, preventing and combating discrimination (especially through a Treaty change). “*There is a short French film “Oppressed Majority”, which is based on an idea of what would happen if women and men would change their roles. This is done in order to show the precarious position in which women are, still today. Of course, not all the men are Hans from “Hans and Gretchen” and not all the women are Cinderella, but even nowadays it would seem that it is men who get the bigger piece of a cake. Poverty has still a female face*” she states, adding “*and this is why we need(ed) a PES Women Standing Committee. To break stereotypes, yes, but to also to organise ourselves, to support each other and then to offer inspiring examples that women can be on the top. The strong presence of women leaders should be a criteria to assess in how far the world and Europe we live in is really modern.*”¹⁵

¹² For the text, please see Chapter 3.4.4 of this publication.

¹³ Please kindly see Chapter 3.3.4

¹⁴ Please kindly see Chapter 3.3.5

¹⁵ Interview by A. Skrzypek - email response by K. Junker from 17th February 2014.

■ 2.2 PES Women Standing Committee under the leadership of Fiorella Ghilardotti (1999-2004)

The period 1999 – 2004 is perhaps the least known chapter in the history of the PES Women Standing Committee. Unfortunately, there are not too many documents that survive. And though there could be more than one possible explanation, two seem to be the most frequent.

First of all, these were the years of a great transformation of the PES itself. There had been an internal reflection process, which ended with the reform adopted by the PES Congress in Berlin in 2001. In parallel, there were negotiations run within the EU institutions. They concluded in a new regulation¹⁶ (from 4th November 2003) on the European political parties, equipping them with the organisational and financial possibilities to split from their respective groups in the European Parliament.

This meant that the PES (as well as the other europarties) left the EP offices at the end of 2003. The PES initially found a haven in the

Headquarters of the PS Belgium, after which it moved to its current Headquarters at Rue du Trône. The transfers between locations, and the separations between the organisations affected the state of the archives – especially as the era of digital files was just at its beginning.

Secondly, the knowledge about these years is bound to remain incomplete because of another, sad reason. With the premature death of President **Fiorella Ghilardotti** on 13th September 2005, it is no longer possible to speak to her to collect her fond memories of the times she led the organisation. While the “dry” record of the achievement of those times has been reconstructed based on factual knowledge (such as the PES report of activities 2001 – 2004), the only possibility of retrieving the political inspiration of those years was to study the rich collection of speeches and interventions by President Ghilardotti.

As imperfect as the conclusions therefore can be, there is still a hope that the passages which follow are a fair picture of the incredibly inspiring achievements of the PES Women Standing Committee for the years 1999 – 2004.



■ Fiorella GHILARDOTTI

■ 2.2.1 President Fiorella Ghilardotti¹⁷

In 2014, the S&D (Socialists and Democrats) Group reopened applications for “**The Fiorella Ghilardotti Fund**”¹⁸. The announcement read: *Inspired by the work of former MEP and women’s rights campaigner Fiorella Ghilardotti, this fund was created in 2005 to enable young people to gain practical experience in the areas of social rights and employment, women’s rights, anti-discrimination, equal opportunities and fundamental rights and freedoms.* As such, these just few lines embody the reasons for which the socialist movement commemorates the multi-tier political activism of Fiorella and continues to mourn her so extensively almost a decade after.

Fiorella Ghilardotti was born on 25th June 1946 in Castelveide. She graduated in economics and trade, and began her professional career as a teacher. Subsequently she entered the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in 1975¹⁹, as Secretary of the Trade Union Confederation in Milan. In 1990 Fiorella became an independent regional director of the Italian Communist Party, subsequently joining the Democratic Party of the Left (Partito Democratico della Sinistra - PDS) upon its creation. She served as the Chair of the PDS Lombardy Region from 1992 to 1994. In that capacity Fiorella was remembered as the first woman to lead the region

¹⁷ http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meps/en/2024/FIORELLA_GHILARDOTTI_home.html

¹⁸ <http://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/fiorella-ghilardotti-fund>

¹⁹ Following Wikipedia: The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) was an international trade union. It came into being on 7 December 1949 following a split within the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), and was dissolved on 31 October 2006 when it merged with the World Confederation of Labour (WCL) to form the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). Prior to being dissolved, the ICFTU had a membership of 157 million members in 225 affiliated organisations in 148 countries and territories. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Confederation_of_Free_Trade_Unions

¹⁶ Adopted on 4th November 2003.

and as a politician who “lifted Lombardy out of the swamps it was drowning in”²⁰.

At the end of that period, Fiorella got elected as a Member of the European Parliament, where she served two consecutive legislative mandates. There she became a Member of the Socialist Group’s Bureau – her election date proved to be symbolic, falling on 8 March 2000 (International Women’s Day). She continued in that function until the end of the mandate. In terms of fields of political activism in the EP, from the beginning Fiorella was an active, devoted and determined member of the Committee on Women’s Rights²¹. In parallel between 1994 and 1999, she also worked within the Budget Committee, where combining her expertise she actively promoted the idea of “gender budgeting”. Additionally, Fiorella served as member of the Legal Affairs and Internal Market Committees (2002 – 2004), and substitute member of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment (1994 – 1999; 2002 – 2004) and the Committee on Industry, External Trade, Research and Energy (1999 – 2002). Following her passion for development and aid policies and her strong belief in the commitments made in the Beijing Platform for Action (PfA), Fiorella also devoted a vast amount of time and energy to her work as a Member of the EP Delegation to the Joint Assembly of the Agreement between African, Caribbean and Pacific States and the European Union (ACP-EU).

²⁰ http://archiviostorico.corriere.it/2005/settembre/14/Morta_Ghilardotti_prima_donna_guidare_co_7_050914033.shtml

²¹ After the elections of 1999, the Committee changed its name to “Committee on Women’s Rights and Equal Opportunities”.

Upon her return to Italy, Fiorella re-entered the regional committee of the DS and was asked to run for mayor of Cremona. Her premature death on 13th September 2005, which came after a long illness, put an end to those plans. Those who knew her recall that the last time they saw Fiorella was just a few days before she died at the Festa dell’Unità. Even then, battling the disease, she was full of life, energy and inspiration. She is remembered as a passionate activist, determined trade unionist and a great, devoted comrade, thanks to whom numerous ground-breaking achievements in the field of gender equality were possible.

■ 2.2.2 PES Women Standing Committee organisational developments between 1999 and 2004

As mentioned in the introduction to this Chapter, the historical record of the PES Women Standing Committee activism for the years 1999 – 2004 remains rather modest²². This is unrelated to the overall strength and the performance that the organisation manifested within those years. Especially the involvement in EU policy making through both MEPs and the Commissioners and

²² Please see Chapter 3.4 of this publication.

respective Ministers is more than apparent when studying the public documents of those times. Hence though not much of the background work can be described here, the impulses originating from there can still clearly be picked up from within the EU level policy statements and shifts - to which socialist women evidently vastly contributed.

Following the PES report of activities, which were adopted respectively at the Berlin Congress (Report entitled “From Milan to Berlin 1999 – 2001”) and at the Brussels Congress (on 24th April 2004), in 2000 the practice was established of holding two Executive meetings per year until 2003 – when the number increased, also due to the preparations for the upcoming European Elections. The practice of annual conferences had not yet been established, as there was only one Conference that took place in 2000. What may come as an obvious question as well is why there is no mention of any campaign. But as neither of the two documents specifies the themes that the PES Women Standing Committee was focusing on these years, it is possible that the record is simply not complete.

What it is possible to detect however is that the PES Women Standing Committee was deeply involved in the overall work of the PES, its internal transformation and the policy agenda development. To begin with, a significant change was achieved regarding the statutory status of the Committee. In the context of the deliberations that eventually led to the so called “Berlin Reform” of the PES, the PES Women Standing Committee too saw its role, its prerogatives and its rights both more clearly specified and broadened. Its voting rights in all the PES bodies, the inclusion of the Executive members in the Congresses and Councils, and

also the participation in the newly created Coordination Team were reaffirmed. To that extent, it was also important that the new statutes included in Article 4 the commitment to the principle of “equal representation” and pledges to continue working together with the PES Women Standing Committee both internally and externally to ensure that.

Furthermore, it would also seem that it was thanks to the PES Women Standing Committee that in the period 1999 – 2004 the PES applied the dual approach to gender equality more decisively. This meant that it would be both a mainstreaming issue, and also that at the same time there would be special measures developed to promote women’s rights and opportunities for them. Even though these days it is taken for “granted”, as it is also the overall philosophy of the European Union, back then there was nothing obvious about that. It may be recalled that there was a tension between advocates of the women’s agenda and the gender equality agenda, both in political and organisational terms. The latter has been translated into the dilemma over whether the women organisations should in fact be closed to women members only. Though they would not seem to be mutually exclusive today, a decade ago the divergences in between the two positions were discussed endlessly. The dispute was not only internal, and one can also detect the echo of it in the broader EU context, looking for example at the change of name of the relevant EP Committee.

One of the most shining examples of the achievements around that period was the recognition of the PES Women’s Standing Committee and the PES Group in the EP Charter, which under the theme “*Towards a new European citizenship for women and*

men” was adopted on 7th December 1998²³. The text was drafted by the three women leaders: Lissy Gröner (MEP, Coordinator from the Socialist Group), **Pauline Green** (Leader of the Group) and Fiorella Ghilardotti (who was then already in her mandate as the President of PES Women Standing Committee²⁴). The text was composed of 15 pledges, each of which entailed diagnoses of the existing situation and a proposed solution. The Charter was in that sense reaffirming the socialist commitment to achieve gender equality, which was both reinforcing the promises of the European Election Manifesto and was also proving that as a political family they were willing to use the historical window of opportunity to profoundly change the EU towards a gender-egalitarian Union.

The Charter was pioneering in a number of ways, as it raised awareness, opened the debate up into new areas and above all mobilised through a strong appeal for this just cause. It was a protagonist action, and the significance of it was enormous - as the EU followed the example eventually and an actual “EU Women’s Charter” was adopted (even though it took almost another 12 years to draft)²⁵.

Finally, the PES Women Standing Committee was involved in all the major PES programme debates of those years. On one hand, that meant that all the documents were at that point “gender screened”. This resulted in more



■ Pauline GREEN

attention being paid to gender-sensitiveness of different policy proposals. This meant that for example the new paradigm of the ‘active labour market policies’ was enriched with its special attention to women’s participation in the labour market. On the other hand, there was also much work delivered to continue the ‘great political push’ of the 1990s. This meant, among others, keeping the spirit of the Beijing Conference alive, and also lobbying for the further expansion of the EU agenda by introduction of the new themes into EU debates. The chances to succeed were there, especially with the newly launched and promising Lisbon Strategy that, carried by the socialist majority in the Council, was a reason to believe that, more than ever, achieving Social Europe was actually possible. Thanks to the efforts, hard work and power of conviction of the women active within the PES Women Standing Committee and the Socialist Group in the EP in those years, a number of new EU initiatives were established (such as the Daphne programme); a number of tools for achieving policies were acquired (including the introduction of the term ‘gender budgeting’), and also benchmarks to assess the progress were set (including the EU Report on Equality between women and men, which was released for the first time in 2004). Their legacy should therefore be preserved in the best way it can – by being seen as an inspiration to go further by the current and the next generations.

■ 2.2.3 PES Women Standing Committee promoting gender equality on the EU agenda in years 1999-2004

Even though the internal archives of the PES leave a lot of questions unanswered about the particular way the PES Women Standing Committee was conducting its work in this period, an excellent source of information still remains the outstanding political legacy of the Committee’s President, Fiorella Ghilardotti. This is retrievable from the European Parliament’s website in the form of speeches, questions and declarations.

The patchwork of issues, initiatives and actions that can be recreated herewith appears to be most inspiring and worth reflecting more extensively in this publication. In order to classify the material, the publication will firstly follow the chronological list of the conclusions of the respective EU Councils regarding gender equality policies, then move to the issues mentioned by the President on the floor of the EP, and then finish with internal PES Women documents.

²³ For the relevant text, please see Chapter 3.3 of this publication.

²⁴ The actual date of the change of leadership between Karin Junker and Fiorella Ghilardotti is not retrievable; as the PES Group Documents indicate the leadership of Karin Junker till 1999 (as was also confirmed by the PES Secretariat by the occasion of the publication of the “Europe, Our Common Future. Celebrating 20 years of the Party of European Socialists”) – however for example the PES Group obituary remembers Fiorella as the serving chair since 1997. From the conversation with Karin Junker and also documents provided by FES the author assumes that the change on the chair position was not associated with one particular historical moment.

²⁵ The EU Women’s Charter was adopted in 2010, on the 15th Anniversary of the Beijing Conference.



■ PES group at the European Parliament in Brussels (2001)

■ 2.2.3.1 Promoting Women's participation in the decision-making process

Looking at the developments of the EU agenda regarding equal rights for women and men, it would seem that the major stimulus prompting a number of substantial developments was still originating from the 1995 Beijing Conference²⁶. The Platform for Action (PfA) adopted there remained the reference point regarding benchmarks in the political, social and economic dimensions respectively. The conclusions of the EU Councils in years 1999 – 2002 keep on returning to the initial pledges and show both the progress and the ambitions for the future.

Starting from 1999, the Council took on the issue of equality from the angle of the participation of women in the decision-making processes. It followed in that sense the work of the Finnish Presidency, which explored the issue and produced conclusions indicating that overall representation was unequal. This not only called the quality of democracy at the different levels into question, but also meant that ongoing discrimination was preventing further emancipation and empowerment of women. In the spirit of the previous PES Women Standing Committee Campaign this was evidence that there was

less than half of the power that women in Europe (and beyond) could effectively exercise in order to determine the course of policies, their employers' strategies or everyday life developments.

To begin with, the scale of discrimination needed to be assessed, together with reasons and potential solutions. The problem was that the theme was relatively new to the European Union, so there was a dramatic lack of statistics – which were neither available within all the Member States, nor possible to collect on the EU level without an instrument enabling such an exchange of data. The Council recommended specific action to overcome this shortcoming, and also proposed (following the previously mentioned Finnish Presidency of July – December 1999) nine new indicators to monitor the situation.

The demand for “*Sharing Power Between Men and Women*” was the second and the fifteenth point of the PES Women's Standing Committee and PES Group in the EP Charter, which under the theme “*Towards a new European citizenship for women and men*” was adopted on 7th December 1998²⁷. Hence the Council's commitment was welcomed with great enthusiasm, which is expressed in the President Fiorella Ghilardotti's speech, which she gave in her capacity as an MEP on 1st March 2000 in Strasbourg²⁸: *I would like to thank the Minister and the Commissioner for their speeches and for committing themselves before the European Parliament on the crucial matter we are discussing today. The presence of women in decision-making bodies, in particular, is a question of democracy.*

²⁷ For the relevant text, please see Chapter 3.2.3 of this publication.

²⁶ For more details on the Beijing Conference and the PES Women Standing Committee Participation, please kindly refer to Chapter 2.1 of this publication.

²⁸ 1st March 2000; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20000301+ITEM-006+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=3-095>

All citizens, both women and men, should be able to see, to feel that they are genuinely represented by those they have elected and those who rule. If we consider the fact that more than half the population is made up of women but that there are many more men than women present in these decision-making bodies, it is clear that we are still far from true democracy. However, it is also a question of political agendas. In addition to making up the majority of the population, women are also the most dynamic element in society: it is women who have made the greatest contribution to the creation of new enterprises in Europe in recent years; a greater percentage of young women obtain irregular work contracts than men, and in many of our regions, they are the main feature of the innovation, training, performance and flexibility development model. Out of a sample of women who work in and around Milan, where I live, 90% said that they do not have enough time to do all they need to in a day. Women work an average of 60 hours a week, which is 20 hours longer than men. The price paid by women for following their desire to be protagonists in all spheres is that they never have enough time. If this is true, and it is, any appropriate policy which aims to find positive solutions to these problems must start from this point. Laws, programmes and interventions must be implemented which are well-constructed, coordinated and audacious, in order to encourage the formation of new cultural, economic, social, institutional and political ruling classes whose modernity is characterised by the involvement of women. Much has been achieved on many issues in Europe, but we are still far from resolving the question of equal representation. I agree with the Commissioner that it is time for the European political sphere – the entire European political sphere – to represent women and men on an equal footing, and for decisive action to be taken in this matter.

The challenge of increasing women's participation and representation in decision-making processes was re-examined soon after. Again in reference to the Beijing PfA, the specific angle that the deliberations took was echoed in the European Council Conclusions of 2003 – where the report on female representation in economic decision-making was presented.

■ 2.2.3.2 Enabling a balanced relationship between family life and working life

For the PES the challenge of full, quality employment was one of the main programme preoccupations of the 1990s. It was mirrored in numerous declarations, among which perhaps the most prominent was “Let's Make Europe Work” (adopted at the PES Congress Malmö of 1997), alongside the reports “A Fair Deal for Employment, the Environment and Equality” (presented in June 1995) and “A European Employment Pact for New European Way” (voted at the PES Congress in Milan in 1999). All these documents show deliberations in which the European socialists and social democrats immersed themselves, looking for a new vision for the European labour market and reviewing the tools and the opportunities that the European Social Model should guarantee in relation to that in the future.

Together with the new Lisbon Strategy in place in 2000, the ‘new’

philosophy of “active labour market policies” was introduced. The “activation” was to include a broader set of policies, which would also qualify as “social investment”, and would empower people both to keep up with the changing times and to manage successfully in times of globalisation.

With the pledge of “full employment” thus translating into enabling all to work, there was also a natural focus on female participation in the labour market. Though the changes in the legal framework introduced by the Amsterdam Treaty were of course conspicuous, still the existing answers seem to have been insufficient. More needed to be achieved in order to facilitate greater employment of women (especially on full time contracts), combat existing discrimination at work and workplaces, as well as to make it possible for them to balance their private and professional obligations. The latter still persisted; especially as cultural transformation did not keep up with the socio-economic process of women taking up professional careers. The stereotypes on one hand, and the expectations for them to then do both house and factory/office work on the other, were still there.

Following the Lisbon Council that had resulted in the previously quoted Lisbon Strategy²⁹, the subsequent one adopted among its conclusions the assessment on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in respect of relationships between family and working life. It also built on the work concluded by the French Presidency of the EU, which led to identifying 9 “qualitative and

quantitative” indicators.

Among them were: number of both women and men taking on parental leave; allocation of parental leave; proportion between children growing up within private households and those attending childcare facilities; existing policies to enable reconciliation of private and professional lives; number of senior citizens (over 75), who require assistance and care; opening hours of public services; opening hours of shops (both during the weeks and weekends); total amount of hours that parents spend at work/travelling to and from work/commuting; and finally also the number of single parents. In the conclusion the EU Council once again underlined that the indicators should help in focusing, collecting data and in coming up with a more comprehensive roadmap to encourage the participation of women.

One and a half years later, in March 2002, the Council adopted, together with the Presidency Conclusions, the so called “Barcelona Targets”. These were featured in “Paragraph 32” within the Chapter “Active policies towards full employment: more and better jobs – A reinforced Employment Strategy”. The text read: *In terms of current employment policies, inter alia: Member States should remove disincentives to female labour force participation and strive, taking into account the demand for childcare facilities and in line with the national patterns of provision, to provide childcare by 2010 to at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age.”*

For the PES Women Standing Committee this was a particularly important achievement. They had already spelt out a need for such an approach in the Charter, demanding possibilities to “Combine

²⁹ This Council took place on 23rd – 24th March 2000.

Work and Family Life”. However the progress was still in the making, it would still take a further struggle to make these words a reality – hence the reiteration of the demand within the “10 principles for our Common Future” declaration (PES Congress in Porto in 2006), and also the PES Campaign of 2006 – 2007.

Summarising the achievements of the Council both in 2000, and also in 2002, while addressing the EP in June 2002, Fiorella Ghilardotti³⁰ noted:(...) *we are discussing conciliation, the outcome of the negotiations on a major proposal for a directive amending the 1976 directive, and we are satisfied (...) we have succeeded in achieving an excellent result. Why were the negotiations difficult? Because the difference between the Council and Parliament’s positions was considerable. (...) the commendable cooperation of all – and I repeat – all the groups, and the willingness shown by Commissioner Diamantopoulou and the Spanish Presidency, whom I would like to thank, to find solutions, mean that the result we have achieved is significant. Why is it significant? Because, three years on from the entry into force of the Treaty of Amsterdam, we can, at last, say that things are starting to change. The Treaty of Amsterdam was a leap forwards in terms of recognition of the principle of equal opportunities and we now, at last, have a directive which provides specific, accurate definitions of direct and indirect discrimination, a directive which, in addition to providing an important definition of harassment and sexual harassment, recognises without a shadow of doubt that sexual harassment is to be considered direct discrimination and is therefore a punishable offence, a directive which recognises the importance of*

maternity and paternity leave and adoption and therefore the need and the right of mothers and fathers returning from such leave to be provided with equal or equivalent work, a directive which recognises the need for and compels each Member State to lay down equal and proportionate sanctions, a directive which, moreover, recognises independent bodies and makes companies responsible for producing equal opportunities plans, thus making positive actions under Article 141 possible. I see this result as significant, Mr President, particularly because the matter is being discussed by the Convention and, on the basis of this result, we will be able to call for a further step forward to be taken in the Convention too.

■ 2.2.3.3 Guaranteeing equal pay for women and men

Despite the fact that the principle of “equal pay for equal work” was one of the oldest rules within the European Community treaties, that type of discrimination still continues to exist. In contemporary times this regrettable, unjust phenomenon is known as a “gender pay gap”, but before the term was introduced the issue was investigated as “pay inequalities”.

The European Council looked at the matter in December 2001 as well, yet again referring to the need to complete an assessment of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The recent Belgian Presidency (and socialist Minister **Frank Vanderbroucke**)

had prepared the ground, by coming up with another “state of play” report. As in the past, this one also proposed nine new indicators, which included: ratio of all employees; ratio for total sum of wages; ratio for part time work; ratio by age and education; wage penalties in female-concentrated occupations; breakdown of the hourly women and men using the Oaxaca technique; indicator on laws, regulations and measures to combat discrimination and inequalities at work; indicator of the influence of public authorities on wage bargaining, indicator relating to part-time work and temporary career breaks. The concrete commitment following these conclusions was that the data were to be reviewed and on the top of that, from this point onwards (namely from 2002) they were to be included in the “European Structure of Earnings Survey”.

Addressing the challenge of equality of women and men on the labour market half a year later, Fiorella Ghilardotti summed up³¹: *the annual report is a genuinely important instrument which allows us all to follow up, assess and monitor the initiatives undertaken by the Union and the Member States and the coherence of these initiatives with the global legislation and strategy defined at Union level. As the rapporteurs have already said, although the 2000 report does record some progress, it reveals a Europe which is still a hostile environment for women and which is, in many respects, a long way from achieving the goal of equal opportunities: the female unemployment rate is higher than the male unemployment rate, the employment rate is still a long way off the goal set at Lisbon, the labour market is still segregated, women continue to be heavily under-represented in positions of responsibility and, above all, there is a pay gap which is frankly scandalous considering that this is Europe in the third millennium.*



■ Frank VANDERBROUCKE

30 EP Debates, 11th June 2002; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20020424+ITEM-006+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=3-123>

31 EP Debates, 24th April 2002, <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20020611+ITEM-010+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=2-193>

With the Community framework strategy on equal opportunities, the mainstreaming of the gender dimension and the Community equal opportunities policy as a whole, we are heading in the right direction. In particular, I feel that the 2002 employment guidelines and the amending of the directive on access to employment and training, which were successfully completed in conciliation last week, the directive on gender equality based on Article 13, in the context of which I (...) feel that we should call more strongly for the individualisation of rights – a directive which the Commission is to present shortly – and the programmes combating violence against women and trafficking are new, important elements which fill gaps in the overall strategy. However, we need to do more. With regard to the pay gap between women and men, the under-representation of women in positions of responsibility and the balanced participation of women and men in decision-making processes, we need to be more forceful in making everyone – the social partners, the political organisations, the institutions and the Member States – shoulder their responsibilities, and we should maybe introduce more effective instruments that provide better incentives than those used hitherto.

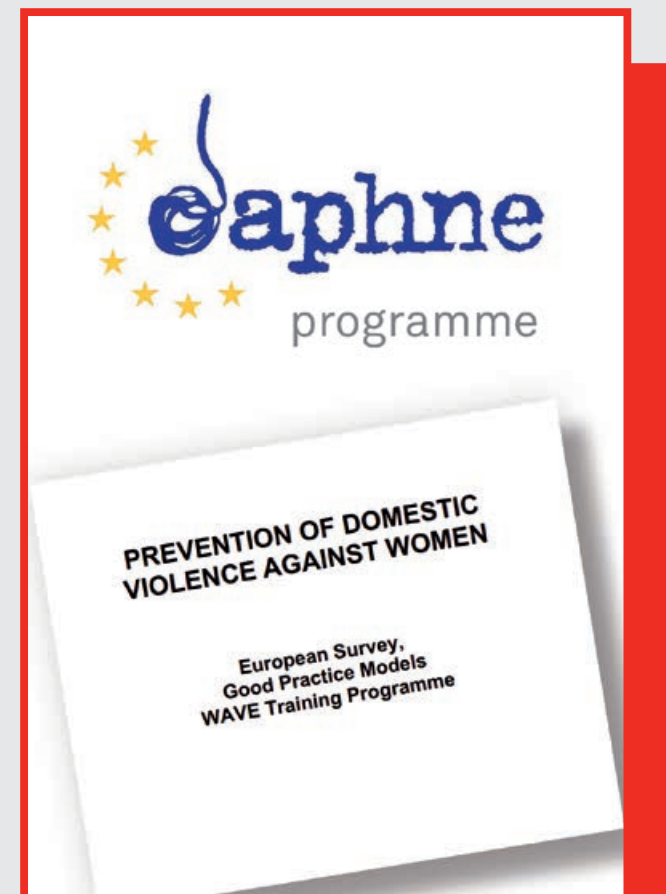
■ 2.2.3.4 Combating violence against women

Violence against women had remained a shameful taboo subject pretty much until the 1990s. As signaled in Chapter 2.1, although it was introduced into the UN context during the Beijing Conference, only two years later at the Conference in Vienna it entered permanently into the vocabulary and thus the deliberations led by the European institutions. And even that was only a first turning point; it still took another two years of hard work to put the issue onto the Union's agenda. In that context the PES Women Standing Committee (having the pledge to eliminate violence against women among the principles of the Charter), and in particular Lissy Gröner, took on countless fights³². They started from setting a universal definition of violence against women (which issue remained practically unresolved till 2002), whence a very exhausting and rocky road led eventually to a successful outcome for this political endeavour. It took the shape of the programme known nowadays as “Daphne”.

Speaking on the EP floor just before the adoption of the Daphne Programme, Fiorella Ghilardotti³³ said: *I would like to stress the fundamental role played by the European Parliament, and in particular, the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities, in, I hope, reaching the point where the final adoption of this programme will*

be debated. It has already been mentioned in other interventions that, a few years ago, the European Parliament promoted pilot projects supporting non-governmental organisations and local authorities that, for some time, have been endeavouring to use actions to fight violence against women and children. This phenomenon of violence against women and children is, unfortunately, not only very widespread but is increasing, and is gradually taking on new, even more sophisticated forms, which are therefore more difficult to combat. The programme we are debating today is the result of this previous work. A very thorough discussion took place with the Executive Commission, especially with regard to amending the legal basis and therefore making the adjustments implied in the proposal to the original proposal. I do not wish to return to this topic, but I would like, however, to express a certain amount of satisfaction, despite the change to the legal basis, that the Commission and the Council have in any case adopted some elements which are extremely important to us. I am referring to the fact that the common position contains references to health in terms of physical, mental and social well-being, to quality of life and to violence as a violation of human rights, and, in particular, to the fact that this programme also covers victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. I also find it especially significant that there is recognition of the important role played by the NGOs and multidisciplinary networks as well as public bodies who are already carrying out valuable work, in particular with regard to the prevention of violence and the support and protection of victims. To give this programme real added value, we must launch a major awareness campaign involving Parliament and the Commission, but, above all, the Member States, which must take complete responsibility for fighting violence.

The “Daphne” programme finally came into being on 24th January 2000 with the European Parliament and Council Decision 293/2000/EC under the official title “Community action on preventive measures to fight violence



■ The “Daphne” programme

³² For an example, please see the last paragraph of the section 3.3.2.3 of this publication.

³³ 15th November 1999; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+19991115+ITEM-005+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=1-064>

against children, young persons and women³⁴”. It was established for a duration of three years and it had a budget of 20 million euros. The focus of the programme in its initial state was three-fold, focusing on protection, prevention and support (for the victims). Among the aims there was an ambition to seek a trans-border, trans-national action by establishing, to begin with a network that would allow exchange of information and best practices. To that extent, the initiative envisaged that the EU could come up with actions that would be complementary to initiatives on the national level. Furthermore, efforts would be made to launch actions that would raise public awareness of the persisting problem of violence against women, young people and children.

In the aftermath of the above mentioned developments, while addressing the EP in October 2001, Fiorella Ghilardotti returned to the question of the scope, by reiterating a need to establish a definition of gender-based violence and sexual harassment. She stated³⁵ that: (...) *we feel that it is necessary – and this is an important amendment – to provide precise definitions of harassment, sexual harassment and the procedures for combating it, including preventive measures. (...) Moreover, it is necessary to make clear, as we have done, the concept of protection for victims, the extension of this protection to trade union representatives and the need for the bodies created to apply the principle of equality to be provided with adequate resources so that they can lend appropriate legal and other assistance to the victims of gender discrimination. We must*

also clarify the provision made for collective action to be brought in the event of breaches of the directive and the requirement for employees to draw up equal opportunities plans.

Following these debates, both the Spanish and the Danish Presidencies of 2002 invested in assessing progress reached by the European Union in terms of realising the Beijing Platform for Action goals in the dimension of combating violence against women. They came together with conclusions that spelled out 7 different indicators, which were named as essential to be able to diagnose the situation and come up with a sound response on the European level. Again, one of the clear obstacles seems to have been that the knowledge regarding the situation was very fragmented. The indicators included: description of average profile of female victims of violence; description of the average profile of male perpetrators; extent of available victim support; measures addressing the male perpetrator to end the circle of violence; existing training of professionals; state measures to eliminate domestic violence against women; defined evaluation criteria to monitor eventual progress.

The European Council in December 2002 adopted those conclusions, together with the recommendation to pursue successful initiatives such as the Daphne programme. What is more, there was a response to the calls for definition – made among others by the PES Women Standing Committee President Fiorella Ghilardotti. It reiterated the Beijing terminology, recognising that “violence against women” was “any physical, sexual, or psychological violence, inflicted on a victim by current or former spouse or intimate partner or other family member.”

The Daphne programme was subsequently prolonged. Its new phase, called “Daphne II”³⁶ was extended for another 5 years. Its scope was also extended to protect the victims and the ‘at risk’ groups as well. The added value of the EU undertaking this initiative was seen in helping to establish an exchange among Member States and actors involved in combatting violence against women, enabling them to cooperate in identifying and encouraging the application of best practice. To that end, it was re-emphasised that the question must be studied more thoroughly, in order to identify the roots of the problem, as well as to come up with the most adequate training and educational packages³⁷.

The impact of these political initiatives is a multi-layered one. Next to serving the goals identified in the programme’s set objectives, its success opens the way to taking on other important, frequently correlated topics. And in that sense much recognition should be given to the legacy of the PES Women Standing Committee and the socialist members of the European Parliament serving in those years.

After this cornerstone, the EU moved to look at the issues previously not encompassed in its scope. To give an example, in 2004 the Council adopted in its conclusions a review of the implementation by the Member States and the European Institutions of the Beijing Platform for Action in respect of sexual harassment at the workplace. Following the reports of the Dutch and Irish Presidencies

respectively, they were recognised as human rights violations. Once again, it was emphasised that the existing Daphne programme was a platform through which this should be addressed, whilst at the same time the role of social partners in helping prevent it was also seen as essential. This approach, again, was very much in line with what PES Women Standing Committee had been demanding and what Fiorella Ghilardotti had already spelled out in the EP in May 2001³⁸: (...) *it is quite true that the 1976 directive played a remarkable role, but 25 years have passed and both social behaviour and the role of women have changed. Behind us we have numerous decisions of the Court of Justice but, most importantly, we have the Treaty of Amsterdam which, from the legal standpoint, gives us the opportunity to consolidate and make more effective the legal instruments which, as we are quite aware, are instruments, but vital instruments for implementing active policies and for putting the principle of equal opportunities into practice, even as regards access to employment. (...) The inclusion of harassment and sexual harassment as elements of discrimination is, without a shadow of a doubt, equally clear, as is also the clarification that the right to maternity, like the right to paternity, cannot be used as an instrument for enforcing discrimination. (...)*

³⁴ http://ec.europa.eu/justice_home/daphnetoolkit/html/welcome/dpt_welcome_en.html

³⁵ EP Debate 21st October 2001; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20011023+ITEM-011+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=2-232>

³⁶ Decision 803/2004/EC

³⁷ Daphne III was eventually established for the period 2007 – 2013 consequently. <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/ALL/?sessionId=6TJ0TwGpmMBdzjZLmmsvypdSmtt9T9B8VCM3yKL5ZypBwTSYXNZI295809812?uri=CELEX:32007D0779>

³⁸ 31st May 2001; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20010531+ITEM-001+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=4-008>



■ Daphne Programme - Meeting (2003)

■ 2.2.3.4.1 Fighting against trafficking of women

The debate on “violence against women” had become indeed a turning point in terms of broadening the EU’s agenda regarding ensuring equal rights for women and men. With violence described and condemned, and also with the concrete steps taken to initiate the fight against it, there was a hope among many that it would be just the beginning. This is also where the encouragement originated from to pursue the issue and bring forward related questions. For PES Women Standing Committee members, as well as for the socialist members of the EP, that meant returning to the Charter of 1998. In its spirit, they would bring up the “crime of trafficking”, which following the text was in fact an integral part of the “Eliminating Violence Against Women” Agenda³⁹.

The challenge on how to fight trafficking remained in the focus of the PES Women Standing Committee for the years that followed, resulting, amongst others, in the Special Resolution adopted by the PES at the Congress in Berlin in 2001. The Statement recognised trafficking in women as a “complex phenomenon”, which involves a number of actions from protecting and promoting human rights, through fighting organised crime, to more comprehensive development, aid and migration policies. The policy approach should therefore be based on international cooperation and should be

multi-disciplinary. As for the EU level, the Resolution welcomed the conclusion of the Tampere European Council, demanding the Union act on the basis of this ‘clear mandate’. Consequently, the EU was required to take the coordination role among various international organisations (UN, Council of Europe and OSCE) in terms of designing a common effective action plan. The Resolution underlined the urgency of pursuing the fight, especially against the new networks expanding during these years towards Central and Eastern Europe ahead of the upcoming enlargement. These elements should be considered, while reviewing and expanding the STOP⁴⁰ and Daphne programmes.

The same month (two weeks later), in the context of the European Parliament, Fiorella addressed the issue in Strasbourg with the following statement⁴¹: *if we are to discuss trafficking in women, we have to be aware that we are talking about a form of slavery, a modern form of slavery in which the majority of the victims are women subjected to trafficking run by organised crime networks. Trafficking in human beings supplies various markets: the market in organs for medical transplants, the market in new-born babies for those who do not have any children and the sweatshop market. However, the greatest area of crime involves women, the majority of whom are victims of trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. The poverty and marginalisation of the women in their countries of origin, the high earnings guaranteed to traffickers and the low risks they*

⁴⁰ The STOP Programme was established in 1996 to prevent trafficking in human beings and exploitation of children. http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/fight_against_trafficking_in_human_beings/l33015_en.htm

⁴¹ 18th May 2000; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20000518+ITEM-013+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=4-301>

³⁹ For the relevant text, please see the Chapter 3.2.3 of this publication

incur, and the substantial demand for women for prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation are the factors behind the growth of this trade. The Tampere European Council recently charged the European Union to fight against illegal immigration and, amongst other things, against those who profit from the trafficking in human beings. Mrs Sörensen's report goes beyond this perspective and gives absolute priority to the fight against trafficking in human beings. It is estimated that 500.000 women are trafficked every year, the majority of whom then work illegally, but the underground nature of the trade means that the true extent of the problem is unknown. The contribution of non-governmental organisations in revealing the causes, methods and consequences of the trafficking in women for sexual exploitation, and the support they provide for the victims, has brought about greater awareness of these issues. The STOP and DAPHNE programmes already represent a major contribution of the European Union, but we must not stop there. Mrs Sörensen's excellent report stresses the links between the trafficking in human beings and the policy on immigration and asylum, and calls, in the first place, upon the Intergovernmental Conference to bring about integral communitarisation of European policy in this field. As the report requests, it will therefore be necessary to establish a legal framework and effective prevention, protection and victim support measures at European level. On the other hand, the Member States and candidate countries must intervene themselves at legislative, administrative and police levels in order to eliminate this crime and, at the same time, increase international cooperation with Europol and Interpol to fight criminal networks. At national level, refugee status must be granted to the victims of trafficking and they must be issued with residence permits. Some countries – Italy and Belgium – assisted by NGOs, have already introduced some early measures. Furthermore,

information campaigns must be launched in the victims' countries of origin and an awareness action pursued in the Member States to raise public awareness, in particular, among the male population.

■ 2.2.3.5 Introducing “gender budgeting”

During her mandate as President of the PES Women Standing Committee, Fiorella Ghilardotti served in a number of the European Parliament's Committees. As her colleagues recall, she took on her tasks with passion and inspiration, reaching new horizons and making a profound difference. This drive together with the diverse expertise that she had acquired were key to the project that she put forward on behalf of the European socialist women – namely the demand for “gender budgeting”. This was the first ever attempt to raise this issue, which turned out to be successful and resulted in a debate on the floor of the European Parliament.

Fiorella modestly explained that though it may have been new to the EU, the concept in itself was not that innovative: *The Platform for Action drawn up at Beijing at the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women specifically refers to it [gender budgeting]; an experts' working group has been set up within the Council of Europe's Directorate-General for Human Rights; the Commission itself, after the conference organised by the Belgian Presidency, set up a working group of experts; but, above all, numerous experiments have*

been carried out in Eastern countries, starting with Australia, which adopted this instrument – like many developing countries, moreover – as early as 1984, and there have been interesting experiments carried out within the European Union too for some years now at both national and local level. What are the specific objectives of the report? Firstly, raising awareness among the public and political and economic actors at all levels. Disseminating information on the gender budgeting strategy and method among the institutions of the European Union and the Member States. Calling on the Commission, which has already expressed its support, to produce and distribute as widely as possible an information brochure on gender budgeting. Involving the actors operating in the Community at all levels in the building of budgets. Most importantly, indicating an action framework for the implementation of gender budgeting, providing for bottom-up democratic participation and the involvement of organised individuals, NGOs and women's associations. I will end, Madam President, with this point: wherever, especially at local level, experiments of this kind are already underway, they have also served to wipe away the indifference and detachment we see today at all levels in relationships between the citizens and the public authorities. This is an instrument which brings great participation as well as great justice.

Though there were existing practices, following up Fiorella's words, back in 2003, when the term “gender budgeting” was hardly known or understood, drafting an entire report about that was indeed a revolutionary move. But Fiorella argued⁴² nevertheless that this

was the only way to make gender equality a reality in the European Union: the report before us today slots perfectly into European policy on equal opportunities, which, as we know, has two basic branches: specific measures benefiting women and gender mainstreaming, or the incorporation of the perspective of gender equality into all. Gender budgeting is the application of the principle of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. As we are all aware, budgets are not gender-neutral, but reflect the way in which power is distributed within society. Whenever they define revenue and expenditure policies, public budgetary authorities at all levels are taking policy decisions. Budgets are not merely economic tools but, in fact, key instruments with which political authorities shape a society's model of socio-economic development and criteria for internal redistribution and prioritise the measures to be taken in respect of policies and the needs of their own citizens. The impact this has is not the same on women and men. The way in which public budgets are normally drawn up tends to ignore the differences – in terms of roles and responsibilities – between women and men, and, in most cases, the indicators and data used fail to make any gender distinction. Although they are presented as neutral economic instruments, public budgets, in actual fact, reflect and thus reproduce the socio-economic disparities already present in the Community. Analysing budgetary policies on the basis of the different impacts they have on women and men and adjusting them accordingly serves to ensure that public budgets meet appropriate criteria in terms of fairness and cost-effectiveness. In order to be not merely fair but also efficient, public spending must help to promote the development and exploit the potential of all sections of society. It is therefore a matter of adopting an economic and social approach based on the principle that, even in an open and globalised market economy, economic and social development

⁴² Debate on Thursday, 3rd July 2003 in Strasbourg; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20030703+ITEM-004+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=4-042>

are considered inseparable and interconnected. An economy cannot be competitive, dynamic and healthy in the long term unless the productive, commercial and financial processes are backed up by a stable, cohesive and fair society in which human rights, resources and capacities are properly developed. The strengthening, modernisation and reorganisation of public intervention, and hence budgetary policies, with a view to social development are, in fact, an absolutely essential intangible investment in capacities, empowerment and new resources and opportunities for economies wishing to be dynamic and competitive through being knowledge-based, in accordance with the objective set by the European Council in Lisbon.

The adoption of the report was a great achievement, as it both influenced a way of thinking about the budget overall (as non-gender-neutral), as well as re-emphasising that there needs to be a clear link between policy declarations in favour of gender equality and the financial means to turn them into reality.

A similar concern was the reason for bringing up the question of equal opportunities between women and men in the context of using the structural funds. The demand for a review and subsequent improvement of the situation had already been made by the PES Women Standing Committee in the famous Charter of 1998⁴³. There the ambition was to re-orient the Structural Funds, so that they would truly provide equal opportunities and achieve a greater social cohesion. Three years later, when the issue made it into the EP debate, Fiorella took the floor to say in the context of the Avilés

Perea and Gröner⁴⁴ Reports respectively: (...) First of all, I think it is important to say that these two initiative reports aim to be a tool and a stimulus for the subsequent steps that the Commission, Parliament and the Member States have to achieve, because they focus on the tools that we should have available both at the planning stage and at the stage of assessing the impact that the policies we issue have on the actual, real lives of our citizens, especially women. From this perspective, I think there are some important, positive examples: the indicators defined in the European employment strategy and the impact assessment carried out by the Commission can be a splendid benchmark for doing the same thing in other policy areas too, for instance in the assessment of Structural Fund programmes (...). It is necessary, therefore, to develop the tools of statistics, the presence of women in decision-making positions and committees, and impact assessment indicators. To these I believe another tool will be added, which we are developing as a guideline in the Committee on Women's Rights: budget structure from a gender perspective. I think this will be an important package that we can work on together, in order to have some effect on the implementation of these policies at all levels – national, regional and local – in the Member States. We must, I think, provide greater information on the tools available, emphasise the positive things that have been done – even if we are not completely happy because there is still a lot to do – but we must not become dejected that we do not have any tools at our disposal: the tools are there, so let us try and use them!

⁴⁴ EP Debate, 12th March 2003; <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+CRE+20030312+ITEM-008+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=en&query=INTERV&detail=3-278>

⁴³ Please see point 6 of the Charter in section 3.2.3 of this publication.

2.3 PES Women under the leadership of Zita Gurmai

The PES Congress of 2004 was a moment of a change. It was the first time in the party's history, that the election for the President would take place between two competing candidates. Emerging as a winner, in his inaugural speech **Poul Nyrup Rasmussen** stated: We have to take our women seriously (I know you always do!) I think that this party should in labour market policy and in practical gender policy show that this party also, as far as gender policy and equal treatment between women and men and equal chances are concerned, is number one in Europe. I think we should invest in more possibilities for women to get their children cared for while they are at work, it is about equal access in practice to education. We are the party of equality, we are the party of gender policy, we are the number one party in all these issues. These words set a new benchmark for the European Socialist Party to achieve.

Evidently, this constituted a turning point in the history of the PES Women. Until then, the relationship had been one dimensional – where it had been a struggle by the PES Women to put gender equality issues at the heart of the party's political agenda. With this proclamation, it was implicit that the relevance given to the work of PES Women was becoming greater. There was a wish on



■ Poul Nyrup RASMUSSEN

both sides to enhance the cooperation and join forces in order to ensure further transformation of the party itself. It was in that sense more than significant, that 12 years after the PES Women Standing Committee was established, the commitment to gender sensitiveness in all dimensions became a criterion for judging to what extent modernisation of the PES was being accomplished.

Although it was clearly a new opening that was made possible by the new leadership of Poul Nyrup Rasmussen and **Philip Cordery** (soon after appointed as the new PES Secretary General), the grasping of it depended on commitment from the PES Women side. And this is why the election of the new President of the PES Women was such a crucial decision for PES Women to take. It had to be someone experienced, charismatic and with a long term vision for the future on how to reform the PES Women Standing Committee as an organisation (keeping up with the transition and adapting it to the new PES situation).

Zita Gurmai was the candidate that fitted this profile perfectly. She had been Vice President of Socialist International Women, as well as serving as a Member of the European Parliament (like her predecessors in the post). She had been well known for many different valuable skills, among them being an excellent networker and a renowned campaigner. Her 2002 “Women Yellow Scarf” action was still a vibrant, inspiring memory, as was the 8th March 2004 action – which together with Poul Nyrup Rasmussen she organised in Hungary, calling for a greater participation of women in the 1st ever European Elections in Hungary. To that extent, her becoming the new President on 19th October 2004 made PES Women a protagonist in one more dimension. It meant that the PES Women Standing Committee was the first to name a leader within the PES family to represent the ‘new’ member states of Central and Eastern Europe.

When asked about this election and its historical significance, Zita Gurmai recalled: *My first experience in politics at transnational level occurred when I*



■ Philip CORDERY



■ Zita GURMAI

*became the first woman from Eastern Europe elected as Vice-President of the SIW, responsible for Central and Eastern European countries. I really grew up within the Socialist International family: under the successive presidencies of **Audrey McLaughlin**, then of **Maria Dolors Renau i Manén** and **Pia Locatelli**, and with **Marlene Haas** as Secretary-General. I learned the values of solidarity and cooperation. I really tried to bring what I had learnt from this experience when I got elected as PES Women President. It was for example crucial, in my opinion, to have Fiorella and Karin who both stayed in the PES Women executive. I was really pleased to be able to rely on such experienced and dedicated women, to help the newcomers from Central and Eastern Europe and share their knowledge. Together with the other Members and our Secretariat we were able to build a strong team, to hold meetings on a more regular basis, to organise activities outside of Brussels and to have activities on the occasion of PES Presidencies. We started to organise yearly conferences, in the Czech Republic, Portugal... Then I got elected as MEP in 2004 and it really became an ideal cooperation as I was in Brussels for my job. And we really tried to pursue and enhance the cooperation with our Group in the EP, and I have been able to count on two great colleagues as Socialist Group coordinators for the FEMM Committee: Lissy Gröner (who was also VP of the SIW) and then **Britta Thomsen** (MEP 2004-2014).*

Becoming a part of the new leadership of the PES, which set the course for a profound change and had a great ambition to make a difference, was therefore undoubtedly an electrifying experience. In the conversation that inaugurated the work on this publication, Zita Gurmai recalled that *Poul brought into the party a new, very ‘human’ approach. His signature initiative to put “People First” was in fact mirroring his set of priorities – to open up the party, to engage activists and to always remain focused on the hopes of the citizens that have been entrusted to us.* This is also why becoming a member of the PES Presidium was the very deepest, personal commitment one could make.



■ Rasmussen and Gurmai



■ Audrey MCLAUGHLIN



■ Maria Dolors RENAU I MANÉN



■ Pia LOCATELLI



■ Marlene HAAS



■ Britta THOMSEN

To this day Zita Gurmai underlines: *This is really like my family, the people I grew up with and with whom I learned how to become a leader. I really believe that it is not by chance I became PES Women President and that my past experience in SIW really was an advantage. At that time we had two great candidates for PES President, but I ultimately decided to campaign for Poul because of his experience as Prime Minister for 10 years and because he convinced me that we would be a great team. That's how we started years of common work and cooperation (in addition to becoming friends) with outcomes such as the PES Manifesto or the Women's rights Charter in 2009.*

Together with Zita Gurmai, the PES Women Standing Committee also decided on a new Board. It would include three Vice Presidents: **Anna Karamanou**, **Inger Segelström** and **Olga Zrihen**; and 8 members. Already then, there were changes introduced to the Standing Orders – marking the beginning of a new era of consolidation and progress. With the level of expectations set high, and energy remaining even higher, there was much enthusiasm accompanying this undoubted beginning of the new era.

