

Consultation for the PES Manifesto for the European elections 2009

Diversity for success

The European Union is ethnically and culturally diverse, and the diversity is growing both within the Union and between Europe's Member States. All member states are becoming increasingly diverse, due to immigration from outside and to migration within the Union. This creates a interculturality that should be regarded as something positive and as an advantage for Europe. **Managed properly, diversity can increase creativity and innovation and it can prevent or at least reduce a future labour shortage.**

The development towards a more diverse Europe does not only present us with new opportunities, but also with challenges. Matters regarding labour market, housing, education and citizenship require the necessary attention. Another important matter is the problem of rising racism, xenophobia and right-wing extremism. This, together with discrimination, might jeopardise the idea of an open and diverse European society without borders.

By creating a Europe that welcomes diversity, we also create a more tolerant Europe. A more tolerant atmosphere is something that everyone would benefit from. It attracts talent, innovation and creativity. For half a century, the USA has attracted leading scholars, scientists and entrepreneurs from all over the world. At a time when America is losing its appeal, a more tolerant Europe could achieve the objectives of Lisbon.

However, if Europe really welcomes diversity, it should welcome those who constitute the diversity. Our society should include all residents; not only the majority population, but also migrant workers, refugees, ethnic minorities and everyone else who are excluded because of their ethnic or cultural background. For example, everyone must be able to grasp and participate in the public and political debate. Otherwise, minorities will not be fully included in a future Europe.