



"Tony Robinson"
<TRobinson@europarl.
eu.int>

To: undisclosed-recipients;;
cc:
Subject: EU enlargement begins with the social democrats . . .

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News from the Party of European Socialists
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EU ENLARGEMENT BEGINS WITH THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS

The Party of European Socialists will this week grant full membership status to seven parties from EU enlargement countries.

After a formal decision at a Presidency meeting in Brussels on 16 May, the PES will have 27 full member parties from the EU, its enlargement countries and Norway. In addition, the Party has eight associate and six observer parties from countries as far apart as Israel and Iceland.

The PES vice-president in charge of enlargement issues, Jan Marinus Wiersma of the Netherlands, said: 'Social democrats across Europe have worked hard since the fall of the Berlin Wall to bring about this remarkable moment in the reunification of Europe.'

'Prime ministers and party leaders from 22 countries will from now on be working together as equals to put our shared vision of a social democratic Europe into effect.'

The seven socialist and social democratic parties to become full members, including two from Poland, are:

- Czech Republic – Česká strana sociálně demokratická;
- Estonia – Rahvaerakond Mõdukad;
- Hungary – Magyar Szocialista Párt;
- Lithuania – Lietuvos Socialdemokrato Partija;
- Poland – Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej and Unia Pracy; and
- Slovenia – Združena Lista Socialnih Demokratov

The Cypriot Party, KISOS, is already a full member of the PES.

The aims of the PES include:

- STRENGTHENING of the socialist and social democratic movement in the Union and throughout Europe;
- DEVELOPMENT of close working relationships between the national member parties, their parliamentary groups, the European Parliamentary Group of the PES

and the Party;

- DEFINITION of common policies for the European Union; and
- ADOPTION of a common platform for elections to the European Parliament.

The PES was founded in 1992 following the Treaty on European Union whose article 191 recognises the importance of political parties at a European level. The PES succeeded the Confederation of Socialist Parties of the European Community, which had been set up in 1974.

The decision to grant full membership status to the seven parties follows the signing of the EU Accession Treaty on 16 April 2003.

end

Tony Robinson
Spokesman, Party of European Socialists

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Fax : ...

<http://www.pes.org>



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