■ 2.3.1 PES Women organisational developments in 2004-2012

The years 2004 – 2012 saw a great transformation of the PES. From the Secretariat that co-existed on the fringe of the administrative support structure of the Socialist Group in the EP, it has evolved into an independent, vibrant and expanding partisan organisation in its own right. That meant a new set of ambitions and a new scope and style of activities. Progress on that



■ Anna KARAMANOOU



■ Inger SEGELSTROM



■ Olga ZRIHEN

field was marked by the respective reforms of the Vienna Council of 2005 and the Brussels Congress of 2011. Furthermore, there was a need for the PES to simultaneously carry on modernising to keep up with the speed of overall developments. The expansion of internet usage was a factor in facilitating communication, but also an enabler opening up new forms of engagement by party activists across the EU. This meant new possibilities for campaigns, to name but one example. But it also translated into a challenge on how to remain an attractive platform for everyone, young people included, where so much of international social life could have been constructed by them elsewhere (i.e. on Facebook).

In that context, Zita Gurmai's leadership of PES Women can also be described as one of constant anticipation on political and social challenges, of permanent adaptation of tools and methods, and of continuous organisational innovation of both PES Women and also PES as a whole. These can be classified as three avenues, which she together with her subsequent boards pursued in building PES Women into the organisation it is today.

■ 2.3.1.1 New agenda, New action plan

First of all, there was a need to set a new agenda. While the ambition in the 1990s was to enlarge the scope of the EU legislation regarding women's rights and at the turn of the old/new Millennium to ensure implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the post-2004 EU was in a need of a new, consolidated set of policy benchmarks. The Lisbon Strategy had brought a certain focus on enabling women to participate fully in the labour market, but the obstacles in the social, economic and political context were far from being

solved. It would also seem that with different Council decisions, there had been a great deal of provisions put in place – however they all seemed scattered rather than unified and synchronised. A new approach was needed there too, which was laying the ground for thinking about constructing on the EU level what the PES Women had already achieved in the 1990s – namely a Charter of Women’s Rights. The political context was at least encouraging, taking into consideration that there was an ongoing EU Reform process – which through a Convention was expected to bring a Constitution for Europe.

This meant that the PES Women needed to review their ways of developing and promoting policy proposals. On one hand there was a need to consolidate a general programme, and on the other to deepen expertise and advance further on specific issues. Therefore, it was decided that there would be a continuation of the PES Women Annual Conferences – however they would now each be devoted to specific themes. In that respect the conferences were focused on: 2005 – “More and better jobs” for women; 2006 – “Women, religion and culture in Europe”; 2007 – “Women on the labour market”; 2008 – “Women in politics”; 2010 “My body, my rights”; 2011 – “Towards a new progressive thinking on gender, emancipation and feminism”.

Furthermore, it was decided that the tradition of campaigning would be continued but that its methodology would change. There would be three types of campaigns in which the PES Women would engage during those years. Firstly, there would be the overall PES campaigns. An example of how that worked is the PES childcare campaign. Zita Gurmai, as PES Women President, took part in the panel inaugurating the PES debate on the question of the Demographic challenges at the PES Council in Vienna in 2005, then the PES Women would engage in

the “Putting Children First” Campaign (launched in Porto in 2006) and subsequently would also be the ones to assess the result during the PES Council in Sofia in 2007.

Secondly, there were the ad-hoc awareness raising campaigns. They would either involve a specific day such as the launch of the PES Women pledge card on 8th March 2005, or would be focused on one currently relevant issue. The example of that was the anti-trafficking campaign launched on 1st March 2006 in the context of the World Cup. The slogan of the campaign was “Celebrate the World Cup, Fight Sexual Slavery”. There were over 22,000 signatures collected in support of this campaign, and the demand for the EU and its Member States was put in front of the European Commission and respective Heads of State and Ministers. It also created a platform through which PES Women began cooperating with new partners and thereby broadened its network.

The third category was the annual campaigns of PES Women. They would serve as an organising, consolidating denominator for the PES Women political agenda, as they would also serve as a thematic platform enabling the creation of a crossover between activities done on the EU and national levels respectively. Examples of such campaigns are “My body, my rights” in 2010 – which was meant to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of the Beijing Conference, and sadly proved to be a visionary action that marked the re-launch of the fights against the conservative backlash in respect of women’s health and reproductive rights in Europe.

The success of all these campaigns has been profound, greatly contributing to the development and strengthening of PES Women.

It enabled opening up of the organisation, raising its profile and reinforcing its power to influence the overall PES agenda. The impact that they have had is also perhaps what earned Zita Gurmai her recognition as the “best campaigner in Europe”. Herself, Zita Gurmai recalls all these actions with pride and gratefulness to all who engaged. However she singles out three of the actions that had been most special to her. These were: *Firstly 2006; the anti-trafficking campaign in the context of the World Cup in Germany, as we were able to influence the conclusions of the Council and include specific proposals and demands on how to tackle trafficking of women in the context of big events. Then 2007; the ‘Gender Pay Gap, Shut it!’ campaign, based on the successful zij-kant campaign on equal pay was picked up by all our sister parties and by the Commission that brought out a Communication on the issue. And then last but not least, in 2007; ‘putting children first’ was a campaign not only carried by PES Women but by the PES and all member parties, emphasising that Childcare was not just a women’s issues.*

■ 2.3.1.2 Developing the PES, Growing within it

Secondly, while the PES has been transforming, the PES Women President has been one of its architects – ensuring that PES Women would be an integral part of both the great reforms and the new leading policy initiatives of the party.

To begin with, the statutory changes have recognised PES Women as a full member organisation. This had consequences both in terms of the voting rights, as well as in terms of representation of PES Women within all the statutory bodies, at conferences and within the working groups. That was of a great relevance, as not only was it a springboard for promoting the women’s rights agenda, but also was a way to pursue the eventual introduction of gender quotas in all these contexts. The reform of the PES Council in Vienna in 2005 was a milestone in that sense, as it put obligations on the sister parties to always nominate one woman and one man for respective PES-related missions, which also put an end to the potential excuses that “there were no women willing to take part”. Now the responsibility for overcoming it was a common one.

Zita Gurmai, the President of PES Women describes this general change with the following words: *Indeed, I can proudly say that PES Women transformed from a platform of exchange in the PES to an active outgoing women’s movement, with a real political influence on the European scene. There are 2 important factors that have led to this transformation; the stronger position PES Women received within the PES through a real implication and participation at all levels of the PES (gender mainstreaming) as well as through a strengthened cooperation with the PES Women; a strong Bureau and liaison with sister parties at national level, frequent statutory meetings and focused visible PES Women campaigns.*

Furthermore, as indicated by Zita Gurmai, PES Women made sure that it contributed to all ongoing policy processes. On one hand that meant that the PES Women spokespersons were nominated to take part in deliberative meetings. Next to Zita Gurmai, PES Women President

representing the organisation at the PES Leaders' Meetings, at the PES Presidency, Councils and Congresses, there were a number of “ambassadors” involved in all the PES thematic working groups. For example, Inger Segelström was a member of the Statutory Reform Committee established in Vienna in 2005, **Anne Van Lancker** followed the so called Lisbon Network Meetings, and **Emine Bozkurt** was the member of the PES High Level Group on Turkey.

Their presence and contributions were backed with much of the internal work done within the PES Women secretariat, which often resulted in special written inputs (such as the one to the New Social Europe process). And they also laid the foundations for the chapters devoted to equality and specifically gender equality in the respective PES Manifestos of 2009 and 2014, as well as to the PES Declaration of Principles and the PES Fundamental Programme. Commenting on that, Zita Gurmai said: *We have always had to give a clear vision of Europe and underline the fundamental value of equality. That's why I pushed so much, together with all PES Women Members, for a greater inclusion of women and gender-related issues. To convince the leaders of our progressive family that equality also meant gender equality and that we had to remain the frontrunners in this fight for women's rights.*

It is important to underline, that in the period 2004 – 2012, PES Women representatives have also become very active members of the PES Ministerial meetings. They would use them as an opportunity to further pursue mainstreaming of the gender equality principle in all policy areas of the PES and by extension of the European Union, but also as a networking opportunity. This was a first step towards further development in the course of which the PES Women President Zita Gurmai would emerge as a partner to the respective Ministers and Commissioners. As a consequence PES Women gained access and could influence different processes. This is what enabled them to see their progressive policy demands incorporated into the EU political framework, as



■ Anne VAN LANCKER



■ Emine BOZKURT

was for example the case regarding the “Roadmap for equality between women and men” – where the cooperation between PES Women and Commissioner **Vladimir Špidla** was a factor in how the document was shaped in the end.

What is more, in order to promote the expertise of PES Women and disseminate the output of the organisation better, under the leadership of Zita Gurmai the organisation invested heavily in publications. The first among these was the PES Women Activity Reports, which would henceforward be prepared, presented and published ahead of every PES Congress. They were a great source of information about the initiatives, policy proposals and results that PES Women's work was bringing to the benefit of the European Progressive Family. As such, they also reflected the fact that the mandate offered consecutively to the leadership throughout those years was taken as a serious commitment to which the elected representatives responded eagerly, wishing to deliver on all the promises made.

The second group of publications encompassed those volumes which would bring the innovative, visionary ideas of the feminist politicians and activists to the broader attention of the progressive movement. They would serve as “food for thought” on one hand and also offer a platform through which different high level representatives could contribute and liaise with PES Women – even if their respective official duties would not allow them to engage with the organisation on an everyday basis. They were helpful in raising awareness about PES Women on one hand, and on the other they were another way of gaining strong credentials since they were introducing PES Women as an organisation with vast expertise. An example of such a publication is the 2008 brochure “Europe through Women's Eyes”.

Finally, the third group consisted of the collections produced by the PES Women in cooperation with partners. They would either feature articles



■ Vladimír ŠPIDLA

submitted ahead of different conferences, or would be devoted to one specific topic. The first category is exemplified well by the PES Women – FEPS publication “Political Participation of Women in Central and Eastern Europe” (Budapest 2013). The second includes PES Women – CEE Network volumes “Social democratic women in action”, such as: “Fifteen years after the Beijing conference and beyond.” (2010); and also “Women and the Economic and Social Crisis” (2010), “Importance of women’s political empowerment”.

Pursuing the initial commitment, the PES Women and especially its President Zita Gurmai remained focused on enhancing relations with the respective sister parties, their representatives and activists. In the course of the years 2004 – 2012, Zita Gurmai visited all the member parties, took part in countless conferences, expert seminars and campaign rallies. She was involved in all the major initiatives that would promote gender equality, would highlight the issues of women’s rights and and so would also empower women candidates.

This translated into the consolidation of progressive women organisations under the PES Women umbrella, and contributed towards the creation of a feeling of solidarity among the activists – which was so essential as the backbone for numerous actions. A concrete example of the tangibility of this achievement was the recent mobilisation against the proposed changes to the abortion law in Spain, when, following the call of PSOE and PES Women, so many stood up and went on the street to express their resistance to such attempts.

Having worked hard to keep PES Women as a platform where all progressive feminist activists from across the continent could come together and would feel a sense of ownership, PES Women President Zita Gurmai proposed a reform, on the basis of which there would be 4 Vice-Presidents elected to the PES Women Board. This would ensure, as she said, better representation of



EUROPE through
WOMEN'S EYES

■ Europe through women’s eyes
(2008)

all members. To quote Zita Gurmai: *PES Women indeed tries to ensure equal geographical and political representation within its organisation and this has certainly strengthened PES Women’s structure and functioning. The diversity is reflected in adopting working methods or thematic issues that have worked in certain sister parties.*

Beyond any doubt, these ambitions have been accomplished in these last years – and just as PES Women has been a home to all sister organisations, all of them became a home for PES Women. It was mirrored for example by the fact that Zita Gurmai has become the President of PS France’s Women Organisation. Commenting on that and on the overall reform achieved by PES Women, Zita Gurmai stated: *PES Women members worked hard on liaising between the national women’s representations and the European level, in order to show the impact of a common European approach on issues such as the pay gap, childcare,... this has been possible through the visible, successful annual campaigns of PES Women. Also PES Women has strengthened its position within the PES by improving the formal structure of PES Women on the one side (i.e. democratic procedures) and ensuring gender mainstreaming through consistent representation of PES Women at all levels and working structures of the PES on the other side.*

While working tirelessly within the PES Leadership on the reform that would enable further development of the PES on one hand, and while investing in consolidating and enhancing relations with the sister parties and women organisations on the other, Zita Gurmai made it a priority of her leadership to continue the initial focus on “People first” into an extra context. Hence her enthusiastic support to the PES Activists since their establishment and the first forum in Vienna in July 2008 has translated into continuous engagement in their initiatives. This meant that as a President she would always take part in their forums, seminars and campaigns, while on the other hand Zita Gurmai

would always use the opportunity of being on a PES mission to meet with local groups of PES activists, even if this was on the fringes of the events.

This would explain not only her own growing popularity, but above all the way the PES Women agenda was promoted and further developed with the support of more and more activists. The promotion of the organisation in this way was significant. To this day, Zita Gurmai advocates that: *The activists are indeed a growing and important project. We could witness this especially during the 2014 European Election Campaign. Their engagement along with today's media tools enables activists to actively participate, contribute and support the PES and its common candidate from the 4 corners of Europe, bringing Europe closer to women and men across Europe.*

■ 2.3.1.3 Enhancing cooperation within the PES family and beyond it

The mandate to strengthen PES Women within the PES and thereby also contribute to the historical modernisation of the Party has undoubtedly been the focus of the years 2004 – 2012. This for the PES Women meant a substantial amount of political and organisational work done within the party, which they have successfully combined with expanding their own network and

building new alliances. The three that they established and have cultivated within the European socialist family and which must be mentioned here are the ones with ECOSY (later YES) – Young European Socialists, with the CEE Network for Gender Issues and last but not least, since its establishment in 2008 with FEPS – Foundation for European Progressive Studies.

■ PES Women – Young European Socialists

ECOSY – Young European Socialists followed the PES when they moved out of the European Parliament and found a haven in the new headquarters at Rue du Trône. In March 2005, after a difficult Congress, the organisation elected a new leadership – which featured **Giacomo Filibeck** as President and **Ania Skrzypek** as Secretary General. The latter was the first ever woman and the first ever Central-Eastern European in an ECOSY leadership position, an outcome very much welcomed by Zita Gurmai, President of PES Women.

The warm welcome evolved into concerted support which the PES Women President has continuously extended to all the subsequent leaders of ECOSY (YES), but especially to the female presidents and secretary generals: **Janna Besamusca**, **Petroula Nteledimou** and **Kaisa Penny**. They were always welcome at the PES Women Statutory Meetings and were always invited to speak



■ Giacomo FILIBECK



■ Ania SKRZYPEK



■ Janna BESAMUSCA



■ Petroula NTELEDIMOU



■ Kaisa PENNY

at PES Women Events. In return, PES Women have always been welcome at the ECOSY events as speakers, there have always been panels on gender equality at their events (such as the Winter University), there there has been great cooperation between the PES Women and the ECOSY (YES) Feminist Network especially in putting together a programme for ECOSY Summer Camps – and also Zita Gurmai, as PES Women President has not missed any of the ECOSY (YES) Congresses, honouring these with her presence as a keynote speaker.

When asked about this particular, tangible support for the younger generation of politicians, Zita Gurmai commented: *As explained before, when I started within SIW, PES Women or within the European Parliament, I have had the chance to count on some great colleagues who were there to share their experience. I believe that this solidarity is even more important between women since we often have to face additional hurdles. So now that I am myself on the “more experienced” side of political life I try to give back. And be assured that I also receive a lot in return: it is always a refreshing experience to exchange with younger candidates who bring innovative ideas or their own vision.*

The alliance between the PES Women and ECOSY (YES) has been both based on common points of the political agenda and a strategic one – as the organisations shared many points of view on the necessity for the reform that enabled PES to become a modern party enabling participation of all. As for the political priorities, starting from the initiatives related to Europe's demographic challenges (2005), following the question regarding the post-referenda Europe, through the New Social Europe initiatives right up to the recent one on “Our Progressive Societies”, the two organisations would frequently support each other in campaigning, and would second many of each other's proposals at the PES meetings. The bond that has

been established, valued and cultivated by the subsequent generations is well mirrored in the words extended by the ECOSY (YES) Veterans and YES President in Chapter 4 of this publication.

■ PES Women - CEE Network for Gender Issues

(section by **Daša Šašić Šilović** and **Sonja Lokar**)

The CEE Network for Gender Issues, established in 1994 by the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, supports progressive, socialist, social-democratic and labour women's organisations, trade unions and NGOs on gender equality in the region of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE). It especially focuses on: support for the empowerment of women politicians and women's organisations for political and societal dialogue; policy support on gender equality issues and alignment with EU policy; capacity development and training on political, social and economic issues, particularly in the election process (campaigning and participation); expert support to the European Forum for Democracy and Solidarity, to the PES and to PES Women on gender equality issues in the region; continuous dialogue among women's organisations in the region and fostering networking and mutual learning and support.

The CEE Network is an associate member of PES Women. The

cooperation has been crucial and enriching for both organisations, for many reasons. For left wing feminists in CEE and SEE, being in continuous contact with the PES Women allowed for a transfer of best practice from the sister party women organisations united in PES Women our own countries. PES Women also offered a huge amount of support in every crucial moment, to enable us, sister parties and organisations in the region, to put gender equality on the mainstream agenda: first of our parties and trade unions in transition countries, then on the agenda of our national mainstream politics. This close cooperation led to the development of many essential initiatives. CEE and SEE socialist and social democratic parties are at the forefront when it comes to advocating for gender equality in their nations. The initiative to establish the Stability Pact Task Force gave a huge impetus to the debate as well. PES Women facilitated the establishment of regional and nationwide women's coalitions which have successfully fought for the introduction of quotas and parity, for gender equality state mechanisms, for the institution of women's rights ombudspersons, for strong legislation on violence against women, for affordable, secular, public childcare, against any attempt to strip women of their right to freedom of choice most importantly, and to the right to legal, safe, free of charge abortion. For example, without the lobbying of the PES Women President Zita Gurmai for the strong and well designed quota in Serbian legislation in 2011, today we would not have 33% of women in the Serbian Parliament, where the share of women MPs in 1994 was 3%! Without this cooperation it would have been impossible for women from the SEE to be the ones to initiate the first parity campaign of the European Women's Lobby (EWL) before the 2004 EP elections and to be actively involved in the design of the EWL

second parity campaign before the 2009 EP elections. The result of all this joint work was that – contrary to pessimistic expectations – new member states did not bring down the share of women in the EU parliament in 2004, and that the share of women in the EU parliament in 2009 has for the first time in 10 years increased, from 30 to 35%.

The fruitful cooperation between the CEE Network for Gender Issues and PES Women now continues in all efforts of the European socialist, labour and SD parties, helping our sisters in Arab spring countries to fight for their rights in really dangerous and difficult circumstances.

On PES Women side, being able to count on such cooperation was of a profound importance. Zita Gurmai, PES Women President speaks very highly about it, saying: *I believe that together with **Daša Šašić Šilović** and **Sonja Lokar** and all the other CEE Network Members we did a lot over the years but the most tangible result is probably the quotas of women we achieved in several political parties of our family.*

Following these words, Zita Gurmai adds that it was also through the CEE Network that she was most able to play the role of 'mentor' following the concept of 'solidarity through mentorship' within the feminist movement: *I played the role of mentor through the CEE Network with Daša and Sonja Lokar, I participated in mentoring programmes such as "Women can do it" or the European Women's Lobby mentoring programme. In my office in the EP we have had about 100 trainees in the past ten years.*



■ Daša ŠAŠIĆ ŠILOVIC



■ Sonja LOKAR

■ PES Women – FEPS

(section by **Judit Tánczos**)

Regulation No 1524/2007, which enabled the establishment of European political foundations states that the objective of these entities is to underpin and complement the objectives of the political parties at European level. With this as a starting point, the cooperation between the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) and PES Women has become a mutually inspiring process of common reflections towards gender equality.

The conviction that structural inequalities between women and men are a major obstacle for the empowerment of Europe's citizens led FEPS to the establishment of the research programme on progressive feminism. Through the establishment of a vast network of committed actors from academia, civil society and politics, its aim has been to give an impetus to the progressive parity agenda and to offer a solid theoretical background to a progressive vision for gender equality. PES Women and its members have been actively involved and with their engagement strongly contributed to the success of the dialogue. PES Women President and FEPS ex-officio Bureau member, Zita Gurmai – who became FEPS Vice-President in 2009 – has acknowledged several times the importance of this joint work and together with FEPS President, **Massimo D'Alema** and FEPS Secretary General, **Ernst Stetter**, constituted the driving forces of a fruitful collaboration.

Several highlights of this cooperation are worth elaborating upon further. In 2009, FEPS launched its activities on gender equality by initiating a reflection on the philosophy of European feminism and instead of focusing on divisions, it made some points about European women together. These



■ Massimo D'ALEMA



■ Ernst STETTER

debates have fed into the 2009 campaign of the PES Women on the content of the European Women's Rights Charter. 2009 was also the year when a transatlantic dimension was added to the FEPS research and with the support of the Fondation Jean Jaures (FJJ) and Boston University the first Transatlantic dialogue on gender issues was organised to look at best practice and stimulating examples. Its Vice-President, Anna Karamanou, represented PES Women at this exciting discussion.

In 2010, the cooperation continued on the issue of combating domestic violence. PES Women launched its "My Body, My Rights" campaign to raise awareness about the risks brought by the financial crisis to sexual and reproductive rights and health and the prospects of increasing numbers of incidents of domestic violence. In the meantime, FEPS investigated the possible causes behind this deteriorating trend with American academic partners at the second Transatlantic dialogue on gender issues. The 100th anniversary of International Women's Day was jointly celebrated with a two-day conference organised in the European Parliament together with 300 participants, both women and men representing progressive foundations, NGOs and PES sister parties under the title "If Clara Zetkin could do it, so can we!". This exciting event again united progressive feminists in a mission to finish the transformation of gender roles, which was initiated by women's entry to the labour market and to fight against the risk of conservative backlash.

Next to the support received from PES Women President, Zita Gurmai, PES Women Vice-President **Marja Bijl** was also strongly and enthusiastically involved throughout the process. Following the success of the previous Transatlantic dialogues, in 2011 the FEPS conference in Washington D.C., with the support of the FJJ and the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, was organised in conjunction with the PES Women delegation to



■ Marja BIJL

New York and Washington D.C. Hence, the delegation meetings with politicians were complemented by a two-day seminar on the same issues with interventions from academia and research institutes. These exchanges are crucial in the opinion of Zita Gurmai, PES Women President: *The transatlantic dialogue is important as both sides of the Atlantic have contributed to women's rights and gender equality. Both sides in a different way and with their own strengths and we can thus learn from each other. A strong feminist movement in the 1970s existed on both sides of the Atlantic, but while Europe has translated lots of demands into legislation and rights for women to have equal chances on the labour market, in politics and in social life, the US has developed a strong academic background and network for women's rights and gender equality issues. As today we are both facing the conservative backlash pushing what has been achieved for women back to traditional patterns, progressives need to support each other around the world. Therefore I believe that such exchanges need to be strengthened over the coming years.*

FEPS has also been engaged in the debates concerning EU enlargement and consequently in improving the situation of gender equality in (potential) candidate countries. This common goal has led to an intensive cooperation with another strategic partner of PES Women, the Central and Eastern European Network for Gender Issues.

2012 was an important year in the history of both organisations. It was memorable for PES Women, as it marked its 20th anniversary. It was also the year where the FEPS brand "Woman up!" was established in order to increase the visibility of the research

programme, hence increasing the visibility of progressive women as well. By that time, four years of extremely stirring and motivating cooperation had passed, including – as the above-mentioned list suggests – many common fights in which the two organisations had mutually strengthened each other and even more joyful moments of success. This inspires both FEPS and PES Women to continue together on the same path, enable both women and men to have a fulfilling life and encourage them to Woman up! for a fairer society.

While extending her warm words about the cooperation, Zita Gurmai, PES President also pointed out that: [at the beginning] *A typical thing happened: the FEPS leadership was elected without any women as VP. As PES Women President and Member of the Bureau, I strongly felt that we were in need of more gender mainstreaming. The general assembly strongly supported me and that's how I became Vice-President of FEPS. We now have more women as contributors, speakers, within the Young Academics Network or the FEPS Scientific Council or in the Bureau. We organise regular activities such as the Transatlantic dialogue (and I would like to emphasize here the very strong and fruitful cooperation we enjoyed over the years with the Jean Jaures Foundation and Ghislaine Toutain) or the publication and cycle of events "Woman Up!". This of course wouldn't have been possible without the support of Massimo D'Alema and Ernst Stetter. But it is also since Judit Tánczos became an active member of the FEPS Team that we have someone who really works on this portfolio, on women's rights and gender equality, and this is very important in my opinion.*



■ Ghislaine TOUTAIN



■ Judit TÁNCZOS

■ 2.3.2 PES Women political influence in 2004-2012

The richness of the political legacy of PES Women is on such a great scale, that it would be impossible to quote here all the initiatives that they have successfully launched and pursued. While the material gathered in Chapter 3.5 illustrates and documents these endeavours, for the purpose of this publication only a few examples will be described in more detail in this section. The selection was made following the suggestions made by the “witnesses of time” (interviewed for Chapter 4) and in parallel the list of the most ground-breaking EU decisions regarding gender equality, to which PES Women contributed directly through their work. These will feature in five sections: empowerment of women and their participation in politics; strategy for equality between women and men; women and the labour market; combating violence against women; women and health and reproductive rights.

■ 2.3.2.1 Empowerment of women and their participation in politics

Following the referenda in the Netherlands and in France, through which the EU Constitutional Treaty had been rejected, PES Women decided to use the time of the “Pause for Reflection” to look specifically at the question of abstention by women voters. The aim was to look at the factors that induce low female participation in elections and referenda and to analyse the reasons for which they eventually become EU-integration reluctant or sceptics.

Commenting on these developments and drawing a parallel with contemporary reality, Zita Gurmai stated that: *This is sadly a reality we have been confronted with: while Europa, in Greek mythology, was a beautiful woman, European women somehow feel less included in the construction of Europe. Of course we have to be careful about too hasty an analysis and I believe that a lot of parameters need to be taken into consideration, apart from gender. But somehow, just as we failed to convince a large part of our citizens, we haven't been able to really demonstrate what Europe can bring to women, apart from what it would bring to any citizens regardless of their sex.*

This reflection process would feed into an overall debate within the PES family about these tendencies towards a growing gap between the EU and its citizens. In that sense, it was also

designed to be a contribution to the PES Initiative on “People’s Dialogue” – which was inaugurated at a Conference taking place in Dublin in January 2006. Zita Gurmai spoke there at the public event, emphasising the need to create more of a connection between the everyday lives of people and the discussions at EU level. She tackled the questions of the empowerment of women in particular, so that they are aware of their rights and ready to use the power of their vote to determine their own future. Following this address, PES Women continued the process by sharing their expertise in the context of the Plan D (for Democracy, Dialogue and Debate) – as launched by the social democratic Commissioner **Margot Wallström** in October 2005. Recalling those times, as well as overall cooperation with Commissioner Wallström, Zita Gurmai underlined: *And one word on Margot Wallström with whom I campaigned in 2009 as part of a campaign similar to the current 50/50 campaign (a cross-party coalition with the support of the European Women’s Lobby): When there were initially only 3 female Commissioner candidates out of 27, and we were trying to put pressure for a more gender-balanced Commission, she was supportive from the beginning. And overall, she collaborated very well with PES Women and we could really count on her support.*

The issue of women’s participation and representation in politics has continued to be a recurrent subject for debate on the PES Women agenda between 2004 and 2014. It was a theme of the PES Women Annual Conference in 2008, which was entitled “Women in Politics”. It brought together more than 250 participants, who deliberated both the existing challenges, and also the potential ways to increase women’s presence. Among the recommendations that were formulated then were the emphasis on quotas as a way to ensure more equal opportunities, as well as mentoring as a system for creating mutual responsibility and support among different generations.



■ Margot WALLSTRÖM



■ 50/50 campaign (2008-2009)

Consequently, the PES Women engaged with the European Women’s Lobby’s “50/50” campaign in 2008 – 2009. The objective of this action was to raise awareness about the fact that in the European Commission (and also within the European Parliament) women remain under-represented. The campaign therefore sought on one hand to involve prominent personalities and women organisations in a cross-party call, and on the other to put pressure on the member states, so that when nominating their representatives they would feel compelled to abide by the EU’s commitment to the principle of equality.

In that spirit also, PES Women welcomed the new articles of the so called “Lisbon Treaty”, which in Articles 2 and 3 committed the member states to non-discrimination and to ensuring equality between women and men. While this in itself was progress in comparison to Amsterdam and Nice, it was still not sufficiently explicit. Therefore, PES Women renewed their call for a special “European Women’s Rights Charter”. Using their in-house expertise in drafting such a document (which had been their experience in 1998), they demanded that the EU Charter become a “visionary progressive text, based on existing agreements”. They argued that it should state what sort of tools and mechanisms could make its pledges reality, and also these should be set within an adequate organisational and budgetary framework. This was the line upheld by PES Women in the consultation with the Commission. The Charter was finally put in place on 3rd February 2010.

European Women's Rights Charter



■ European Women's Rights Charter (2009)

■ 2.3.2.2 Strategy for equality between women and men^{45,46,47}

The commitment to struggle for further mainstreaming of the gender equality principle at EU level had been the motivation with which PES Women began cooperation with Commissioner Vladimir Špidla in 2004. Looking back at this period the PES Women President emphasised: *It has been a great collaboration, at both a personal and professional level. He has been an excellent Commissioner and I think that his personal experience really played a role in it: at some point, he had to stay at home for a while to take care of his family and I know that it really brought him a personal level of experience and a true understanding of the need for more gender equality: he really believes in it.*

Furthermore, Zita Gurmai added that there are many concrete outcomes resulting from this particular joint work: *The cooperation between PES Women and the Commissioner responsible for Women's Rights, at the time Vladimir Špidla, contributed to a number of positive developments in the field of Gender Equality. To offer examples: (1) 2007 was the year dedicated to Gender Equality; (2) In 2007, the European Pact for Gender Equality*

⁴⁵ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Roadmap for equality between women and men (2006 – 2010), Brussels 01.03.2006, COM (2006) 92 final.

⁴⁶ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Mid-term progress report on the roadmap for equality between women and men (2006 – 2010), Brussels 26.11.2008, COM (2008) 760 final.

⁴⁷ Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: Strategy for equality between women and men 2010 – 2015, COM (2010) 491 final, Brussels 21.9.2010

was adopted by the Council; (3) A mid-term progress report was introduced to evaluate the objectives of the 2006-2010 roadmap; (4) Thanks to the PES Women Campaign 'Pay Gap, shut it!', the Commission presented a communication on the pay gap trying to get "uniformity" of data across Europe as well as proposals to combat the pay gap; (5) Childcare targets were also brought back on the European agenda thanks to the PES campaign 'Children First'.

While all these achievements have had a tangible impact in terms of progress towards achieving the pledge of gender equality, the historically outstanding document that had been drafted and adopted following these exchanges was the "Roadmap for equality between women and men". The Roadmap built upon the existing provisions, however, most importantly, it set new and more ambitious benchmarks. Putting them forward was quite a challenge, as Vladimir Špidla recalls: *There have been many legal acts promoting non-discrimination; however these were not sufficient to ensure equality for women and men in all aspects of their lives. That was especially the case for the changing contemporary societies. At the same time, with the conservatives assuming power on the national level, it was a politically precarious situation. We could not afford a new directive, hence a "Roadmap" was a sort of "new method" of bringing our principles and policies forward.*

The initial Roadmap for equality between women and men was made public on 1st March 2006, just a week ahead of International Women's Day. It was a new European Strategy, and would spell out 6 priorities for EU action on gender equality. These were: (1) equal economic independence for women and men; (2) reconciliation of private and professional life; (3) Equal representation in decision-

making; (4) eradication of all forms of gender based violence; (5) Elimination of gender stereotypes; (6) Promotion of gender equality in external and development policies. The Roadmap was a continuation of the Framework Strategy for Equality of Women and Men 2001 – 2005; however it also combined the launch of new actions and the reinforcement of existing initiatives.

What was a real innovation was that each of the goals spelled out by the Roadmap would be matched with a set of indicators agreed upon as benchmarks to enable adequate monitoring of the progress made. Each Chapter was therefore composed of a detailed description of the problems existing within the respective areas, followed by tangible actions that the EU could take in order to combat them.

In the field of achieving equal economic independence for women and men, it referred to reaching the Lisbon employment targets, eliminating the gender pay gap, enhancement of female entrepreneurship, gender equality in social protection and the fight against poverty, recognising the gender dimension in health, and combating multiple discrimination (in particular against immigrant and ethnic minority women). The Commission hoped to achieve progress by, amongst other things: making the Integrated Guidelines and the Open Method of Coordination gender-neutral; using the 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All and the 2010 European Year of Combating Exclusion and Poverty as opportunities to debate and explore further action. As for reconciliation of work, private and family life the Commission identified 2 areas of possible intervention: flexible working arrangements for both women and men; and increasing care services.

Regarding promoting equal participation of women and men in decision-making, the EC wanted to explore the difficulties in three fields: politics, economy, science and technology. The lack of data was the first obstacle to overcome. Hence the development of a gender-specific research programme was at the core of the commitment.

Actions for eradicating gender-based violence and trafficking would also require further expertise in order to be adequately tackled. The Commission wanted to begin by establishing a system of comparable statistics on crime, victims and criminal justice, as well as benchmarks for monitoring progress. As for eliminating gender stereotypes, the Commission foresaw essential action in three fields: education, training and culture; the labour market; and the media. The Commission promised to support the fight against gender stereotyping by mainstreaming the gender equality principle and through specific actions, for example in the EU Lifelong Learning strategy.

The innovative part of the document is the chapter “Promoting Gender Equality Outside of the EU”. Previously the trend was rather to refer to the Beijing Platform as a set of benchmarks and deliberate on how to translate it into EU policy. With the new strategy the approach changes – by focusing also on what the EU can do to promote gender equality worldwide. The key areas are the ones mapped by the Millennium Development Goals and the European Neighbourhood Policy and specific programmes (such as the EU Strategy for Africa). The actions still remain limited, focused on monitoring and support for relevant NGOs active in the field of development and aid policies – but the fact that they have been

taken into consideration in this Strategy is of great relevance.

Subsequently to the 2006 Roadmap, the Commission published a mid-term report in 2008. It underlined that although the inequalities continued to persist, nevertheless the action of the European Commission was influential in prompting some progress. One of the examples offered was that the 2007 report of the Commission on “Tackling the pay gap” identifies concrete measures to fight the existing 15% differences in incomes. Furthermore, thanks to the existence of the Roadmap, many different European policy areas, initiatives and tools were screened according to its objectives. This is also why there was progress in terms of reaching new benchmarks to ensure adequate provision of health services to both genders, and also why the European Year of Equal Opportunities of 2007 was used as an opportunity to discuss new projects that could foster women’s rights in the EU. To that end, the European Commission also ensured mobilisation of further funding to support the political pledges, namely within the course of distribution of the European Fund 2007 – 2013. A very important fact that the Commission was also proud to report is that the European Institute for Gender Equality was established by then⁴⁸.

In 2010, the introduction to the Strategy stressed that the European Union was founded on ‘fostering equality between women and men’, noting however that there is a need to continue in order to build a ‘genuinely gender-equal society’. Among the inequalities that still exist, the document identified the gender pay gap as the first one,

which was followed by mentions of inequality of women in terms of their overrepresentation in low paid sectors, underrepresentation in decision-making processes and challenges they face in balancing their professional and private lives. Based on this and other evidence that equality between gender had not been achieved yet, the Commission reiterated its commitment to the EU’s founding values and paved a roadmap for how to achieve that. What is striking is that the document does not refer to the existing economic crisis, nor to the impacts that it had already had on hindering equality and equal opportunities in Europe by that point.

The Strategy was composed of 6 Chapters: (1) Equal economic independence; (2) Equal pay for equal work and work of equal value; (3) Equality in decision-making; (4) Dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence; (5) Gender equality in external actions; (6) Horizontal issues. All these areas were identified as complementary to the earlier pledges by the Union, made in the context of the Beijing UN World Conference on Women (of which it was the 15th anniversary in 2010), the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and the EU2020 Strategy and the Women’s Charter previously adopted by the Commission. The Strategy would build on the earlier Roadmap, as adopted in 2006 (for the years 2006 – 2010).

In terms of the key objectives, a number of actions were identified in each of the Chapters of the Strategy. It is worth mentioning a number of them here. As for equal economic independence, it was pointed out that participation of women in the labour market was still lagging behind the EU2020 objectives (remaining at 62.5% instead of 75%). This meant also that a large group of potential employees

was remaining outside employment, while their employment was essential for many reasons, amongst them to counterbalance the effect of the ageing of society. Among the actions, the Commission was hoping to make better use of the Structural Funds to promote more female entrepreneurship and self-employment. There was also a renewed commitment to review the Member States’ performance regarding childcare provision on one side and integration of migrant workers on the other. As for equal pay, the Commission recognised the need to “explore” together with the social partners the reasons for the existing pay gap – also looking here at the impact of the different types of contract (fixed-term, part time etc.) as catalysts of persistent inequalities. There were further instruments put in place to enable a more thorough review.

As for equality in decision-making, the Commission expressed readiness to consider targeted initiatives to improve the situation, as well as monitoring whether the existing targets were being achieved (such as for example the 25% target for women in top level decision-making positions in research and the setting of a 40% minimum quota for each gender in all the Commission’s own committees and working groups). However, where the Commission was less strong was on the European Parliament, where they would be ready to ‘promote greater participation’ – but left it without setting any benchmarks.

⁴⁸ Regulation (EC) No 1922/2006.

■ 2.3.2.3 Women and the labour market

The paradigm of activation of women was an essential ingredient of the Lisbon Strategy. It was taken further and echoed in the PES proposal on the “New Social Europe”, to which PES Women made an enormous contribution and spent much effort exploring how to ensure equal opportunities in the context of an evolving labour market. It was therefore not a coincidence that the first PES Women Annual Conference of the new mandate (March 2005) was devoted precisely to the question of “More and better jobs for women – an EU priority?”. Subsequently, there have been many avenues through which the topic was approached, and among them two main questions have been raised: equal pay and the reconciliation of professional and private lives.

■ Equal Pay

Although the fundamental right to equal pay for equal work was already recognised by the European Community in the Treaty of Rome, the pledge has sadly never been effectively implemented. There were many reasons why the situation still persisted in the second half of the previous century, however the evolution of the labour market on one hand, and the crisis-related socio-economic developments on the other made the situation far worse. The

statistics show that it is women who are more frequently trapped in atypical and “unsocial” working contracts, who have been victims of the negative impacts of the polarisation of the labour market, and also who have lost much of their support mechanisms, once austerity policies started being implemented across the Union.

PES Women has been committed to moving forward in the fight against the gender pay gap since the early beginnings. However it reaffirmed its commitment in the course of 2007 – when in February a campaign “Gender Pay Gap, shut it!” was launched. Then PES Women drew attention to the fact that the 15% difference persisting between the relative incomes of both genders meant that women needed to work harder and longer in order to be able to earn as much as men. This first action under the leadership of PES Women President Zita Gurmai was two-fold – on one hand it supported the call made by Commissioner Vladimir Špidla that it was high time for the Commission to identify a set of concrete actions against the gender pay gap; on the other it was an internet mobilisation which peaked on the 8th March 2007 (following the Belgian Equal Pay Day campaign www.equalpayday.be).

The question of equal pay returned to the PES Women Agenda indirectly through the annual campaign of 2011, which was devoted to the question of pensions. Looking at the challenge that European governments were facing while trying to put in place respective pension reforms, PES Women strived to prevent these legislative changes from further undermining the already unequal provisions. In that context the demands presented in the course of this year of action, and subsequently to the annual conference, featured: a call for a gender impact assessment in the field of

pensions, establishment of career care credits and specific strategies to keep women over 55 active on the labour market.

This action was matched by the campaign in 2012, when PES Women and ECOSY joined forces in the “Your Future is My Future” PES Campaign for a European Youth Guarantee. In that context, a special focus was put on bringing attention to the precarious situation of young women. It was demanded that the new programme should address the question of gender segregation in education, creating green jobs for women and adopting a maternity leave directive.

Finally, the quest to combat the gender pay gap was made the absolute priority for PES Women in 2013 – when in Sofia in June a new annual campaign “Equal Pay, It’s About Time!” was launched. It was emphasised then that despite different kinds of action the gender pay gap had deepened to 16,2% in Europe and that a new strategy needed to be put together to finally tackle that effectively. In total, women work 2 months extra per year to earn the same pay as men.



■ Gender Pay Gap, shut it! (2007)

■ Reconciliation between private and professional lives⁴⁹

Next to the gender pay gap, tackling the challenges of reconciling private and professional lives has been a focus for PES Women. The motivation to advance with this agenda was two-fold. Firstly, there was the question of looking at women and their life choices in a different way. Social security and private provision exists to make emancipated choices possible. To put it more explicitly, in terms for example of childcare, the progressives wanted to shift the focus from that being a “way to enable working mothers to work” into “provision enabling working women to decide on having children, shall they want to”. The emphasis was both on recognising the next step of emancipation as well as embedding the quest for incentives better in an era of demographic challenges. Secondly, on the margin of these deliberations the point was made that such an approach would also be beneficial for children – offering to all the same possibilities in terms of attending childcare facilities and profiting from public education from an early age.

With this in mind, PES and PES Women embarked on a campaign in 2007. Its action plan was summarised in the slogan “Putting Children First”. It offered a possibility for numerous exchanges and seminars, thanks to which the best practices in Europe could be identified and put together in a comprehensive report.

⁴⁹ See: Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: A better work-life balance: stronger support for reconciling professional, private and family life, Brussels 3.10.2008, COM (2008) 635 final.

Putting Children First



■ Putting Children First (2007)

The campaign created a certain momentum, which was definitely influential in the Commission's decision in 2008 to issue a new Communication on the matter. It spelled out that although the EU's competence in the area of enabling reconciliation of private and professional lives by individuals remains 'limited', implementation of other EU policy promises could still play a role in achieving the same goals. An example of this was the pledge for “more and better jobs” spelled out in the Lisbon Strategy. To that extent, the impact of these policies on demographic trends was explicitly recognised by the EU, and already included in the set of active inclusion policies (as spelled out, for example, in the Report on Social Protection and Social Inclusion).

Consequently, the Commission's Communication would recognise a need for further action, which was also expressed in the proposals embedded in the Renewed Social Agenda of 2008. There the legislative proposals focused on two aspects: strengthening workers' legal entitlement to family related-leave and ensuring equal treatment of the self-employed and their assisting spouses. There was also a strong commitment to reach the so-called “Barcelona Targets”⁵⁰ on childcare, progress regarding which should be further monitored.

To that effect the Commission distinguished four fields for action. First of all, there was a question regarding possible improvements around the family-related leave provision. The Commission suggested a revision of the Directive 92/85/EEC regarding maternity

leave, extending the leave (from 14 to 18 weeks) and offering a greater flexibility for women to decide how much of that time should be taken before/after birth. On the equal treatment of the self-employed and their assisting spouses, the Commission proposed a repeal of the existing legislation, putting a new Directive in place, which would put self-employed workers on the same footing as everyone else in terms of rights to maternity leave. Regarding childcare, the Commission noted that sufficient progress has not been made and that there is a need to monitor that further, while offering space for exchange of best practice and while using other instruments (among them the EU's Cohesion Policy).

Another avenue that was pursued in terms of enabling reconciliation was the issue of maternity leave provision. Regulations still varied across the Union and there was an obvious demand for standardisation of the minimum protections. PES Women pre-empted this debate by discussing the question with Commissioner Reding during a meeting in September 2010. Following these exchanges, PES Women welcomed the Parliament's vote extending the leave from 14 to 20 weeks – within which 2 weeks were allocated for a paternity leave.

Summarising the efforts to put the issue of women's rights and opportunities in the context of their participation in the labour market so high on the agenda, Zita Gurmai said: *We need a social agenda putting people and people's interests back at the centre of the European project and future. The PES in its manifesto clearly underlines that, by proposing to invest in people, creating jobs and ensuring social justice and equality.*

⁵⁰ Refers to the European Council's targets from 2002, pledging to provide by 2010 : a) at least 90% of children between 3 and mandatory school age. b) at least 33% of these under 3 with childcare.

■ 2.3.2.4 Combating Violence against Women⁵¹

Following the same agenda as in earlier years, after 2004 PES Women continued with their struggle to ensure that the Union took adequate steps to combat violence against women. Even though the EU programmes such as STOP and DAPHNE were undoubtedly bringing results, there were permanent fears that they would be reshaped, cut or even terminated. Hence the first objective was safeguarding them.

Secondly, though their respective scopes had already been broad – they had still been missing many issues (such as for example gender-based harassment at the work place). What is more, much of the programme's success depended on the cooperation of the national governments and their subsequent commitment to provide data on one hand, and on the other to modify their respective domestic legislation. Binding national governments more closely required action at Council level and setting up parallel cooperation with the respective ministers – and that is what PES Women identified as their area for action.

On 30th November 2004 (promptly after her election), Zita Gurmai, PES Women President met with **Soledad Murillo**, Spanish Secretary of State for Equality and **Maribel Montaña**, National Secretary for Equality of the



■ Soledad MURILLO



■ Maribel MONTAÑO

Federal Executive Committee of PSOE. This was an opportunity to discuss the prospect of the new legislation that the Spanish government was aiming to put in place with more effective measures to combat violence against women. The meeting was one example of a number of similar exchanges that took place between PES Women and representatives of other governments.

In parallel with the political debates, PES Women also identified possible actions that they could take in order to raise awareness about how complex, multidimensional and devastating for victims the phenomenon of violence against women has been. Using the momentum of the run-up to the World Cup in 2006, PES Women launched what many called one of the most successful campaigns – namely the one held under the theme “Celebrate the World Cup, Fight sexual slavery”. The first action took place on 1st March, when on behalf of PES Women – its President Zita Gurmai called upon the President of the European Commission and the Heads of State to take action to prevent trafficking and sexual exploitation of women, which has become a shameful practice on the fringes of the football championship. Following this inauguration, PES Women used this slogan as they collected signatures – 22,000 of which they presented to Franco Frattini, the EU Commissioner for Justice and Home Affairs. The letter was sent on 27th April – when the Council was in session and the issue made it into the agenda. The Ministers gathered expressed their deep concern over the issue and, influenced by this action, modified and strengthened the conclusions of their meeting.

The mobilisation and the communication that accompanied the campaign had an obvious influence on the overall discussion, ahead of the 2007 Council, when Daphne III was expected to be discussed. Finally the Decision 779.2007/EC of the EP and the Council recognised violence against women as a ‘violation of fundamental rights, a health scourge and an obstacle to the enjoyment of safe, free and just citizenship’. This was a great achievement,

⁵¹ See: Decisions adopted jointly by the European Parliament and the Council Decision No 779/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 June 2007 establishing during the period 2007 – 2013 a specific programme to prevent and combat violence against children, young people and women to prevent victims and groups at risk (Daphne III programme) as part of the General “Fundamental Rights and Justice” Programme.

Celebrate the
World Cup
Fight
sexual slavery
Sign up
to our petition

■ World Cup sexual slavery (2006)

especially when we recall that a decade earlier the discussion revolved around provision of a definition and reaching an agreement for the Union to act. Following this, a pledge was made that the Daphne programme would continue as the Daphne III Programme, which would run from 1st January 2007 to 31st December 2013. The programme would contribute to both prevention and the fight against all forms of violence in the private or public sphere against children, young people and women. It would: assist the NGOs active in that field and set up and support multidisciplinary networks; develop and implement awareness-raising actions and design educational material; disseminate results of Daphne and Daphne II; identify and enhance actions contributing to positive treatment of people at risk of violence; study the phenomena related to violence and its impact further, identifying better ways to support both the victims and society in preventing them.

Subsequently, PES Women carried on actions to ensure that Daphne III was indeed being implemented. An example of that was the mobilisation on 1st June 2010 in Madrid – where PES Women organised their statutory meeting in the context of the Spanish Presidency. The session concluded with the presentation of a list of demands, which included a call for not allowing austerity to affect the already limited financial resources behind programmes to fight violence against women.

The fight would be continued in following years, for example via the PES Women Declaration on 25th November 2012 and the participation of PES Women in the Flash Mob “One Billion Rising” held on 14th February 2013 in Brussels.



■ World Cup sexual slavery petition (2006)

■ 2.3.2.5 Women and health and reproductive rights

The fight for women's right to self-determination, especially in the specific field of health and reproductive rights, has been a continuous struggle led by PES Women throughout the years 2004 – 2012. The reason has been that on one hand, there have been numerous attempts on the part of conservative governments to change the existing legislation negatively. On the other, the progress in work toward progress in medicine has not always been directed to the areas where lives could be saved if the research were gender specific – such as in the case of cervical or prostate cancer.

