



PES Council Resolution

Approved by the PES Council in Lisbon on 1 December 2017

PES 2019 Common Candidate roadmap

For the first time, on 1 March 2014, a pan-European common candidate was designated by a pan-European party, the Party of European Socialists. This was a revolution in the context of the European election, and an ambitious step for a reinforced European democracy. For the first time in its history, European citizens could vote for a majority in the European Parliament not only through national political parties' lists, but also with a European common candidate for each family, and its leader would become the president of the European Commission. This new democratic path was initiated by the PES, and we should be proud of having lead the way to other European parties

After the European elections to the European Parliament in 2009, and after several discussions among our member parties, the PES decided to include this procedure in the PES Statutes by the 8th PES congress in 2009 in Prague in the following terms:

Article 25 of the PES statutes foresee that “The Election Congress shall: - elect the PES common Candidate to the European Commission Presidency, through an open, transparent and democratic competitive process; - adopt the PES Manifesto for the European elections.” Therefore, we agreed to prepare the 2014 European elections by nominating one common candidate on behalf of the PES family for the position of President of the European Commission.

Next year, the 2010 PES Council in Warsaw adopted a resolution establishing a Working Group led by PES Treasurer Ruairi Quinn to develop a democratic and transparent nomination procedure for election our common candidate. This working group with representation of all our member parties worked for many months on the terms and conditions of this procedure to elect the common candidate of our political family to the European elections of 2014. The end of this long process was the election of Martin Schulz as our common candidate by the member parties and ratified by the delegates in the Rome PES Election Congress, in March 2014.

This decision taken by the 2014 PES Election Congress was an important step forward on the road to a more democratic Europe and created an opportunity to make European election campaigns more visible and political than ever before, especially because four other European political parties followed the PES initiative and proposed common candidates as well. The billboards surrounding the European Parliament proclaimed “This time it’s different”, and the so-called “Spitzenkandidaten” process was the main novelty of that campaign, which gave the European elections an entirely new dynamic, more visibility and a European perspective in these elections that too often are determined by national politics. The five European candidates to become President of the European Commission made European tours, participating in rallies all over Europe, and having a strong visibility in many of EU countries. The epitome of all this were the debates that the five candidates had, which were broadcasted by dozens of national media and watched it by millions of Europeans.



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However, during the 2014 elections, our family of social democrats did not manage to become the biggest political group in the European Parliament, and Jean-Claude Juncker from the EPP managed to become the new President of the European Commission.

As expressed in the 2015 PES Congress in Budapest¹, our main challenge for the European political cycle ahead of us is to win the next European elections and to have our common candidate elected as the next European Commission President in 2019.

At this challenging crossroads for Europe, we must relaunch European social democracy and progressive and democratic values. We have to show that the PES parties represent a clear alternative to the current European state of play. We have to prove to our citizens that the PES, within the European Institutions and through the national member parties, is able to promote and implement our call for a democratic paradigm shift in European policies, from blind austerity to investment, growth policies and solidarity. We want to do that putting the citizens in the centre of our political action, protecting the vulnerable people and defending our fundamental values as a political family.

Therefore, the social democratic, progressive and democratic family is ready to elaborate a common PES electoral strategy for the next European elections. The PES needs to engage with much more citizens by addressing the European political issues at stake during those elections. We, as a European party, need again a common PES Manifesto and a PES Common Candidate for the Presidency of the European Commission, but this time we need to take a step further, if we still want to become innovative and ambitious.

Our political family will aim to build up a coalition of progressive and pro-European forces in the newly elected European Parliament that would vote for the PES Common Candidate to be next European Commission President.

With this goal, the PES will select its Common Candidate through a democratic, open and transparent process, supervised by the Working Group Candidate 2019. This process will end with the second PES Election Congress in spring 2019, which aims to kick off the PES 2019 European election campaign.

With this in mind, in its 2017 Council meeting, the PES agreed:

- To elect the Working Group Candidate 2019, with the composition shown below.
- This Working Group will discuss and propose an election process, which will be adopted by the PES Presidency in autumn 2018
- To identify, in case there are several candidates and in order to promote an open debate also at the national level, a selection procedure of direct consultation among party members that can include internal primaries and the possibility to hold open primaries.
- To set an end date for candidacy applications no later than two weeks before the 2018 PES Congress, which we schedule for late 2018
- To support the proposal of electing a part of the Members of the new European Parliament through European lists of candidates, presented by the different European political Parties, led by the candidates at the Presidency of the European Commission”

¹ Resolution “*PES Roadmap toward 2019*”, adopted by the PES Congress in Budapest in 2015

