

**ECOSY Contribution  
to the Consultation  
on the PES Manifesto 2009**

**PES Paper  
ECOSY Presidium Members in  
Charge**

**New Social Europe  
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Since its 7<sup>th</sup> Congress in March 2005 in Portugal, ECOSY – Young European Socialists have been running a campaign under the theme “Social Europe for everyone”. Accordingly to our position paper “For a Social Europe that works” we have identified 8 pillars for our campaign (“More and better jobs”, “Gender equality”, “End poverty now”, “International solidarity”, “Better healthcare”, “Education 4 all”, “Same sex marriage”, “Public services”) within which we run debates, adopted number of reports and resolutions, organized events. The brief summaries of the discussions were inserted also to the PES New Social Europe debate – both during PES events (Congress, Council, Conferences) and in the publication (see: PES New Social Europe, Second contributions to a debate).

Elaborating within the Consultation for the PES Manifesto for the European elections 2009 on the Discussion Paper “New Social Europe”, we would like to express our support for making “Social Europe” – a traditional vision of socialists and social democrats in Europe, a key pillar of the manifesto construction. We believe this is an important statement as such, recalling the “tradition – mission – vision” scheme of our ideological family, clearly needed to show the basic differences between us and conservatives, between the Europe they impose and the Europe that we propose.

Same time, unfortunately, we need to start our reflection also from a note of disappointment that among the “Questions for you” specific issue of young people has not been tackled as a hint of a debate. We find it discouraging, especially that in fact policies designed today will affect most directly us, as the new generation entering the labour market currently.

In relation to the content of the discussion paper we would like to propose for the manifesto 2009 to be composed of 3 elements:

1. Challenge of “New Social Europe”

2. Jobs, jobs, jobs!
3. Social justice!!

The content of the paragraphs shall in our view reflect on following sub-points:

### **1. Challenge of New Social Europe**

- Many refer to the concept of “a Social Europe” and many apply diverse definitions. Socialists and social democrats have been struggling for “A Social Europe” since their Congress in Bonn in 1973. Having launched a debate on “A new Social Europe” we ought to provide people across Europe with an answer: what is that? Is that simply “a people’s Europe” – as “social” can be translated in some European languages as “belonging to society”? Or is that a combined vision for Europe’s future, both in internal and external dimension, which is unique, because it combines economic growth with a strategy to improve living and working conditions for all? Finally, what is the difference in between “Social Europe” and “a new Social Europe”? The public debate about Europe’s future reveals clear doubts about a social dimension on the European level. It has to be clearly stated what is so new about the social Europe. As stated before, the mission of a struggle for a Social Europe has been identified by several actors: socialists and social democrats, Socialist Groups in the EP and in CoR, trade unions, NGOs’, social movements. The question that Manifesto 2009 has to respond to is: what is the bridge of all those campaign? What is the role (based on assets of each) that PES, all social partners shall play in struggle for Social Europe? What is the future of the trade unions, students unions and socialists alliance? As only together we are stronger, those questions must be answered in clear declaration in order to let us all mobilize for a Social Europe 2009.

### **2. Jobs, jobs, jobs!**

For socialists and social democrats, putting employment on the top of the agenda has been a natural tendency. For more than a century of our struggle, we have faced changing society – and therefore the concept of what is work needs to be re-defined today, at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- In 1993 the Larsson Paper on “Put Europe back to work” has put forward the message that the reemployment strategy is an essential factor to stimulate growth. More than 10 years later, most of European socialists and social democrats put forward a claim that “Economic growth is not enough – we have to have

economic growth focused on job creation". Looking at those two different approaches, we come to a conclusion that in the Manifesto 2009 PES has to describe its vision and long term strategy in order to complete the European Labour Market. Unlike the Single Market, this aspect of the debate is not clear to our citizens – and since decent secured work is what people are concerned with, we shall not fail the hopes that are entrusted in us.

- It has to take into consideration challenges of today's world – alike globalization. If we really want to fulfill Lisbon Agenda as a response to it, we need to make sure that education, research and development are not just empty words. Today the debate upon them is still in largest extend reserved for the national member states. As young generation we want to say clearly – the European labour market will not be a reality, EU will not become the most competitive economy based on knowledge and skills, as long as training and education is not tackled in depth on the EU level. And the visionary proposal on how to overcome right-wing prejudices that EU speaking on education for all would hijack national sovereignty, we expect from PES Manifesto.
- The manifesto has to try to define the work of today also on the bases of changing lives of individual – demographical statistics, the fact that we enter the labour market later than our parents, which the life cycle has expanded in years. Modern social democracy has to approach therefore the issue of flexicurity – but as it consists of several elements (among them mobility, active labour market policies, life long learning) it has to be very clear on what is our view how to make our proposals applicable at the entire European Labour Market.
- The labour market of EU will not become a working reality, as long as the working poor and the segregation of the labour market remains reality. For that, socialists and social democrats have to deliver and answer in order to be able to ask responsibly for voters trust and support.
- Last but not least, the issue of the youth unemployment. Many, many skilled young people living in despair, stripped of any hope for a decent work, women and migrants ready to take any precarious jobs in order to survive themselves and sustain their families – is the reminder that Europe has not done yet all in order to "unlock its potential". Illegal immigration as also legal one reflected in brain drain and much of frustrations of those, who completed their studies and now work abroad much below their qualifications, gives birth to doubt and social isolation. In order to break this pattern, we expect Manifesto 2009 to reflect

specifically on what to do about youth unemployment, what the actual meaning of the “active labour market policies” is and how to abandon young people’s exploitation in precarious jobs and unpaid internships. If social democracy wants to regain in the future the position of the leader in the EU it has to regain the trust of young people, who are the future of Europe and whose trust depends on how secure their future is.

### **3. More social justice!**

In many European countries socialists and social democrats have a lack of credibility when it comes to the question on who is taking care of the social justice in society. PES manifesto 2009 has to clearly state that it’s socialists and social democrats who stand and work for social justice in our society. Only if this is clearly stated and shown we gain back trust from our voters and clearly distinguish us from other parties. Social justice is a headline for the following issues

- The European labour market debates proceed, with issues alike “flexicurity”, however the social policies provision is not proceeding equally fast. As socialists and social democrats we believe that labour policies and social policies are bound with one another, and this is a message that we have to emphasize in Manifesto 2009. Thus no European labour market without social justice!
- For that reason, as PES we need to agree what is the future of the European Social Model. Too often the discussion tends to shift and focus on differences of the different types of models, instead of the common aspects – like the values of equality, solidarity. This is why the PES Manifesto should include the vision for what the European Social Model shall be, what is the role of the public services that we foresee, what the essential social security is that it brings along. We have to crash the message of the conservatives and liberals that “we can not afford the Welfare system” – as young generation that can be harmed by cuts we want to state: this is investment in a sustainable society that is a community and care for all, we therefore can not afford not to have Welfare system.
- Taking into account that the social security system is the question that relates to both the future of Europe, but also to the demand for solidarity of generations, the Manifesto has to refer in this dimension to the youth policy. European Youth Pact has to be included as a part of the human security strategy and the population/development policies for Europe.

Last, but not least the "New Social Europe" shall give a clear motivation to the voters why to go, to vote and to support socialist policies. Outlining a clear difference between us and other political families has to appear also convincing through giving an answer what the PES Group will actually do with these Manifesto proposals after elections, explaining also to the voters role of European Parliament in aspect of labour, economic and social policies. Otherwise the EP may seem to remain irrelevant to the voters, as also with no capacity to act upon the pledges made by the parties in the elections.