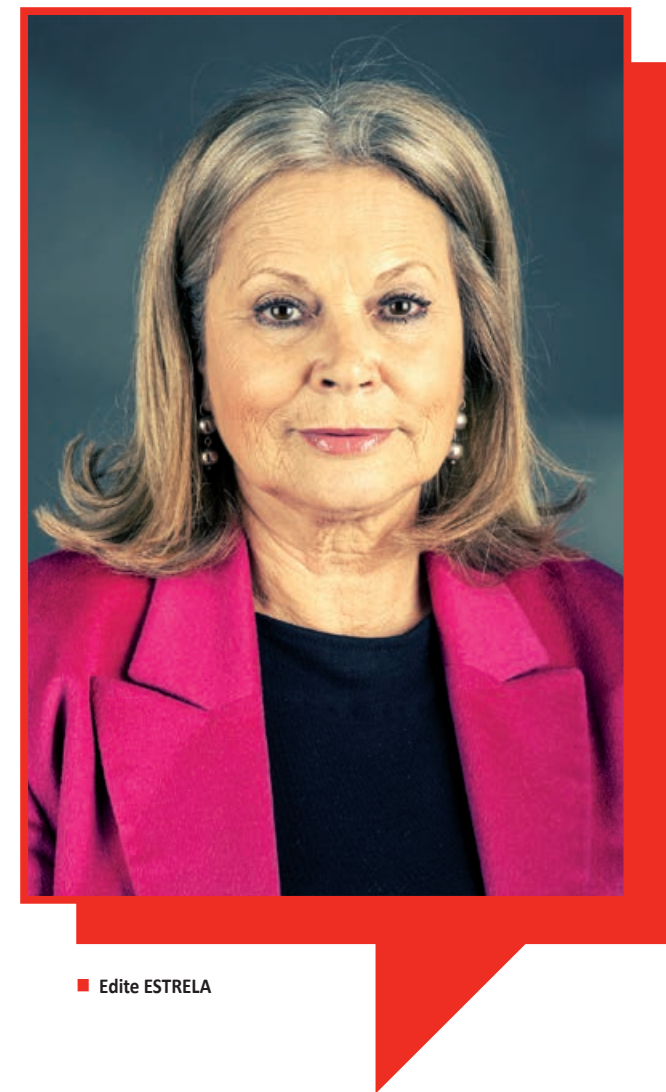
The first action under the leadership of Zita Gurmai as President of PES Women in the area of women's health and reproductive rights took place in January 2007. It featured a common campaign organised together with the sister party of PS Portugal ahead of the referendum called by Prime Minister José Socrates, by which it was hoped to get support to lift the ban on abortion.

The principle “My body, my rights” has become the main theme of the PES Women campaigns and annual conference of 2010. The latter was held in Warsaw, Poland – the country of one of the most restrictive laws regarding abortion. The Conference adopted the final declaration, recalling the pledges made by the United Nations through the Millennium Development Goals and by the delegation to the Beijing Conference in 1995. This occasion emphasised that girls and women across the EU still do not benefit from unrestricted access to sexual education, and also that there are many obstacles preventing them from exercising their reproductive rights.



The challenge to safeguard at least existing women's rights became yet again painfully apparent with the conservative backlash experienced in Europe in recent years. This meant that there was an attempt to change the legislation in Poland, which ended inconclusively – sustaining what the Polish feminists call a “rotten compromise”. Then in Spain, the government also indicated that they wanted to retrace the progress achieved by the previous “Zapatero” government. This announcement was made amid great opposition and the mobilisation of protests across the EU, in which PES Women took part on 29th January 2014. The struggle continues on both EU and national level, with even more anxiety than before, in view of the fact that the European Citizens' Initiative was successfully used by anti-abortion activists to try and make the European Commission ban abortion across the EU. To that extent the recent dismissal of the **Edite Estrela** report and the non-approval of the Annual Report on gender equality are naturally more than worrying signs.

Commenting on that, Zita Gurmai PES Women President stated: *Of course, as President of PES Women, I want to see gender equality as a reality and not regress as we have witnessed in the past years across Europe. I want to see that the gender pay gap is actually closing, that women no longer have to suffer from gender based violence and that women can have a free choice about their sexual rights. (...)I cannot stress it enough, but progressive women and men have to keep fighting and show solidarity, we need to raise awareness and demonstrate to women what is at stake if the backlash goes on. There is a difference between what the right proposes and what the left wants to do in terms of gender equality, but often it is not articulated clearly and that is what we have to do and underline the fact that we are not ready to turn the clock back 30 years.*







WOMEN
Socialists & Democrats
WOMEN

CHAPTER

3

PES

WOMEN



KEY DOCUMENTS OF THE PES WOMEN

(1992-2012)

20 YEARS OF PES WOMEN

The words are powerful. They carry ideas on how to change the world into a fairer and better place. Disregarding possible scepticism, from those who say “these are just words”, it is relevant for the mission of this book to recall some of the most important phrases that laid the ground for the foundation of PES Women, that have been used to explain its mission and that have been encouraging both women and men of the European socialist family ever since.

Today many of these statements are taken for obvious truths. Different terms have become standards that contemporary audiences can enjoy – or refer to, whilst demanding changes in the

name of justice. But they have not come from nowhere. They have been formulated and spelled out by courageous generations of feminists, often battling even for the opportunity to be able to bring them forward.

The collection gathered here is therefore meant as a tribute. It allows us to depart jointly on an inspiring journey, during which the reader will discover how much the circumstances have changed, how much the style has altered and yet how much of the initial cause still remains the same. That is a noble reason for joining the mission and make the next 20 years of the PES Women no less transformative in terms of their impact on the Union and its politics.



■ PES Women (2004)

■ 3.1 Founding Documents

There are not too many surviving documents to help recreate the story of the institutional beginnings. The reason already given in Chapter 1 is that cooperation among women's organisations had not been formalised then, and hence the records of it were mostly maintained in personal memories. Nevertheless, a search leads to finding certain paragraphs of respective overall reports from the Confederation of Socialist Parties in the European Community (CSPEC, predecessor of PES) – which are worth quoting. To that end as well, the real breakthrough point is the “Resolution on Women” from the PES founding Congress in The Hague, on 8th – 9th November 1992.

■ 3.1.1 Report of the Kok working party

This report “*Strengthening the Confederation*” (presented to the Bureau and Congress of the Confederation of Socialist Parties in the European Community in February 1990) was one of the analyses which paved the way to establishment of the PES as a europarty. Its relevance is related to the way in which it inspired CSPEC members to think that a more enhanced cooperation among sister parties for the sake of the Political Union was possible. As for the future PES Women, it enclosed point 7.3 on page 19, which referred to “The setting-up of networks” and hereunder enumerated youth and women. The original statement presents itself in the following manner:

Organisation of Socialist Women

Other than occasional joint activities over recent years, there are still no regular contacts or formal links between women's organisations of the Confederation member and observer parties. However, the need for cooperation, coordination and organisation in some form is essential for the exchange of views between parties from different countries, the formulation of EC policy initiatives and to ensure that women's policies are given adequate attention within the Confederation.

The Confederation would take a first crucial step by providing the necessary facilities for organising the first meeting between

representatives from women's organisations within the Confederation parties. At this meeting participants would:

- appoint a representative to attend Confederation Bureau meetings
- ascertain whether own initiatives could be linked to other Confederation activities
- examine cooperation between women's organisations, female socialist MEPs and national Members of Parliament
- consider ways of setting up coordinated activities in different countries

■ 3.1.2 Report on the activities of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament

This document belongs to a collection of reports which, in accordance with the tradition and later the statutory requirements of the CSPEC, the President of the Socialist Group would present to the Confederation at its Congresses and Bureaux. This particular presentation was made by Jean-Pierre Cot, Chairman (please excuse the non gender-neutral term) during the Congress held in Berlin

on 8th and 9th February 1990. On page 5 of the transcript, there is a very important section on “Women's Rights”, which gives a record of actions within the EP in that field:

Women's Rights

The Socialist Group continues to give impetus to the work of the European Parliament in the field of women's rights and equal opportunity for women and men. Socialists continue to call for the integration policies in favour of women into the overall development of economic, social and regional policies. This is of particular importance during the final stages before the completion implementation of the internal market. The Socialist Group argues that it is necessary to ensure that women's current social and economic situation is not adversely affected by the completion of the internal market in 1992. The inclusion of equal opportunities for women in the Social Charter must be followed up with specific legislation to make a reality of this declaration of intent. The Group does not limit its activities in this domain to a particular parliamentary committee: matters of importance to women have been highlighted by Socialists in all committees on which they serve and in any other fora, including the Socialist International Women, to which the Group is affiliated. The Socialist Group will continue to hold information seminars and conferences on pertinent issues.

Over recent years, there has been a slackening of pace in measures proposed by the Commission to tackle the outstanding inequalities and handicaps that women face. The Socialist Group continues to use every available opportunity to such topics as parental leave, childcare, protection for part-time workers and temporary workers.

■ 3.1.3 “Europe, Our Common Future”

The important moment for PES Women was, naturally, the 1st PES Congress “Europe, Our Common Future”, which took place in The Hague on 8th – 9th November 1992. Within the main declaration, there was one specific mention of women, which falls under Article 3.2. Within the rest of the text, there was no reference made to either gender – it rather kept the style of addressing all, everyone etc.

It is also known that the “PES Women Standing Committee” held a debate on the fringes of that historic gathering, however, sadly, no record survives of the proceedings. Nevertheless, the true building block for future work was the “Resolution on Women”, which the Congress adopted there:

Art 3.2 Economic and social cohesion

(...) Every aspect of Community Policy must take full account of the position of women in society. The Community must harness the talent and contribution of women, or the Community as a whole will be weakened.

Resolution on women

Socialist and Social-Democratic women request the Congress to adopt the following resolution:

- *The Socialist and Social-Democratic Women welcome with satisfaction the constitution of the Party of European Socialists and sees in the new Party an essential element of cohesion between Socialist and Social-democrats of the Community and between women who identify with the principles of European Socialism.*
- *Socialist and Social-Democratic women wish the new Party to bring a stimulus to the construction of a democratic and social Europe of women citizens as well as other citizens in general.*

The Congress

- *Reaffirms its conviction that women are a fundamental subject of socialist and social democratic policy and that the feminist movement is a driving force for a democratic and progressive policies.*
- *Underlines the importance of the contribution of women to economic activities, and to the social and cultural life of the countries of the Community.*
- *Demands that their representation at every level of*

decision-making be increased and correspond to their responsibility in society.

- Recalls that several Socialist and Social-Democratic parties have already adopted measures to improve female representation; demands that the Party of European Socialists commit itself to guaranteeing, in accordance with its statutes, a balanced participation of women and men in all its organs and all its activities, and to supporting a policy of promotion for women in all the Community Institutions.

- Criticizes the fact that equality of treatment in the area of salary between women and men does not yet exist in all countries of the Community; that increasing unemployment effects women most; that women are often relegated to situations of atypical work and are therefore penalised by economic and regional imbalances.

- Therefore commits itself to promoting policy where women in the Community can be guaranteed the right to work, to equal pay and to equal opportunities.

- Condemns the fact that women have been seriously affected by the policies of Conservative governments and by the present crisis in the welfare state.

- Recognises the principle of equal distribution of social and family choices between women and men.

- Commits itself to defending and implementing a policy which guarantees child care, education, health and social services for all and to working for improvement of the present Community directive on the protection of pregnant women and mothers in the workplace.

- The Congress of the Party of European Socialists calls all Socialist and Social Democratic women to support the actions of the Party of European Socialists and its commitment in the process of European integration.

■ 3.1.4 The First Years

There is no specific report that would enlighten the reader on the details of PES Women Standing Committee activities in the initial period. There are several explanations, including the fact that its work (like the work of the PES itself) was initially very much incorporated within the Socialist Group in the EP – and hence its material constitutes perhaps the most accurate record of proceedings. The text below is the 3rd Chapter, extracted from the campaign publication “1989 – 1994. Our political achievements. Group of the Party of European Socialists”.



■ PES Women (2006)

Winning for Women

Building on early successes in the European Community, Socialists have continued to develop policies designed to improve life for Europe's women.

In the Parliament, notable successes have been achieved following initiatives by Socialists MEPs.

The Council adopted a Directive on Maternity Leave guaranteeing a minimum of 14 weeks' leave to pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding, which was a material improvement, particularly for women in Portugal and the United Kingdom. This directive also greatly strengthened health and safety regulations at the workplace for pregnant women.

A European Code of Conduct on sexual harassment was adopted after a Socialist initiative, laying down procedures to combat this problem and thereby increasing women's personal and professional security.

Socialists recognise that the key to women's success on the labour market lies in access to adequate, good quality and affordable childcare.

Continued pressure by Socialists led to a Recommendation on childcare being adopted, addressing the needs of both parents and children.

To encourage more women to become active in European politics

and to seek election to the European Parliament, and to help women pursue a career in the European Parliament, Socialists successfully mounted a campaign to establish a crèche on the EP's premises in Brussels and Strasbourg.

The European Social Fund has an important role to play in promoting equality for women, particularly in employment, training and education: Socialists have been successful in changing the rules governing the Structural Funds so that equal opportunities are, for the first time, an overriding principle in the allocation of these funds.

Apart from these very important legislative advances, Socialists have continued to highlight the many areas of special interest to women, and at our initiative, the Women's Rights Committee has organised public hearings on Women and the Labour Market, Women and Rape, Women and Poverty, and Women and Equal Pay.

To deepen debate on women's issues within our parties, and to encourage grass-roots participation in this debate, we have organised a series of regional women's conferences throughout the EU.

■ 3.1.5 Party Leaders' Declaration

Though, at the very beginning of the PES, a majority of the documents would neither speak in terms of “women and men” nor address women specifically, there are exceptions to that rule. An example of it is the Declaration of the Party Leaders at their conference in Brussels on 9th December 1993 – which was entitled “*The European Employment Initiative – Put Europe to Work*”. It directly corresponded with three sections of the PES Women Standing Committee agenda, which we quote:

The European Employment Initiative - Put Europe to Work

Point 4: A New Deal for Europe: Our Strategy - “Security for individuals in a changing society”

We will establish a new partnership in Europe, a new sense of community and new productive balance between security and change. Security is essential in order to win acceptance for changes in the economy. And changes are necessary in order to create the economic resources that form the basis for security. Therefore we uphold justice and security – the purpose of the welfare society – and reform welfare policy so that it gives good incentives for work and employment. Social protection, taxation and unemployment insurance have to be made coherent to open doors to job opportunities

and ways out of poverty. The overall needs of people, women and men, at work and at home and in their local environment have to be taken into consideration, responding to aspirations for a better life.

The organisation of work should be based on strong collective relations, but should also integrate the increasing diversity of workers' expectations, particularly concerning working hours and type of labour.

Point 5.3: Invest in equal opportunities (Part of the Chapter New Deal For Europe: Our action programme)

The labour market is highly segregated: in most places women are concentrated in a narrow range of service jobs. Women are a majority of the unemployed, though the labour force participation rate is still low in a number of countries. Women are an increasingly important part of the European labour force and, as the best educated generation of women ever, represent a competitive strength for Europe.

A new re-employment policy must include active measures for equal opportunities for women and men. One important step is the recent decision on equality as an overall goal for EC structural funds. It confirms that active measures for equality must be an integrated part of all policies.

Working life should be organised in such a way that both women and men shall have the possibility to combine work with other

responsibilities in family and society. Social security must be extended to cover all forms of work, through collective bargaining and/or legislation to avoid discrimination against part-time workers. Taxation and social security systems must reflect the fact that women and men act as individuals in their working life.

The social infrastructure, for example childcare and care for the elderly, is important not only for our children and for our elderly parents or grandparents, but also for working life and for equal opportunities. The programmes for education, training and retraining and new opportunities for the long-term unemployed must include positive action for women in order to contribute to a labour market with full equality of opportunity between the sexes.

Point 5.6: Invest in social infrastructure

Besides traditional demands for investment there is a need for improvement in social infrastructure and social services depending on changes in demography and in social patterns.

Europe has a growing need for improved care for an ageing population. Most elderly people have fairly good health, but there are sizeable groups who have health problems and therefore require assistance and care. Traditional forms of support, mainly from families, are no longer sufficient. That calls for a better supply of public provisions for long-term care.

There is also a growing need for improved childcare, to allow parents, both couples and single-parents families, to combine

family life and working life. Improved provision for child care is needed for many reasons, not only to avoid further decrease in birth rates, but particularly to avoid discrimination against women in the labour market (...).



■ PES Women (2008)

■ 3.2 Electoral Manifestos

The PES electoral manifestos play an important role. They are a symbol of unity among sister parties in the name of a common long term vision for Europe, while at the same time serving as the reference points for setting an agenda for the respective legislative terms. As they have been adopted every 5 years since 1984¹, they also constitute important evidence of the most relevant questions that the progressive family deliberated upon and aimed at providing answers to in the context of the European Union. What is more, they serve as a connecting tissue for all the inner-party working groups and networks, member organisations and partners. Hence they offer a great deal of information about the common ground in terms of priorities – which is why we include the relevant parts of them below.

¹ In 1979 there was no agreement on a manifesto reached – and hence a short, two-page document “Appeal to Electorate” was adopted instead.

■ 3.2.1 Manifesto for the elections to the European Parliament of June 1994

The Manifesto was adopted at the (extraordinary) PES Congress on 6th November 1993 in Brussels, Belgium. It was composed of 7 thematic chapters, starting from the introduction “*Europe at the Crossroads. A Challenge for Democratic Socialism*” and finishing with the appeal “*Everyone is talking about Europe – only we can make progress*”. From a PES Women perspective, the most relevant section is Chapter III, which directly refers to the equality agenda:

Chapter III: Equality for women and men

We want to achieve equality for women and men in the economy, in society and in politics. Women’s emancipation throughout the EU is restricted by the traditional division of labour between the sexes, disadvantages in the labour market, discrimination in pay and in social security and, not least, by inadequate representation in all spheres of public life. The current economic crisis has a particularly harsh effect on women. Achievements made in the past – with the EC’s help – are under threat.

This is why it is now particularly important that the EU takes the lead to ensure:

- *Equal opportunities in the labour market*
- *Equal treatment in social security systems*
- *Equal pay for work of equal value*
- *Equal opportunities for women and men to combine career with family life – particularly through measures to provide adequate childcare facilities*
- *Equal opportunities to participate in politics*

■ 3.2.3 “Towards a new European citizenship for women and men”

In parallel with the drafting process of the PES 1999 Manifesto, there was also an effort made to draft the first Charter for Gender Equality in history. Some documents from the time suggest that it was intended to complete the general message of the Party with a particular focus on women’s issues. The Charter was entitled “*Towards a new European citizenship for women and men*” and was adopted on 7th December 1998 at the conference of the Parliamentary Group of the PES and the PES Women’s Standing Committee in Brussels. The text has a very interesting

format, incorporating 15 pledges – most of which are explained in two paragraphs. The first of each pair refers to the principle, the second to the concrete actions that Socialist Women aim to undertake. This new style corresponds with the innovative logic of the writing of the 1999 Manifesto as well.

Charter “Towards a new European citizenship for women and men”

1) Making Women’s Rights an Integral Part of Human Rights

- *The European Union’s women live in an area comprising fifteen democratic states which respect human rights. This respect is fundamental element of international relations within the European Union.*
- *Socialist women call for the fundamental rights of women, which are inseparable from the rights of human beings, to be upheld. These rights are often flouted in the name of fundamentalism. Rape in time of war, female circumcision, prostitution, forced sterilisation: political pressure to combat these must remain on the agenda of the Member States.*
- *In the European Union, the women Socialists want sexual rights to be guaranteed, i.e. the right of control*

and freedom of determination in the areas concerning sexuality and sexual and reproductive health. They also want these issues to be born in mind in guaranteeing the right of asylum.

2) Sharing Power Between Women and Men

- Every woman of the European Union engaged in politics or civic life must have access to all levels of responsibility: local, regional, national or European. Equal participation by women in political and social decision making structures is the guarantee for proper functioning of democracy. Parity in the representation of women in politics is not only a right, but a means for society to make progress by benefiting from the special resources of women, notably in the areas of creativity and solidarity. Party hierarchies still lag somewhat behind the times and restrict women in the exercise of their rights. They no longer reflect reality.
- Socialist women support measures adopted to change these structures and arrive at a fair representation of women and men, such as information programmes about women and campaigns to raise awareness of the public and political activities of women. Within the parties they are calling for balanced electoral lists, the incorporation of “mainstreaming” in the party programmes and for the men/women balance to be redressed in the European Union institutions.

3) Making Equal Opportunities a Reality

- Every woman of the European Union can claim their rights in the name of the right to equality. This principle is no longer limited to the application of the principle of equal pay for male and female workers for equal work. The principle of equal opportunities is now a right enshrined in the Treaty of Amsterdam and aims to combat all discrimination based, *inter alia*, on sex. The European Union must therefore make it one of its priority tasks to combat discrimination and define positive measures. This principle is protected by European law: any woman who considers that her right have been infringed may appeal to the European Court of Justice.
- Socialist women are committed to ensuring that these social, economic and political rights are made a reality. They also support equal opportunities via the individualisation of rights and obligations, in particular in taxation, legal and social matters.

4) Access to All Types of Jobs and All Training

- Every woman of the European Union must be able to fulfil herself completely in her career. She must have access to all types of training and, if she so desires, to any position of responsibility. The concept of equal opportunities as an integral part of all Community policies – also known as ‘mainstreaming’ – must go hand in hand with measures to promote employment. Since the Luxembourg Summit,

the European Union has set guidelines, which must be implemented in employment policies.

- Socialists women intend to follow the initiatives taken at European and national level in the area of women’s employment. They want demanding and verifiable objectives, statistical data on the figures for the number of jobs created and the progress made in reducing the wage gap between women and men, as well as the regular publication of statistics broken by sex. They advocate the establishment of good working conditions and the adoption of adequate European legislation on part-time work.

5) Combining Work with Family Life

- All women and men in the European Union must be enabled to strike a balance between two lives running in parallel. The first steps have been taken: the European Union recently adopted a directive on parental leave but more progress must be made before women and men can reconcile their family lives with their working lives so that they can live in harmony in two different environments. One way to contribute to this aim is gradually to reduce working hours.
- Socialist women wish to promote the adoption of directives on child care and care of the elderly, assistance to one-parent families and paid leave for these purposes for women and men, so as to have an equal distribution of responsibility, in both the public and private domains. They

commit themselves to pursuing policies at European and national level which stimulate a redistribution of work, paid and unpaid, between women and men. They want to change social structures, and attitudes, in the Members States. They want measures to be taken in the areas of training and lifelong learning for women and men who have chosen to interrupt their careers.

6) Access to Structural Funds

- All Europe’s women living in rural or urban regions can expect their country and the European Union to take measures to improve their situation. Through its Structural Fund policy, the European Union, in partnership with the Member States, has made possible the social and economic regeneration of regions whose development is lagging behind and regions will severe unemployment and employability problems which mainly affect women.
- Socialist women are calling for Structural Funds to become instruments promoting equal opportunities and sustainable development allowing the creation of jobs and the strengthening of social cohesion. They want 15% of the appropriations to be allocated to specific measures to promote equal opportunities for women and men, such as promoting vocational skills for women job seekers, setting up high-quality social facilities for child care and the elderly and promoting setting-up businesses by women.

7) Eliminating Violence Against Women

- All women have the right to respect for their persons in all areas of life. Violence in daily life, both mental and physical, in the family, at the work place or in social life, affects women from every background, age and faith. It often means shame and fear and continues to be private matter which is shrouded in secrecy. This silence makes it a taboo subject.
- Socialist women have worked to raise public awareness of such violence, but the victims have too little protection, support or defence. The women Socialist have campaigned for “DAPHNE”, a European Programme financing measures to combat violence against women and children. They are working actively to launch a campaign against the day-to-day violence affecting very large number of women in every European Union country. They are also campaigning against the sexual exploitation of women, particularly in Eastern Europe. They believe that cooperation between police forces must be strengthened, that the crime of trafficking in women must be legally recognised and believe that victims should be able to benefit from the right to asylum until judgement in their case is finalised.

8) Combating Poverty

- In the European Union single mothers, women looking after large families, elderly women and women on their own are living in increasingly precarious conditions. Many of

them fall below the poverty line, below subsistence level. The economic crisis is affecting women in particular, even those with jobs. They are the first to be made redundant. Out of every five people living in poverty, four are women.

- Socialist women deplore this situation and demand that action be taken at European level: on wages, in the field of the right to housing, improving social protection, establishing equivalent pension rights for female workers and on the individualisation of pension rights. Poverty relief programmes must give priority to women.

9) Improving the Environment

- The women of the European Union can contribute to the development of an environmental conscience. Their status as women, with their awareness of living in a community and of consumer issues, education, and the need to improve the quality of life for their children gives them a constructive outlook on environmental policy.
- Socialist women undertake to apply the concept of sustainable development. They wish to promote changes in habits of behaviour. They are seeking to encourage the adoption of high standards in public health and a reform of the Common Agricultural Policy to promote the general good of human beings and the natural world.

10) Solidarity with Women in Developing Countries

- Women play a key role in achieving sustainable development. They are responsible for day-to day life and for bringing up children and they contribute to the social and human development of the community. They play essential role in the economy of their country.
- Socialist women want to see equal representation of women in the projects funded by the European Union, whether at the level of evaluating and implementing or at the level of programming these projects.
- They also want the situation of women to be taken into account, notably in development cooperation, and in cooperation agreement with all developing countries. Particular attention must also be paid to women in the context of Euro-Mediterranean policy.

11) Cooperation with Women in the Countries in Transition Towards Democracy

- Women in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe were greatly affected by the collapse of the Communist system. Since then they have not, in majority of cases, been covered by any system of social protection. They live under difficult conditions in countries undergoing full-scale political and economic change. They are having to adapt to a system which will lead in the long term to a democratic state based on the

rule of law. They soon will be part of the European Union and of the community of European women.

- Socialist women are calling for the principle of equal opportunities for women and men to be an integral part of the negotiation and accession process, especially in the framework of Agenda 2000. European Union funding intended to help the applicant countries through the transition to democracy must also lead to women and women's organisations being given more power through the promotion of positive action measures of all kinds and in assisting with the setting in place mainstreaming.

12) Better Integration of Immigrant Women

- Every woman of the European Union lives and has her place in an area based on justice and freedom. This area is also occupied by women who have some from countries not belonging to the Union who have chosen to settle here. These women suffer twofold discrimination on the basis of their gender and ethnic origin. However, their presence within the European Union brings added cultural value to a multicultural society created by the citizens of Europe. But all too often they still live in isolation and feel uprooted.
- Socialist women believe that European action on equal opportunities must pay particular attention to immigrant women and provide them with access to decent working conditions, with education and training opportunities.

Solidarity also means combating the social exclusion and discrimination of which immigrant women are victims.

13) Developing European Information

- The women socialist note that women are less well-informed than men on European Union issues. This may be because this information is not sufficiently well tailored to their needs. Where the euro is concerned, for example, information must be available to women which will enable them to understand the single currency in their role as consumers who are usually responsible for the family budget. Appropriate and properly targeted information offers a major advantage: women provide important points of contact with children. Information concerning them will also ensure that confidence in European matters is built up.
- The Socialist women are committed to mounting an information campaign directed specifically at women. This campaign will cover all spheres of European political life.

14) Generalising ‘Mainstreaming’ in European Policies

- The Charter of European Socialist Women mentions the concept of ‘mainstreaming’ several times. The commitment of Socialist women to this concept is the logical continuation of the active role they played in drawing up the final declaration and platform of action adopted at the Beijing Conference in 1995.

- Socialist women ask that this concept be translated into practice in the daily lives of every male and female European citizen, and that it be implemented systematically in every Community policy, including by recourse to positive actions. To this end, Socialist European women ask for the setting of a 5th Action Programme. Equality of conditions, situations and needs for women and men must be a priority objective.

15) Half the sky, half the earth and half the power

- 1999 – 2004: five years in which the Socialist women will be working to set long-term goals for the European Union. Their aim is to sow the seeds and cultivate to a new solidarity between women and men, with equal rights and equal responsibilities.
- Women are entitled to half sky, half earth and half the power.

Lissy Groner (Coordinator, Parliamentary Group), Pauline Green (Leader of the Group), Fiorella Ghilardotti (President of PES Women).

■ 3.2.3 Manifesto for the 1999 European Elections

The Manifesto “21 Commitments for the 21st century” was prepared within the PES Manifesto Working Party, which was chaired by **Robin Cook** and **Henri Nallet**. The document was adopted at the PES Congress in Milan on 1st and 2nd March 1999. Among the 21 pledges, the 9th was specifically devoted to equality between women and men:

Commitment 9: Creating Equality Between Women and Men

The principle of equality of opportunity between women and men is fundamental to democracy. It must be applied in all aspects of society and form an integral part of social and economic policy. We warmly welcome the new commitment in the Treaty to achieve equity and combat all forms of discrimination. To exclude anyone from fair access to education, employment or democratic participation is to diminish society. Responsibility for family, society and work must be shared and domestic violence must be combated. Participation in political structures must be open equally to both genders.

We commit ourselves to ensuring equal opportunities for women and men across the European Union and promoting that principle in all the policies of the Union.

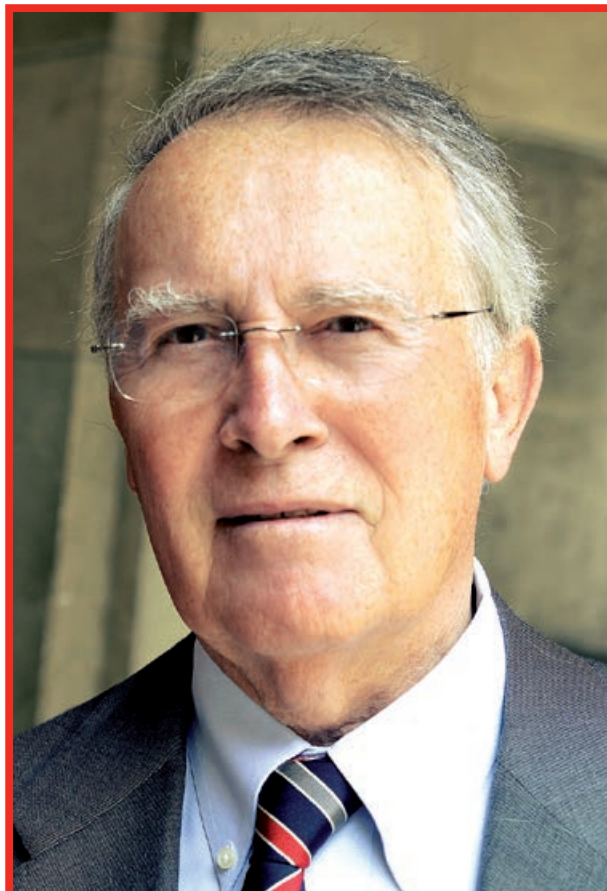


Party of European Socialists
Manifesto for
the 1999 European Elections

■ PES Manifesto - 1999



■ Robin COOK



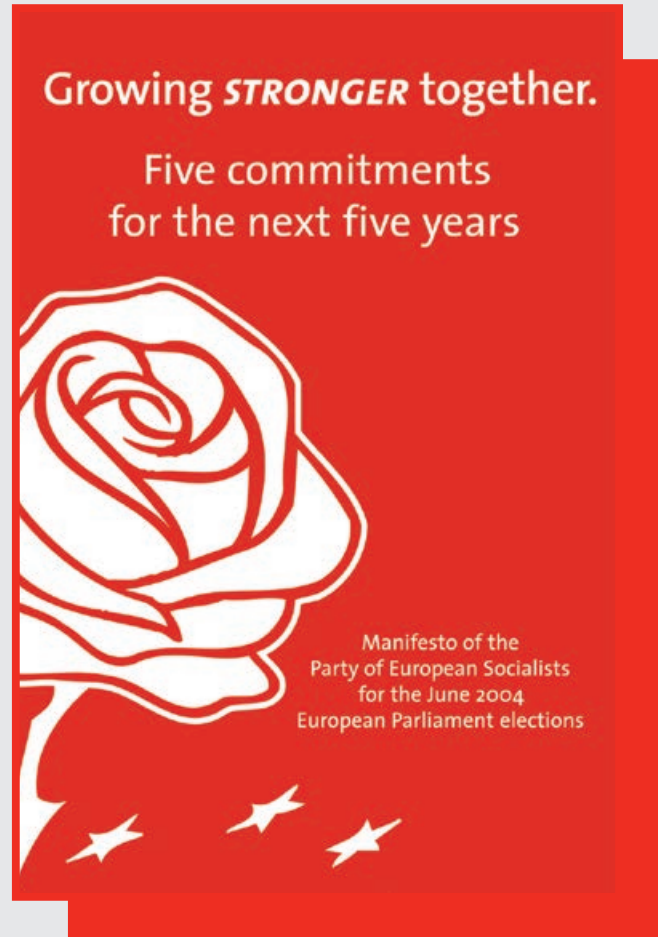
■ Henri NALLET

■ 3.2.4 Manifesto of the Party of European Socialists for the June 2004 European Parliament elections

The 2004 PES Manifesto was a relatively short document. The drafting process was turbulent due to the changes within the leadership on one hand, and on the other due to the short time framework within which it needed to be achieved. In the end, the document “*Growing Stronger Together. Five Commitments for the Next Five Years*” was adopted at the PES Congress in Brussels on 24th April 2004. Within the text, the equality agenda is a mainstreaming one. None of the 5 key commitments addresses gender equality directly in the title; however there are numerous references to it within the text. The points concerning “women and men” or women specifically are following:

Commitment 1: Boost Europe’s Growth, Fight Poverty and Create More and Better Jobs

(...) We reject the attempts of right-wing governments to limit the Lisbon process to economic reforms by neglecting its social objectives. We demand action to meet the social and employment objectives of the Lisbon Strategy, with particular emphasis on reaching the 70 per cent overall employment rate and 60 per cent rate for women’s participation in the workforce by 2010. Higher participation will help us tackle demographic challenges arising from ageing population. (...)



■ PES Manifesto - 2004

We aim to: (5) Increase the participation rate of women and remove barriers that prevent women from taking up jobs.

Commitment 5: Promote Europe as an area of democracy and equality

Our vision is of Europe based on democracy, equality, respect for human rights, diversity and the rule of law. For this reason, we support the Charter of Fundamental Rights and its inclusion in the Constitution. We should also promote these values beyond the borders of the EU. (...)

We aim to: (2) Promote equality and fight all forms of discrimination.

■ 3.2.5 PES manifesto – European elections June 2009

It has been proudly underlined that this particular Manifesto was the reason why the PES was recognised as the most gender-friendly europarty running in the elections of 2009. Thanks to the strong leadership of Zita Gurmai, the PES Women President, and her outstanding cooperation with Poul Nyrup Rasmussen, the PES President the result was that the gender equality agenda was mainstreamed; it was also the focus of one of the six chapters of the Manifesto “*People First: A New Direction for Europe*”, which was adopted by the PES Council in Madrid, on 1st – 2nd December 2008. The relevant sections are noted below:



■ PES Manifesto - 2009

Introduction:

(...) The Party of European Socialists is committed to creating a fairer, safer society, tackling the challenges we all face by putting people first. (...)

It is now 30 years since the first direct elections to the European Parliament, which has a key role to play in realising our vision of a European Union which puts people first. The Party of European Socialists is your voice, promoting your interests and championing your causes. We are committed to:

- Relaunching the economy and preventing new financial crises
- New social Europe – giving people a fairer deal
- Transforming Europe into the leading global force against climate change
- Championing gender equality in Europe
- Developing an effective European migration policy
- Enhancing Europe's role as a partner for peace, security and development

Priority 4. Championing gender equality in Europe

Significant progress has been made towards achieving genuine equality between women and men in recent years, largely thanks to the efforts of socialists, social democrats and democratic progressives in partnership with progressive women's organisations.

There are, however, lingering inequalities: women still earn, on average, 15% less than men for doing the same work; they are much more likely to be unemployed, discouraged from entering the labour market by the lack of decent jobs, or in lower-paid, low-quality or part-time jobs. Millions of women around the world still face exploitation and rights violations, in the form of human trafficking, domestic violence and other abuses.

There are still too few women in politics over half a century after gaining the right to vote and stand for election across Europe. In some parts of Europe, men have hardly any rights to parental leave when their children are born.

Women often have to choose between having children and pursuing the career they want. Working families find it hard to balance their professional and personal responsibilities. We can change this: those European countries which have done most to increase women's rights and opportunities now have the highest proportion of women in the workforce and the highest birth rates. We have also campaigned relentlessly at local, regional and national levels



■ PES Women Leaders - PES Manifesto - EU Elections - (2009)

to increase childcare places.

We will continue to fight gender stereotypes and believe that strengthening women's rights and opportunities will bring significant economic, social and democratic benefits for all Europe's citizens.

Making gender equality a reality for all:

36. We propose to create a European Women's Rights Charter, to improve women's rights and opportunities and to promote mechanisms to achieve gender equality in all aspects of social, economic and political life.

37. We propose to introduce improved parental leave rights for women and men across Europe up to the highest standards in Europe.

38. We will campaign for equal political representation of women and men in all decision-making bodies at European level. We will campaign for a gender-equal European Commission and a gender-equal European Parliament, and will call for the creation of a European Commissioner for Gender Equality.

39. We will work to support parents so that they can balance their caring responsibilities with their professional responsibilities. To support this goal, we propose that member states achieve the existing EU target of 33% childcare coverage for 0-3 year olds and 90% coverage for children from 3-school age, and adopt complementary EU qualitative targets for childcare.

40. We will lead the fight to close the gender pay gap, which is vital to improve living standards, fight poverty and increase economic growth.

41. We will encourage and support women entrepreneurs, scientists and researchers to broaden their opportunities.

42. We will ensure and promote women's sexual and reproductive health rights throughout the EU.

43. We propose to step up European efforts to eradicate human trafficking and sexual exploitation through closer judicial and police cooperation.

44. We propose to encourage and support the EU and its Member States in their efforts to stop domestic and gender-specific violence, including that perpetrated against women of ethnic minorities, through all appropriate EU programmes and funds.

A new European progressive reform agenda is essential to continue the work we have already done in spearheading gender equality initiatives that help both women and men. We can build a fairer society by putting people's first. Let's take Europe in a new direction in June 2009.

■ 3.2.6 Declaration of Principles (2011)

Within the course of its renewal project after the 2009 elections process “Re:new – Our Progressive Societies” – the PES launched a number of reflection debates. They led to the drafting and adoption by the PES Council on 24th November 2011 of the “Declaration of Principles”. This enumerates equality among four fundamental values (next to freedom, solidarity and justice). Among 12 principles for action, gender equality is the 10th:

Socialism and Social Democracy have a long and proud history of achievement. The welfare state, universal access to education and to health care, and the struggle for fundamental rights have improved the lives of countless individuals and created more equal, just and secure societies. In the 21st century, our movement continues to shape a better future for all.

Freedom, equality, solidarity and justice are our fundamental values. These universal values belong together. Democracy is a prerequisite to their full expression. Combined, our values form our moral compass to build progressive societies in today’s world. These are societies in which individuals do not struggle against each other but work together for the benefit of all. These are thriving, trusting societies which take care of their environment now and as an investment for the future. These are societies in which each and every person is able to create the conditions for his or her emancipation.

Our values are being challenged. People, money, goods, information and ideas travel incessantly. But the reality of deregulated globalisation provokes a more fragmented sense of living. Market forces, driven by finance and greed, are annexing huge amounts of power from democratic control. These forces serve the interests of a privileged few. Conservatives and neo-liberals, have deepened economic, geographic and social inequalities, promoting a system of short-termism, easy profits and loose rules that has led to the worst crisis in modern times.

We reject the politics of pessimism that claim that nothing can be done. We reject the language of hate that makes people, and whole communities, scapegoats for the ills in societies. Instead, we work to build inclusive societies and a better future for all. We need a new progressive global agenda to enable the fruits of globalisation to benefit all. This is a matter of political choice and responsibility.

Our principles for action

1. **Democracy** must prevail in all areas of life to enable citizens to decide. Democracy must be pluralistic, transparent, truly representative of society’s diversity and enable everyone to participate, with an open public sphere, an independent media and free access to the internet. Freedom of speech is fundamental to a democratic society.
2. **Strong public authorities** all along the democratic chain, from the local, regional and national levels, to the European

level of government, are essential. Together, they preserve the public good, guarantee the common interest and promote justice and solidarity in society. Good governance, the rule of law, accountability and transparency are the pillars of strong public authorities.

3. We want to shape the future so that people regain control over their lives. **True freedom** means that people are active citizens, not passive consumers, empowered to build societies which have a richness that goes beyond material wealth, so that each individual’s fulfillment is also part of a collective endeavour.
4. **Decent work** is the keystone in ensuring people are the architects of their future. Giving back a real meaning, a real value and a real continuity to working life, is central to ensuring people’s emancipation and sense of pride.
5. A society based on our values means a new economy that embodies them. **Values-driven growth**, means that environmental sustainability, human dignity and well being are fundamental to wealth creation. This new economy must foster social progress that raises living standards, secures homes and creates jobs. The public sector plays an essential role in this new economy.
6. Our politics work to preserve the planet’s resources rather than exhaust them. **Environmental sustainability** means that we safeguard nature for present and future generations, not only in European cities and countries but across the globe.

7. Our renewed vision of solidarity is a joint investment in our common future. It means lasting justice and **solidarity between generations**. It means we preserve the planet, protect the elderly and invest in young people. Access to universal and free education is a cornerstone in ensuring our children and grandchildren have the means for emancipation.
8. A strong and **just society** is one that instills confidence and inspires trust. To guarantee this trust and confidence, we must ensure that the wealth generated by all is shared fairly. This collective responsibility embodies our conviction that we are stronger when we work together. It also reflects our determination to enable all people to live a dignified life, free of poverty. All members of society are entitled to protection from social risks in life.
9. We foster a sense of belonging based on a confident inclusion of all and not the fearful exclusion of some. An open and inclusive society values the individual and embraces **diversity**. This means the same dignity, freedom and equal access to rights, education, culture and public services for all, regardless of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or age. In this society, religion is separated from the State.
10. **Building on the achievements of the feminist movement, we continue to fight for gender equality. This means that women and men equally share work, share power, share time and share roles, both in the public and in the private realms.**

11. Our shared pride in society guarantees our shared **security**. A free, peaceful and just society is one in which people are safe as they go about their lives.

12. **International solidarity** means our political practice is always outward looking. Our solidarity goes beyond national borders. Ensuring long lasting prosperity, stability and above all, peace requires effective coordination in the international realm based on democracy, mutual respect and human rights.

To put our principles into action in a world of economic, social and cultural interconnection, new progressive politics linking local, regional, national and European levels are needed to regain democratic control. A comprehensive approach to policy making that integrates all levels of governance is the guarantee to making each and every individual's life more secure in the global, multi-polar age. A progressive, democratic European Union, with solidarity between European peoples and countries, reinforces democratic sovereignty on the national level on one side, and the international on the other.

Our commitment to European integration transcends competition between countries and reflects our determination to oppose the erosion of social rights. It embodies our pledge to build a European Union with lasting common political, social and economic realities, not only provisional cooperation between governments. There can be no political decision making without democratic control, no economic Union without a social Union, and no social Union without a common budget to support investment and reduce inequalities in the European Union. Alongside a political

and economic European Union, an integrated Social Europe is crucial to improve the living conditions for citizens, in all countries indiscriminately. Our historic task is to work towards a progressive harmonisation within a political Union, making it a tool for justice and emancipation.

A political voice that is truly progressive is needed in Europe. Unified action by the socialist, social democratic, labour and democratic progressive movement in the European Union and throughout Europe, and in cooperation with our partners within civil society and trade unions, is required. The Party of European Socialists embodies these principles for action. Together, we will continue our political struggle in the European Union for progressive societies in the 21st century.

■ 3.3 Key documents 1994-1999

The PES Women Standing Committee continued consolidating its structure in the years 1994 – 1999. It applied a model similar to the SPD in terms of positioning itself as an organisation vis-à-vis the party, thereby offering a new space for socialist women to deliberate issues specifically related with the challenge of achieving gender equality in Europe. The enhancement of the work on that field soon after started bringing results that would be mirrored not only in their own statements, but also in the change of content of all the PES documents. In this way not only political, but also cultural change of the PES was taking place.

The documents illustrating this period can be classified into 5 main categories. Among them are: PES Congress documents (including any separate documents from PES Women that had been presented and adopted by the plenary); Activity Reports and Plans which had been saved (both of the PES and of the PES Women); Leaders' Statements; Special Reports (on the state of

the Union and potential policy initiatives); and last but not least, occasional statements. When they are put together they allow a full picture of the discussions, actions and consequently proud achievements of those times to be retrieved.

■ 3.3.1 Congress Declarations

■ 3.3.1.1 Barcelona Declaration of the PES

The second PES Congress took place in Barcelona on 6th – 8th March 1995. It adopted a PES declaration, which set out the main objectives for the work of the PES almost one year after the last European Elections and which refers to equal opportunities as among the main objectives. The emphasis on it relates to the hope that negotiations around the new, Amsterdam Treaty could be used to broaden the scope of EU legislation to include the non-discrimination principle. Since the last day of the Congress fell on International Women's Day, this was used as a great opportunity to issue a statement (which is included in section 3.3.5). What is important is that at this particular Congress, the PES Women Standing Committee was introduced into the PES Statutes.

Barcelona Declaration

[Objectives of the PES were to ensure:]

- *Work and prosperity: a fully active society, efficient and secure, without employment or poverty.*
- *Real equal opportunities for women and men.*
- *A balanced model of economic, social and ecological development: quality of the environment and of life.*
- *Solidarity between people, countries and generations.*
- *Progress in the deepening, reform and enlargement of the EU, increasing democracy and transparency.*
- *A common foreign policy for security and cooperation, as contribution to world wide peace and development.*
- The document features 10 thematic sections (including issues such as employment, social affairs etc.). They refer to “all” and “everybody” in terms of addressees of different policies. The document is more specific regarding gender equality in Section 6:

Section 6 of Barcelona Declaration: An egalitarian society

The representation of women at all the levels of participation and decision-taking should be increased considerably.

In the political sphere, this means progressing until we have an equal balance of women and men in the organisations and activities of our party, and a socialist compromise for the promotion of women in all the institutions of the EU.

In the economic and social sphere, it means overcoming discrimination, correcting wage inequalities in a real way, and answering the problem of unemployment affecting women more and the fact that they suffer more from the consequences of social and geographical imbalances.

■ 3.3.1.2 “Let’s Make Europe Work” at Malmö Congress (1997)

The 3rd PES Congress in Malmö took place on 5th – 7th June 1997. In the impassioned words of **Jean-François Vallin** (PES Secretary General 1995 - 1999), it was the most “*This was the Third Congress of our Party, alive, human, not just an anonymous bureaucracy but talented women and men sharing a common purpose*”. The reasons for this outspoken enthusiasm were related not only to the great attendance (over 5000 people) or to the inspiring political programme. Above all they echoed the mood within the social democratic family. With the recent electoral victories of Lionel Jospin and Tony Blair, it seemed that the centre-left was back at the steering wheel of Europe. It was therefore a time to deliver, hence the slogan of the gathering “*A New Europe: Our Responsibility*”.

For the PES Women Standing Committee, this Congress was memorable for two reasons. First of all, their demands on redefining the articles of the new Treaty were acknowledged in the Congress Declaration and through a specific statement. Those were adopted and the struggle for new EU legislation on gender equality became, for everybody, a fight for a principle. Secondly, the Socialist Group was led at this point by a woman – Pauline Green. Even for symbolic reasons, it was incredibly important, as she has only been the second female Group president in its history². In one of the reports, her presidency was called a “*Proof that the party doesn’t just mouth platitudes about equal opportunities – everybody has a chance*”.



■ Jean François VALLIN

² The Socialist / PES / S&D Group has been led by a woman only twice in its existence: by Kate Strobel from the SPD (1964 – 1967) and Pauline Green from the Labour Party (1994 – 1999).

Declaration “Let’s Make Europe Work”

The Declaration included two specific references to the gender equality agenda:

Introduction: Lots on neo-liberalism, crisis, employment etc: but not gender proofed – not even in “People’s Europe”, they talk on more flexible working hours etc.

Chapter 2 “A Union of Citizens”: “This is the European Year against Racism and Discrimination. The EU should introduce a special clause against discrimination in the Treaty. This should be part of a wider effort to include a more coherent chapter in the EU Treaty on citizens’ rights, including equal rights for women and men. We want Europe to be a society which is open and tolerant.”

Declaration “Equality between women and men in a new Treaty”³

The PES wants a Europe constructed on a fundament of equality between women and men.

