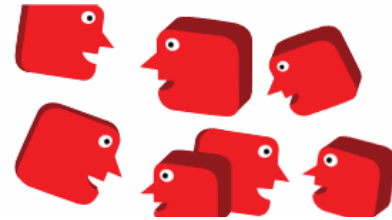




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manifesto2009 barometer: European democracy and diversity III

Many participants to the online consultation noted the need to push forward the [anti-discrimination directive](#) to deal with the increasing intolerance, homophobia and discrimination in Europe. We also need to educate people and politicians, and change backward mentalities to ensure legislation is effectively implemented. The PES should therefore produce a [clear statement](#) on this directive.

Natalia highlighted the need to put emphasis on [equality policies](#) as a cornerstone of the PES political action: *“in defining socialist policies, we have a moral obligation to work in favour of this profound social change through education, legislation and the questioning of those social models based on the so-called superiority of one sex over the other”*. The case of the Spanish government, with 9 women and 8 men, and a Ministry of Equality, should be used as a best practice.

Several participants stressed that it was important to ensure that [marriage is exactly the same for all](#) - regardless of whether the couple is hetero or same-sex, rather than creating a new form of “gay marriage”. It is the only way to ensure non-discrimination.

To tackle the [European democratic deficit](#), several proposals were put forward by Carlos:

- Have a democratically elected President of the Commission
- All other Commissioners should be elected and reflect the ideological balance of the European Parliament and not of the Member States
- Have a High Commissioner of Foreign Affairs so the EU speaks with one voice in international affairs

Others, such as PES Group Coordinator Karl-Heinz Klär, rather proposed to create a [European referendum](#), to be held simultaneously in all Member States on major European political issues. Costas Simitis, former Greek Prime Minister and Member of the Amato high level group on the future of Europe, added that attempts to create democracy by a top-down process will not succeed unless accompanied by [broad public participation](#). To foster this public participation, we need to discuss concrete policy problems like inflation and interest rates. Jo Leinen, MEP, proposed that voters have [two votes at the European elections](#):



one for national representatives and one for a transnational list (with 10% of the MEPs to be elected).

Michel Delebarre, first CoR Vice-President, noted that the PES manifesto must develop a [comprehensive program](#) for the European elections, and not focus only on some traditional socialist themes: we cannot leave the environment to the greens, the issue of civil rights to the liberals or security issues to the conservatives.

Michel Delebarre, first CoR Vice-President, urged the PES to come forward with a concrete [diversity and migration agenda](#).

A strong democratic and a social Europe also starts with [winning the people's hearts and minds](#). Therefore, the PES should ensure better information of the citizens on EU activities and affairs, a stronger EU presence within education and more visibility of impact of EU activities in people's everyday lives. [Different measures](#) could be adopted to this purpose:

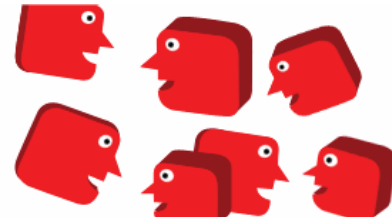
- Use a single logo for all EU aid (e.g. European flag with name of the Direction)
- Centralise all EU communication budget lines and activities within DG Communication. This should allow for a transversal and deep knowledge of all EU institutional communication; it would rationalise and ensure effectiveness of all communication spendings; and it would allow the establishment of a clear communication policy for each Member State.
- Give the EU a clear communication policy, implemented in each country and fully managed by the DG Communications (with or through its national representations).
- Reinforce "Europe Direct", which aims at informing the public about EU activities.

[To get people more involved](#) in European affairs, the PES could:

- Present a candidate for the European Commission Presidency selected amongst all the PES national parties
- Promote a European campaign caravan, led by the PES candidate for the EC presidency and by several MEP candidates. The caravan should have a political rally in all the countries so local candidates would join it and campaign together.
- Recommends a more intense political miscegenation between PES parties. The concept would be appealing to media and it would be much easier to present a Portuguese candidate to the Italian electorate.



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- Create an electoral European level to complement national elections, including around 15% of the national MEPs and presenting 95 MEPs to be elected. This European list, closed, would have to gather candidates from all the countries (this proposal is further developed [here](#)).

It was also underlined the need to [forge a European cultural model and a common European collective conscience](#) through three vectors: education, a wider use of the media's capabilities to disseminate a common identity and the reinforcement of European symbols. But also, regarding the EU democratisation process, common interests should be emphasised, and institutions should become more democratic, efficient and transparent.

Another step to ensure a common European sentiment is to establish a [statute of European association](#), to avoid the complications related to the diversity of rules governing associations in different member states. The PES should act to establish such a statute, to enable citizens of the Union who wish to do so, to associate freely.