By the occasion of the revision of the Treaty of Maastricht, we demand that right to an equal treatment between women and men is recognised as a fundamental right.

While there is still no equality between women and men, PES demands that positive measures that can enable that are specifically mentioned in the Treaty.

We demand also that the article 119 of the Treaty of the European Communities is redefined and includes then equality of opportunities in all the domains, namely economic, social and family; that there are more ambitious objectives envisaged such an improvement of participation of women in decision making process, access to education and training, improvement of working conditions and rights to benefits of social security.

In more general, PES aims at entry of a general non-discrimination clause, recognition of fundamental social rights as also inclusion and improvement of the Social Protocol in the EC Treaty. We want also the extension of the voting of qualified majority and co-decision principle on those matters.

The struggle for employment remains a priority for PES. An equitable division of work, which in parallel takes into considerations the personal obligations of women and men is an essential condition for both the genders to be able to combine family obligations, contractual work and participation in social life.

Equality between women and men is an indispensable condition of the development of a society that is truly a democratic one. PES supports the principle of parity between the genders, in all of the societal sectors, as also regarding all that concerns responsibilities and power.

PES demands that society guarantees to all a social autonomy. Education, childcare and elderly care have to be recognised by social security.

The PES acknowledges the educational role played by women in the world and in the sustainable development. We believe that education is the key to development of social and economic situation of women.

We think that solidarity is a mutual aid between women and men, as it also is among people in general. Only the society of partnership will allow a guarantee of progress and cultural enrichment of all the parts of the world, as also the solidarity in between developed and developing countries.

PES is aware of the fact that a great number of women are victims of political, military or individual violence. We condemn all the forms of violence against women and children and we want the application of the asylum right for the victims of such violence.

Rights of women are human rights (personal rights).

Our Europe engages for them [women], the right of women are the rights of all.

■ 3.3.1.3 “A Common Strategy for a New Europe” from Milan (1999)

The 4th PES Congress took place in Milan on 1st – 2nd March 1999. It was focused on the European elections, with the adoption of the new Manifesto “21 Commitments for the 21st Century” (please see Chapter 3.2.3). Among the accompanying documents which were accepted there were also reports (including a report from the PES Women Standing Committee for the first time) and “discussion papers” (with the paper “A Fair Deal for Employment, the Environment and Equality – quoted below in Chapter 3.3.5).

The presence of the PES Women Standing Committee was further remarked upon in the report from the Congress, where a brief note on the presentation of the President Fiorella Ghilardotti was accompanied by the following words: *Fiorella Ghilardotti recalled that women, and especially young women, are discriminated against in the labour market. Mainstreaming to reduce gender inequality is still not fully applied.* (Page 14 of the Report, summarising the Congress debate on “A Citizens’ Europe”).

³ Déclaration du PSE à l’occasion du III^{ème} Congrès du PSE à Malmö – “L’Egalité entre les femmes et les hommes dans le nouveau Traité”

■ 3.3.2 Activity Programmes and Reports

At first the record of the PES Women Standing Committee's activities was mostly included either in the overall PES activity reports or in the reports from the Socialist Group in the EP. Similarly, their activity planning was also incorporated within the Party or the Group's proposal. The situation altered with the Congress in Milan in 1999, where the PES Women Standing Committee was introduced.

■ 3.3.2.1 PES activity Programme 1995-1996

The PES activity programme for 1995-1996 presents basic political and organisational goals put forward by the PES Bureau for approval to the second PES Congress on March 8th, 1995.

(...) POLITICAL PRIORITIES: The Manifesto for the European elections gives a good indication of the political objectives of the Party of European Socialists.

However, the objective of an activity programme is not to list all the major themes. Firstly, priorities have to be selected so that our restricted organisational and financial means can be concentrated

so they are most effective. Proposals put forward by the PES women for the period 1995-1996 will have to be integrated as far as possible into the general PES activity programme.

■ 3.3.2.2 Activity Report of the PES Women's Standing Committee

(March 1995-June 1997)

Since the PES Congress in Barcelona held in March 1995, The Women's Standing Committee has become a full member of the PES and has its own statutes. Its Chairwoman has the right to vote in the PES Bureau meetings. The aim of our committee is to formulate an equal opportunities policy between women and men in respect of all community policies and to check that it is being implemented. The committee is a forum for the exchange of important information and deliberations on current themes which specifically affect women. The women of the Party of European Socialists work in close cooperation with the parliamentary group of the Party of European Socialists.

Since the Barcelona Congress, the committee has held several meetings and has organised 2 Europe-wide campaigns:

In 1994/1995 – under the slogan of “half the heaven, half the earth, half the power”

In 1997, under the slogan of “Women's rights are human rights” in the context of the European Year against racism and xenophobia. Posters and postcards were edited in all the official languages of the European Union and were very successful.

The two campaigns ran parallel to events which received favourable feedback.

On 7th March 1995, a round table on a policy in favour of women was held in the context of the PES Party Congress in Barcelona. This was followed on 8th March by a discussion attended by the Vice Chairman of the Tunisian Socialist Party, who was extremely worried about the development of Islamic fundamentalism in North Africa, and a Socialist woman from Croatia, who made a plea for peace in the Balkans.

During the same Convention, a statement entitled “Solidarity between women and men for an equal society” was adopted. Amongst other things the statement recognises that women make an important contribution to economic prosperity, social and cultural life. No society can simply deprive itself of the competence, knowledge and the capacity of action of half of the population. Our society will only reach true democracy when women and men have the same possibilities and the same opportunities.

Finally, a conference was organised on 3rd March 1997 in Brussels, which brought together 200 women from the member countries of the European Union and representatives from Algeria, Afghanistan

and South Africa in order to discuss the following themes:

- Access to money and power, the intergovernmental conference and violence against women.

All of the participants wished that the Women's International Day should, in the future, become an action day for women of the Party of European Socialists.

At the various meetings, the women of the Standing Committee adopted many statements, particularly in July 1995, on solidarity with women and child victims of the war in Bosnia, in July 1996 on the non-participation of women from certain countries in the Atlanta Olympic Games.

Finally, during its meeting last April, the Socialist women adopted a statement, which took up different claims over the inclusion in the new Treaty of important items about equality between women and men. These stated, in particular, that:

- Equal treatment between women and men should be recognised as a fundamental right.
- Article 119 of the EC Treaty should be redefined so as to extend this to equal opportunities in all spheres, particularly in economic, social and family life; broader aims should envisage, among other things, higher participation of women in decision-taking, access to education and training, improvement of working conditions and the right to social security benefits.

- The use of positive action should be explicitly mentioned in the EC Treaty.
- A non-discrimination clause should be included in the EC Treaty.
- Fundamental social rights should be recognised in the EC Treaty, as well as the insertion and improvement of the social Protocol.
- The extension of QMV and the codecision procedure should be the rule.

Finally our committee commits itself to preparing a common policy for Socialist women in Europe in the coming months, in view of the 1999 European elections.

■ 3.3.2.3 Report by Pauline Green to the PES Bureau - Women Rights

(January-June 1998)

By **Brigitte Bataille**

On 9th February, there was a Women's Seminar (Organised by the PES Group) with the Bureau and the PES Women Standing Committee. The aim was to brainstorm on a Socialist Women's Charter to be used during the European campaign. Three workshops were organised: reconciliation of family and professional life / women and political participation / women and the euro. The final chapter was to be presented at the Women's Conference on 7th December in Brussels and would also be the socialist women's contribution to the European Manifesto.

Work in the committee: two own-initiative reports:

- a) The impact of unemployment on the situation of women (**Elena Marinucci**). A hearing has also been organised on this topic by the Committee, especially focused on the four guidelines on employment decided upon during the Jobs Summit in Luxembourg.
- b) The situation of single mothers and one-parent families (**Ludivina García Arias**).



■ Elena MARINUCCI



■ Ludivina GARCIA ARIAS

For the celebration of International Women's Day, socialist women chose to speak about the violation of women's rights by fundamentalist governments, particularly in Afghanistan and in Algeria.

A written Declaration initiated by Lissy Groner, PES Group Coordinator of the Women's Rights Committee, on designation of 1999 as the European Year of action to combat violence against women, gathered 356 signatures in less than four weeks, a record in the history of the Parliament, which demonstrates the importance of the problem in our societies. As a result of socialist amendments, this request has also been raised in EP reports. The Council of Ministers would take a decision on it on 30th June.

■ 3.3.3 Leaders' Statements

The Leaders' Conferences have been traditionally the gatherings of the Presidents and Chairs of the sister parties united firstly in the CSPEC, and then in the PES. The first meeting ever took place in The Hague in November 1974 and since then they have continued to be organised. At the beginning they were predominantly focused on bringing the national party leaderships onto European discussion tables; however in the course of time they became more connected with the upcoming summits of the EC (then EU) and the respective Presidencies of the EU. The PES still proudly underlines the fact that at the beginning of this century they turned de facto into prep-meetings of the Council, as the socialists led a majority of the governments of the EU member states.

The Leaders' Conferences would usually be concluded with the adoption of a statement, which, however, usually either kept to general themes or was used to showcase an agreement on one specific case. In that sense the Declaration from Madrid (meeting of 14th December 1995) is interesting to quote here. Indeed, it focuses on bringing forward 10 priorities for all the socialist parties in the course of the Intergovernmental Conference – but at the same time this is one of the few documents from this category of meetings which specifically refers to the women's agenda.

“Bringing the European Union into Balance”

Point 4: “Promoting a Citizen's Europe, a Social Union”: “The concept of equality between men and women in the Treaty should be extended beyond the subject of equal pay for equal work.”

■ 3.3.4 Special Reports

One of the main themes that the PES was working on in the 1990s was how to ensure full employment. The European Union was still seeking recovery after the recent crisis, whilst simultaneously it had to face new pressures related to the accelerating process of globalisation. Hence the paradigm changed – and it was no longer about “growth that would create jobs” but about “employment that would ensure growth”. Within that context, new answers

needed to be found to the question of where the sources of job creation would be, as well as what would constitute so called “decent employment”. Even though it was becoming more and more apparent that the existing European Social Model (and the national welfare states) was no longer offering adequate solutions to societal questions, the debate on how to change it was yet to come – it became the core of ideological dispute around the “Third Way”. Therefore, the PES decided to extend the debate and entrust different personalities with leadership over debates. These would conclude in “Special Reports” of which two in particular referred to the question of gender equality. These were the non-binding “A Fair Deal for Employment, the Environment and Equality” by S. Auken and A. Lindh (presented in June 1995 following the mandate of the earlier Barcelona Congress) and adopted by the PES Congress and “A European Employment Pact for a New European Way” by A. Guterres (voted by the 4th PES Congress on 2nd March 1999 in Milan).

■ 3.3.4.1 A FAIR DEAL for Employment, the Environment and Equality

(4 recommendations in total)

2nd Recommendation: A new Strategy for sustainable development, new jobs and equality between women and men (call for a new strategy among 4 recommendations) :

- the need for a new structural approach to the labour market.
- the need for a new European macroeconomic approach.
- the need for a new investment strategy for sustainable development.
- the need for a new strategy for equality between women and men.

Point 2.4: A new strategy for equality between women and men.

Europe is a divided society, where men by tradition have a strong position in both economic and political life. The EU has been

successful in improving the conditions for equality at legislative level, and economic development has contributed to considerable progress for women in the labour market.

These changes are taking place at different speeds – the rate of change is faster in countries which were late starters. Women's employment is increasing more rapidly in Southern Europe than in other parts of Europe.

But age-old ideas and traditions still have a deep influence on relations between women and men in the member countries. New strategies and new initiatives are necessary to ensure the continuation of the legislative work, improvement in the status of women in society and the integration of women into the labour market.

However, new directives and new programmes of the traditional type will not be sufficient. We must adopt a much broader and more dynamic approach in order to influence the national factors which now represent the main obstacles. It is time to set common European goals for equality policy for working life and political life, but we should leave it to national parliaments and governments to take the decisions – after national debate and in international consultation – the timetable and the strategies to reach the goals.

1. A European Action Programme for sustainable development, new jobs and equality (Transform the EU – create an Employment Union; Put people first – create the best skilled workforce in the world; create 15 million new jobs – A new Policy for growth in the private sector; Rebuild Europe for

sustainable development; Give the markets incentives to invest in sustainable development; A White Paper on Employment and Environment; A European Charter on Equality Between Women and Men; Mobilise citizens, consumers and workers to achieve a sustainable restructuring of the economy;)

2. A European Charter

The European Union must play a leading role in efforts to establish a society that is fair to both women and men, and thereby to children. We ask the Commission to draw up a European Charter on Equality between Women and Men, setting out the legal principles of equality in working life and the general principles on equality in political life. This Charter should form a central element in the new EU strategy.

In the first place, the Charter should express the principles already incorporated into EU law, making them clearer, not merely as legal principles but also as objectives for the policies of the EU member states in all areas. Secondly, the Charter should be drawn up with the aim of laying down strategies and action plans for working life and political life, permitting the achievement of objectives within a specific time scale, decided upon at national level.

Last sentence: We will mobilise all untapped resources to bring these forces together in a joint effort to achieve a fair deal for employment, the environment and equality for the benefit of the social well-being of women and men in Europe, for enhancing the environment and for moving the world towards sustainability.

■ 3.3.4.2 A European Employment Pact for a New European Way

European Socialists and Social Democrats propose a New European Way, a European Employment Pact. We want to undertake a major shift leading to higher employment, sustainable economic growth and new prosperity shared by all. We need to launch a new trajectory of growth and employment with social inclusion in Europe.

The New European Way endeavours to:

- Combine higher growth with a control of inflation, public deficits and debt.
- Create employment involving more people in the labour market.
- Combine social protection and competitiveness (...)

(...) The elections for the European Parliament must prepare the agenda for the next five years. As Socialists and Social Democrats we wish to firmly re-establish the goal of full employment, but adapted to the modern world with more flexible time over working life, greater choice between work and leisure, equal opportunities for women and men, more fairness between younger and older

generations and improved social justice. In order to achieve these objectives, we must now take a major new step, that of combining social policies with economic policies, defining the appropriate policy mix and the co-ordination procedures, as well as new forms of global regulation, which can boost sustainable growth and better living conditions. (...)

Point 2: Towards a European Employment Pact (...)

The European Employment Pact should be based on a political declaration by the various actors committing themselves to giving greater priority to growth and employment, which should be translated into practical improvements in the existing instruments, such as (...) [8 points]:

1. The employment guidelines should consider gender equality as a basic component of employment policies.

■ 3.3.4 Occasional statements

As long ago as the 1990s, the PES Women Standing Committee began issuing statements that were either political addresses for specific occasions or were aimed at drawing attention to a specific theme. Since it was a “Standing Committee” within the PES, whose political and organisational integrity was frequently underlined, the objective was to ensure that those documents were proclaimed in the name of the entire party. In doing so they

would also, somewhat by default, serve the goal of imprinting gender mainstreaming over all the PES policies.

The example of how successful they could be was the statement made on the occasion of International Women's Day, 8th March 1995. It was issued on the last day of the PES Congress in Barcelona – and so also became one of the key documents of the Congress.

Barcelona: “Solidarity between the sexes: towards a society based on partnership”

1. *The traditional division of labour between women and men, continuing differences in employment policy, women's disadvantaged position on the labour market, discrimination in pay and social security systems and, last but not least, the inadequate representation of women in all walks of public life – all these factors conspire to place severe constraints on gender democracy in the European Union. The example of Scandinavia shows that these obstacles can be overcome if the political will is strong enough.*
2. *The Party of European Socialists, which endorses the principles of human rights, social justice and liberty, upholds women's rights and seeks to guarantee both sexes equal opportunities to realise their professional,*

family and social aspirations. When International Women's Day was established in 1910 – 85 years ago – in response to a call by German women Social Democrats in Copenhagen, female suffrage still headed the list of women's demands. The issue today is ensuring genuine equality for women.

3. *Gender equality is an essential condition for a fully developed democratic society. Our aim is to overcome the sex-based division of labour and thus to ensure equal participation for women and men in all areas of society. Education and training must be based on the fundamentals of equality and have as a goal the overcoming stereotypes. We therefore seek to promote a process of reform in Europe which will lead to a society based on partnership and open up equal opportunities for both sexes in business, social, political and cultural life.*
4. *This entails upholding the right of equal access to the labour market and the equitable sharing between sexes of paid and unpaid work, particularly housework, family duties and caring. This will require reorganisation of work and a new division of labour, for which sufficient social infrastructure is needed, including parental leave and childcare facilities offering quality learning opportunities, and special forms of caring for the elderly and handicapped.*
5. *Our objective – creating conditions which will enable people to combine work and family duties – cannot be*

achieved through policy on women alone, but constitutes an essential element of all policy initiatives and legislation. Policy on women is not a luxury affordable only in the times of prosperity. It is precisely when times are hard that policy on women must be an integral component of economic, employment, environmental, family, financial; social and societal policy.

6. *The fundamental democratic value of solidarity is inconceivable without solidarity between the sexes and peoples. Only a society based on partnership can solve the problems associated with economic and social change in Europe and the rest of the world. Only such a society can ensure the continued cultural development and enrichment in all parts of the world and solidarity between the developed and developing countries. Women in the South need our particular solidarity. It is not until sexual discrimination has been overcome that the principle of democracy will have come to full fruition in business, society in general, the academic world and politics.*
7. *All over the world women are victims of structural, political, military and individual violence and they are restricted in their rights to self-determination in motherhood. The Party of European Socialists is committed to ensuring that every form of violence against women is outlawed and if it is not yet the case, should be prosecuted, including rape in marriage. In all Member States refugees for women who have been victims of*

violence should be put at their disposal. The incidence of women fleeing from violence should be recognised as ground for granting asylum.

8. *Solving the problem of unemployment in Europe is among the most pressing challenges of our time. This is why an equitable division of paid employment which takes the needs of both women and men into account is not just an effective contribution to labour market policy. From the point of view of equal opportunities, too, it is an essential condition enabling both sexes to combine family duties, paid work and social participation.*
9. *The Party of European Socialists recognizes the right of both women and men to economic autonomy. We need a society in which everyone has the right to individual social security. All social policy must be based on the principle of equal rights for women and men. Women's and men's work in bringing up children and providing care must be recognised in terms of social insurance.*
10. *The necessary process of social reform in Europe is inconceivable without a democracy that includes both sexes. Solidarity between the sexes requires an equitable division of socially necessary work. The economic and social crisis which our industrial society is currently undergoing also offers an opportunity to implement a policy reform based on a new “social contract” between the sexes. The Party of European Socialists aims to make use of this opportunity.*

11. *Women represent half of the population in all the countries of the European Union. This means that they should also exercise half of the power. Women must be able to participate on an equal footing in all decisions at international, European, national and local level. Above all, women must have an equal share of power in all political and social bodies in which decisions affecting citizens' daily lives are taken. The Party of European Socialists commits itself to create the conditions under which this can be realised.*

12. *Democracy is based on the principle of liberty, equality and mutual respect for and recognition of all social groups and individuals, irrespective of, background, gender, race, ideological beliefs, or sexual orientation. Full democracy will not have been achieved until these principles apply equally to everyone, women and men alike. The achievement of equal opportunities will be a source of enrichment for all citizens. The Party of European Socialists advocates that all Member States amend their constitutions and laws so as to ensure that they comply with the principle of equal treatment for women and men and that they compensate for existing discrimination through affirmative action.*

13. *Women make a major contribution to the economic strength and the social and cultural life of our society. No society can afford in the long term to do without the talents, knowledge and energy of the half of the population. In our countries with their democratic*

constitutions, as elsewhere, genuine democracy will not have been achieved until opportunities are equally accessible to women and men.

■ 3.4 Key documents 1999-2004

There are only a handful of documents that mirror the developments and political actions of the PES Women Standing Committee in the years 1999 – 2004. The reason behind this is that the PES itself was in a transformative moment. On one hand, there were efforts put in place to modernise the party. They found their conclusion at the PES Congress in Berlin on 7th – 8th May 2001, where the report on “Strengthening the awareness and internal cohesion of the PES” was adopted together with the corresponding statutory changes.

On the other, this is also a time of major institutional changes, which led to further organisational separation between the PES and the Socialist Group in the European Parliament.

With the adoption of the new Regulation on europarties in November 2003, they moved out of the Assembly building. In the case of PES, it was first hosted by PES Belgium – before it found its own place at Rue du Trône in Brussels. The moving and separation together with

still as yet incomplete digitalisation of archives, may also be why not too many documents have survived to contemporary times.

The material preserved can be divided into four categories. The first group consists of the Report of Activities of the PES; the second includes PES Statutes; the third is Overall Statements of the PES; and the fourth is the special resolution. The reader will note that most of them originate from the Congress in Berlin. Unlike in the past, the PES Women Standing Committee was now perceived as a semi-autonomous organisation, hence probably following this logic, it was not part of overall deliberations on the PES Berlin Reform. Neither was it mentioned specifically in the “Activity Programme 2001 – 2004”, even though the opening sentence read: *The Berlin Congress is the starting point for a new PES.* (...) Furthermore, the first PES Council in Warsaw on 14th – 15th November 2002 adopted, as almost all the Congresses before, a “main” resolution. It does not refer specifically to gender equality issues, however, devoting the paragraph on equality to the issues of migration and fighting right-wing extremism.



Zita Gurmai, Martine Aubry, Anne Hidalgo - Women's rights in Paris - France (2009)

■ 3.4.1 Reports of Activities

Berlin Congress: Report of Activities 1999-2001 “From Milan to Berlin”

Annex: Indicative chronological list of the PES Activities 1999 – 2001

2000: June 29 - Women Standing Committee - Brussels.
December 7 - Women Standing Committee - Brussels.

2001: February 8 - Women Standing Committee - Brussels.

Brussels Congress: PES report of activities 2001-2004 (24 April 2004)

2001 - There were 2 PES Women Standing Committee meetings.

2002 - There were: 2 Standing Committee meetings, 3 Bureau meetings, 1 Conference.

2003 - There were 3 Standing Committee meetings.

■ 3.4.2 PES Statutes (as amended through the PES Berlin Reform)

Preamble

The socialist and social democratic parties of the European Union constitute the Party of European Socialists (PES). (...)

The aims of the PES are: (8)

(3) To develop close working relationship between the national parties, the national parliamentary groups, the Parliamentary Group of the P.E.S., the PES Women's Standing Committee, ECOSY, the PES Group in the Committee of Regions and the Socialist Members of the Economic and Social Committee.

Article 2

The PES Consists of:

- *Full Member Parties (see annex 2). Socialist International parties in EU member states are full members as of right on condition that they accept the PES Statutes.*
- *The Parliamentary Group of the PES*

- ECOSY

- The PES Women's Standing Committee

Article 4

The PES supports equal representation and as a consequence, aspired to achieve internal equality and equal representation of women and men in its bodies and meetings. The “PES Women Standing Committee” consists of representatives from affiliated parties. Its mission is to formulate and implement the objectives relating to women's policy within the framework of the PES.

Article 7

(2) Decisions on administrative and organisational matters can be taken by simple majority in the Presidency whereby all full member parties, the President and the Parliamentary Group of the PES, PES Women's Standing Committee, ECOSY and the PES Group in the Committee of Regions have one vote each.

Article 8.3

Full and associate member parties, the Parliamentary Group of the PES in the European Parliament, the PES Women's Standing Committee, ECOSY and the PES Group in the Committee of the Regions may present proposals to, and speak on these before the Congress.

Article 10

IV. The PES Women's Standing Committee and ECOSY shall have 2 delegates each with voting rights.

10.2 Delegates with consultative status (ex-officio delegates) (...) Members of the Bureau of the PES Women's Standing Committee

Article 17

Members of the Presidency with voting rights are (...) the President of the PES Women's Standing Committee or her representative.

Article 26

The Secretary General shall convene meetings of a Co-ordination Team to discuss the planning, preparation, follow-up and financing of PES activities. The Co-ordination Team shall consist of one representative from each full member party, the PES Parliamentary Group, ECOSY, the PES Women's Standing Committee and the PES Group in the Committee of the Regions. These meetings will take place at least three times a year.

■ 3.4.3 Overall PES Statements

The PES Congress in Berlin adopted this general resolution under the theme “*Security in Change*”. It referred to the women's agenda in the section on the vision for a new socio-economic model:

Security in Change

Today the Party of European Socialists holds its 5th Congress in Berlin, and today the city of Berlin is the symbol of a more unified continent after decades of division. It has never been so essential for Europeans to stand together, to answer the challenges of integration and globalisation, and to meet the expectations of the citizens. The Social Democrats and Socialists of Europe feel a special responsibility for Europe's future and its role in the world, promoting peace and solidarity (...)

(2) Modernising and strengthening the European Union's social and economic model

(...) We want equality between women and men to become reality. This means a clear commitment to equality in all areas of life, including parity in all political institutions.

■ 3.4.4 Special Resolutions

Within the period 1999 – 2004 there was in fact only one resolution of the PES that specifically referred to the women's rights agenda. It was passed at the PES Congress in Berlin in 2001 and it focused on the question of trafficking.

Statement on Trafficking in Women and Children

The United Nations and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) estimate that 4 million people are victims of the trade in human beings world-wide. Each year, 500.000 victims of this trade enter the Western Europe.

Trading in human beings is a form of slavery in the 21st century, which affects men, women and children. The majority of victims are women who are used principally for sexual exploitation.

Trading in women is increasing steadily, largely due to their vulnerability, poverty and marginalisation in their country of origin.

The increase is explained by the large profits and limited risks enjoyed by traffickers, as well as by high demand for women in Europe, for the purpose of prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation.

Trafficking in women is a complex phenomenon which is a direct result of the demand for prostitutes, involving violations of human rights, the fight against organised crime, migration and visa policies, gender inequalities, poverty and socio-economic inequalities within and between countries.

The PES considers trafficking in human beings to be a global problem, which calls for cooperation at the international level and requires a multi-disciplinary approach, focused on prevention, prosecution and actual sentencing of traffickers, as well as the provision of assistance to victims.

The PES highlights the need to view trading in women principally from the victim's perspective and to conceptualise this scourge in terms of violations of fundamental women's rights and not only in terms of the need to combat organised crime and irregular immigration. However, the irrefutable link between the trade in human beings and immigration and asylum policies should not be denied.

The PES points out that the conclusions of the Tampere European Council and the European Parliament resolution adopted on 19 May 2000 establish a clear mandate for the European Union to fight against the trade in human beings and particularly against the sexual exploitation of women and children. The mandate also calls for the adoption of laws which seek to establish a common definition of the trade in human beings, criminal actions, common sanctions and measures to assist victims.

The PES considers that a clear definition is a prerequisite for the fight against trading in women to be effective. The definition should cover

all practices that are similar to slavery, such as sexual exploitation, forced labour and forced marriages.

The PES holds the view that the trade in human beings is to be condemned, and asks the member states to grant temporary protection and social support to victims of trafficking.

The PES considers that the European Union should ensure that its actions are co-ordinated so as to be consistent with the various international platforms such as the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the Beijing Conference, and calls on the Commission to draw fully on the potential of Articles 30, 31 and 34 of the European Union Treaty, in order to fight the trade in human beings for sexual exploitation.

The PES believes that the European Union and third countries must organise a joint information campaign addressed to women on order to explain to them clearly how the networks for trade in women operate, especially in future member countries in Central and Eastern Europe where trafficking is expanding steadily.

The PES also asks the Council to ensure that the Stop and Daphne programmes are endowed with sufficient budgets so that the various NGOs concerned with the trade in women can operate efficiently in the field.

The PES is committed to promoting measures and actions aimed at eliminating trafficking in human beings.

■ 3.5 Key documents 2004-2012

The years 2004 – 2012 have been the period of daring challenges and great transformation for both the PES and for PES Women. After the difficult Congress of 2004 and the short but demanding European election campaign a process that would ultimately lay the foundation for a profound reform was launched. The new leadership was composed of: Poul Nyrup Rasmussen (PES President and former Prime Minister of Denmark), Philip Cordery (Secretary General from PS France and former Secretary General of ECOSY) and Zita Gurmai (who was elected on 19th October 2004). Within the team there was a shared guiding ambition to pave the way to a new, stronger PES. The fact that Zita Gurmai was the first ever Women Leader and the first ever Central-Eastern European was not just a symbol of historical momentum – more a guarantee that a profound change was being accomplished.

The preparations for the subsequent PES Council (scheduled to take place in Vienna in June 2005) were however disrupted, when

the news of the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty in referenda in France and in the Netherlands hit Europe. Though the first step of the reform was accomplished and the strategy for the next ones was laid out as well, there was still a need to re-focus attention. The deliberative process that followed emphasised the new PES orientation, through which it aspired to become a Europarty much more strongly anchored in the national, regional and local aspects of social democratic activism. On the political level this meant the orientation to “People's First”, on the organisational level it led to the creation of a more consolidated structure with new possibilities for the activists to engage – such as through PES Activists. The numerous exchanges inspired the formulation of a new mission known as “A new Social Europe”. Its proclamation at the PES Congress at Porto set the new direction for the Europarty, which was sadly disrupted again – due to the impact of the global crisis that began in 2008. At its peak it was clear that the task ahead would be about safeguarding the progressive legacy on one hand, while trying to identify new ways to deliver on the promise of a prosperous Europe and better, fairer societies.

The documents gathered in this chapter reflect the changes seen in the period 2004 – 2012, especially the incredible development of PES Women. Under the charismatic leadership of Zita Gurmai, the organisation has reached a new horizon. Her political vision, her commitment and hard work, as well as her persistence in the fight for the equal rights agenda has been inspiring and mobilising for many. The result of that transformation of PES Women was that the organisation assumed a new position and with it also a new, energetic style of action. Consequently, it significantly influenced the EU agenda, for example with the new Charter of

Women's Rights and the Roadmap for equality among women and men. It remained a protagonist of progressive policies, ensuring both gender-proofing and special articles in all core documents regarding women's rights. And organisationally, it became stronger and better structured. Its growing importance was also mirrored in expanding relations with EU politicians, EU partner organisations, and with sister parties and other full PES members and activists.

The documents collected below are organised in 7 sections. The first incorporates a selection of relevant declarations and resolutions of the PES Congresses. The second deals with the PES Councils Resolutions, some of which also involve organisational changes in the PES. As these were co-designed, they also affected the operational model of PES Women as an organisation. The third includes the relevant statements from the PES Leaders' Meetings, which are particularly good illustrations of the position of the PES after the EU Elections in 2009 and then in respect of the crisis. The fourth category of documents refers to the PES Statutes, showing an evolution in the position of PES Women. The fifth includes "Working Programmes" of the PES, while the sixth and seventh respectively feature PES Congress reports (relevant sections) and the PES Women Congress reports. It is important to note that the latter ones continue to be published as detailed, regularly occurring documents – providing information on the 2004 – 2012 (2014) era of the PES Women Chronicles.

■ 3.5.1 PES Congress Declarations and Resolutions

Adoption of the New Social Europe Agenda at the PES was undoubtedly a historic moment. It not only united all the members behind a common, tangible vision for Europe – it also brought onto the agenda modern elements deriving from the debate on active labour market policies and on the paradigm of social investment. One of the core pledges that this agenda made was the one on further socio-economic empowerment of women, by facilitating their entry and retention on the labour market, by seeking to provide adequate supportive social policies and also set the measures that would ensure respect for equal rights of women and men. The relevant extracts are included in section 3.5.1.1.

The resolutions from the 2009 Congress reconfirm those commitments, emphasising even more strongly that the EU has not yet delivered on the promise of equality and welfare for all. The PES sees this historic pledge as particularly endangered by the crisis and its impacts and this is mirrored in the two resolutions quoted in 3.5.1.2 and 3.5.1.3 respectively. Where perhaps there is a slight difference is the emphasis that these latter documents place on the social security issues; this is understandable taking into account the progression in conservative governance in the EU and the beginnings of the austerity policies.



■ PES Congress (2009)

■ 3.5.1.1 The New Social Europe - Ten Principles for Our Common Future.

Resolution adopted at the
PES Congress in Porto on
8th December 2006

4. Inclusive societies - nobody left behind

(...) Those at greatest risk of exclusion – the elderly, the long-term unemployed, women, young people, ethnic minorities, the unskilled, those from deprived communities, and those suffering multiple disadvantages – demand renewed commitment from society and government to fight poverty and ensure new prospects for inclusion and participation. Public policies at national, regional and local levels must be targeted at individuals and communities. These should address all relevant issues, including health, social services, active labour market policies, as well as innovative measures for community cohesion, in partnership with local stakeholders and grassroots organisations. We must guide our reforms on the basis of rights

and duties, making our social policies a springboard for creating an active, inclusive society.

5. Universal childcare

(...) Childcare frees parents to enter paid employment, essential for ensuring equal rights for women and men, ending child poverty and tackling the economic challenge posed by demographic change. Childcare creates local jobs - which further stimulates economic growth, particularly in deprived communities.

6. Equal rights for women and men

Some claim that enough progress has been made in equal rights between women and men and that we need not go any further.

We, the PES, have made our choice: in spite of progress, inequality between women and men is still strong and we must act on it. Women are the largest disadvantaged group in the labour market due to discrimination, insufficient access and unequal conditions. Wages are lower for women than for men and women still bear most domestic responsibilities in the family, often without child care support.

Equal rights for women and men are not just a moral imperative: they are also a key to solving the demographic challenge, to strengthening democracy and ensuring better welfare for families.

New public policies to promote equal rights and opportunities – in working life, in family life and in public life – will bring economic progress and deliver social justice. These will be crucial for tackling gender inequalities in the labour market, such as the pay gap, and the resulting inequalities in welfare and life chances, as well as pursuing better work-life balance policies, including the right to flexible working for parents. Social dialogue and collective bargaining will also play an important role in achieving these objectives.

The European value-added is clear: Europe must go further in the broad struggle for equal rights in all areas of work and life, not least in the field of equal pay for equal work as established in the Treaty of Rome.

8. Making diversity and integration our strength

(...) We, the PES, believe in Diversity and Tolerance as set out in the declaration of this Congress. European societies must reject all forms of intolerance and hatred. Everyone has the right to live in dignity and be treated with respect regardless of their nationality, ethnic origin, race, gender, sexual orientation or religion.

A new vision – for our Social Europe

(...) 3. Why we need a New Social Europe

- Too many people are excluded from good job opportunities and from adult education and re-training;
- Too many children drop out of school;
- Too many young people suffer from poor education systems and difficulties in finding a job;
- Too many women are denied an equal position in work and in society;
- Too many disabled persons lack the support needed for a successful integration into working life;
- Too many people who have come to Europe as refugees or immigrants have great difficulties in being integrated into our societies;
- Too many people are still living on the margins of society, even in poverty;
- Too much pressure is being placed on natural resources because of old technologies and life styles.

4. Our roadmap for a New Social Europe

(...) Achieving real equal rights for women and men. Achieving gender equality will require a sea change in the welfare state and the economy. It requires efforts from women and men, from businesses, trade unions and government. It demands not only changes in structures, but a revolution in attitudes. Political leadership and public action must lead the way.

Persistent gender inequalities must be tackled through social dialogue and reform of public policies to:

- Eliminate the gender pay gap and in-work discrimination;
- Better sharing of parental leave between women and men;
- Socialise the costs of parental leave;
- Institute a right to flexible working for parents and pregnant workers;
- Regulate working time to tackle the culture of long working hours;
- Manage organisational change resulting from parental leave and flexible working;
- Individualise social security, pension and taxation rights;

- Tackle gender inequalities in pension systems;
- Social protection coverage for women in precarious employment;
- Establish urban time policies for women and men to reconcile work, family and civic obligations.

Achieving equal rights and opportunities is a key goal for the European Union. This must be promoted in a far more dynamic approach through new policies and new tripartite dialogue. This must be given a stronger priority as a fundamental part of our high quality jobs strategy and as a means to achieve social inclusion. Making it a part of our shared responsibility in the labour market and a pillar of our common rights and duties in society.

Making our ageing societies proactive

- Bringing down unemployment through massive investment and reform of the labour market and educational systems;
- Increasing the employment rate of women and young people;
- Allowing older workers to stay in work longer through a more adapted and non-discriminatory labour market;
- Stronger inclusiveness and better integration in the labour market for immigrants and minorities;

- A new inclusive policy strategy for vulnerable people supporting those who can work.

(...) First pillar state pensions should indeed be complemented by mandatory occupational pensions, although in-built employment inequalities – for example between women and men – should be factored into pension provision. Labour market pensions based on collective agreements should be promoted to play an even more important role in the future - as a part of a more coherent and fair pension strategy and our strategy for full employment.

(...) The European Union can add value to Member States' efforts by focusing on:

- Promoting higher growth for more and better jobs to be obtained through the PES strategy for coordinated investment policies;
- Promoting pensions reforms on the basis of adequacy, equity and financial sustainability, ensuring non-discrimination between women and men in the pension systems;
- Ensuring pension rights for people on the move, including migrant workers.

Chapter 5: A progressive strategy for full employment

Progressive standards of corporate behaviour in the New Social Europe: the future role of corporate social responsibility

(...) Enterprises should make decisions based not only on financial or economic factors but also on the social and environmental consequences of their activities. Companies do not operate in a vacuum, but in a society and thus should uphold the values and objectives of that society. In this sense, companies must play an active role in the New Social Europe, committed to the achievement of its objectives, including full employment, sustainability and gender equality. This implies private investments in innovation and sustainability. It implies giving the unemployed, women, young people, the disabled, and older persons better chances of entering the workplace, sharing and developing their capabilities. It also means pursuing better company policies to reconcile work and family life, promoting women, retaining the most experienced workers, and flattening hierarchies to foster new talents. There are a whole set of new company practices - which do not lie within the ambit of the law or public policy - that must develop to make the New Social Europe a success.

Chapter 7: Learning from the beginning - and learning throughout life

1. Learning from the beginning: shifting investment curve towards babies and children

(...) Furthermore, Europe will be unable to reduce poverty, achieve gender equality and tackle the demographic challenge without systems of universal child care provision for babies and pre-school children. Too many women are still denied the opportunity of working full-time or sometimes even part-time, due to insufficient and expensive child care, and are left with few prospects of providing for their families, fulfilling themselves professionally and earning a good pension for their retirement. Women are not having the number of children they desire, largely as a result of these difficulties, fostering the fertility crisis we now see across most of Europe. The prevalence of poverty amongst single-parent households and amongst households with several children, in which women do not work or work too few hours, makes the need to facilitate female employment ever more important. Children also benefit from growing up in a household in which parents do work, given that it significantly reduces the risk of poverty that has been shown to damage children's prospects in life.

4. Living and learning in the emerging digital society

Information and Communications Technology (ICT) education is our fourth learning priority. European countries must democratise access and participation in the digital society as it has become a new factor for social inclusion or exclusion. In most EU countries, income, education and age emerge as the main determinants of digital exclusion, followed by geographical location (the rural/urban divide) and gender. The emerging Information Society in the new Member States is more polarised than in the EU-15 zone, even in areas showing an Internet penetration rate close to the EU-15 average (Estonia and Slovenia). Access to computers and Internet facilities are provided in public settings in most of the EU-10. However, facilities are limited in scale compared with the EU-15 and are unevenly distributed among regions.

Chapter 8: Achieving real equal rights for women and men

Persistent gender inequalities must be tackled through social dialogue and the reform of public policies to:

- Eliminate the gender pay gap and in-work discrimination;
- Better sharing of parental leave between women and men;
- Socialise the costs of parental leave;

- Institute a right to flexible working for parents and pregnant workers;
- Regulate working time to tackle the culture of long working hours;
- Tripartite dialogue to manage and benefit from organizational change resulting from parental leave and flexible working;
- Individualise social security, pension and taxation rights;
- Tackle gender inequalities in pension systems;
- Ensure social protection coverage of women and men in precarious employment;
- Establish urban time policies for women and men to reconcile work, family and civic obligations.

Significant advances in women's rights over the past hundred years risk being overshadowed by the new and persistent gender inequalities that remain at the heart of our societies.

Women now have access to all institutions in our societies – educational, labour, political and social. Indeed, girls enjoy great educational success, performing better than boys at school and universities, although they remain under-represented in scientific fields. However, other institutions have proven more difficult to conquer. Women find it hard to reconcile work with family life;

they sometimes earn less than men in comparable jobs and reach a glass ceiling in their careers that is unknown to men; women are promoted less and are more likely to be in precarious employment; they have fewer children than they would want; they are more likely to be saddled with domestic chores at home and care responsibilities in relation to dependent relatives. As a result of shorter and more precarious employment, they are at a greater risk of poverty and earn lower pensions. With rising instability in family structures, there are growing numbers of female lone parents struggling to make ends meet.

The sense of frustration and unfulfilled expectations amongst today's women is great. Although women have gained sexual and reproductive rights across Europe, including the right to choose the number and spacing of children and the right to a safe and legal abortion, many are still constrained from choosing their desired number of children with their partners, as a result of the continuing incompatibilities between work and family life. While women have now gained equal access to education and attain better results than their male counterparts, this does not translate into equal treatment in work. Women have gained the right to combine the roles of mother and professional, but have not been given the means to benefit fully from this right on an equal footing with men.

Substantial improvements need to be made throughout Europe to reach equal rights and opportunities for women and men. All democratic levels of policy-making will have to play a role.

1. Gender equality as a socio-economic imperative

Equal rights and opportunities between women and men are now not just a value-based goal for society, but also a socio-economic imperative. This imperative is about the future of the welfare state in a context of demographic change. Since the ageing and shrinking of the population will result in proportionally lower fiscal revenues at a time of growing welfare costs, there is an ever greater need to raise the growth potential and actual growth of our economies, through better female employment in numbers of women and the productive quality of work, as well as mitigating the demographic effect in the long term by eliminating the opportunity costs of having more than one child. At the same time, the greater proportion of poverty amongst women and single parent households, headed mainly by women, establishes the social imperative of ensuring female economic independence throughout the life course.

We must achieve employment on equal terms between women and men, making better use of women's productive talents and creating the conditions for women and men to have their desired number of children. Some European countries have managed to reduce the employment gap between women and men, including the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and the UK. Indeed, European countries with higher female employment rates also have higher fertility rates. But elsewhere in the Mediterranean, Central and Eastern European and continental countries the divide is far too high and fertility far too low. At the same time, the gender pay gap is higher in those countries with the highest female employment rates, making it clear that equality has not been achieved even in these countries due to labour market discrimination and segregation.

2. Equality in the welfare society and the labour market

The obstacles to achieving the goal of gender equality in the labour market are financial, in terms of access to affordable child care and compensation for parental leave; consist of labour market discrimination and segregation, in terms of the gender pay gap, the highly unequal distribution of parental leave between women and men leading to discrimination against prime-age females, low work-life balance and the prevalence of women in low-paid sectors; relate to organisational culture, as a result of a culture of long and inflexible working hours, affecting women and men, in the private sector particularly; and, domestic, given the reticence of some men to share family responsibilities and domestic chores.

Achieving gender equality will require a sea change in the welfare state and the economy. It requires efforts from women and men, from businesses, trade unions and government. It demands not only changes in structures, but a revolution in attitudes. Political leadership and public action must lead the way.

The pro-natalist policies of the past, aiming to keep mothers in the home, will either maintain fertility rates at their current depressed levels or lead to further declines. The vast majority of today's women aspire to motherhood and professional fulfilment, not one or the other. Public policies must foster these aspirations.

Firstly, universal, high quality and affordable child care must be established throughout Europe, in combination with a care

system for other dependents such as the elderly and disabled. The costs of child care and dependent care are still prohibitive in the majority of European countries, particularly for lone parents and parents with two or more children. For example, Denmark enjoys an activity rate for single parents of 60% thanks to near universal child care coverage, that is 20% higher than in other European countries which have less child care provision. Progressive scaling of contributions must be introduced everywhere, taking account of income and number of dependants. In countries where cultural norms discourage institutional child care of babies and very young children, the means for child care in home environments should also be provided. Such care systems would allow a rise in full-time employment and contribute to the end of involuntary part-time work for parents.

Secondly, there must be comprehensive action to fight discrimination and segregation in the labour market and end disincentives to work through policy reform and social dialogue:

- The gender pay gap and in-work gender discrimination must resurface as major political priorities, with stricter enforcement of national legislation through better policing of labour and wage practices. Equal pay for equal work has been an established European principle since the founding Treaty of Rome in 1957. Thus, the European Union has a particularly important responsibility in setting out a new direction for achieving equal gender pay;
- Parental leave must be better shared between women and men in order to prevent discrimination against women and

encourage fertility. Paternity leave policy should be reformed to ensure take-up and reduce the wide imbalance between maternal and paternal leave that makes employment and promotion of prime-age females less attractive than that of prime-age males. Countries in which paternity leave is an individual, non-transferable entitlement including compensation for loss of earnings, have far higher take-up rates. For example, in Norway 85% of men take leave, followed by Sweden in which 42% of men take leave. Apart from these European countries, only Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Iceland have take-up of paternity leave above 10%. In 2002 only 16% of all available leave days were taken by men;

- The costs of maternity and paternity leave should be socialised as far as possible, through tax or insurance-based income maintenance;
- The right to flexible working should be instituted for parents and pregnant workers, including a right to time off work, flexible and/or reduced working hours through time bank and time account schemes, and tele-working. Such a right should reduce the often involuntary reliance of women on part-time work;
- The culture of long working hours in certain sectors, which disadvantages parents particularly, must be strictly regulated within the framework of the law, namely through maximum working time;

- Tripartitedialogueshouldbeestablishedtoidentify measures to support the economy and employers, particularly SMEs, to manage and benefit from organisational changes in relation to parental leave and flexible working, including retaining staff, raising productivity, and from the perspective of the wider concern of lowering unemployment, combining parental leave with vocational training and temporary work placements for the unemployed.

Thirdly, social security and taxation systems must be based on the presumption of economic independence and female employment in a life-course perspective:

- Social security rights, pension rights and taxation must be individualised.

The reform of pension systems must take due account of the gender gap in pension entitlements, due to the general structure of earnings- related pensions, leaving more retired women in poverty. This means ensuring a decent minimum pension guarantee, pension credits for unpaid care work, amongst other measures; Ensure social protection coverage of women in precarious employment.

Equality through time as a social value

Making child-rearing compatible with social democratic goals such as full employment and social justice in a gender neutral approach will also involve taking a new and more innovative approach to time as a social value.

The entry of women into the labour market, new forms of work organization as well as the increasing flexibilisation of working time have left most women and men struggling to cope with conflicting demands on their time: these include time for work, time for their families, time for learning, time for community and political participation, personal time. These demands sometimes prove to be irreconcilable and have grave implications for our quality of life, for example rising stress and diminishing community vitality. The result is that people do not feel able to lead full lives and opt out of one aspect or another, in a way that also has an impact on gender equality, with the unequal distribution of time.

(...) Thus, first of all, we must rethink the management of time over the life course, as education, child-rearing and work become ever more parallel, rather than consecutive or mutually exclusive activities in life, for women and men. Public policy in some European countries has already begun to take account of this new reality, for example, providing for flexibility in working hours for parents, educational leave allowances, sabbatical leaves for personal development. Each European country must explore such innovative policies and find their own balance in redefining the mix of working, educational, family and personal time throughout the life-cycle.

Secondly, time as a value day-to-day is regaining attention as a major aspect of quality of life, over which women and men aspire to have greater control. In this regard, innovative public policies are being explored in some cities in Europe, with surprising results. Urban time policies seek to make work and commuting more compatible with accessing public and community services, exercising civic duties,

shopping, taking children to crèches and schools, family and leisure time. Examples from Italy and France show that urban time policies allow a community to manage time better for the wider good: for instance, extending opening hours for public services, community leisure centres or local businesses or improving local transport networks to shorten commuting time. For example, several northern Italian cities pioneered such policies with the opening of “time offices” which were charged with consulting local stakeholders – including employees, local associations, and businesses – and negotiating new measures to reconcile work with family responsibilities and other aspects of urban life.

Such policies do not imply a shift to a 24/7 society, such as in the US Social Model, but place control over all aspects of time back into the hands of women and men. Greater consideration should be given to time as a social value for the future of the European way of life.

Making our ageing society proactive

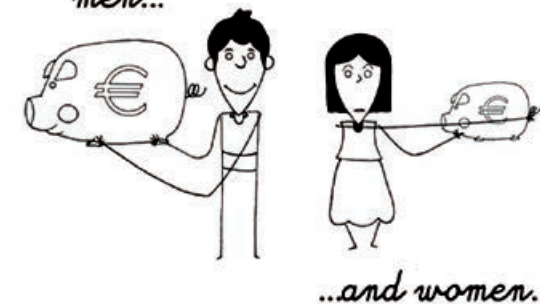
3. Reform of pension systems

(...) It will be equally important to ensure equity between women and men. Given the large employment gap between the sexes, women often receive far lower pensions and are more likely to find themselves in poverty. The gradual equalisation of the pensionable age between women and men is an important step and the generational shift towards higher employment amongst today’s women in their 20s and 30s will of course contribute to better pensions for women in future. However, women may still continue to have shorter and lower paid working lives as a result of the gender pay gap, the prevalence of part-time work amongst women and the unequal distribution of family responsibilities between women and men.

Women and Pensions

Pensions – It's different for

men...



■ Women and Pensions (2011)

Thus a twin-track approach is needed: firstly, addressing gender inequalities and discrimination in employment and family care; secondly, ensuring that pensions take account of these imbalances – through pension credits for example - and women's longer life expectancy in order to prevent rising statistics of female pensioner poverty in future.

Evolution in the global economy, work organisation, demography and societal expectations, will demand a much more fluid interchange between education, work, family responsibilities and retirement. Education will not only be a matter for the young due to the need to re-skill several times over a working life; retirement and work should no longer be mutually exclusive, to allow working later in life; family responsibilities will require better balancing with employment in order to achieve gender equality and encourage higher fertility.

■ 3.5.1.2 **People first: A Progressive European Agenda** (Congress 2009)

Our strategic priorities for the European Union

Our priorities for the next five-year strategy of the European Union focus on the main challenges Europe's people are facing. We believe that the new democratic provisions of the Lisbon treaty should now be actively deployed and all governance levels - from the local, regional, national, European to the global – should fully participate in achieving these priorities:

- 1. To secure a strong recovery and a new sustainable and socially just growth model.**
- 2. To achieve fundamental reform of the financial markets to preserve us from future crises and serve the real economy.**
- 3. To fight climate change and secure clean energy into the future.**
- 4. To promote strong, fair and effective welfare systems in a globalised world: a New Social Europe.**

5. To pursue gender equality. To shape a globalisation of human progress and security in a new global order (...)

6. To promote strong, fair and effective welfare states in a globalised world: a New Social Europe.

(...) We are also committed to ensuring that EU legislation respects citizens' rights as enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. We want to strengthen anti-discrimination legislation to ensure equal treatment on grounds of gender, race, disability, age, sexual orientation and religion or belief. Efforts should be stepped up in favour of minorities and socially excluded and vulnerable groups in society, including access to public goods such as education.

5. To pursue gender equality

Our vision of progressive societies is contingent on gender equality. Gender inequalities continue to have deeply negative consequences for the economy, social justice and democracy.

Women still earn, on average, 17.4% less than men for doing the same work; they are much more likely to be unemployed, discouraged from entering the labour market by the lack of decent jobs, or in lower-paid, low-quality or part-time jobs. The financial and economic crisis has highlighted the very low number of women in top decision-making positions in the banking sector and in listed companies. Overall, the result is that women have not been able to contribute fully to generating new prosperity and providing sound stewardship in the economy.

The extent to which gender equality has been achieved varies across Europe. Those European countries which have done most to increase women's rights and opportunities are amongst the leading sustainable societies in Europe with the highest proportion of women in the workforce *and* the highest birth rates.

We believe gender should be mainstreamed throughout all EU policies and instruments, including national and European economic recovery plans. It is urgent for the EU to adopt a European Women's Rights Charter to improve women's rights and opportunities and promote mechanisms to achieve gender equality in all aspects of social, economic and political life. Moreover, this Charter must be carried by a visible, effective, target-driven platform with a sufficient budget to ensure that its content is implemented and respected in all Member States.

Improving paid and shared parental leave rights and pre-school child care and education would benefit labour market participation and economic performance, reduce poverty – thereby alleviating welfare burdens - as well as improve the life chances of children. We must reach the EU Barcelona child care targets. The use of quotas in politics and the private sector should be explored in order to overcome latent discrimination and entrench gender equality.

We will continue to campaign for equal political representation of women and men in all decision-making bodies at European level. In this respect, we are proud that the first EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, following the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, is Catherine Ashton, a woman from our political family.



■ PES Women (2009)

We welcome the forthcoming Spanish EU Presidency's placement of women's rights at the top of the European agenda. We will promote women's sexual and reproductive health rights throughout the EU. We propose to step up European efforts to eradicate human trafficking and sexual exploitation through closer judicial and police cooperation. We also propose to encourage and support the EU and its Member States in their efforts to stop domestic and gender-specific violence, including that perpetrated against women of ethnic minorities, through all appropriate EU programmes and funds.

We are convinced that pursuing gender equality will bring far-reaching benefits for European societies.

6. To shape a globalization of human progress and security in a new global order

While conservatives and liberals want people to adapt to globalization, we want to shape it. Together with progressive forces in the world, we want to shape a new age of worldwide human progress. International solidarity is at the heart of our parties. This is reflected in the priorities we set for the EU external agenda. The Lisbon Treaty will equip the EU with a strengthened capacity to enlarge and act more efficiently in the globalised world: a unified office of EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy and President of the

European Council to give a stronger and clearer voice globally; the ability to pursue a **more consistent and coherent external action** comprising CFSP, trade, cooperation, humanitarian aid and the external dimension of internal policies such as energy, research, education, employment and gender equality; and a service of external representation to promote our collective interests in third countries.

We must define a **progressive European external agenda** to shape a new globalization of human progress and security, aimed at ensuring a better future for people and the planet into the twenty-first century. This includes ensuring that governments keep their commitments on aid as well as helping developing countries cope with the effects of climate change. Decent work, environmental protection and the global ability to manage climate change, social justice, gender equality, the fight against poverty, security, peacekeeping and peace building, disarmament, financial market reform, upholding international conventions on migration and asylum, fair, free and sustainable trade are among the ingredients for a better world.

■ 3.5.1.3 A New Way Forward – A Stronger PES

(Congress 2009)

1. Developing our vision for Progressive Societies in the 21st century

(...) We must renew social democracy from the bottom up to face today's challenges and meet citizens' expectations. Our aim is to develop a new vision for Progressive Societies in the 21st century, with solidarity at its heart. The globalised world implies that we cannot undertake this debate in isolation from each other. Conflicting national solutions are doomed to fail. A vision for social democracy and a progressive society must be coherent at the local, regional, national, European and global levels if it is to be successful. We should take care to include people who in the past have been under-represented in political debate and decision-making, such as women, young people and minorities. Therefore, the PES will undertake deep and wide-ranging reflection and coordinated activities and campaigns with our member parties, our parliamentary groups in the European Parliament and the Committee of regions, PES Women, ECOSY as well as PES observer organisations and stakeholders during the next two years.

3. Challenging a resurgent but fragmented right-wing

Many right-wing parties have borrowed social democratic language to mask their conservative positions. They have pursued a deliberate political strategy of blurring political differences, particularly on social and economic issues such as women's rights which many conservatives had previously opposed. Right-wing pro-European politicians often falsely claim that there is a right-left European consensus. Praise for the welfare state, calls for financial market reform and Keynesian fiscal stimulus, as well as support for the social market economy, are just four rhetorical points used for increased electoral appeal. This is in spite of the very different reality revealed by their practices.

5. Strengthening our methods and instruments for a stronger PES

(...) The PES should strengthen the work and presence of PES Women through an ongoing and clear gender mainstreaming approach in all policy areas, as was the case in the PES election manifesto. The PES should also guarantee a strong presence of women in all PES bodies, decision-making processes and positions to fulfil our social democratic values of equality and democracy. The PES needs the support and presence of women, who represent 50% of our voters, if we want to be credible and convincing to our electorate of progressive women and men.

■ 3.5.1.4 Together for the Europe we need

(Congress 2012)

(...) **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 the 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.

To put an end to mass unemployment and return to the path towards full employment, a **European employment pact** must be implemented. European funds need to be better used 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 to create opportunities for every woman and man to contribute to society and the economy. Furthermore, a gender-sensitive working environment that guarantees 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 of a new job, training or further education within four months after leaving the education system or becoming unemployed. A European Employment Programme of at least 10 billion Euros must be introduced immediately to finance the creation of new jobs and support better education and training. A strong gender perspective must be included in this programme in order to prevent the development of larger gaps between women and men in the labour market and across society at a later stage.

(...) **Our Socialist and Social Democratic alternative**

2. Generating employment and fair growth throughout Europe

(...) 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: (...)



Combating Young Women's Unemployment



■ European Youth Guarantee (2012)

- 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 into the labour market. Furthermore, we have to provide women with equal opportunities to access decision-making positions within companies.

3. Developing a Social Union

In a Social Union, implementing economic freedoms in the European Union must not result in the 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. Adherence to 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 to enjoy 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: (...)

- 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. (...)
- Based on the Europe 2020 target to reduce the number of people living in poverty, every Member State needs to develop plans and set



■ Your Future is My Future (2012)

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. (...)

- The gender gap in pensions 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. (...)

Every measure must be taken to ensure that women and men contribute to and benefit fully and equally from the greening process of 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

(...) 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.

(...) 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.

(...) We are committed to giving refugees and asylum seekers fleeing their countries the possibility of finding 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.

6. A just world

(...) 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 democratisation and peace processes.

The PES was the first European political family to organise 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.

(...) Standing before the new global distribution of power, the EU must speak with one voice to raise its profile and 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

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, we must also be able to do so in our internal bodies and meetings**, 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.

■ 3.5.2 PES Council's Declarations and Resolutions

Generally speaking, there are two categories of PES Council resolutions. The first one comprises statements regarding organisational developments. Examples of these are included in sections 3.5.2.1 and 3.5.2.6 – which respectively mirror the compromise regarding PES Reform (for a Stronger PES) and concerning the new institution of a common Top Candidate. The former is relevant, as it imposes a gender quota for all the PES bodies, including working groups. The latter resolution highlights that the PES is committed to promoting women in politics in general, and in the context of the EU high level positions in particular.

The second category features more of the political statements. They are included in the sections 3.5.2.2 - 3.5.2.3. The majority of them present the progressive statements vis-à-vis the crisis, proposing an alternative path to the applied austerity measures and cuts. The attention to jeopardised opportunities and the backlash against women's rights is clear, mirroring both the overall commitment to the egalitarian agenda, but also the role of PES Women as a guarantor of gender-proofing of all the alternative “out of crisis” strategies.

■ 3.5.2.1 Proposal for Stronger PES

(PES Council in Vienna

on 24th-25th June 2005)

II. A more democratic and effective PES

Proposal 7: The working groups of the PES will be composed of at least 40% from each gender. Member parties will propose one man and one woman for each working group.

Motivation: PES Statutes already foresee gender balanced delegations to statutory meeting of the PES. However, this has not been enough to secure gender equality. We need to go further to increase the participation of women in the work of the PES. In order to have gender balanced working groups, Member parties and organisations will propose two names (1 man and 1 woman) for each working group. Final composition will be decided by the PES Presidency or Leaders.

IV. A PES open to its partners

Proposal 11: ECOSY President or Secretary General, PES Women President and the President of the PES group in the Committee of the Regions will be invited to participate in the Leaders meetings.

Motivation: In order to develop better working relations with socialists involved in other organisations, the PES should increase the participation in its work of its member organisations and strengthen its cooperation with its partners.

Composition of the Statutes Committee

Adopted by the Council: Chair: Ruairi Quinn, Treasurer; Rapporteur: Philip Cordery, Secretary General; Members : Achim Post, SPD, Germany, Alain Richard, PS, France, Ian McCartney, Labour, UK, Alexandra Dobolyi, PSH Hungary (MEP) Vytenis Andriukaitis, LSDP, Lithuania Luciano Vecchi, DS, Italy, Inger Segeström, SAP & PES Women (MEP), Ania Skrzypek, ECOSY & SLD Poland.

■ 3.5.2.2 PES Priorities for the EU Policy Agenda 2006

(PES Council in Vienna

on 24th-25th June 2005)

(...) Following the European Parliament elections and the investiture of the European Commission, the PES addressed its objectives in relation to the EU policy agenda to the EU institutions in our political declaration “Developing Europe 2004-2009” of December 2004. We established that three principles should guide

us in the achievement of our manifesto commitments and shape what Europe delivers to its citizens in this political term. These principles are prosperity; equality; solidarity: (...) Equality: we must eliminate discrimination and ill-treatment on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, age and disability. (...)

Equality

In the PES Election Manifesto 2004, the PES committed itself to promote equality and to fight all forms of discrimination. Our Manifesto called for an increase of the participation rate of women and the removal of barriers that prevent women from taking up jobs.

Equality must be a principle, but also a genuine practice in Europe’s workplaces. We must step up our efforts to fight discrimination, which acts against Europe’s social and economic interests.

Workplace discrimination remains far too commonplace within the European Union, particularly on the grounds of race and gender. It infringes fundamental rights and deters participation in the labour market.

A primary goal is to eliminate the gender pay gap, which prevents European economies from achieving greater participation of women in the labour market and under-values the real skills and capacity provided by the female labour force.

In the aim of advancing equality within Europe, the PES calls for:

3. More effective European anti-discrimination legislation and implementation in the workplace, in particular, with regard to equal pay between women and men and the conciliation of professional and family life.

4. More effective legislation to eradicate violence against women in society, as well as in conflict and crisis situations, and the trafficking of women and children.

■ 3.5.2.3 PES Resolution: Buidling a fair Europe by and for the people

(PES Council Warsaw 2010)

(...)

Policies for Progressive and Fair Societies

(...)

The fuel for fair growth - the Employment and Social Progress Pact

(...) As part of the Employment and Social Progress Pact, but also as one of our long-standing core value and priority, we have a strong responsibility to put gender equality at the heart of all our policies and emphasising its added-value to our societies. The current European rightwing dominated political context as well as the crisis have established a backlash and threatens decades of progressive women's rights achievements. Gender equality should be an indicator of the well-being of our societies.

(...)

Global Progressive Values

(...) The trends that have appeared in the last decade have come into a sharp perspective with the global crisis. First, the crisis has uncovered the unbalanced nature of the world's economy based on trade imbalances and lack of redistribution. Growing inequalities, including between women and men, are the result of global imbalances, externalities of the financial markets, and unsustainable macro-economic models. Second, the imbalance between high- and low-growth economies is increasingly shaping the global distribution of power. A new international role of the emerging economies, notably the BRICs (Brazil, Russia, India, China) or BASIC (Brazil, South Africa, India, China), is accelerating. The third trend is, with a certain degree, the decreasing influence of the EU and the US.

■ 3.5.2.4 A European Employment Strategy and Social Progress Pact

(PES Council 2010)

A European Employment and Social Progress Pact for fair growth - Limiting and overcoming the employment and social crisis. PES Policy Paper adopted by the PES Council in Warsaw on 2nd December 2010.

3. Improving skills of European employees and strengthening innovation

A special focus must be placed on youth, which is severely effected in most Member States.

Education needs to be improved and employment opportunities for young people need to be created. Every young person in Europe should be offered a youth guarantee, enshrined in European

legislation, which guarantees every young person to receive further education, training or a job at the latest four months after leaving the school. It is fundamental to raise the level of basic education, by taking steps against early school leaving and providing more support for children from disadvantaged backgrounds to finish their secondary education. There is also an opportunity to continue to raise the skills levels of young people, by supporting school-leavers into vocational, further and higher education.

Education and training programmes must be reformed and strengthened to provide the general and tailored education needed to enable all young people to thrive and contribute to an innovative, knowledge-driven low carbon society. Discrimination and access barriers that prevent educational inclusion should be tackled. It is crucial to break down existing stereotypes when guiding young women and men from all backgrounds in their study choices in order to eliminate resulting labour market segregation and to create gender balance representation across all sectors. Therefore cuts on education are unacceptable.

We need to overhaul our education and training systems so that they do not repeat and confirm existing inequalities, but make sure that they are as inclusive as possible. We need good structure of second chance education and training so that low-skilled people can enter into lifelong pathways.

5. Increasing the quality of jobs and overcoming precariousness on the labour market

Wage developments must be closely monitored, ensuring support for wage levels as a vital component for maintaining and increasing demand for successful economic recovery. The social partners have a crucial role to play in ensuring fair and sustainable wage levels during the recovery and long-term positive wage developments. Common principles could also be agreed between the social partners at the European level, based on the dual need for wages to be aligned with productivity gains and protect purchasing power. Competitive deflation strategies based on wage moderation must be prevented. While respecting national traditions and the autonomy of social partners, Member State governments should play a proactive role in monitoring and supporting wages, acting against wage inequality – such as the gender pay gap –, and negotiating decent public sector pay. Wage reduction schemes, which have been introduced during the crisis to prevent lay-offs, should be phased out.

(...) Wage discrimination within the EU must be overcome, based on strict regulation, such as compulsory pay audits. The implementation of the EU Directive on temporary agency worker must be closely monitored, ensuring that temporary agency workers are not paid less and treated equally than permanent staff. Additionally, the EU should come forward with specific targets to reduce the gender pay gap; for example by policies supporting women entrepreneurs and boosting quality jobs for women. Unpaid work which is not based on

volunteering, including unpaid internships, must be outlawed and European minimum standards for contracts must be set, including a limitation on the number of sequential fixed term contracts. In order to facilitate the reconciliation of work, private and family life for women and men, a new, progressive agreement on revising the Working Time directive needs to be found, in order to limit working time to a 48 hour average working week in the entire EU, notwithstanding the opportunity for Member States to impose a lower maximum.

7. Protecting and strengthening national social security systems

(...) In order to avoid large proportions of Europe's elderly slipping into poverty, minimum criteria for the adequacy of pensions should be considered, for example through the introduction a European legal framework defining minimum criteria for pensions. The minimum level of pensions could be set as proportion of average salaries or in accordance with the minimum wages or minimum incomes defined in each Member State. An upwards convergence of minimum pensions should be ensured through the Open Method of Coordination. The gender dimension must be taken into account in the European legal framework: women's lower pension schemes are affected by their 'forced' career interruption during the maternity leave, shorter professional careers or as a consequence of part-time work. Besides, women on the one hand tend to be employed in lower paid jobs, thus having lesser resources for pension schemes (public or private) and on the other hand they still often depend on traditional pension schemes in which they depend on their husband's pension.

8. Taking gender equality as an asset

Despite decades of emancipation and social democrats fighting for progressive women's rights, gender equality remains far from being reached. The current European right wing dominated political context as well as the crisis have established a conservative backlash and reverse trend in terms of progressive women's rights achievements and improved gender equality policies. The crisis must not be used as pretext to neglect or encourage further inequalities to emerge. We thus have a strong responsibility in putting gender equality at the heart of all our policies. In 2008, the

first wave of unemployment hit mostly male dominated sectors such as the financial sector, the building sector and the car industry. The current and second wave of unemployment and long-term consequences of the crisis affects mostly women hitting the outsourcing services (80% of them occupied by women) and the public service (female dominated). The outsourcing services are based temporary and/or short-term contracts, which are the more vulnerable and unstable in times of crisis, leaving women with little or no social and economic security. The public services are suffering employment and expenditure cuts due to the austerity measures as part of EU and national fiscal consolidation plans emphasising



■ PES Women (2010)

tax cuts and public spending cuts. The negative consequences of the crisis do not only affect women's participation on and access to the labour market, but also women's economic independence, women's social responsibilities as well as family situation and the gender equality gap.

8.1. Women's economic independence

An important challenge to guarantee women's economic independence is to overcome the gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is not only an issue of salary difference between women and men, but is a result of different gaps on the labour market such as sectoral segregation, part-time jobs, the effect of the glass ceiling, the lack of private-work reconciliation solutions and the lack of recognition of women's place and rights in society. Women still represent a majority of part-time workers, of lower-paid workers and care takers in the family context. While women represent 60% of university degrees, women are still under-represented in decision-making posts. Over thirty percent of women (compared to only 7% of men) work part-time either out of choice or out of necessity to balance family and private life due to a lack of childcare facilities. Although parttime employment can help women in combining private life and work responsibilities, it limits them in gaining economic dependence because of lower salaries and pension schemes or limited possibilities in gaining professional experience and responsibilities. Therefore good quality, affordable and accessible childcare should be a priority to give both women and men the possibility to find an equitable balance between work and private life. Apart from the childcare

support, caretaking responsibilities should be equally shared between women working hours, limiting the burden of care taking on women's professional careers only. Norwegian and Icelandic models have shown that a take-it-or-lose-it paternity leave system encouraged 90% of fathers to use the time off to balance better their responsibilities. We therefore need a strong EU directive regulating paternity leave. Another important challenge to guarantee women's economic independence is increasing women's employment in all sectors and at all levels including in the financial sector, new green technologies and development and research. Besides, the care sector - an ever growing and important sector in our aging society - should be re-valued through increased investment and better working conditions attracting both women and men to enter the care sector. Women's economic independence also relies on the opportunities and the access to higher positions on the labour market. We need to stimulate specific women's life-long learning, training programmes and education in order to guarantee women's career promotions and competitiveness on the labour market. We need to break stereotypes and encourage gender equal representation in all sectors and at all levels. Therefore gender mainstreamed education and employment policies, including in school curricula, are essential. Another measure to guarantee a real reduction of the gender pay gap is proper and frequent monitoring and measuring of salary developments in the EU Member States. The EU should agree on the target to reduce the gender pay gap from 17,4% to 7%. Considering the different Member States' pay gaps, every Member State should aim at decreasing the gender pay gap each year by at least one percentage point.

8.2. Women's participation at all decision-making levels

An important method in ensuring women's participation in decision-making levels and an essential step in achieving gender equality, economically and politically speaking, is the introduction of quotas. The Norwegian model has proven that the introduction of a quota of 40% of women in company boards, has not only lead to gender equality but also to greater social and economic benefits and turn-overs. French and Icelandic financial companies lead by gender balanced executive bodies proved to be less affected by the crisis as they had more balanced and long-term and less risk taking approaches. Therefore introducing gender quotas in company boards across Europe should be introduced. Also political decision-making lacks still a significant representation of women. With only under 25% of women in national parliament and 35% at the European Parliament, we need to introduce quotas and/or zip systems in our electoral systems to guarantee on the one side a more democratic representation and on the other women's participation in policy making and political decision-making.

8.3. Gender Budgeting

Gender budgeting allows national and European budgets to flagship specific initiatives and policies that encourage women's rights and gender equality. Based on the Austrian model, EU Member States should implement such practice to guarantee that even in times of economic slow-down, gender equality issues and progress are not shifted aside. Flagship initiatives compromise employment,

educational and social programmes. But we should not forget that women's rights and place in health policies (including sexual and reproductive health rights) and combating violence policies (trafficking, sexual exploitation and domestic violence) contribute towards women's empowerment and economic independence.

Annex: Measures to overcome the employment and social crisis

Many different short term measures and long term measures are needed to implement the European Employment and Social Progress Pact for progressive growth. These must be targeted to contribute to the overall aim of increasing employment, revitalising the European economy and improving social cohesion. A good coordination of European, national, regional and local instruments is key for success, ensuring that all measures mutually reinforce each other instead of contradicting one another or being counter-productive. The following is a non-exhaustive list of measures to be taken at the EU and Member State levels.

1. Creating new sustainable jobs

National, regional and local measures: (...)

I. Efforts to implement the European Pact for Gender Equality should be stepped up at Member State level.

5. Increasing the quality of jobs and overcoming precariousness on the labour market

EU measures:

(...) I. Specific European targets to reduce the gender pay gap need to be agreed and a legislative package to support women entrepreneurs and to boost the quality of jobs for women needs to be agreed.

7. Protecting and strengthening national social security systems

(...) D. A European framework directive on adequacy of pensions should be introduced, for example through the introduction a European legal framework defining minimum criteria for pensions. The minimum level of pensions could be set as proportion of average salaries or in accordance with the minimum wages or minimum incomes defined in each Member State. An upwards convergence of minimum pensions should be ensured through the Open Method of Coordination. The gender dimension must be taken into account in the European legal framework.

8. Taking gender equality as an asset

EU measures:

A. A European Directive on the Gender Pay Gap should be introduced, including clear numerical targets and transparent measures towards salary window per Member States per year.

B. A strong EU directive regulating paternity leave is needed, giving all fathers the incentive and opportunities to take care responsibilities.

C. Flexible working times as well as parental leave measures for women and men should be introduced, in order for both parents to have a fair and balanced approach towards work and private life responsibilities.

D. The Barcelona targets should be enhanced in terms of quality and affordable childcare facilities.

E. Continuous life long learning, training and education programmes for women should be introduced.

F. The care sector should be revalued by investment programmes and by raising working conditions including salary increase.

G. Company board quotas (40%) should be introduced, as well as quotas in political electoral systems to increase women in decision-making.

H. Gender budgeting needs to be introduced, in order to flagship gender sensitive initiatives in all policy areas.

National, regional and local measures:

A. Gender mainstreaming during the salary negotiations with social partners must be ensured.

B. Transparent salary leagues per sector and position should be introduced.

C. Member States should enhance childcare facilities and educational programmes for all children at local and national level.

D. Member States should encourage financial programmes and assets for women to start up small and medium enterprises.

E. Member States should introduce gender budgeting at national and local level.

F. Gender stereotyped curricula programmes should be introduced.

G. Member States should gender mainstream national health policies to guarantee education, access to medication and support to all treatments.

■ 3.5.2.5 PES Resolution: Selecting our common candidate

(PES Council 24th November 2011)

Our way is the only fair and sustainable way out of the crisis. The key pillars of our plan include:

1. An investment plan for green growth, jobs, social and territorial cohesion. Reducing public expenditure is not a sufficient approach to overcoming the crisis. On the contrary, an adequate programme for the EU27 of € 210 billion of public and private investments annually - entailing an increase of 1.1 percentage point for public investments - would create 12 million new jobs over the next 10 years, pushing unemployment back at 7.7%, while allowing for the public deficit to be reduced to an average of 1.2% of GDP between 2016 and 2020. Such large scale investments are needed to create new and better jobs and generate sustainable growth. Innovation and revitalised industrial production, improved health and care will create many of the decent jobs urgently needed in Europe, especially for young people, women and elderly workers. Better education, skills and innovation are key policies. Our plan is based on a system of broad social contribution and deep social protection. It strives for a green and carbon-free economy. It strengthens Europe's industrial base, and promotes the better use of EU funds to protect and promote fair growth and solidarity in the whole region.



■ FEPS - Call To Europe (2011)

(...) The crisis is not only economic. It is not only social. It is also a crisis of our European ideal and of democratic values. The democratic legitimacy of the European project has been seriously damaged. Progress on gender equality and women's rights are facing a serious backlash across Europe. The sense of community, of solidarity, of pride to be citizens in our European welfare societies, the sense of confidence and hope have been eroded. Years of neo-liberal policies have allowed financial markets to gain an inordinate amount of power. This must be stopped. The bottom line is this: we can no longer allow the financial markets to dictate public policy. We are determined to put politics back in the hands of the people. To put politics back at the service of our societies. To regain full democratic control in our countries and in Europe.

■ 3.5.2.6 PES Resolution: Selecting our common candidate

(PES Council 2011)

2. The criteria to stand as a candidate:

- To be a potential candidate, one should:
- Be nominated by a PES full member party or organisation.

- Be supported by 15% of PES full member parties or organisations (nominating party or organisation included), including his/her party or a party from his/her country if he/she is not a member of a PES full member party.

A party can only nominate or support one potential candidate.

The PES promotes gender equality and the candidacy of women at all high level positions in EU official bodies.

■ 3.5.3 PES Leaders' Statement

Before 2004, it was more of an exception than a common practice that women's rights or gender equality would feature as a core, prominent element of the PES Leaders' Statements. The change with the new leadership is more than apparent – which the documents included below mirrors to a great extent. What it also shows is that among many ideological differences between the PES and other europarties regarding the strategy out of the crisis, one dissimilarity is particularly apparent – with the strong PES Women and their representation involved in the drafting and adoption of these statements, it is ensured that the progressive way distinctively is a gender sensitive one.

■ 3.5.3.1 PES Leaders' Statement

(19th June 2008)

(...) **Creating a New Social Europe** (...)

The upcoming French Presidency of the European Union has failed to feature Social Europe as one of its top political priorities. No substantive proposals have yet been tabled, despite the pressing concerns of Europe's citizens regarding unemployment, workers' rights, access of women to the labour market, and social justice.

Equal rights for all

Over fifty years ago, the European Community set out in its founding treaties that it should combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation. However, we have not yet achieved this as discrimination persists in our diverse societies. The PES believes in an inclusive society based on equal rights for all.

Therefore, we believe that any proposed new European legislation on discrimination should benefit all discriminated groups and ensure equal rights and treatment for all.

Furthermore, the PES is committed to gender equality as a fundamental value of our movement. In addition, for our Party and for

our national parties, it is a fundamental question of democracy and legitimacy that women, as more than half of EU citizens, should be equally represented at all levels of EU decision-making. 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.

■ 3.5.3.2 PES Leaders' Statement

(19th March 2009)

The need for strong leadership and action to promote growth and jobs and to counteract the deepening economic crisis

(...) Strengthening the European Economy Recovery Plan should be based on a 7-point strategy:

(...) **3. A Pact for Employment**

A new strategy should be defined to safeguard jobs as far as possible, support the unemployed back into employment as fast as possible and stimulate the creation of new jobs.

The crisis should be seen as an opportunity for a European-wide radical re-skilling of the labour force. Labour, social and education policies must be strengthened and developed:

- *The investment strategy must be accompanied by targeted employment and tax policies and incentives to create new jobs.*
- *A maximum effort must be made to safeguard employment in Europe. This means supporting existing jobs – in some countries, for example combining temporary reductions in working time with skills programmes and incentives for companies to maintain and even increase their workforce. Special attention must be paid to young people trying to enter into employment for the first time and those in precarious employment, notably women.*
- *We must anticipate mass lay-offs as much as possible, ensuring they are a last resort by exploring all possible alternatives. Clear transition and support measures should be developed for affected workers where lay-offs cannot be avoided. This implies proactive policies to accompany restructuring, including examining the possibilities of using the European Social Fund and Regional Development fund.*
- *The priority for the unemployed should be to ensure as fast and productive a transition as possible back into employment. The unemployed should benefit from new re-skilling opportunities to prepare for the jobs of the future in a safe and sustainable low-carbon knowledge economy.*



■ Z. Gurmai - Combating Young Women's Unemployment

Social security and unemployment insurance for the unemployed should be strengthened, where appropriate, and linked to more effective active labour market policies.

- *We must also protect migrant workers across Europe, many of whom are particularly badly affected.*

4. A Social Progress Pact

We must tackle the full social costs of the crisis, preventing a rise in poverty, inequality and exclusion. Agreement on a European Social Progress Pact is vital. Targeted policies must be established or reinforced to support those most affected by the crisis, especially those on the lowest incomes, at risk of home repossession, the young, pensioners and women who are more likely to head lone-parent families and be in service jobs set to suffer in the next wave of the crisis. These policies might include strengthening social protection systems; targeting income support to maintain purchasing power (for example, targeted tax cuts and credits); policies to ensure the affordability of basic goods such as electricity and gas; policies to keep mortgages available and affordable; and special support for the most vulnerable. We must promote social justice while having an immediate impact on consumer demand for the recovery. Special measures need to be developed in those countries where the most vulnerable in the workforce do not enjoy adequate social rights. Active social policies must protect and unleash the potential of those who are or risk being marginalized. A fairer society should emerge from the economic crisis, grounded in the aspirations of ordinary people and families across Europe.

■ 3.5.3.3 People First: A New Direction for Europe

(24th April 2009 Toulouse)

(...) **How? Our first hundred days**

This crisis is a test for European leadership which Europe cannot fail. We need new European leadership. We demand that in the first hundred days following the European elections, the following 7 steps are taken to fight the recession and mass unemployment and to ensure social security:

1. *A new, strong recovery plan for Europe, with coordinated investments in jobs and green growth. We, the PES, have proposed a European recovery plan, which could stop mass unemployment and create a new direction.*
2. *A European Employment Pact to safeguard employment, create new and better jobs, fight mass unemployment, and strengthen workers' rights, working conditions and equal pay. Special attention must be paid to youth unemployment. Europe is not a market society, but a social market economy. Fundamental social rights must be ensured. These come first – including free collective bargaining, trade union rights - before the single market and economic freedoms. Free movement of labour, including posting of workers, must be based on the principle equal pay and*

equal working conditions for equal work in the same workplace.

3. *A new Women's Rights Charter to improve women's right and opportunities.*

4. *A Social Progress Pact to tackle the full social consequences of the crisis, preventing a rise in poverty, inequality and exclusion.*

5. *Effective regulation and supervision of the financial markets, covering all financial actors and instruments, including hedge funds and private equity. The PES has made clear proposals on what to do to avoid devastating new financial bubbles in the future.*

6. *New mutual solidarity across European member states – between East and West, North and South – ensuring a common roadmap out of the crisis.*

7. *An urgent, common European roadmap for a global new deal, to be agreed at the G20 before the end of 2009. This is about coordinated action for new jobs on the planet, global regulation of financial markets, a global climate deal, and aid to developing countries.*

■ 3.5.3.4 Let's get Europe Working Again

(16th June 2009)

The European Union has, over the last six months, undergone a sustained period of crisis. Under Conservative direction, there has been a misguided response, largely based on public budget cuts and austerity measures that threaten long term recovery, employment and social cohesion. It is an attempt to 'strangle our way back to good economic health'. It will not work. Indeed, when austerity measures begin also to be implemented by countries in good economic health, one must ask if these measures are nothing less than a conservative assault on the welfare state.

Having practically all EU member states simultaneously implementing austerity measures is simply a guarantee for a slump in growth and a return to recession. It will lead to an extra 4.5 million jobs lost by 2013. Europe is the only major trading area pursuing an imbalanced 'austerity only' approach.

There is another way. The Party of European Socialists (PES) proposes a more balanced approach. Our way would result in a more effective consolidation of public finances than the ideologically driven conservative approach. Our approach prioritises job creation, which is the most important indicator of recovery and sustainable growth. It is an approach based on recognising the need for budget consolidation, but also the role of public investment.

Unemployment in Europe is heading towards the 25 million mark. The EU is at risk of losing a generation of young people to long-term unemployment. As a consequence, European society is at risk of losing this generation to political apathy or worse to political extremism.

The European Council has the opportunity to make far reaching decisions on economic governance, financial regulation and climate change. It also has an opportunity to make poverty reduction, social inclusion and decent work a central pillar of the EU's long-term strategy. It is unclear if the Conservative dominated Council has the political courage to make real progress on any of these subjects.

Political leaders in Europe must illustrate that they can react to crisis in ways that actually create more job opportunities, as have been done in other parts of the world also hit by the global financial crisis. It is time to revitalise the European decision-making process. It is time for the European Union Governments to develop a real economic union, rediscover solidarity and identify a collective way out of the crisis.

The PES, supported by the hard work of the Spanish EU Presidency, has a proven track record on concrete actions for the Euro-zone crisis. The PES has first identified and promoted the Financial Transaction Tax and a bank levy as new sources for much needed tax revenue, but also a balanced and fair measure to make those who caused the crisis contribute to its redress. The PES also was first to call for the European Financial Stability Facility and the emergency stability mechanism.

We, PES leaders, also believe that there is a need for budget consolidation. But it must be combined with economic recovery and structural reform. Both revenue measures and expenditure measures need to be socially balanced. In particular, cuts in welfare systems, with their direct consequences on social cohesion and gender equality should be avoided. What we need is an alternative way through which a tax on financial transactions and bank levies play a complementary and central part. In this context, a collective European debt mechanism, otherwise known as "Eurobonds", should also be put on the political agenda.

The European Union now needs to move from crisis management to long term recovery and sustainable development. On the basis of the declarations on a Progressive Way Out of the Crisis and on the priorities for the Europe 2020 Strategy, as adopted by the PES Presidency and the Group in the European Parliament, and the annexed PES policy paper, we, the Prime Ministers and Leaders of the PES, call for:

- a coordinated economic policy that recognises that the EU is a single trading area, not a disparate collection of competing member states;
- a long-term 'Europe 2020' strategy that puts social justice, poverty reduction, green growth and jobs at the centre, reinforcing a sustainable way out of the crisis;
- effective and urgent financial regulation, including strengthening European supervisory authorities; more transparent and tighter control of derivatives products

and speculative actors, such as hedge funds and private equity; regulating private rating agencies; and the creation of a European independent rating agency;

- a clear response to the EU sovereign debt crisis, in which a system of Eurobonds, managed by a European debt agency, should be seriously explored in order to handle the existing debt, facilitate future debt management and protect against speculative attacks. This could provide relief to national budgets and be combined with clear political conditions to ensure sound economic and sustainable growth. Furthermore, the capacity for the EU to issue Eurobonds could fund investment projects managed at the European level;
- a European Employment and Social Progress Pact, including concrete measures to create new, decent jobs; promote active labour market policies; increase the quality of work; fight against precarious jobs; overcome social inequalities such as the gender pay gap; and improve the quality of and access to public services.

Ordinary people did not cause this crisis. Condemning people to unemployment is unjust. Putting people back to work is the true path out of the crisis. Let's defend our welfare states. Alone, no country can defend itself against speculative attacks. By acting together we guarantee our strength. To the people of Europe, the Party of European Socialists says; 'Let's Get Europe Working Again'.

■ 3.5.3.5 Economic Coordination and Financial Reform for a Stronger and Fair Recovery

(10th February 2010)

(...) Furthermore, it is urgent to develop a European sustainable industrial policy to foster the transition to a greener and smarter economy, to be supported by an active re-skilling and social protection, if we want to ensure a fair transition. The EU2020 should include a strong social dimension, combining employment policies with social protection and social inclusion policies in order to support change, to fight poverty and ensure equal opportunities. Access to new skills should be generalized, flexi-curity should be really balanced and pensions systems consolidated. In a time of crisis, it is also fundamental that our welfare systems become more effective in fighting actively against poverty, social and gender inequalities. And we have to stop the income gap from further widening. A European framework should be defined in order to strengthen the European Social model.

■ 3.5.3.6 Recovery vs. Austerity – PES Strategy to Resolve the Dilemma

(Policy Paper, 16th June 2010)

While social democrats have been careful to avoid social cuts, the cuts already announced by conservative governments all across Europe will have devastating social consequences, particularly on the most disadvantaged, such as the elderly, children, youth, women and migrants. Reducing active labour market support, child care, pensions, minimum wages, minimum income schemes, educational expenditures and health protection are the wrong way forward and will not help us to overcome the crisis. Fiscal tightening threatens the social progress achieved in Europe over the last 60 years. By reducing the provision of public services, the austerity approach will result in adverse effect on all segments of society.

(...) **2. Four policy actions for a progressive way out of the crisis**

(...) **Action Three: Against the Conservatives' obsession with austerity, we must combine fiscal consolidation with economic and labour market recovery, sustainable growth and social progress**

(...) **Prioritising public spending**

It is however inevitable that some cuts will have to be made in the process of redirecting public spending. In doing so, governments must carefully



■ Zita Gurmai and Gianni Pittella - Tax haven campaign

assess all economic, social and gender equality implications of cuts. In particular, social transfer measures must only be affected by spending reduction under the fulfilment of the fair burden-sharing principle. (...)

ANNEX 2

A European Employment and Social Progress Pact

(...) *The priorities of such a pact should be:*

1. Creating new jobs

Even during a sluggish growth period, Europe can create jobs in many sectors, for example green technologies, health and care services and information and communication technologies. Public investment should be redirected into labour intensive sectors and private investment facilitated by improving the framework conditions for investors. European and national programmes for job creation should be set up, combining public and private investment, notably through EU structural funds, EIB and new instruments such as Eurobonds. These initiatives should promote access to new jobs, particularly amongst women, young and older workers, and will require stronger proactive action, based on a better coordination of labour market, education and innovation policies. (...)

4. Monitor wage developments

Considering the need to increase purchasing power in Europe, wage developments must be closely monitored and should be in line with productivity gains. While respecting the role and autonomy of social partners, Member State governments should play a proactive role in monitoring and supporting wages, especially in order to prevent a rise of working poor, for example through the level of statutory minimum wages, where applicable. Wage reduction schemes to prevent layoffs should be temporary, closely monitored and linked to compensatory benefits, such as alternative earning schemes, like share schemes, or intelligent work-sharing. We need to overcome wage inequalities. While the wages of top managers have increased in recent years by an average of two percentage points, wages at the lower end of the scale have stagnated. Executive pay policies must be revised in the interests of fairness and to reflect long-term economic performance. Ambitious measures to overcome the gender pay gap need to be implemented together with specific targets to close the pay and pension gap in each member state. (...)

6. Active Social Inclusion and sounder Social Protection

Instead of weakening social protection systems in times of crisis, they need to be adapted and strengthened. Active labour market policies should be scaled up across Europe. Public employment services should be modernised to cater for a sharp rise in users, offering new schemes to increase employability and ensure rapid and effective re-integration into new jobs during the recovery. Targeted policies

must be established or reinforced to support those most affected by the crisis, including those on the lowest incomes, at risk of home repossession, loneparent families (mostly headed by women), the young, and pensioners. A European framework directive on minimum income schemes is an important step into this direction and it should be included in the Europe 2020 flagship initiative “European platform against poverty”. A strong focus must be placed on stabilising pension systems. Minimum criteria for the safety of pension fund investments should be formulated. A safe option to invest pension funds, providing additional benefits to the European economy, is large scale investment of pensions into Eurobonds, which could be used to finance investments for the recovery. In order to sustain and strengthen European social protection systems, tax policies should be reformed and new financial instruments introduced. The revenues of the state must be increased, without widening the income gap. Those who are financially well off must contribute more to the functioning of the state and of the economy. The income and capital taxes for the wealthiest part of society should be increased. Furthermore, new taxes should be introduced, such as a Financial Transaction Tax and carbon taxes.

■ 3.5.4 PES Statutes (2005)

As previously noted, it is worth citing the PES Statute as the basis of the operation of the PES, which also determines the relations between the Party and PES Women. A new feature, however, is the introduction of gender quotas for the delegations. This regulation has even been taken a step further, following the reform adopted in Vienna in 2005.

■ 3.5.4.1 PES Statues as the Congress in 2006

As adopted by the Congress

Article 3 – Object and Aims

3.3. More specifically, the aims of the PES are:

(...)

- *To develop close working relationships between the PES, the national parties, the national parliamentary groups, the Socialist group in the European parliament (PSE), the PES Group in the Committee of the Regions, PES members holding positions in EU institutions (Council, Commission and Parliament), PES Women, ECOSY, the PES and other socialist and social democratic organisations; (...)*
- *to promote equal representation and as a consequence, to seek internal equality and equal representation of women and men in our bodies and meetings;*

Article 12 – PES Women

The “PES Women” standing committee consists of representatives from all PES members, according to the rights and obligations defined in Article 11 of these statutes. Its mission is to formulate and implement

the objectives relating to women’s policy within the framework of the PES. It adopts its own “Standing Orders” to specify its functioning.

Article 17 – Composition of the Congress

17.4. Neither gender should make up less than 40% of a delegation of a member party or organisation.

Article 21 – Composition of the Council

21.3. Neither gender should make up less than 40% of a delegation of a member party or organisation.

A 2.2.2. Sectoral organisations of the PES

*PES Women
ECOSY*

They are also a certain benchmark that allows us to see what had been planned and what was achieved. Looking at the texts below, and comparing them with the reviews in sections 3.5.6 and 3.5.7, it is self-evident that the PES Women Leadership’s record of achievements clearly reaches beyond original expectations, proving the incredible scale of transformation that has taken place thanks to their hard work.

■ 3.5.5 Working Programmes

The PES working programmes provide relevant information on how the aims expressed in the Congress and Council political documents were envisaged to be translated into an action plan. The programmes from 2004 – 2012 serve as a particularly helpful source of knowledge, as they enable us to reconstruct the initial set of operational ambitions – before circumstances such as EU referenda or the economic crisis imposed different detours.

■ 3.5.5.1 Draft PES Work Programme Brussels, 24 April 2004

(Congress)

Delivering on the commitments of the manifesto and pursuing strategic planning regarding the issues central to the European project (...)

• **European Union: an area of democracy and equality**

Although article 2 of the draft European Constitution grants equality the same status as other values, equality is the intrinsic, central value according to which the PES develops all of its policies.

PES members of the Convention staunchly defended the inclusion of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in the Constitution. The PES will pursue the fight against extreme right-wing populism

and reject all forms of discrimination based on race, religion or belief, gender, disability, age or sexual orientation. The PES will continue to denounce the monopoly control of the media, the manipulation of information and the abuse of power. (...)

Strengthening the PES

• **Consolidation, democratisation and independence of the new PES (...)**

• **The house of social democracy**

In the first instance, the PES, ECOSY and the PES Women's Standing Committee will take up office in this house. The PES will continue its discussions and negotiations with Socialist International to ensure that the latter moves into the "Anna Lindh house" in Brussels as soon as possible. This communal house of European social democracy will produce significant economies of scale for SI and PES member parties.

• **The PES Women's Standing Committee**

The PES will continue to cooperate closely with the PES Women's Standing Committee to allow the latter to pursue independently its principal objectives. The participation and contribution of the Committee's representatives to all the bodies of the PES have proved very valuable. (...)

■ 3.5.5.2 Our Common European Ambitions - A Framework for PES Action 2007-2009

(Congress)

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: (...)

- 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. (...)

■ 3.5.6 PES Reports of Activities

Prior to 2004, the PES Reports of Activities constituted the main summary of the developments and accomplishment of PES Women. With Zita Gurmai as the leader of PES Women, this has changed. The acknowledgement of the role of PES Women and their respective activities would still remain as an integral PES report, reflecting on one hand the genuine appreciation of its work and the strong position of PES Women within the party on the other. Nevertheless, PES Women would also ensure that PES Congresses are presented with their own detailed reports, which have become not only a matter of information – but also a way of effectively raising awareness about all the work delivered by the women members in PES and its sister parties.

■ 3.5.6.1 A stronger PES for a more progressive Europe PES Report of activities 2004-2006

In 2005, the PES mourned the loss of two significant figures. On 6 August 2005, Robin Cook, PES President from 2001 to the last Congress in 2004, tragically died during a walk in the Scottish Highlands. A month later, on 13 September 2005, Fiorella Ghilardotti, President of PES Women from 1997 to 2004, sadly passed away. Robin and Fiorella's dedicated work will be remembered for a long time in the PES. A book commemorating Robin Cook's tenure as PES President has been published.(...)

I. Making the PES a political actor on the EU scene

(...)

10. Global Progressive Forum

A GPF Leaders' meeting was organised in Geneva on 19 & 20 January to elaborate on the next steps of the GPF. On 30 March 2006, the PES Presidency approved the GPF strategy and work

programme for 2006-2008, which would have Decent Work as an over-arching theme. Projects to be developed in the coming years include: Decent Work for Africa, **Women and Decent Work**, People on the move (Decent Work and migration), as well as a strategic high-level network on Decent Work among socialists and social democrats in relevant national, regional and international institutions.(...)

II. A more active, more visible and more effective PES

(...)

PES Women

PES Women brings together women - MP, MEPs and activists - from PES member parties. Zita Gurmai MEP was elected President of PES Women on 21 October 2004. Under her leadership, PES Women entered a new period of reinforced cooperation amongst its members, a stronger role within a stronger PES and a reinvigorated external dimension to its work, in terms of contributing to the European policy process and organizing campaigns.

At the November 2004 meeting, PES Women members agreed to introduce new elements and several changes to its working methods and objectives. One of the major innovations was the organization of an annual conference on a specific theme.

Apart from its annual conference, PES Women meets three times per year to discuss a specific issue of concern which is open to a wider audience than just PES Women members, such as NGOs, trade unions and the media.

PES Women launched an important petition signed by over 22,000 people calling for European action to prevent the trafficking of women to work as prostitutes during the World Cup in Germany.

More detailed information on the activities of PES Women can be found in the PES Women activity report. (...)

10. A new Communication strategy

(...) In March 2006 the PES launched its first ever campaign – an online petition against the trafficking of women in connection with the World Cup. This campaign was enthusiastically supported by several member parties and was widely felt to be an excellent innovation. A campaign on Diversity was launched in October 2006. (...)

Since October 2005, the PES has issued brochures on 'A new Social Europe' (2 sets of contributions from member parties), 'A new Growth and investment Strategy', 'Meeting Europe's demographic challenges in the 21st century' and leaflets presenting the PES and PES Women.

PES Activities

19 October 2004: PES Women Standing Committee, Brussels

30 November 2004: PES Women, Brussels

18 March 2005: PES Women Annual Conference, Brussels

27 May 2005: PES Women, Brussels

7 November 2005: PES Women Brussels

23 February 2006: PES Women, Brussels

24 May 2006: PES Women Annual Conference, Copenhagen

7 October 2006: PES Ministerial Meeting Gender Equality, Helsinki + PES Women

■ 3.5.6.2 PES in Action 2007-2009

A. Our political agenda: building a common Manifesto

1. Priorities for the European agenda

In defining its 2008 policy priorities, PES leaders considered that “the way forward for the European Union from now until the European elections of June 2009 lies in the pursuit of a new progressive, programme for social, environmental and economic reform. In this context, it will be vital to agree on a new treaty in order to achieve our goal of making the European Union more democratic, social, open, transparent, and efficient.” PES leaders therefore defined six priorities:

(...)

3. The Lisbon Strategy’s policy guidelines should be reviewed to recognise: the use of income policies to reduce income inequalities, in order to distribute better the fruits of growth; the benefits of simultaneous and coordinated investments in Lisbon objectives across the EU; the fight against climate change; the fight against delocalization and social dumping; the objective of full and high quality employment, particularly for young people and women, notably through the elimination of gender inequalities; the need for

territorial cohesion; the need to create a system of lifelong learning accessible to all, including pre-school education; the objective of 3% GDP for R&D. (...)

6. Diversity and Integration

Recommendations when talking about social democratic values in a Europe with multiple diversity: They covered eleven points from community mapping, to intercultural approaches in political parties, policies and community visions, welcoming and understanding people of different cultural and religious background, adapting or re- adjusting our discourse, promoting education as a channel for integration, adopting a gender and youth approach by encouraging a dialogue with women and younger generations on this issue.

B. Increasing our influence with strong partnerships

1. Strengthened PES bodies

Ministerial meetings: The PES has organized a number of pre-Council meetings in the fields of Employment and Social Affairs, Education, Environment, Gender issues, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Defence, Development. These meetings allow for better coordination between Ministers from PES member parties and opposition spokespeople who participate in at least one meeting per year with the Ministers.

5. PES Women

PES Women brings together women - MP, MEPs and activists - from PES member parties. Zita Gurmai MEP was re-elected President of PES Women on 7 December 2006. Under her leadership, PES Women continued reinforcing on the one side its cooperation amongst its members, and on the other side its role within the PES in terms of an active and visible participation in the PES thematic (pay gap and child care campaign) and electoral campaigns as well as contributing to the European policy process.

Moreover, PES Women also reinforced its direct work with and influence on the different European Union institution in shaping European policy on gender related issues while keeping a continuous contact with the civil society and non-governmental organisations when organising meetings and conferences. To strengthen the cooperation on international level, PES Women adopted in its standing orders on 7 December 2009 the inclusion of an ex-officio status for SIW President in the PES Women Bureau structure. Besides, PES Women President participated at several GPF meetings and EU external delegations.

More detailed information on the activities of PES Women can be found in the PES Women activity report.

C. Increasing our visibility

2. PES activists

PES activists campaigning: PES activists have promoted PES campaigns in PES parties such as the “Child Care Campaign” and “Gender Pay Gap, Shut It!” and they organised local meetings around them. During the 2009 election campaign PES activists campaigned enthusiastically for the socialist EP candidates. During the European Days of Action PES activists were involved in 220 events across Europe: street theatre and campaigning, leafleting, debates, rallies, picnics, and workshops.

3. PES campaigns

Between 2006 and 2009, the PES conducted 3 European-wide campaigns: Child care, Gender pay gap, and last but not least, the 2009 European election campaign.

The PES launched its **Child Care campaign** at its Congress in Porto in December 2006 with Portuguese PM José Socrates. It was closed at PES Council in Sofia on 22 November 2007. The Campaign results and recommendations were presented to European Commissioner Vladimir Spidla on 11 December 2007. The campaign led to new commitments on child care services from Governments, PES member parties and the European Commission. To promote this campaign, the PES produced a movie, posters, books and dedicated a part of its website to it. (<http://www.pes.org/en/news/closing->

child-care-campaign-almost-year-road)

Gender Pay Gap, Shut It! On 22nd February 2007, PES Women held a day of action on equal pay for women and men. The PES produced strong and very successful visuals for this day of action and dedicated a section of its website to it. (<http://www.pes.org/en/you-pes/campaigns/gender-pay-gap>)

3/10/2007: Ministerial Meeting Gender Issues, Lisbon, Portugal

7-8/3/2009: European day of action on Gender equality, All over Europe

31/1/2008: Gender Issues, Ljubljana, Slovenia

■ 3.5.7 Reports of PES Women Activities

With the new leadership by Zita Gurmai of PES Women, new practices have been implemented. It has become a tradition for PES Women to present their own report at every Congress. The document would incorporate a description of the main political goals identified for the respective period, information regarding actions and campaigns, as also a very detailed record of meetings and activities at which PES Women and especially the PES Women President have been present.

The persistence in presenting these overviews has had a number of positive effects. First of all, it drew attention to the themes that would be especially relevant for the PES to engage in from a PES Women point of view. Second, it raised the organisational profile of PES Women – showing the amazing capacity to achieve a lot, despite limited resources. Third, it mirrored the ongoing consolidation and expansion of the organisation. Especially through a detailed calendar, it is possible to admire the strengthening of relations with the national and partner organisations. Fourth, it explains the thematic expansion of PES Women.

While ten years earlier, the struggle was about the mere mention of certain issues within the EU political conversation, these reports prove that in the last 8 years this was no longer a source of anxiety. To the contrary, PES Women seem to have been boldly moving to explore new avenues – making sure that gender equality is imprinted in all areas, including in the international policies of the EU. Finally, the detailed reports showed the great respect that the PES Women leadership has always shown to all the members. The record of meetings and the engagement on the national and regional level within these last years have been unprecedented.

As such, the reports included below constitute an inspiring record of memorable achievements through which PES Women is the strong, relevant and politically advanced organisation that the contemporaries know nowadays.

■ 3.5.7.1 PES Women Activity Report

(October 2004-December 2006)

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 the first meeting (19 October 2004) of this new period for PES Women, Zita Gurmai MEP was elected President. Several changes were made to PES Women's Standing Orders, in particular the introduction of an annual conference on a specific theme. Members also elected three new vice-Presidents (Anna Karamanou, Inger Segelström, Olga Zrihen) and an 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).

The loss of Fiorella Ghilardotti

During this first meeting, members thanked the incumbent President, Fiorella Ghilardotti, for all her excellent work during her time in office (from 1999 - 2004). Following the election of the new President, Fiorella was active as a member of the PES Women's Executive, attending meetings and was also present at the second Global Progressive Forum event just days before her sad death on 13 September 2005.

Losing Fiorella was a loss to the movement but her work will always serve as a tremendous inspiration to us. In a statement shortly after her death, the PES and PES Women Presidents paid tribute to Fiorella's life-long and tireless commitment to greater gender equality.

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.

Violence against women

(30 November 2004)

Two high level speakers from the Spanish government and the Spanish Socialist Party, PSOE, presented the new draft legislation on violence against women. Soledad Murillo, Secretary of State for Equality in the Spanish government, and Maribel Montaña, National Secretary for Equality on the Federal Executive Committee of PSOE, explained the background and the parameters of the new legislation.

Beijing+10 – the 10 year review of the international platform for action

(17 January 2005)

PES Women adopted a resolution calling on world leaders to reaffirm the values and commitments made in Beijing in 2000. Specifically, it demanded a focus on the empowerment of women, so that through gender mainstreaming we can build a better world of social justice, equality in status and equal opportunities for women and men. The resolution was sent to EU equality ministers prior to the United Nations meeting in New York in February 2005 which considered the ten year review of the Platform for Action agreed by governments from across the world in Beijing 10 years ago.

Communication with women voters

(30 June 2005)

In the wake of the negative results in the Constitutional Treaty referenda in France and the Netherlands, PES Women focused on communication with women voters and how to persuade women that PES parties are their natural home. Commissioner Margot Wallstrom spoke about the current crisis in Europe and the period of reflection. She explored the reasons for the ‘no’ votes in France and the Netherlands to the Constitutional Treaty, in particular, the reaction against the political establishment and the effective use of the internet by the ‘no’ proponents in France. In this context, she presented the European Commission’s new Communication strategy and the new plan D – debate, dialogue and democracy.

Meeting on the fringes of the UK Presidency Conference on gender equality

(7 November 2005)

We held a successful meeting for the first time on the fringes of a Presidency conference on gender equality. Speakers included **Meg Munn**, UK Deputy Minister for Women and Gender Equality and **Mary McPhail**, Secretary General of the European Women’s Lobby. Members also had a heated debate regarding a draft resolution which, with several amendments, was adopted. It called for Member States governments and the Commission to renew their efforts to reach and go beyond the Lisbon objective of a women’s employment rate of 60% and to set targets to eliminate the gender pay gap. The PES Women President attended the UK Presidency gender equality conference and represented PES Women on several panel debates, as well as conveying the resolution to the PES gender equality ministers prior to their informal meeting.

Preparation of anti-trafficking campaign for international women’s day 2006

(23 February 2006)

In anticipation of 8 March 2006, PES Women agreed on a campaign to call for immediate action to stop the predicted mass trafficking of women and girls into Germany in the context of the World Cup in June and July 2006 (see “Campaigns” section for more details). In addition, an academic gave a presentation on the causes and possible solutions to the gender pay gap.



■ Meg MUNN



■ Mary MCPHAIL

PES Women Statutory Meeting on the fringes of the Finnish Presidency Conference on Men and Gender Equality

(Helsinki - 7 October 2006)

*Prior to the PES Women Statutory meeting, PES Women Executive Members met with the PES Ministers for Gender Equality, including Ms **Tuula Haatainen**, Finnish Minister of Social Affairs and Health, and Mr Spidla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. They discussed the establishment of Gender Institute, the Daphne Programme and Women and decision-making in the economy sector.*

During the Statutory Meeting, PES Women prepared PES Women elections and the fringe meetings that will take place at PES Congress early December. Moreover, PES Women had the opportunity to receive Commissioner Spidla and Maribel Montaña, Federal Secretary of gender equality of PSOE as guest speakers for the debates on the EU Gender Roadmap and the Gender Equality Legislation in Spain. PES Women concluded their session with voting on a Resolution against violence on women, which will be sent out on 25 November 2006, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.



■ Tuula HAATAINEN

Annual Conferences

More and better jobs for women - an EU priority?

(Friday 18 March 2005)

PES Women held its first annual conference in Brussels a few days before European Heads of State and Government reviewed the mid-term progress of the Lisbon strategy at the annual Spring Summit.

The conference considered the need to increase the participation rate of women in the labour market and to improve the quality of women's employment. There was a broad consensus among participants that these two objectives should be a priority and the panel discussions enabled the development of ideas as to how to more effectively push forward with these aims. Several high level and expert speakers, such as Commissioner Spidla, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, addressed the conference from the EU institutions and beyond. It attracted a high number of participants – with over 80 representatives in total from 25 PES member parties, NGOs, trade unions and the media.

Women, religion and culture in Europe: will women be the battleground of the 21st century?

(24 May 2006)

Over 100 people gathered in Copenhagen - from 27 countries across Europe and many people from all over Denmark - to attend the PES Women conference on the controversial topic of women, religion and culture. The leader of the Danish

Social Democratic party, **Helle Thorning-Schmidt** gave the introductory speech about the clash of civilizations and women becoming the pawns in this clash. She also addressed the issue of violence against women which is still prevalent in our societies, with many women losing their lives at their hands of their partners.

The first panel discussed the harmful role of extreme interpretations of religion and how these groups are trying to roll back the progress of women's rights. The second panel addressed the role of Muslim women in their communities and the racism and multiple discrimination (on the grounds of their gender and ethnic origin). The third panel considered whether there was a potential non-religious backlash in terms of the objectification of women in advertising and in the sex industry.

Campaigns

PES Women pledge card

On international women's day (8 March 2005), PES Women launched their first pledge card. It serves as a communication tool to raise awareness of the work of PES Women and to convey five priorities:

- more and better jobs for women;
- equal opportunities and equal pay;
- better childcare;
- an end of all forms of violence against women;
- women's rights and empowerment.



■ Helle THORNING-SCHMIDT

Anti-trafficking campaign in the context of the World Cup

On 1 March 2006, PES Women and the PES launched an online petition to call on the European Commission President, in close cooperation

with member state government to take urgent action to stop the trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation in the context of the World Cup. The campaign slogan was "Celebrate the World Cup, Fight sexual slavery". Over 22,000 signatures from across the EU and beyond were collected and presented to the Justice and Home Affairs



■ Mikko, Korczak, Frattini, Thomsen, Gurmai - World cup sexual slavery (2006)

European Commissioner, Franco Frattini. The PES and PES Women President also presented the campaign to Commission President, **Jose Manuel Barroso**.

PES Women used its extensive network to collect these signatures and also secured the signatures of several prime ministers and PES party leaders.

PES Women sent a letter to PES Justice and Home Affairs ministers (see annex) before the Council meeting on 27 April 2006 calling for concrete action and presenting specific recommendations.

Prior to 27 April Council meeting (at which the issue of human trafficking was an agenda point), PES Women organized a preparatory meeting for PES justice and home affairs ministers. All ministers present were deeply concerned about the issue and the evident link between the World Cup and an increase in trafficking into Germany. The meeting enabled ministers from our political family to support each other during the Council discussions and to strengthen the resulting Council conclusions.

PES Women also contacted Europol, the German Police Union and various NGOs to find out more information about the situation on the ground. PES Women President sent a letter to the President of FIFA to raise this issue, but his reply stated that FIFA does not take responsibility for occurrences outside stadiums.

On the eve of the World Cup, PES Women President together with the Vice-Chair of the biggest Danish Trade Union 3F, met with Commissioner Franco Frattini, Commissioner for Justice, Freedom and Security to handover over 23,000 PES collected signatures and nearly 100,000 signatures from the Danish Trade Union's campaign. They discussed the need for EU's action regarding anti-trafficking legislation and better cooperation between the institutions on anti-trafficking actions.



■ Jose Manuel BARROSO



■ Rasmussen, Gurmai, Barroso - Celebrate the World Cup, Fight sexual slavery (2006)

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, ECOSY Seminars and several meetings with Commissioners to discuss gender issues.

2004	
November 12 - 13	SIW Meeting, Johannesburg
November	Conference on the EU Constitution, Poitier (France)
December 18	SLD Congress, Warsaw (Poland)
2005	
January 23 - 27	World Social Forum, Porto Alegre (Brazil)
April 5	Social Democratic Women’s Network, Sofia (Bulgaria)
April 21 - 22	SOLIDAR meeting at the WTO Symposium “Women Talk!” Project, Geneva
May 14	LSDP Congress, Vilnius (Lithuania)
May 21 - 22	Congress of Swedish Social Democratic Women, Esklistuna (Sweden)
May 27 - 29	Congress of Socialist Women, Limassol (Cyprus)
December 2	Meeting with Commissioner Špidla, Brussels (Belgium)
December 3	BSP Congress, Sofia (Bulgaria)
2006	
January 27	PES Initiative – People’s Dialogue Conference, Dublin (Ireland)
January 27 - 28	SIW Meeting “Promoting universal values in a world of different cultural realities”, Athens (Greece)
February 12	Labour Party Conference, Blackpool (UK)
February 24	Conference, Lisbon (Portugal)
March 7 - 8	ECOSY Winter University

March 15	Meeting with José Manuel Barroso, President of the Commission, PES Anti-Trafficking Campaign
April 7	PES Women meeting, Budapest (Hungary)
May 8	Women’s organisation of SPÖ, Vienna (Austria)
June 8	PES Conference, Liège (Belgium)
June 27	ECOSY Summer Conference at IUSY Festival, Alicante, Spain
August 24	PS Summer University, La Rochelle (France)
October 16	International Conference on Women’s Sexual and Reproductive Health, Lisbon (Portugal)
November 24	Conference “Women’s Place: Kitchen or Politics?”, Pärny (Estonia)

Increasing women’s representation

At the PES Council meeting in Vienna (June 2005), PES Women’s principal and lasting achievement was the double nomination system, adopted in the PES Reform paper. This stipulates that PES member parties have to nominate 1 man and 1 woman for each PES working group, thus enabling the final composition (1 representative from each party) to be gender-balanced.

adviser was particularly involved in the party’s work on the New Social Europe, and previous to that the PES report on demographic challenges. The PES Priorities paper for the EU Policy Agenda in 2006 and 2007 were gender sensitive with several priorities relating to gender equality.

In the paper on the 2006 EU policy Agenda, two out of the seven priorities were related to gender equality: calling for “more effective Euro pean anti-discrimination legislation and implementation in the workplace, in particular, with regard to equal pay between women and men and the conciliation of professional and family life.” and “more effective legislation to eradicate violence against women in society, as well as in conflict and crisis situations, and the trafficking of women and children.” In the paper adopted this year for the 2007 EU policy agenda, a strong emphasis is given to improving the investment in and provision of childcare. PES Women nominated a member of the PES High Level Group on Turkey, Emine Bozkurt MEP, and is thus following closely this extremely important process. Emine Bozkurt (PvdA – the Netherlands)

Gender mainstraiming 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

successfully kept women's rights on the agenda in the period 2005-2006 and will continue to do so in the future. Her work as Rapporteur for the European Parliament on the issue of Women's Rights in Turkey helped to link that information and experience within the High Level Group. In October 2005 Ms Bozkurt took part in its working visit to Turkey, where the group spoke to different representatives of women's rights NGOs located in Ankara and Istanbul. In July 2006, the High Level Group had a fruitful meeting with Commissioner Rehn, Commissioner for Enlargement. Three months later, she joined the second working visit of the group, this time in Izmir and Ankara. One whole day of her programme was devoted to the subject of Women's Rights in Turkey.

Anne Sofie Allarp (SD – Denmark) represented PES Women at the Lisbon Network meetings. Since she left in September 2006, she has been replaced by Anne Van Lancker MEP (Sp.a – Belgium).

International work

Global Progressive Forum

PES Women organised a panel on Women and Globalisation at the second annual event of the Global Progressive Forum in Milan on 9-10 September 2005. The panel considered how to ensure women's reproductive rights and tackle the spread of HIV/AIDS, violence against women and trafficking of women. Given the decision to focus the GPF's activities on decent work, PES Women is leading a project on the gender equality dimension of decent work which should be at the forefront of the GPF's activities, given the increasing feminisation of

work. The project will focus on women working in the informal economy and export processing zones, and the increasing numbers of women that migrate to send back remittances to their families. A publication with contributions from key stakeholders will be published in early 2007 which will then be launched at the next Committee of the Status of Women meeting in New York (February – March 2007).

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.

Euromed Conference

In February 2005, the Euromed Conference took place in Alger, which was linked to the Barcelona summit organised three months prior to the congress and which was directly in line with the programme initiated in Malta in November 2004. Olga Zrihen, Vice-President of PES Women, was designated as representative for PES Women at the Euromed Conference. Convinced about the need to promote an open, egalitarian dialogue without taboos between the North and the South, the participants adopted a declaration on a common vision for the future to encourage all desirable reforms by civil society from the two sides: promoting information which is in favour of dialogue, education giving equal opportunities for women and men, an active participation of civil

society to political processes and promoting dialogue between the citizens with different values and from different cultural backgrounds of the Euro- Mediterranean Region in order to fight stereotypes.

■ 3.5.7.2 Report of PES Women 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 does gender equality have 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 mains issues on the agenda were: PES Women position on the PES Manifesto; the different elections systems in Europe as regards womenPs 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



■ Laurence ROSSIGNOL

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 in 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).

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 Cancer 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



■ 50/50 For Diversity Campaign

represent the citizens and the interest of all citizens, including 50% of the population which are women.

European Election Campaign
(2007)

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

Date	Event	Venue
2007		
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 for 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 Committee 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 Committee	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
2008		
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 the PSOE election campaign	Brussels
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 on 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 Committee Meeting	Athens
27/06	SIW Congress	Athens
05/07	PES Activists Meeting	Vienna
19/07	PSC Congress	Barcelona
30/07	ECOSY Summer Camp	Carpentras
30/08	PS France Summer University	La Rochelle
09/09	PES Women Executive Committee 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 - PES Leaders- Women Leaders' Meeting	Madrid
2009		
27/01	PES Women Executive Committee Meeting	Brussels
04/02	PASOK Women Conference: Handling the Economic Crisis	Athens
05/02	PES Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting	Prague
11/02	PES Manifesto	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 Committee 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 the 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 **KARAMANO**U - PASOK (Greece)
- Inger **SEGELSTRÖM** - SAP (Sweden)

Bureau

- Britta **Thomsen** - SD (Denmark)
- Marianne **Mikko** - SDE (Estonia)
- Laurence **Rossignol** - PS (France)
- Karin **Junker** - SPD (Germany)
- Edite **Estrela** - PS (Portugal)
- Rovana **Plumb** - PSD (Romania)
- Saskia **Duives** - PvdA (the Netherlands)
- Teresa **Riera** - PSOE (Spain))



■ Saskia DUIVES

ANNEX 2:

Adopted procedures and timetable of the PES Women Elections of December 2009

When:

- Prior to the 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).
- 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 the achievements of PES Women since the last elections in December 2006.

- In both cases, candidates should receive full endorsement 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). 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 among the 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 Bureau member positions will be elected according to the 10 highest results.

■ 3.5.7.3 Report of PES Women December 2009–September 2012

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 2009, Prague), 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).

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. The adviser together with PES Women President or other PES Women Representative was particularly involved in the party's work on the Progressive Societies, Re:new, the PES Convention, the PES Working Group on the 2014 Candidate, the Working Group on Youth Unemployment as well as the PES thematic networks. Especially the PES Principles and the youth unemployment document included a strong gender dimension. At the Convention in November 2011, PES Women together with FEPS and the CEE Network co-organised a workshop on women's empowerment.

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.

European Women's Right Charter

3 February 2010, Brussels

PES Women Members focused on 3 issues, the European Women's Rights Charter, the Beijing + 15 priority as well as the main priorities for 2010. They agreed that the main campaign for 2010 would be 'My Body My Rights' with 3 angles: universal maternity health, combating violence against women and eradicating AIDS. PES Women also underlined their proposed European Women's Rights Charter on the eve of the European Commission's launch of such Charter. The Charter should be a visionary progressive text based on existing agreements, mechanisms or tools already in place for gender equality with an adequate platform and framework, which is visible, budget based and target driven as well as with a monitoring, follow-up and assessment task responsibilities. PES Women could not accept a Charter that is solely symbolic text.

My Body My Rights: Combating Violence Against Women

1 June 2010, Madrid

In the context of the Spanish Presidency of the EU under the leadership of Prime Minister Zapatero, PES Women organised a statutory meeting in Madrid discussing one of the Presidency Priorities 'Combating Violence Against Women'. PES Women adopted a declaration 'My Body My Rights: PES Women calls on the European Union to implement the Spanish Presidency Initiatives in combating all forms of violence against women'. The main demands have been the European Protection Order

Directive, a European-wide free help line and no budgetary cuts in the Daphne Programme. This meeting was co-organised with PSOE Women's organization and the presence of Gender Equality Minister Bibiana Aído.

Maternity Leave and EU Gender Equality Strategy

20 October 2010, Brussels

PES Women took the opportunity to discuss the maternity leave directive as well that the European Gender Equality Strategy, which Commissioner Reding, Commissioner responsible for women's rights, in September 2010.

PES Women welcomed the European Parliament's positive vote on extending the maternity leave from 14 to 20 weeks and the inclusion of two weeks of paternity leave. PES Women's assessment of the European Gender Equality Strategy the lack of women's health policies, including sexual and reproductive rights, of Gender budgeting, of Paternity leave and of coherency between EU internal Gender Equality commitment and external development policy rhetoric.

If Clara Zetkin can do it, so can we!

1 March 2011, Brussels

On the fringes of the PES Women-FEPS Seminar "Towards a new progressive thinking on gender, emancipation and feminism", PES Women hold its statutory meeting to take stock of the seminar

results and establish the 2011 priorities and campaign.

PES Women underlined the importance of Clara Zetkin's leadership in women's labour and social rights, the corner stone for the left movement in terms of gender equality. The progressive feminism is a movement of women and men fighting for gender equality and equal share of responsibili - ties between women and men.

PES Women agreed to campaign on the issue of women's pensions in the run up of the Commission's white and green paper on pensions; women's pensions are significantly lower than that of men, due to the other existing gaps, be it the pay gap as the difference in working time and work-life balance. A specific campaign spot will be created as well as an informative meeting on the issue.

Closing the Pension Pay Gap

24 May 2011, Brussels

PES Women invited Anabela Gago from the European Commission, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion and Meeri Wasberg, SAP Member of the Swedish Parliament to give presentations on the issue of pensions for women. The aim of the debate was to inform PES Women members about the European proposals on the issue and exchange of best practices in Europe. The main priorities for PES Women were to call for a study on the situation of women's pensions, including care credits in the European proposal and encourage training for women above 50.

PES Declaration of Principles

8 November 2011, Brussels

PES Women used this statutory meeting to prepare the PES Council and Convention of 23-26 November in Brussels. The PES Council aimed at adopting for the first time in history a Declaration of Principles. PES Women contributed towards the drafting of its text and ensured a strong gender dimension, which is part of Re:new, a larger process within the PES. For the PES Convention, PES Women together with the CEE Network and FEPS organised a workshop on Women's Empowerment.

Combating Unemployment among Young Women

23 March 2012, Copenhagen

In presence of Danish Minister for Gender Equality Manu Sareen and Spokesperson on Gender Equality Rasmus Langhoff MP, PES Women welcomed the Danish EU Presidency priorities to tackle gender inequality. The Danish priorities include addressing gender segregation in education, creating green jobs for women and adopting the maternity leave directive. These 3 priorities join perfectly the demands of PES Women in the 2012 PES-ECOSY-PES Women campaign "Your Future is My Future", a campaign calling for a European Youth Guarantee.

Ministerial meetings

My Body, My Rights: Universal Maternal Health

4 March 2010, New York

On the fringes of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), celebrating the fifteenth anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action, PES Women, ECOSY, the Global Progressive Forum and the Global Progressive Youth Forum organised a ministerial meeting to strengthen the position in and of Europe on universal maternal health. Under the slogan and PES Women Campaign 'My Body My Rights', the socio-democratic ministers adopted a declaration calling on all governments to reiterate their commitment to maternal health in order to insure women's empowerment in sexual rights as well as socio-economic development.

Europe 2020

25 March 2010, Valencia

On 25 March, PES Women, PES Ministers and State Secretaries for Gender Equality call on Prime Ministers and Heads of States to include a true gender perspective in the Europe 2020 strategy at the eve of the Informal Gender Equality Ministerial meeting. The main demands were to reach at least 70% female employment, to reach and extends the Barcelona targets, to lower the EU gender pay gap by 10% and to break stereotypes and promote women to top positions, based on the Norwegian model.



■ PES Women statutory meeting - Copenhagen (2012)

Annual conferences

My Body, My Rights

3-4 December 2010, Warsaw

To close its 2010 campaign 'My Body My Rights', PES Women organised its annual conference in Warsaw on sexual and reproductive rights. The conference discussed the still on-going taboos and challenges as well as the existing prevention and education methods regarding sexual and reproductive rights. Together with the Polish Socialist Women from SLD and progressive NGOs, participants looked at the strengths and role of feminist movements in achieving and maintaining equal sexual and reproductive rights for all women across Europe. The Conference adopted a declaration on the issue, signed by political actors and activists.

Towards a New Progressive Thinking on Gender, Emancipation and Feminism

28 February – 1 March 2011, Brussels

For the 100th Anniversary of the International Women's Day, PES Women together with FEPS organised a two-day seminar under the title 'If Clara Can do it, so can we', looking at a new progressive thinking on gender emancipation and feminism. Progressive Foundations, NGOs and politicians from all over Europe gathered to examine the achievements over the past 100 years and to

present the challenges ahead for today's progressive feminists. The 2 workshops demonstrated on the one hand meaning of today's progressive feminism and on the other hand the new challenges ahead.

Campaigns

My Body My Rights (2010)

The 2010 PES Women campaign "My Body My Rights" was launched on the fringes of the UN Common Status on Women meeting celebrating the Beijing platform's 15th anniversary. Under this umbrella slogan PES Women dedicate its 2010 campaign to the overarching theme of sexual and reproductive health rights. 'My Body My Rights' was a one year commitment with three windows of action: calling for universal maternal health, combating violence against women and an annual conference on sexual and reproductive rights. The 3 actions took place in New York, Madrid and Warsaw, each in a specific context. The Universal Maternal Health was especially discussed and highlighted during the UN Common Status on Women meeting. In Madrid, PES Women supported the Spanish Presidency priority on combating violence against women. The campaign ended with a PES Women Annual Conference adapting a declaration in Warsaw.

Pension: It's Different for Women

(2011)

With an aging population and the European Union and its Member States going through pension reforms, PES Women dedicated its 2011 campaign on raising awareness on the pension gap that exists between women and men. In order to illustrate the message and raise awareness a little online video was produced and circulated. (<http://vimeo.com/20736475>)

PES Women also put pressure on different political actors and decision-makers putting 3 specific demands forward; a gender impact assessment, career care credits and a specific strategy to keep women over 55 on the labour market.

No to the Ugly Face of Abuse

25 November 2011, Brussels

To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence, PES Women joined the Zijkant (Women's movement of the Sp.a) campaign 'No to the Ugly Face of Abuse'. The event took place at the opening of the PES Convention in Brussels, where member of the Sp.a and PES Women raised awareness on early signs of abuse amongst young women by gathering signatures (stamps) on a tuk-tuk-stand. PES Women also promoted the special Facebook webpage and application Zij-kant created for the campaign. PES Women's called for a comprehensive European Strategy on Combating Violence

against women and a European Year of Combating Violence against Women.

International work

PES Women Delegation to United States

17-21 October, New York – Washington DC

For the first time in October 2011, PES Women organised a delegation to the United States. The delegation took place on the fringes of the FEPS meeting in Washington on Gender Equality issues.

It was an opportunity to establish a first contact with different actors of the newly established UN Women entity in New York as well as the World Bank, the Friederich Ebert Foundation and Women's Rights NGOs. The main focus of the meetings was on the one hand the gender equality strategy in times of crisis and on the other hand the impact on feminism due to the conservative back clash.

In Washington DC, the PES Women Delegation met with Melanne Verwee, Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, appointed by President Obama at the US State Department. Moreover, the delegation had the opportunity to meet with some elected Democrats as well as with Vital Voices, a Foundation encouraging Women's Empowerment, created by State Secretary Hilary Clinton.

The US visit ended with a 2-day FEPS seminar focussing on the issues of 'Female Migrant Care Workers' and 'The Role of Feminist



■ Arena, Gurmai, Zrihen - International Women's Day, 8 March (2012)



■ PES Women - International Women's Day (2012)

Movements in times of crisis and growing extremism'. The seminar was organised in partnership with US academics and researchers.

PES International Delegation to Turkey

PES Women president participated to the PES High Level Advisory Group Delegation on Turkey in January 2011, which travelled to Ankara, Diyarbakir and Istanbul. During the four day visit the delegation met several political, governmental and civil society actors. The main focus of the trip was the necessity for a new momentum in Turkey's reform agenda including labour and trade unions rights, freedom of media and the electoral threshold as well as social policies and women's rights.

Global Progressive Forum: Arab Spring

In 2011 and 2012, the Global Progressive Forum (GPF) with its partners the PES, the S&D Group and FEPS, organised a series of meetings in the context of the Arab Spring. PES Women has played an active role in meeting, listening and exchanging with progressive women from the region. The role of women in the region needs to be strengthened, especially after the revolution and the transition periods and in the democratisation process.

PES Women also attended the World Social Forum in Dakar, February 2011.

Socialist International Women

PES Women as Observer Member of Socialist International Women participated to SIW Congress, Councils as well as to some regional meetings where PES Women was a special guest. SIW Councils in Paris, November 2010 on the Global Crisis and the Impact on Women and in San Jose, January 2012 on Sexual and Reproductive Rights and SIW Congress in Cape Town electing a new leadership of the organisations. PES Women also attended Regional SIW Meetings in Oslo, April 2010 on Gender Pay Gap and in Rabat September 2011 on Women's role in the Arab Spring. PES Women's European actions and priorities on these issues have contributed to the general debate and conclusions.

Publications and Media

PES Women produced its own leaflet in 2011 presenting PES Women priorities and campaigns from 2006 onwards. The aim is to use it as promotion material until the 2012 PES Congress. An online version was also published on the web http://www.pes.org/sites/www.pes.org/files/pes_women_leaflet_2011.pdf

PES Women has also increased its visibility in the social media using existing and new online tools such as the PES Website, Facebook and Twitter. PES Women has been posting on a weekly basis articles on current issues <http://www.pes.eu/en/blogs/zitas-blog>

Zita Gurmai's blog

Welcome to my blog! I'm Zita Gurmai, President of PES Women. This is where I share my ideas about European politics and tell you what I do in a day-to-day basis.

PES Women President at the SI Congress: no democracy without gender equality

07/09/2012 - 09:49

After a successful SIW Congress in Cape Town, where socialist and social democratic women from around the world elected a new President **Ouafa Hajji** and Secretary General **Marije Laffeber**, I continued calling for a true commitment to gender equality and women's rights in our socialist family.

PES Women denounce the Pussy Riot verdict in Russia

17/08/2012 - 21:00

On Friday 17 August three of the Pussy Riot members, Maria Alekhina, 24, Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, 23 and Ekaterina Samucevich, 29 were sentenced to two years of jail by the Moscow's Khamovnichesky District Court. I want to denounce this verdict, which is unfair and highly political. This case shows one more time that the separation of powers does not really exist in Russia, where the judiciary is still highly influenced by politics and the Church.



■ Ouafa HAJJI



■ Marije LAFFEBER

Together for the Europe we need!

26/07/2012 - 16:11

While the parliamentary recess gives us time to re-charge our batteries, I would like to take the time to reflect upon the upcoming PES Congress. On 28 and 29 September 2012, the PES will hold its Congress in Bucharest to elect the new leadership but also to prepare the fundamental programme and our work towards the 2014 European Elections.

PES Women events and reactions have also been reported on the PES Women Facebook page:

[https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/PES- Women/115443321849793](https://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/PES-Women/115443321849793) and Twitter account: https://www.twitter.com/PES_Women.



Attended events

2009		
27/01	PES Executive Meeting	Brussels
04/02	PASOK Women Conference ‘Handling the economic crisis, supporting women’	Athens
19/02	PES Women Statutory Meeting	Brussels
04/03	International Women’s Day Event in the European Parliament	Brussels
17/03	Meeting with Ray Collins, Secretary General UK Labour Party	Brussels
17/03	Meeting with UNIFEMM Osnat Lubrani, Regional Programme Director	Brussels
17/03	Meeting with President of Kagider	Brussels
19/03	FEPS Seminar “Philosophy of feminism in the EU”	Brussels
27/03	Meeting with Commissioner Spidla	Brussels
27-28/03	FEPS - Jean Jaures conference	Paris
01/04	ECOSY Winter University	Brussels
02/04	GPF Workshop “Equal rights for all women”	Brussels
03/04	PES Conference “Let’s get our Europe back”	Barcelona
24/04	PES campaign launch	Toulouse
13/05	ASF conference “Women in politics”	Berlin
18/05	Conference “Women in politics”	Italy
19/05	Visit to PS France for European Elections	Marseille
26/05	Visit with SD Women	Lithuania
17/06	PES Women Executive Committee Meeting	Brussels
26-27/06	SIW Council	Montenegro

29-30/06	SI Council	Montenegro
02/07	PS Commission: Women's Rights	Paris
16/07	IUSY Festival	Zanka, Hungary
23/09	PES Women Statutory Meeting	Brussels
20/10	Meeting with Commissioner Wallström	Strasbourg
20/10	Meeting with Commissioner Špidla	Strasbourg
14/11	PES Women Statutory Meeting	Stockholm
18/11	Working Group - European Women's Rights Charter	Brussels
05/12	PES Women Annual Conference	Prague
16/12	EPLP Dinner	Strasbourg
2010		
12/01	Meeting with Myria Vassiliadou (Secretary General, EWL)	Brussels
12/01	Meeting with Commissioner Špidla	Brussels
21/01	PES Executive Meeting	Brussels
03/02	PES Statutory Meeting	Brussels
05-07/02	Young European Socialists Network Seminar	Helsinki
09/02	Meeting with Commissioner Špidla	Strasbourg
01-12/03	PES Women, GFP, ECOSY Beijing +15 delegation UN CSW,	New York
08/03	International Women's Day Event with ECOSY	European Parliament
15/03	Meeting with Bibiana Aído, Spanish Minister for Equality	Brussels
16/03	FEPS Next Left Seminar	Brussels
25/03	Meeting with Commissioner Damanaki	Brussels
27/03	Gender Ministerial Meeting	Valencia
08/04	Arborus, Gender Equality and European citizenship	Brussels

10/04	SIW regional meeting	Oslo
13/04	Meeting with Commissioner Andor	Brussels
14/04	PES Executive Meeting	Brussels
22-23/05	Meeting with PS Women	Portugal
27/05	Spanish Presidency Conference: Political participation of women	Valencia
01/06	PES Statutory Meeting	Madrid
05-06/06	Federal Conference of the SPD, women's working party (ASF)	Bonn
08/06	FES Meeting with Latin American Women	Brussels
21-22/06	SI Council	New York
03/07	Conference PSC	Barcelona
29/09	PES Executive Committee Meeting	Brussels
10/10	PSD Women Congress	Bucharest
16/10	FEPS Seminar	Paris
17/10	ECOSY Event	Rome
28/10	Meeting with Commissioner Ándor	Brussels
15-16/11	SIW Council	Paris
22/10	PES Statutory Meeting	Brussels
03-04/12	PES Women Annual Conference	Warsaw
18/12	DS Congress	Belgrade
2011		
12/01	Meeting with Vladimir Špidla	Brussels
13/01	PES Executive Meeting	Brussels
26-29/01	PES High Level Advisory Group	Ankara, Diyarbakir and Istanbul
26/01	Meeting with Deputy Leader UK Labour Party Harriet Harman	Brussels

06-11/02	World Social Forum in Dakar	Dakar
01/03	PES Women Statutory Meeting	Brussels
01/03	FEPS Seminar: Towards a New progressive thinking on gender, emancipation and feminism	European Parliament
20/02	Meeting BSP Women Organisation	Sofia
03/03	100 Years of Women's progress - PASOK women	Athens
04/03	PES Leaders Meeting	Athens
15/03	Meeting with Commissioner Andor on Women and Pensions	Brussels
05/03	PES Leaders Meeting	Athens
27/03	Meeting with Michèle Bachelet, Executive Director UN Women	Brussels
28-29/03	KAGIDER workshop	Istanbul
12/04	PES Women Executive Committee Meeting	Brussels
14/04	PES Presidency Meeting	Brussels
29-30/04	Visit with Member Party	Vilnius
24/05	PES Women Statutory Meeting	Brussels
30-02/06	SIW - SI Council	Athens
9-10/09	CEE Network Seminar	Skopje
28/09	PvdA Vrouwen Festival	Rotterdam
06/10	PES Presidency Meeting	Brussels
08-10/10	BSP Campaign	Sofia
13/10	PES Youth Unemployment Working Group	Brussels
17-21/10	PES Women's delegation	New York/Washington DC
22/10	FEPS Transatlantic Academic Exchange on Gender Issues	Washington DC
08/11	PES Women Statutory Meeting	Brussels
24/11	PES Presidency	Brussels

24-26/11	PES Convention	Brussels
26/11	PES Youth Unemployment Working Group	Brussels
04-06/12	SPD Party Conference	Berlin
14/12	PES Executive Meeting	Brussels
2012		
21-22/01	SIW - SI Councils	San José
01/02	PES Youth Unemployment Working Group	Brussels
08/02	PES Executive Meeting	Brussels
15/02	Meeting with Commissioner Barnier	Strasbourg
05/02	PSOE Congress	Sevilla
05/03	ECOSY Winter University	Brussels
06/03	Meeting with Iris Munguia, Solidar Silver Rose Award Winner	Brussels
06/03	Meeting with KAOS GL, Solidar Silver Rose Award Winner	Brussels
06/03	SOLIDAR Silver Rose Awards	Brussels
07/03	S&D event for International Women's Day	Brussels
08/03	International Women's Day Event "Women on the bridge"	Brussels
23/03	PES Women Statutory Meeting	Copenhagen
24/03	FEPS/Foundation Jean-Jaures Seminar	Paris
29-30/03	PES Arab Revolution Conference	Tunis
26-28/04	Visit with PD and PSI Women	Italy
09/05	Meeting with Farida Allaghi, Libyan Activist	Brussels
21/05	ASF Congress	Berlin
09/05	PES Youth Unemployment Working Group	Brussels
11/05	Launch of the PES Youth and Unemployment campaign	Brussels

04/06	Meeting with Elke Ferner ASF President	Brussels
06/06	Meeting with Ouafa Hajji, SIW President Candidate	Brussels
06/06	S&D Conference "Youth Unemployment"	Brussels
07/06	GPF Arab Spring Debate	Brussels
19/06	PES Women Statutory Meeting	Brussels
19/06	PES Youth Unemployment Working Group	Brussels
24-25/06	SIW Regional Meeting	Istanbul
29/06	PES Presidency	Brussels
12/07	Meeting with PS Women Portugal and civil society	Lisbon
13/07	ECOSY summer camp	Croatia
30/08 - 01/09	SIW – SI Congress	Cape Town
04/09	PES Women Executive Committee	Brussels
6-7/09	FEPS - CEE Network "Korcula school"	Korcula



■ PES Congress - Brussels (2012)

ANNEX 1:

*List of PES Women Bureau Members as of elections
December 2009, Prague*

President

- Zita **GURMAI** - MSZP (Hungary)

Vice-Presidents

- Olga **ZRIHEN** - PS (Belgium)
- Anna **KARAMANOU** - PASOK (Greece)
- Inger **SEGELSTRÖM** - SAP (Sweden)

Bureau

- Britta **Thomsen** - SD (Denmark)
- Marianne **Mikko** - SDE (Estonia)
- Laurence **Rossignol** - PS (France)
- Karin **Junker** - SPD (Germany)
- Edite **Estrela** - PS (Portugal)
- Rovana **Plumb** - PSD (Romania)
- Marja **Bijl** - PvdA (Netherlands)
- Sonja **Lokar** - SD (Slovenia)

- Iratxe **Garcia Perez** - PSOE (Spain)
- Denitza **Slateva** - BSP (Bulgaria)

(Note)

Each Vice President represents a specific region for which she is responsible within the PES Women Executive and for coordinating the sister parties of their region and linking them with PES Women. The Vice Presidents have both coordinating and reporting roles and responsibilities. The Coordinating role implies physical and/or electronic contacts and updates with the socialist women's organisations within their country. The reporting role implies bringing the national/regional issues to the PES Women Executive Committee that should be placed on the Executive and/or Statutory agendas. Having four Vice Presidents would give each Vice President responsibility over a different regional area, geographically balancing the PES Women leadership.



■ Iratxe GARCÍA PEREZ



■ Denitza SLATEVA

■ 3.5.7.4 Report of PES Women October 2012- February 2014

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.

First, **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.

Second, 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 of Prague in 2009 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 Women Annual Conference** (September 2012, Brussels), **Zita Gurmai** MEP was re-elected **President of PES Women**. At the same election **Rovana Plumb**, **Tuula Peltonen**, **Anna Karamanou** and **Marja Bijl** were elected as the four Vice-Presidents. A new composition was formed among the 13 bureau-members who assist in the preparation and follow-up of meetings during the executive meetings (see annex for list of the whole Executive which comprises the President, Vice-Presidents and Bureau).

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.

In 2013 again **PES Women Bureau members** and PES Women members have been active on various aspects gender issues, at the European level as around the world, strengthening collaboration with sister parties in USA, in Africa or in Latin-America.



■ Rovana PLUMB

Gender mainstreaming

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.

The adviser together with PES Women President and other PES Women Representative was particularly involved in the party's work on the **Fundamental Programme**, the **PES Council**, the **PES Working Group** on the 2014 Candidate, the **Manifesto Process** and as well as the PES thematic networks. Especially the PES Fundamental Programme and Manifesto document include a strong gender dimension.

Meetings

Dublin Statutory Meeting and Seminar on Women's Image (22/23 March 2013)

In March 2013, PES Women hosted its first **statutory meeting** in Dublin in parallel of the Irish Presidency. This was also the occasion to hold a joint event with the women organization of the Labour Party. Together with the Irish colleagues from the European Parliament, PES Women reiterated the importance of keeping gender equality at the forefront of our political priorities, despite the crisis.

The seminar focused on the issue of women's empowerment through combating women's objectification, as objectification is the problem of every woman regardless

of her age, socio- economic or ethnic background. PES Women thus took the opportunity to raise awareness and address the problem at political level, using as a model the very good campaign of our Austrian sisters. The aim of the seminar was to denounce the objectification and sexualisation of women as roots restricting women's chances of empowerment and to define what empowerment for women means.

Together with progressive politicians, trade unions, civil society organizations, writers, media representatives, PES Women created a debate around the consequences of today's objectification of women, the solutions and the tools and means for women to really empower themselves.

Leipzig Executive Meeting and PES Women 20th Anniversary Celebrations (25th May 2013)

In the eve of the ceremony of the 150th Anniversary of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), **PES Women celebrated** (22 May) **its two decades of progress towards gender equality and women's empowerment**. The **20th Anniversary Reception** took place in Leipzig, commemorating the foundation of the PES Women's Standing Committee in May 1993 and honouring the remarkable work of past PES Women Presidents Karin Junker and Fiorella Ghilardotti.

For Zita Gurmai, PES Women President, this anniversary was a poignant reminder of our achievements to date and challenges ahead. For over two decades, PES Women has done justice to its

motto **"The same rights, the same fights"**. In the last years the PES Women members have fought tirelessly for a European Youth Guarantee, gender quotas on company boards and equal sexual and reproductive rights for all women in Europe. Nowadays, concerning the Gender Pay Gap, it definitely is about time: on its 20th birthday, PES Women calls for a 2 percent reduction per year of the Gender Pay Gap and demands the creation of a European Commissioner for Gender Equality and Women's Rights with the political will to ensure the implementation of this and other progressive legislation.

The event was co-hosted by Elke Ferner, Vice- Chair of the SPD Group in the Bundestag, and chairperson of the "Association of Social Democratic Women" (ASF) - the women's organization of the SPD.

Sofia PES Women Statutory Meeting and PES Women Annual Conference "Women Up! Against the Crisis"

(21st June 2012)

PES Women members started their activities in Sofia discussing the final text of the Fundamental Programme, the launch of the PES/ PES Women "Equal Pay Campaign" as well as the upcoming European electoral campaign and the impact in the different member states.

The PES Women Annual Conference entitled **"Women up! Against the Crisis"** took place on the 21 June in Sofia. The Conference was the occasion to launch the new PES Women Campaign on closing the Gender Pay Gap: "Equal Pay, it's about time!" as well as to debate



■ PES Women 20th Anniversary (Leipzig 2013)



■ PES Women annual conference - Sofia (2013)

with high-level European speakers the consequences and solutions to the devastating effect of the crisis on women. As PES Women has been underlining the effect of the crisis on women and the increasing gender pay gap across Europe, it is essential to acknowledge and put forward the consequences of the crisis such as women's wages that have been systematically undermined by conservative policies, austerity measures that reduce drastically public services (childcare, social services, health care, ...) and budget cuts which hit programmes and funds that either employ or empower women.

The Annual Conference, which took place the day before the PES Council, hosted two roundtables: "Why a 'silent crisis' for women?" and "How women rise up against the crisis?". The debate focused on the importance of increasing the presence of women in economic and political decision-making in order to overcome the crisis.

Brussels Statutory Meeting and International Conference "The Threshold of the Desert"

(2nd October 2013)

2 October 2013, the third **PES Women Statutory Meeting** of the year took place, where the issue of "quota for women on boards", "elimination of prostitution" and the single-common candidate were discussed. PES Women members also welcomed Najat Aziz, the Moroccan protagonist from the documentary "**Threshold of the Desert**".

The Statutory Meeting was followed by an international conference including the screening of a documentary and a high-level debate. Zita Gurmai, PES Women President and Member of the European Parliament (S&D, HU), and **Corina Cretu**, Romanian MEP and Vice-President of the S&D Group, co-hosted the Brussels



■ Corina CRETU



■ The Threshold of the Desert with Emer Costello and Najat Aziz - Brussels (2013)

première of the documentary “The Threshold of the Desert” in the European Parliament.

Vision Films director, Ramon Vila, and the main star, Najat Aziz presented the project and the challenges towards women’s empowerment in the rural areas of Morocco. More generally, the screening of this documentary was the starting point for a broader discussion on women’s empowerment in the MENA region, the leading role of women in the post-Revolution context and of democratization processes, of forming of governments, political parties, trade- unions and civil organisations.

Members of the European Parliament, but also speakers from UN Women, the OECD, the European Economic and Social Council and the Anna Lindh Foundation discussed the issues raised by the film and answered questions from the audience.

A more detailed report can be found online <http://the-threshold-of-the-desert.org>.

Campaigns

International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women

(25 November 2012)

For International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women (VAW) on 25 November 2013, PES Women reiterated its demands:

1. The European Commission to deliver this comprehensive European strategy on the elimination of violence against women.
2. A European Year dedicated to combat Violence Against Women. This would allow raising awareness on the issue of Violence Against Women at EU level, giving visibility to the NGOs and organisations working on it and also making women victims’ voices heard.
3. The European Union to sign the Council of Europe Convention on Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, which is the first legally binding instrument in Europe creating a comprehensive legal framework to protect women against all forms of violence. This would send a strong and exemplar sign for all Member States.
4. Securing all the European budgets and funds on Violence Against Women, including in in the 2014-2020 budget (the Multiannual Financial Framework) and the DAPHNE Programme.

As part of this action, PES Women joined the European Women’s Lobby “**Make My Year!**” post-card action, sending a strong demand to Commissioner President Barroso and sharing it on our social media.

“One Billion Rising” – Flash Mob 2013

(Brussels, 14th February 2013)

PES Women President Zita Gurmai participated in February in the Brussels “**One Billion Rising**” action to say no to violence against women. The event was one out of 200 country- based events which mobilized citizens from all over the world. In Brussels, PES Women President was joined by hundreds of women and men calling for concrete measures to address gender violence in the EU. It has been very positive contribution in the rally around the common cause of combating violence against women. In solidarity, with women of different organizations and women

from the civil society that showed how important it is to put the fight against gender violence at the top of the EU agenda.

PES Women called on Viviane Reding, European Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship, to take stock of this massive mobilization and to present concrete proposals to tackle this issue such as a clear commitment from the EU to fight violence against women and to raise awareness to the huge problem it represents. In this sense, PES Women supports the European Women’s Lobby demand the creation of a European Year Against Violence campaign. This event proved that it is possible to use our bodies to dance and to express our freedom and to never tolerate violence.



■ Make My Year! (2012)



■ One Billion Rising - Flash Mob with EWL (Brussels 2013)

Launch of “Equal Pay, It’s About Time” Campaign

(21st June 2013 Sofia)

PES Women launched the campaign “Equal Pay, it’s About time” in Sofia as the main PES Women Campaign for the European Elections to highlight the consequences of the economic crisis on women and put forward concrete demands and proposals.

“Equal Pay, it’s About Time!”

The campaign raises awareness about the **16,2% gender pay gap** that exists at European level and puts forward specific demands to close this gap, in advance of the 2014 European Elections. In this context, PES Women calls for:

- A common target to be established in order to reduce the Gender Pay Gap by 2% per year and per Member State for all age groups monitored by audits at European level.
- Clear and dissuasive sanctions in the European legislation in case of non-fulfilment of the objectives.
- A European Commissioner for Gender Equality and Women’s Rights to be fully engaged on this issue as of 2014.

At the launch, the campaign video was publicly screened for the first time. PES Women also shared its plans to develop a website that will gather activists, individual stories and international events and distributed post-cards.



■ Equal Pay, It's about Time (2013)

PES Women Demonstrate in Support of Spanish Women Sexual and Reproductive Rights

(Brussels, 29th January 2014)

On the 29th January, PES Women President Zita Gurmai together with her colleagues from the European Parliament, PES Activists and Young European Socialists along with women and men from civil society gathered in front of the Spanish Embassy in Brussels in support of Spanish Women’s free choice and right to sexual and reproductive rights. Under the motto of PES Women’s 2010 campaign “**My body, My rights**” PES Women President wanted to underline that sexual and reproductive rights should be accessible, affordable and a free choice to all women across Europe.

International

Inauguration of Barack Obama

(21st January 2013 in Washington D.C.)

Mid-January, PES Women President Zita Gurmai attended the **Inauguration of Barack Obama** in Washington. Zita Gurmai is thankful for his deep commitment to social values and fundamental rights during his first mandate, but she remarked that more has to be done in order to improve the status of gender equality in the country.

According to PES Women President Obama’s victory was, to a great extent, thanks to his deep commitment to gender issues and women’s

empowerment. It was an election won by women, for women. “Now, we have to ensure that President Obama is given all the necessary political backing to push forward his programme in support of gender equality, better public services and the woman’s right to decide over her own body. It is time to turn victory into action. It is time to put women’s rights at the top of the agenda”.

Meeting Role Models Across the Atlantic: Inspiring and Engaging

(3rd – 4th March 2013 Washington)

Invited as special guest to the **33rd Annual Parties of Your Choice Gala** organised by the Women’s Campaign Fund in March, the PES Women President travelled to the US. This cross- party initiative has been created to support women to run for office, an approach that is needed for European Women for the 2014 European Elections. Zita Gurmai also tackled global women’s issues during her meetings with Lakshmi Puri, the Acting Head of **UN Women** and Zainab Hawa Bangura, the UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

World Social Forum

(26th – 30th March 2013 Tunis)

The PES, together with the S&D Group in the European Parliament and the Global Progressive Forum actively participated in the 2013 **World Social Forum** in Tunis.

The President of PES Women Zita Gurmai, on behalf of the PES Delegation, met strong and engaged sisters from the MENA region and took part in the series of workshops and debates on gender equality issues and women's empowerment organised by the Global Progressive Forum. As a result, Progressive women from the region have connected with and are building the Women's Arab Social Democratic Forum (ASDF Women). Together we will keep fighting for the same progressive rights. The discussions have demonstrated that only unity among progressive voices will guarantee a place for women's rights.

Composition PES Women Bureau:

President

- Zita **GURMAI** - MSZP (Hungary)

Vice-Presidents

- Anna **KARAMANOU** - PASOK (Greece)
- Maria **BIJL** - PvdA (Netherlands)
- Tuula **PELTONEN** - SDP (Finland)
- Rovana **PLUMB** - PSD (Romania)

Bureau

- Olga **Zrihen** - PS (Belgium)
- Iratxe **García Pérez** - PSOE (Spain)
- Britta **Thomsen** - SD (Denmark)
- Karin **Junker** - SPD (Germany)
- Marianne **Mikko** - SDE (Estonia)
- Mojca **Kleva** - SD (Slovenia)
- Marysia **Lubcheva** - BSP (Bulgaria)
- Roulla **Mavrnikola** - EDEK (Cyprus)
- Edite **Estrela** - PS (Portugal)
- Andrea **Mautz** - SPÖ (Austria)
- Mercedes **Bresso** - Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions (Ex-Officio)
- Kaisa **Penny** - President of the YES (Ex-Officio)
- Ouafa **Hajji** - President of the Socialist International Women (Ex-Officio)



■ Marysia LUBCHEVA



■ Roulla MAVRNIKOLA



■ Andrea MAUTZ

PES Women - Presidency and Board (as elected on 19 October 2004)

President

- Zita **GURMAI** - MSZP (Hungary)

Vice-Presidents

- Olga **ZRIHEN** - PS (Belgium)
- Anna **KARAMANOU** - PASOK (Greece)
- Inger **SEGELSTRÖM** - SAP (Sweden)

Bureau

- Marie **Paukejová** - CSSD (Czech Republic)
- Karin **Junker** - SPD (Germany)
- Viola **Lazo** - LSDWP (Latvia)
- Saskia **Duives** - PvdA (Netherlands)
- Karin **Yrvin** - DNA (Norway)
- Edite **Estrela** - PS (Portugal)
- Teresa **Riera** - PSOE (Spain)

PES Women Elections Porto, 7 December 2006

President

- Zita **GURMAI** - MSZP (Hungary)

Vice-Presidents

- Olga **ZRIHEN** - PS (Belgium)
- Anna **KARAMANOU** - PASOK (Greece)
- Inger **SEGELSTRÖM** - SAP (Sweden)

Bureau

- Saskia **Duives** - PvdA, (Netherlands)
- Edite **Estrela** - PS (Portugal)
- Karin **Junker** - SPD (Germany)
- Marianna **Mikko** - SDE (Estonia)
- Rovana **Plumb** - PSD (Romania)
- Teresa **Riera** - PSOE (Spain)
- Laurence **Rossignol** - PS (France)
- Britta **Thomsen** - SD (Denmark)

Results of PES Women Elections 2009

President

- Zita **GURMAI** - MSZP (Hungary)

Vice-Presidents

- Olga **ZRIHEN** - PS (Belgium)
- Anna **KARAMANOU** - PASOK (Greece)
- Inger **SEGELSTRÖM** - SAP (Sweden)

Bureau

- Britta **Thomsen** - SD (Denmark)
- Marianne **Mikko** - SDE (Estonia)
- Laurence **Rossignol** - PS (France)
- Karin **Junker** - SPD (Germany)
- Edite **Estrela** - PS (Portugal)
- Rovana **Plumb** - PSD (Romania)
- Marja **Bijl** - PvdA (Netherlands)
- Sonja **Lokar** - SD (Slovenia)
- Iratxe **Garcia Perez** - PSOE (Spain)
- Denitza **Slateva** - BSP (Bulgaria)



■ PES Women (2012)

PES

Socialists & Democrats

WOMEN

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WOMEN
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CHAPTER

4

PES

Socialists & Democrats

WOMEN



MEMORIES, REFLECTIONS AND WISHES UPON THE JUBILEE OF 20 YEARS OF PES WOMEN

20 years of PES Women is an inspiring story. To begin with, the Standing Committee offered a platform for socialist and social democratic women on the European level. Thanks to its establishment, they could come together in the name of very specific, gender-sensitive understanding of the movement's pledge that another, fairer and more egalitarian society is possible. And even if these women came from sister parties, whose tradition in terms of women's organisations differed, they were determined to put those divergences aside and ensure that the European Union would invest in accomplishing gender equality in all of its policy dimensions.

The beginnings were very difficult, as frequently the Founding-Mothers of the PES Women Standing Committee had to battle prejudices. Inside of the movement, they needed to fight an idea that they would be "just a

minority demanding special rights", and outside of the limitations put in place by the existing legislation of the EU. Until the Treaty of Amsterdam, the EU would be limited in its prerogatives regarding equality between women and men to ensure that there is no discrimination at the workplace. There were no annual reports to assess progress even in this scope, and certain issues such as mobbing or gender based violence would not even be recognised as there were no common definitions. This is incomparable with what the EU-level agenda and debates now embrace. Therefore, nowadays, when there is such a backlash in the agenda of women's rights in Europe, the perseverance and power of conviction that led to those achievements should serve as clear inspiration. The fact that generation by generation the slogan "half Earth, half sky, half power" has been proudly maintained on, makes it compulsory for the contemporaries to honour the legacy of PES Women's 20 years of existence by continuing the battle.

What has to be remembered is that at the time of the launch of the PES Women Standing Committee, the organisational possibilities were very modest. But with the engagement of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament and of particular Members at the beginning, along with the support of the PES since its institutional independence – PES Women found both the resources and greater possibilities to act. None of that has, however, been taken for granted. It was achieved on a daily basis through the work of everyone committed, but especially that of the three subsequent Presidents: Karin Junker, Fiorella Ghilardotti and Zita Gurmai, who through their continuous efforts led the campaigns to change the culture of the movement. Thanks to those brave, uncompromising women, there is a common fight by both progressive women and men for equal gender representation in politics at present, and also thanks to whom gender equality is a transversal principle of the PES policies and also an integral part of the movement's agenda.

To that end, PES Women have touched upon the lives of many. As an organisation, it has enabled formulation of the core policy lines, has taken on mobilisation for the particular goals and has empowered many activists. As individuals, members engaged in the PES Women Standing Committee and then later in PES Women, these women have been an inspiration for comrades across the continent and the globe, have been partners in struggle for policy makers of different governing and legislative levels, as they themselves have also become leaders and mentors for the next generations to come. For all those involved, it has been significant to be a part of this endeavour in so many different ways, which can only be expressed fully by the women themselves taking the floor in this book. And that is precisely what this Chapter is about.

■ 4.1 PES Women: what has been the most significant achievement?

Every organisation, as also with every individual, will over the course of time experience both successes and defeats. They are inevitable, becoming a factor that influences further development. Each of them in itself presents a test – being about grasping the momentum and advancing accordingly, or a disappointment that imposes a change of strategy and an even harder battle towards the achievement of an ultimate goal. This determines and shapes the spirit, which in case of PES Women seems to have always been about pursuing a vision, manifesting courage of conviction and persevering in it political action. As **Elena Valenciano**, PES Vice-President, MEP and the top candidate of PSOE in the 2014 European Elections put it: *For over a century, we European socialist women have been at the forefront of the struggle for the recognition of our rights as free and independent citizens who are responsible for their own actions. For the last twenty years, we have also been helped in this by the PES Women, an organisation which has succeeded better than any other in managing the synergies of socialist women, as well as in*



■ Elena VALENCIANO

boosting and promoting them in Europe and beyond. These two decades have seen significant political and social achievements for a great many European women. Nowadays, our presence in the universities of our continent is comparable to that of men, we take an equal part in the electoral lists, and the governments of many countries have adopted equality legislation, as well as legislation against gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive health legislation.

This assessment of a historical role played by the PES Women is embodied also in how **Brigitte Bataille**, the first ever advisor of the PES Women Standing Committee, sees the two decades of struggle: *The story of the PES Women is the story of all those leaders who over the last quarter of a century have put their wisdom, their strength and their vision at the service of equality for all women in Europe and in the world. The PES Women Standing Committee has been successfully chaired by strong personalities such as Karin Junker, Fiorella Ghilardotti, and since 2004 by Zita Gurmai. They created an added value by effective networking, the sharing of information, experiences and good practices with socialist women representatives from all over Europe. In this light, the accession of Sweden and Finland in 1995 was a giant step forward to promote gender equality policies. It is also the year when the idea of gender-mainstreaming has been formally featured at the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing. Initiatives taken by the PES Women have permitted socialist parties to be at the forefront of progressive policies, which after 2004 gathered strong support with the enlargement to Central and Eastern European Countries.*

The role of PES Women in creating historical momentum and being protagonists in terms of enabling further integration of the socialist family

in Europe in the last two decades through four enlargements¹ has been of great significance. This has always been valued on both the sides of the unification processes, as attested by **Sonja Lokar**, Executive Director of the CEE Network for Gender Issues: *PES Women were established just ahead of the CEE Network for Gender Issues (1994), which is a network of left wing women politicians and civil society activists in the transition countries. It was of crucial importance for us, left wing feminists in CEE and SEE to be in direct contact with the PES Women at all times, to transfer the best practices from the sister party women organisations united in PES Women to our countries, to get the support of PES Women in every crucial moment of putting gender equality on the mainstream agenda first of our parties and trade unions in transition countries, and then on the agenda of our national mainstream politics. This close cooperation led to the development of CEE and SEE socialist and SD parties as the flagships of gender equality in their nations, to their initiative to establish a Stability Pact Task Force, to their crucial role in nationwide women coalitions which have successfully fought for legal quotas and parity, for gender equality state mechanisms, for the institution of women's rights ombudspersons, for strong legislation against violence against women, for affordable, secular, public childcare, against any attempt to strip women of their right to freedom of choice, legal, safe, free of charge abortion. Without direct lobbying of the PES Women President Zita Gurmai for the strong and well designed quota for example in Serbian legislation in 2011, today we would not have 33% of women in the Serbian Parliament, where the share*

¹ 1995, 2004, 2007, 2013.

of women MPs in 1994 was 3%! Without this cooperation it would have been impossible that women from the SEE were the ones to imitate the first parity campaign of the European Women's Lobby before the 2004 EU elections and to bring in the second one a new impetus in 2009. (...). The result of all this joint work was that new member states did not bring down the overall share of women in the EU Parliament in 2004, and that the share of women in the EU Parliament in 2009 has for the first time after 10 years increased, from 30% to 35%. The fruitful cooperation of the CEE Network for Gender Issues and PES Women continues now also in all efforts of the European socialist, labour and SD parties, helping our sisters in Arab spring countries to fight for their rights in really dangerous and difficult circumstances.

Following the thread of the internal development that the establishment of the PES Women Standing Committee catalysed within the Party of European Socialists, it is beyond any further doubt that this organisation defined a political and cultural change that has taken place within the PES. The nature of this transformation is further elaborated in Chapter 4.4, however since its recognition belongs to the significant achievements, it is relevant to quote **Mercedes Bresso**, 1st Vice President of the Committee of the Regions, who stated that: *PES Women have been a key component in the evolution of the Party of European Socialists, successfully taking forward gender equality issues across member parties and organisations. This has required relentless efforts, huge enthusiasm and unequivocal commitment by all the people behind PES Women. In her capacity as President, Zita Gurmai has been leading us by example in the battle to raise awareness about gender issues, often considered of lesser importance even by*



■ Mercedes BRESSO

politicians of our own political family. I have had the honour to be involved extensively in the initiatives of PES Women, representing the PES Group in the Committee of the Regions. I can assure you that the campaign calling for universally accessible, high quality and affordable Childcare, as well as the campaign for Equal Pay have been highly relevant for progressive local and regional authorities across the EU. The current mobilisation of PES Women in defence of women's sexual and reproductive rights inspires us all to resist the conservative backlash and confirms its key role in promoting some non-negotiable values of the European socialist family. I am truly proud to be part of this great organisation!

This opinion is shared also by **Pia Locatelli**, former President of the Socialist International Women and Italian Member of Parliament, who discusses the most important accomplishments: *Visibility! This is to me very important. PES Women has reached this goal; not so for many women in many parties. Women too often care about doing things but not letting people know they have; and - Coordination: sharing commitments and campaigns makes our work more productive; and -involvement of PES in gender issues and our campaigns.*

The above quote of Pia Locatelli puts emphasis on yet another important issue. The establishment of the PES Women Standing Committee meant that there was a space, a platform, at which women activists could come and which could be used for the discussion and development of policies. In parallel with the organisational developments, it was also gaining a greater capacity to act – still remaining however a haven for those who would engage and speak on behalf of its cause. This great team spirit is echoed in the words of **Anna Karamanou**, former MEP and Vice-President of PES Women: *As a PES Women vice-president, for the last ten years, I became part of a wonderful team of women, which under the dynamic leadership of Zita Gurmai has given weight and impetus to the work on gender equality,*

within our political family, on both European and national level. Our overall strategic objective has motivated and has united us to achieve a gender equal and just society. We have been successful in raising awareness on the multiple benefits of gender equality and in mainstreaming gender in all PES bodies, and member parties all over Europe. During the last twenty years we have made gender more visible, central in PES key policy documents and dominant in the debate on Social Europe, which I count as our greatest success. PES Women have also influenced, through well-aimed political interventions, the shaping of EU Gender Equality Policies. We have contributed to the adoption of the EU Roadmap and the Gender Pact, outlining priority areas for the period 2006-2010 and we insisted that gender equality, should be enshrined in the Lisbon Treaty, among the fundamental European values.

And despite PES Women's development into a well-established, long running organisation, it should not be underestimated how much power it does create by simply empowering those who find it a space to come together, unite and pave the way forward. This principle also is cherished by the younger generation, as **Kaisa Penny**, President of YES – Young European Socialists and herself a candidate of SDP in the 2014 elections, said: *Bringing (socialist) women together at the European level has great value in itself. It is essential that we organize at all levels to continue the battle for more equal societies, Europe is not, and should not be, any different from the national level in this respect. PES Women have also done a great job in raising issues to the European agenda and reminding us about the issues that still remain unsolved, be they gender pay gap, need for fair and accessible child care, or equal pensions.*

The growing influence of PES Women within the European socialist family is also what **Daša Šašić Šilović**, Chair of the CEE Network for Gender Issues, cites among the three main achievements over the last two decades. Her list features the following points: (1) mainstreaming gender equality goals into socialist and social-democratic political party platforms and documents, as well as the substantive increase of women in political party leadership; (2) gender equality and women's concerns have become a part of the PES agenda and have been espoused by SP/SDP and progressive political parties as a *sine qua non*. (3) awareness raising regarding gender concerns among the electorate in individual parties by empowering political leadership, especially women politicians, to articulate and fight for gender equality and women's rights.

This spirit of comradeship and “sisterhood” within PES Women translated eventually also into a mutually reinforcing relationship between the PES and PES Women. Even though the beginnings are still remembered as rough (and this book enumerates the reasons in the earlier chapters), this has fundamentally changed, particularly in the last decade. This is mirrored in the warm words extended by **Philip Cordery**, PES Secretary General 2004 – 2012 and a member of French Parliament: *During my mandate as PES Secretary General I was honoured to share the fights of PES Women. Articulating the priorities and the objectives of the PES and its women organization was a clear priority during all these years. It was a pleasure to work in close cooperation with PES Women President, Zita Gurmai, PES Women vice-presidents and bureau members and the efficient staff including Emma Reynolds (now a British MP) and Lesia Radelicki. During ten years PES Women led efficient campaigns in order to raise awareness on inequalities between women and men and developed*

constructive proposals to bridge the gap: equal Pay, women's pensions, right of control over one's own body, protection against domestic violence, defence of sexual and reproductive rights, child care available for everyone, stopping trafficking against women, gender equality in politics and business ...

Recognition and great respect for an amazing contribution of PES Women is also the essence of the quote offered by **Ton Beumer**, PES Secretary General 1999 – 2004: *Over the last decades the socialist women movement has been a crucial player in ensuring that the EU institutions have been supportive in strengthening the position of women and girls in the labour market, education and society in general.*

Following that, it is of course beyond any doubt that although changing the nature of progressive organisations and the progressive political agenda was the first step, the long-term objective was to profoundly change the EU approach towards gender equality. It had to become a part of legislation and a part of action plans. This is also why putting the quest for equality between women and men “on the top” was of such great importance. Recognition of the successful mission conducted by the PES Women is the essence of the quote of **Marianne Mikko**, PES Women Executive Committee Member and former member of the European Parliament: *I think that the most important achievements of the 20 years' work of PES Women is that Europe has started to take women's problems seriously, has started recognizing that there are serious problems that need solutions. Lots of countries have already found solutions for different problems. For example some countries have created a legislative system for gender equality in professional, political and economic life, with a system of quotas. The successes in progressive countries encourage women of the other countries also to demand and achieve the same results. PES Women has had a big impact in achieving these results with its consistent work during 20 years and*



■ Ton BEUMER



■ Marianne MIKKO

through a lot of important projects that are still in progress, the results of which we hope to see very soon.

Achieving a greater recognition that the women's rights agenda should be at the core of both the progressive and EU-wide agenda is also what **Ivana Bartoletti**, Chair of the Fabian Women and candidate of the Labour Party in the 2014 European Elections, underlines as the legacy of PES Women for the last 20 years. She particularly underlined that this has always been the case, but only recently has become understood as a truly common fight of the movement: *First, PES Women have achieved by putting women's jobs at the heart of our policies and campaigns. We now recognise that the gender pay gap is an issue we have to tackle. Second, PES Women have brought together women from all across Europe through showcasing how we have 'the same rights and the same fights': PES women seminars and events have always been important incubators of ideas on how we can best 'mainstream' feminism. Third, PES women have championed quotas for more diversity in company boardrooms, as key to achieve a better and more sustainable economy, as part of an ongoing and important campaign for more equal representation for women in public, corporate and political life.*

The more tangible measurement of the success of PES Women is of course connected with the legislation that was enacted and which substantially changed the situation of all women and men living and working in the EU. **Petroula Nteledimou**, President of ECOSY – Young European Socialists 2009 – 2011, noted: *That we managed to put women, equality, and gender justice top on the agenda of the PES. But much more that we managed to put it higher on the agenda of conservatives, too. PES Women has not been working only for socialist women; its achievements reflect on all European women's lives.*



■ Ivana BARTOLETTI

As recalled before, the first steps were aimed at broadening the EU treaties' prerogatives. Instead of only speaking about non-discrimination at the workplace, the principle had to become a binding cause for action. There had to be efforts put in place to seek a better framework to ensure the real socio-economic independence of women. **Achim Post**, Secretary General of PES and member of German Parliament sees the progress regarding this agenda as PES Women's achievement: *The socialist movement has been the frontrunner of the fight for women's rights and for equality. Thanks to our fight, we have been able to improve women's economic independence, set up binding anti-discrimination rules, but also provide grounds for a better balance of power and shared responsibilities among women and men.*

The pursuit of this agenda meant that PES Women had to introduce new elements to the debate on the EU level. Otherwise, neither the picture of the situation was complete nor was there a possibility of acting in a complex, cohesive and coordinated manner. Acknowledgement of this is mirrored in the words of **Teresa Madurell**, PSOE Member of the European Parliament: *Following the massive incorporation of women in the labour market, I think our strength lies in having put the finger on all the discrimination against women suffered in the workplace, such as pension rights, equal pay, quotas in boards or reconciliation of professional and family life. We have gone a long way, but a long way still lies ahead of us, which makes our fight as relevant as 20 year ago.*

Example of an issue that PES Women have been and continue struggling for is the gender pay gap, which remains the leading theme of the ongoing campaign. **Marja Bijl**, PES Women Vice-President, sees the struggle for closing it as particularly important these days: *(...) Another thing we - PES Women - can be proud of is the fact that our gender pay gap campaign is a substantial part of the PES campaign for the EU 2014 elections. It is another*



■ Achim POST



■ Teresa MADURELL

example of why PES Women is a vital part of the party that cannot be missed. I am honoured and proud to be part of that organisation.

While the gender pay gap is one of the key points that expresses a fight for the realisation of the principle of equal treatment and also thereby equal access to wealth, the agenda regarding gender equality at the workplace is naturally much broader. Another issue that is now incorporated on the EU level thanks to the legacy of PES Women is the principle of enabling the reconciliation of professional and private life for both women and men. This is the sentiment of **Olga Zrihen**, Member of Belgian Senate: *I perceive the PSE Women as European as a protagonist of the fight for empowerment. It has strived for ensuring equality of welfare and power, and it has been a key actor in enabling further emancipation of women. The core achievement is how far we have gout in terms of making that possible for women to take their own decisions, make their own choices and find the most suitable ways to reconcile the professional and private lives.*

This evaluation is shared by **Mojca Kleva Kekuš**, Member of the European Parliament and candidate of SD Slovenia in the 2014 elections, who notes: *The socialist women movement has a rich history of efforts that helped women improve their lives with hope, possibilities and rights. It is very difficult to choose only one achievement as all the efforts have been equally important. PES Women have stood up for the problem of reconciling work and family life, gender pay gap, gender pension gap, women on boards, violence against women, human trafficking, sexual and reproductive health and rights, etc. To put it very clearly: With the help of PES Women, women's rights are gaining more and more power and are being considered a lot more than 20 years ago.*

The progress that was achieved, even if not sufficient and currently under both post-crisis and conservative-imposed pressures, still meant a tangible



■ Mojka KLEVA KEKUŠ

transformation of lives. **Anna Colombo**, the Secretary General of the S&D Group, describes this change: *I could list so many achievements, so many common battles and work in progress, but for very personal reasons I would like to point at all the successes on reconciling work and family life. From the targets of the Lisbon strategy on early school and kindergartens, to paternity and maternity leave, our fight allowed many women (myself included!) to access full time employment and even important responsibilities. However, much remains to be done, the crisis and the Right in power have slowed down and in some cases even reversed the positive trend put in place by us in some countries and in Europe. As far as the S&D Group is concerned, I think the fact all the Presidents of PES Women have been active Members of the Group has contributed a lot to maintaining women's fights and concerns at the core of our parliamentary activities.*

The above mentioned reconciliation can and should be enabled in a number of ways. This is particularly important when the overall political agenda gets developed. To catch up with ambitions such as building Europe into a knowledge-based economy, it is important that access to education and training is indeed equal. This is why the legacy of PES Women in this area should be recognised and cultivated, following the words of **Tuula Pelttonen**, Vice-President of Socialist International Women: *PES Women has promoted women's rights to study and work. We have been improving the child care system and because of that women can have children and also be active in their working life. PES Women has also fought against prostitution and improved women's rights to their own body.*

The complexity of the issues consequently means that holistic approaches have always been and remain very important in the struggle for gender equality. This has always prevented “cherry picking” and was also a way to defend the agenda against the threat of “rotten compromises”. For that



■ Anna COLOMBO



■ Tuula PELTONEN

reason, the PES Women work that laid the ground for the PES Women Charter and then inspired the European oneserves as one of the primary main achievements for **Maria Badia i Cutchet**, Member of the European Parliament and the former Vice President of the S&D Group: *From my point of view, the most important achievements by the socialist women's movement over the last 20 years were the Women's Rights Charter, established by the Commission in 2010, and the adoption of the European Protection Order for violence victims.*

Though the jubilee is a moment of summaries and celebrations of achievements, it is clear that the struggle must and will continue. While the legacy and the history provide inspiration and a reminder of the initial mobilising ambition, new benchmarks need to be continuously developed. Thus, **Marysia Lubcheva**, Member of the European Parliament and Member of the PES Women Executive Committee, observed: *We, as socialist women, are working tirelessly to achieve two main goals – changing the prejudice that women could not contribute equally to the economic and social development of Europe, and ensuring their equal and respectful representation in policy-making. Looking back to the recent years, the fact that today Europe recognizes equality between women and men not as a principle, but as an indispensable part of democracy, rule of law and horizontal policy-making at EU level is an achievement we can all be proud of.*

As for the way forward, **Britta Thomsen**, member of the European Parliament (2004-2014) and Member of the PES Women Executive Committee cited the issues where progress was achieved, but requires further efforts. She regards these as: *Quotas in politics, better possibilities for safe and legal abortion; more women on the labour market.*

While commenting on the main achievements and setting the new ambition



■ Maria BADIA I CUTCHET

for the next two decades, **Sergei Stanishev**, President of the PES and former Prime Minister of Bulgaria further added: *In the last 20 years they have fought for their beliefs and won many of their battles. In my opinion, one of the most important achievements has been the legalization of abortion in many Member States. Every woman must have the right to take the best decision for her; this is not an issue where Institutions can take the decision on a woman's behalf. There are still countries denying this right to women, the fight must be continued and I have all trust that PES Women's activism on this is essential.*



■ Sergey STANISHEV

■ 4.2 PES Women: why is it important to organise within this organisation nowadays?

The proud record of the achievements of the PES in general and PES Women in particular in terms of advancing the gender equality agenda in Europe is certainly an inspiration. It has been already stated that the best way to honour that proud tradition is to continue by both pursuing the issues that have not yet been fully realised and also by setting new benchmarks that would respond more adequately to the needs and ambitions of contemporary women.

In the past, the core mission was to set a gender sensitive programme, to put the issues on the top of the movement's agenda and forge the change that would enlarge the scope of the EU policies in this dimension. While at this point in time there are numerous legal provisions and important programmes that have been launched because of that work (such as Daphne, for example), the important question to ask now is about the drivers for the current generation. What underpins the engagement of its current members? What is the essence of the cause? What is the mission that the PES sees the PES Women embarking on these days?

It would seem that among those who have kindly shared their view for this publication, it is possible to find three categories of responses. First of all, it is important to organise within PES Women in order to preserve the achievements and continue pursuing the fight for social progress. Gender equality has not been fully achieved in Europe yet, and hence there are many areas and many problems for which politics have not yet provided necessary answers and actions. Second, the point made by many is that especially now in the aftermath of the economic crisis, the agenda of equal opportunities is under enormous pressures. After the application of austerity and after all the cuts applied to social policies, there is a need for a decisive recovery plan. Third, the current political trends in Europe allowed the conservatives to implement policies that meant a backlash for women's rights. There is a fear that unless fought against, this trend will continue – particularly so if the right wing extremists and populists were to indeed persist in gaining influence.

Within the first group of respondents, **Anna Colombo** not only frames the mission at hand, but also offers a concrete set of proposals how the S&D Group in the European Parliament hopes to continue contributing to the struggle for gender equality in Europe: [we should continue to organise because it is] *very easy: because to involve women in politics and decision making processes is not only much more just and more democratic, but incredibly more efficient. I think that the core of our cause is just that: to fight for equality within our societies is the essence, the very core principle for building a much more inclusive, and therefore so better functioning European economic and social model. You can see the link between equality, including gender*

equality, and the crisis. One of the reasons for us to heavily struggle against the wrong answer of the Right is precisely the fact that such conservative responses created and are still creating many more inequalities. In this context, women have been hit more than men according to statistics on employment, poverty, welfare, human rights. It is clearly time for a 180° change. As far as the Group is concerned, I would like to mention in particular our internal rule related to our most important organ, the Bureau, where we must have at least 40% of each gender represented. During the current mandate we did so well at a certain point that men were under represented - in the “historical” spirit of the rule, such an imbalance has been tolerated!

Thus, according to Anna Colombo, the struggle for gender equality is therefore at the core of providing a progressive answer to the social challenge at present. This is also what **Maria Badia i Cutchet** sees as essential, asserting: *The essence of the socialist feminist cause is to set up and boost a gender-based holistic vision and action in our contribution to the designing and building of our future society. In other words, we have to put gender mainstreaming at the very core of our ideas and proposals.* Similarly, **Pia Locatelli** summarised that PES Women's activism: *makes it visible that socialists are women and men and that gender issues regard women and men. Too often, still nowadays, people, both involved and not-involved in politics, think that politics and policies are neutral. Being gender-neutral means being gender-blind. Therefore there is a need to strive for equality in diversity, for equal dignity in diversity. This is a principle. As for actions: ensuring fundamental rights such as right to self-determination, sexual and reproductive rights, right to employment... all of them mean simply a right to a decent life.*

They translate into empowerment of women, and they are a factor enabling women's leadership.

The understanding that there is much ahead to strive for is shared by **Kaisa Penny**, who found her personal motivation in the critical assessment that: *Neither our societies, political system, nor our parties have yet reached equality, and as long as this is the case, a women's movement is needed. My great hope is that one day the women's movement would manage to make itself redundant, that we would have a society where equality was not a goal but reality. Unfortunately this looks a further away utopia now than it did a few years ago. The economic crisis hits women worse than men, and takes us more than a few steps back. Equality is one of the core values of our movement, yet we seem to need specific organisations to remind us of the necessity of it in the policy making processes. I believe the essence of the socialist women's movement is to function as a conscience of our movement, and to educate always a new generation of socialists on the necessity of feminism in socialism.*

The message of Kaisa Penny is also affirmed by her predecessor in the position of President of Young European Socialists – **Petroula Nteledimou**, who answered that for her it is important to persevere on: *Because there is still much to achieve. Especially in times of crisis, as the last years have been, and in times of big changes, as the next years will be, women need to have a strong voice and a dynamic presence in politics. This needs to be done both through our socialist parties and – in a more distinct and explicit way – through PES Women, which has to continue being the avant-garde of feminist argumentation and action in Europe!*

The appeals by Kaisa Penny and Petroula Nteledimou, in which they both respectively call for the strengthening of the progressive women's voice and reiterating the ambition to achieve a greater social progress, are shared by **Marianne Mikko**. She summarises that the reason for progressive feminists to embark on the mission these days is: *To draw more attention to women's problems, situation, and position in professional and private life.*

This means continuing along the path of strengthening internally, whilst seeking to make profound political and societal change externally. While both tasks have to be undertaken simultaneously, as regards the first one, **Marysia Lubcheva** commented: *Gender equality is an essential part of the socialist idea itself and PES Women has always been a champion of this policy, the driving force behind the strong participation of women in public life. The essence of the socialist feminist cause is “equal rights, equal responsibilities” - this generates more sustainability and wider dissemination of the ideas of the European socialists.* A similar position is presented by **Britta Thomsen**, who wrote: *Women's issues are political issues and a core issue for socialists. Looking at Europe today and at some conservative movements, it is clear that the rights that have been obtained cannot be taken for granted and have to be safeguarded. There are still challenges and improvements to be made for women's issues. The essence of our cause is to improve conditions for women in general, in life and on the labour market, and to ensure sexual and reproductive health and rights.*

In that spirit, also **Tuula Peltonen** reaffirmed that: *We need women's organisation for socialists today. Gender equality is not achieved yet. There is for example still too big a pay gap between*

women and men. The equal pay campaign of PES Women is a very good way to fight for equality. She is echoed by **Åsa Westlund**, former ECOSY Feminist Network Coordinator, Member of the European Parliament and SAP candidate to National Parliament in the 2014 elections, who warns what could happen if the fight was to be ever given up: *Somehow, discrimination against women in for example the labour market, as well as issues such as pro-choice, always seem to disappear from the agenda if women don't organize and themselves raise these issues constantly.*

More of the respondents warned that the achievements should not be taken for granted. This is why the work has to intensify: on one side continuously modernising and enriching the agenda, while on the other defending the corner stones that became the turning points of the European women's history in the past. This reflection guides **Elena Valenciano**, whose comment provides a clear bridge between the first and the second group of comments: *(...) big gaps exist across Europe. Even where there has been greater progress in terms of women's rights and freedoms, they still face major difficulties to access the labour market on an equal footing. We have lower salaries; we are very often underrepresented in political life, not to mention in the boards of directors of companies; and, in many cases, reconciling work and family life is virtually impossible. There is no irreversible conquest and, just like women's suffrage suffered setbacks, the achievements of these last years are now facing the challenge of the most ancient conservatism. Using the economic crisis as an excuse, we are witnessing how the progress we thought would have no turning back is now being reversed, if not jeopardized. This is the case in Spain, due to the proposed amendment to the law on the voluntary termination of pregnancy, which will lead us more than 30 years backwards. We Spanish women won't be able to freely decide on our own maternity anymore, as others will decide for us. And this is unbearable. For all these reasons, if we look ahead to the future taking into account the challenges*



■ Åsa WESTLUND

Europe is going to face in the next 20 years, we have to do so being well aware that we will have to work in order to preserve what has already been achieved and prevent a step backwards, at the same time that we set new targets.

The impact of the economic crisis is of a great concern, especially to women – on whom the consequences both directly and indirectly have hit so hard. In relation to that, **Anna Karamanou** noted that: *Under the current financial crisis, the rocketing unemployment and the rise of the far right, the situation of women in EU is under threat. Historically the right has always been hostile towards feminism and equal rights. Since these values lie at the core of social-democratic theory and practice, the socialist parties must keep supporting women's organisations and join forces with PES Women to eliminate unequal gender hierarchies, deconstruct patriarchy, achieve a gender balance in all democratic institutions and a fair share of political power and domestic care. Recent studies have shown that gender inequality is a clear waste of human resources and has a high political, economic and social cost.*

In that sense, the costs of the predicament in all three dimensions: economic, social and political, have proven harsh to women. They endangered measures put in place to enable the socio-economic emancipation of women, with “and thus threaten the earlier celebrated accomplishments that promoted a reconciliation between professional and private lives. This has meant decreasing rights and opportunities, sadly described by **Ivana Bartoletti**: *All across Europe, women have been bearing the brunt of the cost of living crisis; women are more likely than men to be low-income earners, and women are more likely than men to work in the public*

sector which has borne the brunt of austerity measures. Cuts to public services as well as the resurfacing of long-gone stereotypes are challenging women's independence and wellbeing. Women's emancipation is often a slippery road – but socialists must fight for it. Feminism is back, with a new generation of younger women entering politics with a clear awareness that there is still a long way to go: the Left has to embrace that, everywhere in Europe. Ed Miliband, the leader of the Labour Party in Britain spoke at his Hugo Young lecture this week – not only of the inequality of opportunity, and income – but also of the inequality of power. This has long been the essence of the socialist feminist cause. When we look at history, we can recognise that women have been placed institutionally at a disadvantage in many aspects of life – and that major political decisions often fail to recognise the impact of those decisions on women. The essence of a socialist feminist cause, therefore, is also about creating the systems and institutions which equalise power between women and men at different levels, and which build and create a more participative politics and economy for women.

The views of Ivana Bartoletti closely match the views of the British Fabian women organisations, in particular, but are also echoed elsewhere in Europe. This proves that the deteriorating trend is most unfortunately a pan-EU trend and, hence, requires a pan-European answer, serving as an impetus for PES Women to stand up and mobilise yet again. In this regard, Slovenian **Mojca Kleva Kekuš**, observed that: *Nowadays, the economic situation influences all parts of life, also women's rights. Women's rights that have been achieved throughout so many years are in danger due to the conservative backlash. We are again discussing topics that were forgotten or achieved even 100 years ago. It is unacceptable that in 2014 we are*

discussing the right of abortion, the payment of gynaecological exams or sexual education... These rights were achieved years ago, however, the governing conservatives are trying to put women's rights far behind the society we're living in nowadays. That is why it is important that we do not forget how hard it was to get these rights and that we don't let conservatism get in the way of rights that women deserve.

Even though the economic crisis and its consequences were the primary causes of the first wave of a backlash, it is in fact the conservative rule over Europe and their crushing austerity policies that respondents blame for the current, negative balance in terms of the gender equality agenda. **Daša Šašić Šilović** describes the developments in the following words: *The essence of the socialist feminist cause is the achievement and respect of human rights, those of women and men, in all spheres of life – political, economic, social, cultural – collective and individual/personal. And we are still far from achieving equal rights and equality of women in our European societies. As a result of the economic crisis, as well as the deteriorating social and economic situation of citizens, women and men, the conservative, ultra-religious, political forces and ideology are on the rise. This ideology, encapsulated in right wing politics, with strong support of the Church, is directly infringing on women's rights especially their reproductive rights. PES Women, within the overall PES, are instrumental in fighting against this conservative backlash and pushing the boundaries of women's human rights further. If we did not have PES Women we would need to invent it to address the socially and even civilisationally precarious situation we are living in today!*

And the power of solidarity arising existence of PES Women in the time of such a crucial battle against the conservative backlash in Europe is what can offer as the binding element to create the strongest and most effective resistance platform. Looking at the example of what is happening in Europe and particularly in Spain, Achim Post commented: *The fight of PES Women is more than ever essential. We see a conservative backlash everywhere in Europe. And when people and women are oppressed by their conservative government, as it is the case in Spain today, they turn towards their European partners for support.* And to that extent the cooperation and mutual responsibility for each other extended within the PES Women is seen as both strengthening and encouraging for our Spanish comrades, in particular, these days. This is expressed by **Teresa Madurell**: *As we are painfully experiencing with the conservative abortion law recently proposed in Spain, women's free choice and access to sexual and reproductive rights are experiencing an intolerable backlash. For women in Spain, to feel a united socialist support from all around Europe helps to feel stronger, reinforces our arguments, and last, but not least, warms our hearts. The essence of the socialist feminist cause is simple: women and men must equally share.*

In agreement with both Daša Šašić Šilović and Teresa Madurell regarding the threats" and the need to mobilise chances of the next generation is" with "as quickly as possible to prevent serious harm from this backlash with chances of the next generation is **Katarína Neved'alová**, Member of the European Parliament and Vice President of the PES. She reflected: *the ideas of Socialist Women are more important today than ever before. Nobody would believe that after 100 years of struggling for real equality some*



■ Katarína NEVEDÁLOVÁ

political forces would still question the relevance and legitimacy of this fight. The conservative views are prevailing in some countries and I am afraid that decisions of the important topics such as anti-choice laws are turning us back to the Middle Ages. PES Women have been here for many years to remind us, the left movement of Europe and the world, of the importance of equality for everybody, of personal choices and of support for the weaker ones. When you see the courage of our women you believe that we can win every fight. Unfortunately, true equality is still not a reality but with people like Zita Gurmai I know it will change. They won't give up. The voice of women should be loud and heard, it is the voice of half of the population of Europe. We don't want to sit at home and protect the fireplace. Our place is in the lead on future decisions and as women we should be demanding the chance to shape the future. The campaign on the gender pay gap is one we should continue until its successful end. If socialist women don't stand up for our rights, the conservatives won't. This is the only movement which can bring a better future for all the female population - a future in which it won't matter if you are born as girl or boy because your chances will be equal and you could be anybody you wish, the professor, scientist, prime minister or astronaut.

■ 4.3 PES Women: what are the personal stories to be remembered?

The PES Women Standing Committee, as well as its successor PES Women, has advanced as an organisation thanks to the tireless efforts of many dedicated individuals. These comrades enthusiastically engaged in debates, drafted documents and helped implement diverse campaigns, all of which has contributed to the legacy celebrated in this publication.

But what is equally important and has not yet been given a proper space is the fact that PES Women has become a space, a nexus of connections and a reference point for conversations. All of those entering into the structure have gained an incredible experience, a great network of supportive sisterhood and an incomparable record of personal memories. They are what make the legacy of PES Women as an organisation so special. It has been a transformative experience for everyone involved.

As mentioned before, a reconstruction of the beginnings of the PES Women history was possible especially thanks to the support

of Karin Junker. She had been so kind to share her recollections, diverse materials from her private archives, and also to devote a vast amount of time to a handful of interviews. The portrait painted in Chapter 1 is however particularly enriched by the memories of **Pia Locatelli**, who wrote: *I cannot forget the first time the project of setting up a Women's Standing Committee was discussed in a PES meeting. We were in Edinburgh, holding a preparatory meeting of a European Leaders Summit, if I am not wrong. I can remember the reluctance of the Socialist leaders even to accept the idea of an organisation of women within the PES. Some of us took the floor. The most convincing was Karin Junker, she was already a leader and the way she spoke was really charismatic. She was, rightly, the first chair of the Women's Standing Committee. The sensational feeling that was inspired by herewith creating a new platform and having a solid base to cherish new hopes for advancement is also what **Daša Šašić Šilović** recalled as groundbreaking: [My most important personal memory is] when PES Women was established 20 years ago. That moment meant the consolidation of our aspirations, the recognition of the gender equality issue in our movement and the promise that things can change for women in Europe. And we have come a long way.*

This above mentioned idea of uniting and being there for one another as a real progressive sisterhood, the new capacity to mobilise across the Union and act jointly on the EU level have always been cherished as incredibly empowering. And a sense of belonging to a greater group that believed and strived for a greater goal is consequently conveyed in a number of memories shared. In that context, **Tuula Peltonen** wrote enthusiastically: *I love all my sisters in PES Women. The happy meetings and all*

*these family pictures! PES Women gives to every woman the possibility to promote the ideas which are most urgent to put forward. I think women look at the world a little bit differently than men. It is also richness. Similarly, **Britta Thomsen** stated: There are so many [memories]. I have met so many interesting, dedicated and capable women and I have learnt so much from women from all over Europe.*

Indeed, among the memories offered especially by the Board members, it was frequently echoed that solidarity within PES Women meant supporting one another also by challenging each other to strive further. This meant critically reviewing the existing order, tirelessly debating alternatives and embarking on battles – with end goals that often appeared as akin to a “mission impossible. This is the sentiment expressed by **Teresa Madurell**: *I have very fond memories from my time serving as a member of the PES Women Bureau. We were a group of feminist women with a clear commitment to increase the presence and visibility of women in politics, convinced that this would benefit the political action of our party. We had endless but very interesting discussions about gender politics and we formalised and built a productive network of communication and support among women in politics from the various European Socialist parties, which is still very much alive. **Marja Bijl** shares the sentiment: I have met, and worked with, strong and able women who were all committed to the fight for a gender equal society. They just would not give up, even though it sometimes feels like an endless battle with a horizon that cannot be seen. And in mentioning this I must also stress that in my opinion we wouldn't have achieved anything without the excellent staff of PES Women!*

The hard day-to-day work honoured here by Marja Bijl was brought into fruition primarily by three Policy Advisors. These were Brigitte Bataille, Emma Reynolds and Lesia Radelicki. For the purpose of this particular publication, two of them were able to offer insights concerning this story – which provides a bit of sparkling light from behind the curtains. For **Brigitte Bataille**, the core was the experience of working with a remarkable team: *Over the years, I have had the chance of working with extraordinary women. I cannot mention them all, but let me highlight the contribution of Lissy Gröner, Anna Karamanou, Elena Valenciano and Pia Locatelli, who have played a leading role in shaping a European socialist policy towards equal opportunities for both, women and men. While, for **Lesia Radelicki**, it all started from an internship which then turned out to be a long-term, exciting and challenging undertaking: My first day and first mission at PES Women was on 8 March 2006, as an intern alongside Emma Reynolds, PES Women Adviser at the time, at the European Parliament. We were calling on MEPs to sign the immense PES anti-trafficking banner. It was clear, PES Women was not just a standing Committee of the PES, but a real movement that brings active women and politicians, including Prime Ministers, together who want to put forward progressive proposals, leave a clear socialist stamp on EU legislation and also mobilise women and men across Europe that believe in the same cause as us; gender equality and women's rights. Almost 8 years later – and thus almost 50% of PES Women's existence – I am convinced that PES Women is still a movement that is needed today in Europe. It's true that women have achieved a series of rights and opportunities in Europe, but when I see today's developments where I - as a young feminist- have to go back to the street and claim the right to abortion in Europe, I am sad. If we do not want further backlashes against other achievements that the*



■ Lesia RADELICKI

socialist family has brought for women, we have to continue an active and visible movement. Indeed, it is thanks to our feminist movement that I feel I had the opportunity to study something I wanted to study, that I received opportunities as a young professional, and that I am able to be economically and socially independent, and have moreover received support to run for elections.

Lesia Radelicki's memory captures nature of PES Women as an organisation that continuously transforms, expanding its activism and network. This development is possible because of various factors, however, an important feature among them is a mentor system – which is not only argued for as an effective mechanism to promote the participation of more, and particularly young, women in politics, but which is also reaffirmed through a solid partnership existing between PES Women and YES (Young European Socialists, formerly ECOSY). On this, **Janna Besamusca**, former ECOSY Feminist Network Coordinator and former Secretary General of ECOSY 2009 – 2011, shared that: *One of my first encounters with PES Women was as the coordinator of the feminist network of ECOSY, the Young European Socialists. We were organizing a petition against trafficking in women, writing resolutions about the gender pay gap and running a campaign on gender equality. Most vividly, I remember the warm and passionate support we received from PES Women and its President, Zita Gurmai. The greatest value of our cooperation then, and later as Secretary General of ECOSY, was the ever present eagerness of PES Women to form inclusive alliances, both inside and outside the PES. In ECOSY's work to put youth unemployment first and foremost on the PES agenda, PES Women was our staunchest supporter and closest friend. We worked together to put the issues of young people, women and LGBT forward; we formed bigger alliances to fight for the sexual and reproductive rights of women. The most special side to the ECOSY – PES Women cooperation, to me, was that we just always seemed to be together.*

The encouraging cooperation and the strategic alliance between the PES Women and YES (ECOSY) remains valued, appreciated and cherished. It is echoed in the words of **Kaisa Penny**, who stated that: *For me PES Women represents a friend and an ally. PES Women has always supported the youth in all of our work, both by participating, supporting and mentoring, but also within the structures of our European movement. Our aims are similar and our work common, so it has always been easy to rely on the help of PES Women. I especially remember many long debates in the PES Presidency and Leaders' Meetings where we would switch roles with the PES Women President Zita Gurmai by her defending the youth and I would speak in favour of women, a lot of the time getting our way through the common effort!*

Among the respective personal memories, a handful are naturally related to the specific personalities whose work and leadership have developed the organisation to become the successful PES Women that is known today. In that sense, **Achim Post** said: *I was honoured to be the master of ceremony at the PES Women 20 years' anniversary reception in Leipzig, welcoming and celebrating with Karin Junker, Zita Gurmai and all those who have built PES Women into a strong network of socialist women. Following the words of Ivana Bartoletti, their key 'secret power' has always been the capacity to live and work by example, and therefore – no matter how hard it must have been – to inspire: I have long been involved in the feminist movement – as Chair of the Fabian Women's Network in Britain now and with our sister party in Italy before. The Fabian Society is Britain's oldest policy institute – so serving as the Chair of their Women's Network is a real privilege and has shaped my political identity just as much as PES Women have shaped my political identity. Fifteen years ago, as a young woman approaching politics, I met PES women at meetings in*

Brussels and all around Europe. They became role models to me, and I also realised I couldn't be a politician without helping other sisters climb the ladder.

The special recollections regarding the respective Presidents show how much they have touched other people's lives. They are authentic and powerful and, as such, also remain a great source of knowledge about their style of leadership, the priorities of their respective mandates and also the extraordinary legacy that remains stamped in the character of this organisation. To that extent, while sharing her personal memory, **Anna Colombo** commemorated the late Fiorella Ghilardotti by saying: *[My personal memory is] my personal friendship with Fiorella Ghilardotti, a woman who taught me so much about feminism, not only the spoken one but the one practiced every day, both in public and private life. Her report on gender budgeting (something that we should dig out while implementing structural funds spending) opened my eyes on the so called apparent "neutrality" of public policies. Since then, even in the role I am playing as secretary general of the S&D Group, I am always thinking twice on how rules and policy affects both genders. I guess it is thanks to this that in 2008 I won on behalf of our secretariat the prize as "role model" for equality and diversity.*

The power to inspire and the capacity to engage have been also aspects that some of the respective respondents have seen as among the greatest strengths of the current PES Women President, Zita Gurmai. Celebrating her tenure, **Marysia Lubcheva** commented that: *[My personal memory] would be my first meeting with PES Women in 2005, when I felt myself a part of the great women family, fighting for equality, solidarity, fighting against discrimination and*

violence. It was also my first meeting with Zita Gurmai who inspired me and made me a fervent defender of equality. And echoing those phrases in a brief, but powerful statement, **Petroula Nteledimou** replied: *I can say lots of long stories... But to cut them short, just two words: Zita Gurmai!!!*

Many memories link to specific historical moments, that became turning points for PES Women – contributing to consolidation of the organisation, its the policy development or a mobilisation. **Janet Royall**, Leader of the UK Labour Party in House of Lords and the Vice-President of PES, recalled as her personal memory the recent experience of the PES Council in Sofia: *At the meeting of PES Women in Sofia last year I spoke at a session in which we discussed the impact of the financial crisis/austerity on women in the EU. Some women understandably spoke of the effect of cuts on civil society organisations, including women's organisations that were/are being cut to the bone. This is important and shocking and affects thousands of women who need advice and support, however, a woman from Greece spoke of the impact of the crisis on her daily life - she had to decide whether or not to spend money on food for her family or medicine. That was/is the reality for hundreds of thousands of women in the EU and it is deeply shocking in the 21st century. It is largely women who have to grapple with these problems, it is women who worry most about the daily problems like food on the table, about the future for the kids - education, jobs, pensions - and the care for the parents. We all acknowledge that in the context of international development you educate women and you educate the whole family. In many ways it is the same in our developed European Union - you provide security and stability for a woman and she provides security and stability for the whole family, for her community and for the wider society.*

In that context, also many credit the PES Women for the numerous opportunities to gather and debate the possible political alternatives. As **Mojca Kleva Kekuš** described: *My memories are linked to official meetings which only women*



■ Janet ROYALL

attended and everyone had the chance to speak. In those meetings, I always felt free to express myself which otherwise rarely happened in meetings where the majority were always men. Somehow, I felt solidarity and understanding with the sisters from PES Women. Similarly, Anna Karamanou expressed that: My personal memories are connected with extensive lively discussions, debates, papers and contributions to the policy and action plans of PES. I enjoyed every meeting, every event and every congress: in Paris, Berlin, Stockholm, Ljubljana, Madrid, Prague, Warsaw, Athens, Milano, Sofia, Lisbon, Rome. I have very much appreciated the dedication, the spirit and the effectiveness of Poul Rassmussen's PES leadership. Under Poul's and Zita's Presidency I was always kept alert to the importance of our mission: to mobilize women across the EU, support social democratic programs and participate in building a gender balanced and socially just Europe. A whole chapter, under the title "Championing Gender Equality in Europe", was included in our PES Manifesto for the 2009 European Elections. PES Women have worked hard to pass the political messages of the Manifesto, by organizing events and mobilizing women all over Europe. PASOK Women, in Greece, have actively participated in the elections campaign, as they did in all action plans and campaigns promoted by the PES Women.

The above mentioned campaigns have become organising backbone for the consolidated, coordinated actions of the PES Women and its sister organisations. They would embody different formats, use diverse communication tools and would feature various activities – but at any given point they served as a political business card. They offered a compelling story, summarising the core sense of the mission undertaken by PES Women at any given moment. **Maria Badia i Cutchet** evaluated them in the following way:

So far, PES Women's actions and campaigns have been focused in promoting this kind of over-arching vision. Personally, I have a very good memory of our fantastic campaign to fight the gender pay gap, which was launched in 2007 but has continued until the present time, as the problem still persists.

As for specific PES Women campaigns, along with the ongoing campaign to close the gender pay gap, it appears that the common action against trafficking, in particular, remains rooted in the memory of many members. **Inger Segelström**, former PES Women Vice President and former Member of the European Parliament and Secretary General of SAMAK recalled: *One of the most successful actions we did was in 2006 before and during the Football World Championship in Germany. We campaigned all over Europe and collected names under the banner: FOOTBALL YES PROSTITUTION NO. We stopped the planned huge import of women and girls from outside EU. We made it known that parking lots outside arenas were the places where prostitutes would often "serve" men from all over the world after games. The campaign stopped much of the buying of women and girls in prostitution and was so successful that PES Women won that year the prize of best campaign in the EP. The excitement for this particular action was also shared by Marianne Mikko: [My personal memory is] of course our anti-trafficking action before the World Cup and the meeting with Commissioner Frattini to address the shameful problem where lots of Eastern girls were trafficked to Germany to satisfy sexually greedy men during football matches.*

While various debates and campaigns have been associated with numerous wonderful memories, there has also been another field of PES Women activities that some of the respondents stressed. There

was a call to remain protagonists of the progressive movement, and to embark on missions that would enable rapprochement and cooperation between different potential partners. This was at its core motivated by the desire to seek possibilities for solidarity to be the bridge between the situation at hand and the commonly shared dream to live in better and more fair societies. This, for example, guided the memorable mission to Afghanistan that **Anna Karamanou** recalled: *However, the most memorable event, among many, was the mission of PES Women to Afghanistan, in November 2002, a year after the fall of the Taliban regime. The journey was indeed long, full of adventure and full of knowledge, just like the Greek poet Cavafis would say. It was a sheer folly, according to some! We were a small group of PES women, headed by the ever memorable PES Women President and MEP Fiorella Ghilardotti, the MEPs Lissy Gröner, Marie-Helene Gillig, Genevieve Fraise and myself and the PES advisors Brigitte Bataille, Armand Borrey, and Bernard Vervoort. For an entire week, we stayed in the country that had so much troubled the entire world during the previous year. Nevertheless, fear and doubts receded when faced with our objective: expressing our support and solidarity to the Afghan women and securing that the country is being rebuilt in a way that takes care of the rights and advancement of women's positions. It was an overwhelming experience, an unforgettable political expedition that has convinced us that women in Afghanistan do not only need humanitarian aid, but they mainly need bold political action to be undertaken. Their situation, as we witnessed it, was tragic in every aspect. Blue ghosts, in their burqas, circulated everywhere, with only very few daring to take it off and endanger their lives. The Taliban had lost power, but their spirit and the traditions were present everywhere. We met with the President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, with the former King and Father of the Nation, Zahir*

Shah, the ministers of Health, Education, Foreign Affairs, Women's Issues, Interior Affairs, National Economy and Justice, as well as with Dr Sima Samar, President of the Committee for Human Rights and with several NGOs. We visited areas where EU projects were implemented, in Kabul and also in the countryside. We travelled to Bamyan, 250 km north-west of Kabul, where the Taliban had destroyed the sculptures of Buddha. It took us 15 hours to arrive there after riding a harsh road and crossing minefields! In Bamyan we met with the Mayor of the town and the forum of women's organisations, realizing that this was the first opportunity these women ever had to speak in public and meet with women of another culture. They were even ashamed of uttering their name, while they were constantly hiding their faces. On the next day the UN sent a plane to take us back to Kabul and to our hotel- the almost destroyed from bombing Intercontinental, with broken windows and problematic provision of electricity and running water. At any rate, it was an exciting and a most constructive journey. We even witnessed gestures of goodwill, by the minister of Interior, who just one day after our visit, liberated 20 women who had been convicted of adultery. Nevertheless, until today not much has changed for women in Afghanistan. Today's great challenge is to give voice to women everywhere whose experiences go unnoticed, whose words go unheard. PES Women can challenge the appalling phenomena that insult the core of our most fundamental human values.



■ Zita GURMAI and Karin JUNKER

■ 4.4. PES Women: how has it changed PES?

The PES Women Standing Committee was established as an integral part of the PES. Following the words of Karin Junker (as introduced in Chapter 1 of this publication), the ambition was to offer a space for socialist women to gather and develop policies, and subsequently to form a board that could advocate for the agenda developed.

In the course of the years, the mutual relationship has developed – significantly influencing the culture, the programme and the structure of the party. Gradually, the approach within the PES transformed to incorporate the philosophy of “dualism” – whereby on one hand the principle of equality between women and men would become a transversal objective, and on the other there was an understanding that further efforts would be required to ensure that women have the same rights and opportunities as men.

This understanding is mirrored in the assessment of **Philip Cordery**, who remarked that: *PES Women contributed a lot to the overall work of the PES, engaging the party to struggle for real equality.*

Hence, gender equality was a priority in the PES Manifesto for the 2009 European elections, which included the creation of a European Women's Rights Charter guaranteeing the same rights for all women across Europe in all fields and aspects of life. Similarly, also **Achim Post** observed that: *PES Women has always been an essential part of the PES. These are not 2 parallel organisations; we have the same fights, and share the same objectives. Our work is complementary. For example, PES Women's current campaign for "equal pay" is a PES campaign – we campaign together for a better life for all, women and men.*

Although there was no ambition to create a separate organisation, during the course of the years the PES Women Standing Committee transformed. Thanks to the effort of the subsequent Presidents and Board Members, it became more of an "organisation within an organisation" – which also meant that it was to adopt its own, separate standing orders. These would be recognised as binding rules, following the PES Statutes. This development also meant that it would find itself in the category of full member organisations – which ECOSY (and then YES) – Young European Socialists belong to. Together they would form a close alliance, already mentioned in the previous Chapter, which would see them join forces in broadening and deepening the PES agenda with matters especially at the core of struggle of those two organisations. **Petroula Nteledimou** remembers: *Together with the youth organization (ECOSY my times, now YES), they have put forward a dynamic and very progressive agenda, sometimes kicking off very lively debates in the PES. Equal pay, youth guarantee, and many others to remember....* The natural communality of the issues translated into common proposals and actions, and in mutual support for different activities which

were cherished by both sides. **Kaisa Penny** speaks about this camaraderie warmly saying: *I believe it is now impossible for the PES to hold an (s)election, or nominate people to different roles without considering the effects of it to the equality within our movement. I also think that through very active campaigning PES Women has lifted many things to the socialist agenda that would not have been there before. And I obviously highly appreciate the support and enthusiasm that PES Women has shown in working with us on the Youth unemployment campaign over the last two years.*

The above-mentioned alliance has been one of the underpinning factors, due to which a new source of dynamism and innovation emerged within the party. It must have been and it undoubtedly has been change inducing. The transformation has been taking place step by step, starting from the entrance into previously male-dominated debating rooms and ending with demanding an alteration of the PES operational rules. **Brigitte Bataille** summarised this fight in the following words: *PES Women have fought for a balanced representation in all decision-making bodies, for example in the Bureau and the Congress delegations. Moreover, in order to have a balanced representation of women and men at all political levels, the PES Women have played a major role by insisting on putting women in eligible places when it comes to electoral lists and on a quota policy whenever necessary. This fight has now led to a fairer representation of women in politics. On the external side, PES Women, in close cooperation with our female representatives elected in the European Parliament, have focused on issues like conciliation of professional and family life, stopping violence against women and women-trafficking, as well as calling for equal pay for work of equal value. The list is long and the fight continues.*



■ Sergei Stanishev, Achim Post and Zita Gurmai in Sophia

The cultural changed that PES Women have managed to accomplish is also noted by **Anna Karamanou**. She emphasised not only the achievements, but also that the need for a permanent struggle through new tools and channels continues to be eminent: *PES Women has changed the patriarchal structure of the PES, which was dominant twenty years before. Gender balance in all delegations and representations is secured by the PES statutes. This has had an impact upon the culture of the PES party members, too. The situation has not become ideal, but there has been substantive progress. At the same time, through important and effective campaigns PES Women has succeeded in mobilizing women in the EU, plus the neighbouring and candidate countries. The campaigns have been very successful and with the help of Internet and social media had a spill-over effect, on both European and domestic level: “Stop trafficking and sexual exploitation of women”, “Elimination of violence against women”, “More and Better Childcare and Parental leave”, “Gender Pay Gap, Shut it”, “My Body my Rights”, “Women-Men 50/50 in decision-making”, “Preserve Women’s Pension Rights”, “Equal Pay-It’s about time!”, “A Charter for European Women’s Rights”. To these we should add the political pressure to define rights within the 2020 European Strategy and the youth employment campaign.*

Following the quote offered above by Anna Karamanou, it is important to realise three dimensions of the impact that PES Women has had over the development of the PES. First of all, there was a general influence over the organisational culture – which meant paving the way for more women to participate. Secondly, there was an overall ambition to make the PES programme subject to gender-equality mainstreaming. And thirdly, there was

a set of specific campaigns and issues, on which PES Women were mobilising and demanding the entire socialist family to place a special attention to remedy. These three dimensions respectively would translate into overall hope to: enable equal representation of women and men in politics, ensure that the EU pursues the gender equality agenda and that it takes specific action to realise the promise of equal rights of women and men within society. This overall translation is what **Anna Colombo** especially values regarding the legacy of PES Women: *I think that PES Women has forced men to better understand and openly support our fights for a more equal and better society. I recall in particular the recent campaign against the gender gap, and of course the very vocal one on the fight against violence on women. I was proud to see how many men were with us in the recent, successful demonstration against the medieval attempt of the Conservative Spanish government to amend the abortion law. I thought that their participation was a clear sign of our successful campaigns; progressive men have clearly understood that a society working against women’s freedom and free choice is not good for them neither.* In her view, Anna Colombo is largely seconded by **Marianne Mikko**: *The equality between genders increases also the equality between all people. More equality, more solidarity is the main aim of the PES. For example the reduction of the payment gap between women and men reduces also the economic equality between rich and poor people. There is more poverty among women, because of the lower remuneration of women’s work.*

Living up to the expectation spelled out above meant that PES Women had to be very persistent in terms of “gender proofing” all of the PES actions and policies. **Teresa Madurell** acknowledged

this perseverance: *PES Women has achieved many advancements on single topics, but one stands above them all: PES Women has firmly and continuously put on the table women’s rights, which might be somehow forgotten in everyday politics. The daily work of seeding the ideas and values of equality and non-discrimination so that they become indissolubly joined to our socialist principles might not get the headlines, but is a truly pivotal task within our party. Along these 20 years, all PES Women campaigns have been well chosen and always relevant. What is sad, however, is the need to repeat the topics.*

And though in fact, the returns and detours may have been any most discouraging and disappointing, there still has never been talk of giving up on any of those issues. This result is noted by **Mojca Kleva Kekuš**: *Most importantly, PES Women made sure that the gender dimension is taken into account in all PES policy areas and in every single document that the party produced. PES Women has managed to raise awareness about topics that concern half of the population and that are vital for the social development of EU countries. The 50/50 Campaign, the “My body, my rights” campaign, the gender pay gap initiatives as well as initiatives focusing on the problem of violence against women and reconciliation of work and family life represent a step in the right direction and should help to achieve a more just society.*

Following those words, it would seem that campaigns have become one of the main tools for PES Women to advance with its strategic objectives. The aforementioned “My Body, My Rights” campaign, to give an example, is also recalled by **Marja Bijl**: *I myself have the strongest memories of our ‘My body, My rights’ campaign; at the*

end of the day it is a basic human right to be able to decide on our own bodies. I go back a long way in the women’s movement and I never in my wildest dreams would have thought that we would still have to fight for these rights today. **Britta Thomsen** also echoed these words. In her statement, she cited among the achievements of PES Women that changed the PES: *Increased focus on gender issues and internal quotas. The most relevant campaigns have been violence against women, equal pay, women and pension and “My body, my rights”. The focus on gender issues is key in the upcoming elections.*

While so many inspiring examples of the particular actions by the PES Women have been quoted, among the respondents there are also many who argued that the most important change has been the overall transformation of the PES approach to a gender mainstreaming one. In that sense **Daša Šašić Šilović** wrote: *Projects come and go. But the biggest change is the recognition of the importance of gender equality for the movement and within the movement. And this is exactly what PES Women and its Presidents have done in these twenty years. Recognition and respect for gender equality and mainstreaming gender equality into PES collective and individual political platforms. And this evaluation is also shared by Ivana Bartoletti: PES Women and women organisations in every country have fought for crucial issues such as equal pay, better workers’ rights, better access to childcare, better representation of women in the corporate sphere as well as in political institutions through a Commissioner for women, and the eradication of violence and domestic abuse. Many of these issues have become mainstream in all sister parties’ manifestos, although much more needs to be done.*

What connects all the statements is in fact an extraordinary feature that although they commemorate past accomplishments, in fact all of them offer also reflection on how to continue. This is the integral part of the fabric of the PES Women organisation, which has achieved much and is fully aware that none of that will simply remain in place without further struggle. To that end, there is great awareness that social progress requires permanent work, persistence and a visionary approach, and this is what **Marysia Lubcheva** drew attention to: *PES Women is a vital part of PES, it ennobled the party, made it more open and sensitive to the social and economic position of women across Europe. Women are still half of the population and now through the work of PES they have the assurance that their problems are being recognized, that they should not be afraid to speak up and to live up to their potential. We have launched a lot of successful campaigns and initiatives, I do not want to single out any of them, but I have deep personal connection with the campaign “Putting children first” and with the understanding that the youth is our common future, also the campaign “My Body – My Rights”, the initiative “The reconciliation between professional and family life” and many more. There are also initiatives that each one of us in PES Women has organized in our own countries. Such initiatives often do not have broad media coverage at EU level, but they help in introducing PES Women’s work and achievements to the local socialist women’s organizations. In Bulgaria we had the “Gender equality in politics. The Bulgarian experience” conference and the seminar “Women in society: The left (social- democratic) look”, both of which were organized by the Union of socialist women in the Bulgarian Socialist Party, with the support of the “Friedrich Ebert Stiftung”.*

In what could be seen as a good summary of this Chapter, Pia Locatelli concluded that even though the gender equality agenda may be suffering a backlash now, PES Women continues to be a brave protagonist and a progressive frontrunner: *Thinking of that first (constitutive) meeting, I can see how far we have gone: nobody could even dare thinking of the party without a women’s organization. PES Women is nowadays an essential part of all socialist activity, but sharing power equally is still to be achieved. I like that PES Women is not a summing up of different organisations but an all-encompassing organisation. This is not the case of PES, which I still feel as a compilation of different parties. What I appreciate most are the campaigns which are addressed to all countries and convey good messages also outside the parties, which is not always a characteristic of political action.*

■ 4.5 PES Women: 3 ambitions for the next 20 years?

Upon the jubilee of two decades of activism of PES Women, much has been said about the organisation’s respective achievements. They have been celebrated and commemorated, especially through precious personal memories shared by the personalities who kindly agreed to contribute to this volume. But what has been an equally eminent observation that occurred in many of the comments is that the strength of the PES Women is its ambition not to settle as long as persistent inequalities remain, as long as discrimination takes place in its different forms, and as long as the pledge of an egalitarian progressive society has not been realised.

This organisational philosophy underpins the strength to persevere and continue, while continuously reaching further and higher. As a consequence, most of the input focused equally on the past and the future.

We asked several people to tell us, in their opinion, what are the three most important goals that PES Women (and the PES) should

aim to achieve in the next 20 years. The answers offered are very diverse, showcasing different but complementary objectives. In order to quote them fully, they are presented below in alphabetical order – with the final statements offered by **Kaisa Penny** (President of YES) and **Sergei Stanishev** (President of PES):

MARIA BADIA I CUTCHET

■ **Member of the European Parliament (2004 - 2014) and Vice President of the S&D Group (2009-2012)**

As to the next 20 years, PES Women should keep delivering the fight for three issues of the utmost importance, namely: gender violence, human trafficking - mainly affecting women and children - and fair and gender-balanced share of responsibilities. To this last point, much has been done to increase women’s representation in decision-making spaces. Some good examples would be women’s increased participation over the last decades in European and national politics. When it comes to the European Parliament, 19% of MEPs were women back in the 4th parliamentary term (1989-1994) whereas the rate has increased up to 36% in the current term, which is to end in May. As to national Parliaments, approximately 15% of national MPs were women at European level 20 years ago, whereas most recent reports show this figure has risen to round 25% last year.



■ PES Women Summit - Saarbrücken (2014)

IVANA BARTOLETTI

■ Chair of Fabian Women

First, we need feminism to become mainstream politics. There should be no 'women's issues' but women's wellbeing, jobs and participation in the economy as well as in public life and company boards should be at the heart of socialist manifestos and policies. Second, we need to achieve equal pay at a living wage all across Europe. We need to move away from a low paid economy and women's pay is a crucial part of a European plan for growth. Third, we need Europe to get back on track so we can compete in a globalised world. To grow, Europe needs to focus on how women can grow the economy and grow in the economy – this is why I think we need a Commissioner for women, and I fully back PES Women on this.

JANNA BESAMUSCA

■ ECOSY Secretary General 2009 - 2011

The first and second waves of feminism have been about rights, firstly political and then sexual and reproductive. In the upcoming years, I believe emancipation will be about the way in which we embed care in the organization of our modern societies. As such, the challenge for the progressive left is to formulate a consistent vision on both rights and duties of women in the labour market, which does not start from a view of women as victims but as emancipated and self-aware individuals. In Europe today, we

observe that women still work less often, fewer hours and in lower paid jobs than men. Yet, we also find that women report being satisfied in those jobs and often indicate they value time more highly than pay. We have been reluctant to say whether women should work, or should be able to work if they wish, if women and men should work full time in decent jobs, or if smaller jobs that are more easily combined with care tasks are an acceptable alternative. Social democratic parties need to choose between a model where women's work is optional and one where women's full time employment is the standard. In a time when the services delivered as a part of the welfare state are being cut back and citizens are increasingly asked to care for their own relatives, we run a very real risk of seeing women being pushed out of full time work again. When we choose a truly equal society, that attributes equal rights and responsibilities for both care and work to women and men, we have to transform the way we organize care. We have to ensure that it is possible in all sectors of the labour market to work a decent and full time job. We need to invest in childcare that is much more accessible and affordable than it is in most EU countries today. Finally, we need to fight for the maternity directive, including an important clause prolonging paternity leave and improving possibilities for men to take up parental leave.

TON BEUMER

■ Secretary General of PES 1999 - 2004

For the next 20 years I recommend to prepare for:

- The first ever female PES President
- The first ever female PES Secretary General
- More mainstreaming of activities and a less autonomous organisation.

ANNA COLOMBO

■ Secretary General of S&D Group in the European Parliament

1. We should achieve in all our Member States, both at government and parliament level, including in the EP, a much better representation of women, who should equally be considered for the highest posts as men are. And once they are there, women should never forget where they come from, and should struggle for other women's emancipation
2. We should actively and without taboos engage with women, coming from the rich different horizons of the new open European citizenship, and in particular Muslim women, in order to find ways to share the same values of equality and emancipation while coming from different experiences and a different history.

3. We must struggle for the fight against violence, such as rape as a war tool, genital mutilation or forced marriage to be core elements in our foreign policy. We want the EU to become a political giant for a reason: to promote and defend our values, and the effective implementation of international conventions.

ANNA KARAMANOU

■ PES Women Vice-President

Despite considerable progress, gender inequalities and discriminations against women still persist and in many cases, due to economic crisis, are accelerating. The signs of a backlash are already visible: higher unemployment for women, discriminations against young women and more violence against them. This is why, the work of PES Women, from now on, will be more necessary than ever before. PES Women should concentrate on: a) demanding gender parity in all decision-making bodies, meaning sharing political power as well as care for domestic life and defining the future on an equal footing for women and men. I strongly believe, that if women and men had an equal share of rights, power and care responsibilities, the whole world would be a better place to live, for both women and men 2) eliminate any discrimination on the basis of gender. The fact that women bear children cannot justify unequal citizenship 3) Save the social state and the social rights that lay at the heart of the postwar European project and social democratic ideology. My best hope for the world is to figure out a way for humanity to achieve global justice and equality. We certainly need a new thinking, new ideas, and to open new avenues and discover new ways of addressing the problems of the 21st century.

MOJCA KLEVA KEKUŠ

■ Member of European Parliament

In 20 years, women should have the same rights as men and they should be equally represented in economic and political decision-making. The fact that women represent half the workforce means that they are in a position to fight alongside men for higher wages and better working conditions. Furthermore, women should be able to decide about their own bodies without any unjust criticism.

PIA LOCATELLI

■ Former President of Socialist International Women and Italian Member of Parliament

- Sharing power equally within PES;
- Exporting this model in other European parties and national and European Institutions;
- Building alliances with women of non-socialist organisations (but sharing our values and field of action) in order to maximize the results of our activities

MARYSIA LUBCHEVA

■ Member of the PES Women Bureau and Member of the European Parliament (2007-2014)

- Parity and equal representation of women in all spheres of political, economic and social life;
- Free and unprejudiced career advancement for women;
- Equal pay for equal work.

TERESA MADURELL

■ Member of the European Parliament (2004 - 2014) and Member of the PES Women Executive

Almost 10 years after the Directive 2006/54/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in matters of employment and occupation, the most important pending objective is the "equal work-equal pay" issue. It is inadmissible that the gender pay gap still stands at an average of 16.2% in the EU Member States. Having always worked on research topics, a second goal that is very close to my heart is to achieve gender equality in this field by correcting imbalances in the participation of female scientists and females involved in the implementation of research programmes and by considering gender as a dimension of research. A third issue would be the need to end once and for all with the violence against women.

MARIANNE MIKKO

- **Member of the PES Women Bureau and former Member of the European Parliament**

Gender equality in all fields of life:

1. In professional life, equal if not parity of positions in politics and business, and an end to the pay gap
2. In private life, balance in family life, in domestic tasks, in the care of children
3. Disappearance of physical and psychological abuses of women, sexual trafficking, etc.

PETROULA NTELEDIMOU

- **President of ECOSY 2009 - 2011**

1. True and deep equality legislation in the EU, far beyond quotas and formal rules.
2. Stronger support for young women and young mothers in professional, social and political life.
3. A woman President of the PES!

TUULA PELTONEN

- **Vice-President of PES Women and Vice-President of Socialist International Women**

For the next 20 years we need to eliminate pay gaps, criminalize prostitution in every European country and make abortion possible for every woman who needs it.

ACHIM POST

- **Secretary General of PES**

Women's economic independence is still jeopardized by inequalities on the job market. I am especially worried at the situation of older women, with a pension gap that is not reducing. Violence of all sorts against women should be fought toughly and severely condemned. Women should feel safe, especially among their own families. It is our duty to ensure that. Finally, a next step would be to secure sexual and reproductive rights for all European women.

LESIA RADELICKI

- **PES Women Coordinator and Advisor on Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

Apart from ensuring that we maintain our achievements such as political empowerment, the access to work and social independence, I think that we need to give women the tools to feel empowered when demanding the same salary, when saying no to objectification and the 'ideal' image of women, when standing up against any type of violence and when choosing non-traditional life choices.

FRANCESCA RATTI²

- **Deputy Secretary-General of the European Parliament**

Thanks to an unflagging effort of the European Parliament's political authorities and its committed Members, major milestones have been achieved in the last 20 years, not only in terms of figures and reaching targets, but especially, in terms of effecting radical changes in the Institution's attitudes and culture. Only unrelenting joint efforts on the part of women Members and officials will ensure that one day, in the next 20 years:

- "Gender equality and equal opportunities" will at last be regarded as an outdated concept, in which men and women will enjoy the same opportunities, and will be judged purely on their merits;



■ Francesca RATTI

² This text only contains the personal opinions of its author.

- “Equal careers” will become a reality, in which mind-sets and culture will be transformed to support both women’s and men’s ambitions, and where barriers that women currently face on their way to the top will finally be dismantled;
- “Discrimination, harassment, all forms of violence against women”, will finally be eradicated and replaced by mutual respect and dignity for each individual, as an essential part of the European Union’s values.

DAŠA ŠAŠIĆ ŠILOVIĆ

■ **Chair of the CEE Network for Gender Issues**

- Victory over the gender equality backlash launched by the European, and world, political right and conservatives so that young women and men can reap and enjoy in the victories and achievements of the socialist and social-democratic feminist movement over the last 100 years (as we celebrate 100 years since 8 March 1914).
- End to poverty and unemployment among women.
- Strengthened reproductive rights of women including the right to counselling and abortion.

BRITTA THOMSEN

■ **Member of the PES Women Executive and Member of the European Parliament**

Real equal pay, quotas in politics and enterprise, paternity leave.

ELENA VALENCIANO

■ **Vice-President of PES and Leader of PSOE list to the EP in 2014**

For all (these) reasons, if we look ahead to the future taking into account the challenges Europe is going to face in the next 20 years, we have to do so being well aware that we will have to work in order to preserve what has already been achieved and prevent a step backwards, at the same time that we set new targets. In the economic field, the struggle for equal pay is essential, since 21st century Europe cannot remain unmoved in the face of realities such as, for instance, women in the EU being paid an average of 16% less than men for the very same job. Likewise, if we aim to achieve the reconciliation of family, work and private life, we need to promote European systems of accessible public services in the field of childcare and care for dependants. In order to put an end to discrimination against women in the labour market, we can rely on Directives, such as on maternity leave, which the Council must unblock and thus include an independent paternity leave for men with the aim of moving forward in this area. Regarding political and social representation, we have to work so that the 52% of the

European population can take part in decision-making on an equal basis.

Therefore, there is a greater need than ever for European social democracy to set up mechanisms for equal representation both in the field of economic and business activities and at a political level. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union places the principle of equality at the heart of the European project. One of the key battles to be fought by the European social democracy must be to protect rights such as the right to sexual and reproductive health from the attacks of the most conservative and reactionary right-wing in Europe. Now more than ever, the economic sphere in the EU must be completed by a social union which makes us equal at the highest level and serves as a reference model for those sister organizations which do not take part in the common European project. Beyond the European borders, the situation is infinitely more dramatic. Many women cannot sit behind the wheel of a car or cannot even wear trousers. And, in the most flagrant cases, still too many, they become victims of marriages of convenience, sometimes to the man who has previously raped them, or they undergo genital mutilation since childhood.

JEAN-FRANCOIS VALLIN

■ **PES Secretary General 1995 - 1999**

1. To have parity in every PES body
2. To have parity in every PES party candidate list for the European elections
3. To have such a level of equality that there will be no need any more for a PES Women

ÅSA WESTLUND

■ **Former ECOSY Feminist Network Coordinator, Member of the European Parliament and SAP candidate to National Parliament in the 2014 elections**

- Equality on the labour market, that includes equal pay
- The right for parental leave and universal childcare of high quality
- Fighting domestic violence

OLGA ZRIHEN

■ **Member of Belgian Senate and Member of the PES Women Executive**

We need more than ever, in this time of crisis, to remain attentive to wage inequality, opportunities for training, and policies enabling reconciliation between private and professional lives, which allow each of us to live decent lives as women. The political and institutional recognition of our potential and of our skills must be uniform within the European territory. What is more, we must assert ourselves as a centre of resistance. Facing nowadays all the regressions that affect the rights of all people and women in particular, we have to show strength in fighting against conservatism and fundamentalism.

KAISA PENNY

■ **President of YES - Young European Socialists**

Within the next 20 years I would want to see a woman leader in PES and a woman top candidate for the European elections. I would also want to see parity reached in the S&D Group, with at least near equal numbers of male and female MEPs. And in policy areas I would want to see legislation that would put parents in young families at the same line in labour markets, in other words I'd want to see equal parental leaves and accessible childcare being made the norm all across Europe.

SERGEI STANISHEV

■ **President of PES**

For sure, equal sexual and reproductive rights for all women should be guaranteed in Europe.

Another big and tough achievement is eliminating violence against women; it is unacceptable that domestic violence exists and causes so many victims every year. Women must feel safe at home and outside, violence and sexual abuse must become an unregretted memory. The second issue is one that our candidate Martin Schulz strongly campaigned on just like PES Women in May's elections, namely equal pay, under the slogan 'It's about time!' Working condition differences between women and men should no longer exist in our society. I really hope that those achievements will soon become reality thanks to the strength of PES women.

■ **4.6 PES Women: Wishes for the current leadership**

On the occasion of the two-decade celebration, there has been a great wish from all the personalities involved with this book to have a chance to congratulate the PES Women and their leadership. The received greetings have been organised in an alphabetical order, finishing with the Presidents' congratulations respectively by Massimo D'Alema (President of FEPS), Kaisa Penny (President of YES), **Hannes Swoboda** (President of S&D Group in the European Parliament) and **Martin Schulz** (President of the European Parliament and the Top Candidate of the PES in 2014 elections).



■ Hannes SWOBODA



■ Martin SCHULZ

MARIA BADIA I CUTCHET

- **Member of the European Parliament (2004 - 2014) and Vice President of the S&D Group (2009-2012)**

PES Women's 20th Anniversary is a good occasion to assess the achievements done so far but also to remember that women's right are an essential and undeniable part of true democracy. Therefore, there are still many challenges ahead to reach the true and fair democracy we have always stood for: the one that takes equality from its founding principles into concrete and effective actions.

IVANA BARTOLETTI

- **Chair of Fabian Women**

Thanks to your fabulous leadership and activists we have achieved a better politics for women and for society. More women mean better politics, and we need to keep achieving this at every level.

TON BEUMER

- **Secretary General of PES 1999 - 2004**

I wish Zita and friends a happy anniversary, a lot of energy and good ideas to raise the position of women and girls in Europe and the wider world.



■ PES Women Executive - PES Candidate Designate (2014)

ANNA COLOMBO

■ **Secretary General of S&D Group in the European Parliament**

Congratulations for keeping solidarity alive even in the most difficult times of our recent history. Solidarity is the legacy of our past, the strength of our present and the steam for our future. Thank you for reminding us every day. As member of the French Parliament, I am still very engaged for gender equality. We recently voted ambitious laws such as the law against prostitution in December 2013 and the law for gender equality in January 2014 which included the revision of the abortion law abandoning the necessity to be in distress to be able to access this fundamental right. Unfortunately, women's rights including such a basic right as the right to abortion can never be taken for granted. The decision of the Spanish conservative government to drastically limit the right to abortion is proof that we must remain permanently vigilant and continue the necessary permanent struggle for equality. For that, PES women will continue being so important in the next twenty years and surely many more!

ANNA KARAMANOU

■ **PES Women Vice-President**

Wishing the best to everyone involved in the 20 years of PES Women's struggle for gender equality and social justice. The Struggle Continues! Social democracy must regain the political hegemony in EU! Victory is certain!!!

MOJCA KLEVA KEKUŠ

■ **Member of European Parliament**

The work of PES women is showing concrete results. However, the fight continues. If we want to have real equality, we need to fight for a different kind of society - a socialist society. PES women should lead the fight and serve as a role model.

PIA LOCATELLI

■ **Former President of Socialist International Women and Italian Member of Parliament**

I think we should sometimes dare more. When games become hard, sometimes we give up. We should be more self-confident and take up the risk of internal conflict. This is my wish and my greetings.

MARUSYA LUBCHEVA

■ **Member of the PES Women Bureau and Member of the European Parliament**

Dreams come true for women.

TERESA MADURELL

■ **Member of the European Parliament (2004 - 2014) and Member of the PES Women Executive**

Keep the spirit. We need you to inspire us!!!

MARIANNE MIKKO

■ **Member of the PES Women Bureau and former Member of the European Parliament**

I hope that we all together, all socialist democratic women in Europe can achieve our goals for equality and then all women, children and people can have a better life in the near future.

KATARÍNA NEVEĎALOVÁ

■ **Vice President of the PES and Member of the European Parliament**

All the best for PES Women's twenties! This young girl is now growing up to be a serious lady. Wise and elegant. But also fearless. Get ready!

PETROULA NTELEDIMOU

■ **President of ECOSY 2009 - 2011**

Thanks for the great work – here we are to support you for more!

ACHIM POST

■ **Secretary General of PES**

I would like to personally thank Zita Gurmai, who has been an incredibly dynamic President of PES Women, fighting with the PES for more equality in Europe.

LESIA RADELICKI

■ **PES Women Coordinator and Advisor on Women's Rights and Gender Equality**

PES Women has developed from being a standing committee to being a key actor in the European arena with concrete policy proposals and visible impactful campaigns and there is no doubt that a strong leading figure has led PES Women to that. I hope that in the coming years apart from a strong leading PES Women figure, other PES leading figures would join as easily and enthusiastically in the movement, because it's not just an issue that concerns us women within PES Women. As Zapatero used to say 'I'm a socialist and therefore I'm a feminist'.



■ PES Election Congress (2014)

JANET ROYALL

■ **Leader of Labour in House of Lords and Vice-President of PES**

Women have, of course, come a long way. We have many advances and achievements to celebrate, and we stand on the shoulders of our sisters, mothers and grandmothers who fought for our rights, but feminism is still relevant and the voice of women as a catalyst for change is essential - that is the strength of PES women. It gives us a real voice in the PES, a real focus for change. In the 21st century it can't be right that only 35% of MEPs are women; it can't be right that one in four women is subject to domestic violence, that a small percentage of crimes against women are successfully prosecuted including rape; it can't be right that women are hardly represented in much of the world of work including science, engineering and IT on which so much of our future prosperity depends; it can't be right that there is still a gender pay gap; it can't be right that in many countries women do not have sexual and reproductive rights. Women cannot alone bring about these changes which are essential to deliver real social justice in the European Union and the wider world, we need to and we want to work with men to educate and influence. But women need to have a powerful voice, they need to act together in sisterhood and solidarity in order to do that, and PES Women, working throughout the European Union, gives us a voice and a vehicle for action.

ERNST STETTER

■ **FEPS Secretary General**

First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to thank wholeheartedly Zita Gurmai, President of the PES Women and Vice-President of FEPS for her outstanding contribution to the work of the Foundation. The cooperation in the field of the women's rights agenda, and specifically the project "Women up!" have been most significant in terms of developing fresh ideas on how to promote gender equality in political, social and economic contexts.

Secondly, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to PES Women and all comrades involved in the historical battle for equality of rights and opportunities for women and men in Europe and beyond! Your achievements, your energy and your hard work are of a great inspiration! And they remain even more important in those challenging times!

DAŠA ŠAŠIĆ ŠILOVIĆ

■ **Chair of the CEE Network for Gender Issues**

There is no time for complacency or respite – a luta continua a vitória é certa and we shall do it together!

VLADIMÍR ŠPIDLA

- **Former EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and President of Masaryk Democratic Academy**

Though much has been achieved, still the culture within our society has not been fully transformed to accommodate emancipated women and accept their family choices. I wish the PES Women leadership all the best in this fight, thinking that the battle against discrimination and for empowerment is the more crucial test for us all as socialists in modern times.

BRITTA THOMSEN

- **Member of the PES Women Bureau and Member of the European Parliament**

We are fighting a very important fight. Many battles have been won, and many more will be won in the future.

ELENA VALENCIANO

- **Vice-President of PES and Leader of PSOE list to the EP in 2014**

20 years is a very long time to reach these goals. We have to believe – and we do – that it is in our hands to move much faster towards the Europe of rights and equality, a Europe with a woman's eye. Our commitment lies in this achievement. Congratulations, PES Women and many happy returns!

MARGOT WALLSTRÖM

- **Former Vice-President of the European Commission**

I can only say that the story of Europe is also the story of women. It is not only "the founding fathers" but as much "the caring mothers" who enabled Europe to rise from war and poverty to cooperation and prosperity. To organise women politically is as important as ever! It takes reforms and political action to put an end to discrimination, ensure equal representation, end violence and guarantee respect for human rights. I have happy memories from meeting women from all over Europe, having been able to cry, laugh and be inspired by their fighting spirit. We have discovered our different conditions but most of all how similar we are!



■ Zita Gurmai, Lesia Radelicki - PES Women Summit (Budapest 2014)



■ Zita Gurmai and Achim Post

MASSIMO D'ALEMA

■ **President of FEPS (Foundation for European Progressive Studies)**

We know how long the path towards effective gender equality is, even in Europe. A goal that gets even farther away because of the economic crisis, which strikes youth and women above all. This makes the work carried out throughout the years by PES Women, and in particular by their activity as members of the European Parliament on welfare, employment and equal representation, even more valuable. Such topics are deeply related to the cultural progress, to economic growth and, ultimately, to the very quality of our democracy.

In participating in the celebrations for the Twentieth Anniversary of the movement, I would like to remember our dear comrade Fiorella Ghilardotti, who chaired it for a long time. A woman of remarkable humanity and generosity who, from her early political career in Italy to the two terms as Member of the European Parliament, always fought for women's rights and took substantial action to enhance women's participation in public life, starting from the PES itself.

I firmly believe that the initiatives promoted by PES Women can provide a precious contribution in the relaunch of the European project. That is why I want to wish them every success and to warmly thank Zita Gurmai for her passionate and restless work. A work she also brings to FEPS' research activities in her capacity of Vice-President.

KAISA PENNY

■ **President of YES - Young European Socialists**

Be proud of what we have achieved so far, but never give up until we have the society we dream of! We need to be loud and we need to be many, as recent examples from within Europe show that unless we are, we risk losing even the rights already achieved.

HANNES SWOBODA

■ **Former President of the S&D Group in the European Parliament**

As Progressives, our fundamental goal is equality and we fight in particular for equality between women and men. PES Women is a crucial part of our common fight, especially today when Conservatives across Europe are trying to scale back women's rights. As Progressives, we work together against the gender pay gap, against discrimination in the workplace, and for equality in all societies - and PES Women leads this fight.

MARTIN SCHULZ

■ President of the European Parliament and Top Candidate of PES in 2014 EU Elections:

Comrades, dear friends,

I took office as President of the European Parliament, very conscious that none of the fundamental rights which we consider part of our common heritage, including gender equality and women's rights, can be taken for granted. First, we see proposals at national level to reverse the achievements of the past decades. Second, it is clear that law-making at EU level on gender-related issues over the last years has been fraught to say the least with so many initiatives either never taken by the Commission or languishing in the Council. The economic crisis increasingly risks turning into a crisis of values.

As we look back on two decades of achievements spearheaded by the PES Women movement, let us redouble our efforts to counter this worrying backlash. You can count on my support in defending and promoting progressive values, gender equality and non-discrimination, starting with equal pay for work of equal value. Gender equality is about social justice and democracy!



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AUTHOR'S NOTE

Dr Ania Skrzypek

Senior Research Fellow at the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)

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The idea to write *“Half the Sky, Half the Earth, Half the Power. Celebrating 20 years of PES Women”* was born out of an ambition to pay homage to generations of brave progressive women politicians, whose efforts led to a historical transformation of both the PES and the EU. Until this very day, their hard work, their achievements and their proud legacy remain often overlooked in different publications. Hence this particular volume has a pioneering character, becoming an essential, complementary publication to *“Europe, Our Common Future. Celebrating 20 years of PES”* (2013) and *“With socialists for jobs, peace and freedom. ECOSY 15”* (2007).

The inspiration came from Dr. Zita Gurmai, PES Women President. She was the one to set the challenge, and herewith also create an incredible opportunity in terms of exploring the tradition of

the European socialist movement. Her personal oversight on the project, and the commitment and hours that she devoted to debates enabling us to consolidate this book's content are invaluable. Though the process was lengthy and there were numerous detours on the way, Zita has never lost belief in it. She personally kept involved in all the detailed aspects of it, extending support and political guidance at every turning point.

The task was indeed not an easy one. Very little of the archives has been preserved, since many documents did not survive the PES moving out from the European Parliament and then to its current Headquarters at rue du Trône. Therefore the first step was to try to recuperate it, which would undoubtedly have proved impossible were it not for the solidarity and help of “Sisters” who served within the organisations in those different years. Therefore, words

of great appreciation are herewith addressed to Karin Junker, first President of PES Women, who supported the search not only with her testimonies, but who has also been so kind as to cross-check all facts with the respective German archives. Her readiness to answer all queries, share illustrative anecdotes and help identifying interlocutors among the comrades, has been one of the factors that most influenced the tone of the publication.

The enthusiasm and eagerness manifested by everyone who has been involved in the process, have been one of the great features accompanying this publication's development. It mirrored the solidarity, mutual responsibility and spirit of comradeship-sisterhood, which PES Women has been based on since its' founding in 1992. The extensive support offered especially by Anna Colombo, the S&D Group Secretary General, by Mercedes Bresso, First Vice-President of the CoR, Olga Fotinou, Dasa Šašić Šilović and Sonja Lokar, as well as the members of the PES Women Executive and respective leaderships of PES and FEPS, should be duly recognised – as without them recapturing the dynamic of different processes and their respective impacts on the party and on the EU, would surely be impossible. Therefore also, last but by no means least, the cooperation with Lesia Radelicki and Brigitte Bataille, as also Xavier Mirel and Attila Benedek, should be underlined here as crucial in terms of completing this volume in the shape that it has taken.

The book is composed of 4 Chapters. They enable readers to explore the origins of the movement and then travel further in time with PES Women under the respective leaderships of Karin Junker, Fiorella Ghilardotti and Zita Gurmai. This journey is further

facilitated by reference to the core documents, and finally with the more personal statements and wishes included in the last chapter. In that sense this publication captures the story of a persistent struggle for an ideal of an egalitarian society, on which course great changes have been initiated by PES Women regarding EU legislation, the fabric of politics and the PES organisational culture itself. This legacy is not only a tribute to the past, but above all a blueprint for the future and a source of inspiration – especially in hard contemporary times, when crisis-related developments have been already so harmful as far as the gender equality agenda in Europe is concerned.

Dr Ania Skrzypek



■ Ania Skrzypek and Zita Gurmai

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