

Simpol



Simpol-UK

The simultaneous policy



Raising awareness of Simpol

For Simultaneous Policy Adopters to have clout at election time, there needs to be a lot of us. For the Simultaneous Policy to reflect the views of all sectors of society, it has to be widely known. For politicians to take it seriously, it needs to be on the news and on the lips of people in their constituency. In short, for Simpol to work, we need everyone to know about it. 'Raising awareness' is jargon of campaigning organisations for increasing the number of people who know about an issue and increasing understanding of it.

How to raise awareness

As an experiment ask a friend, relative or colleague if they have heard about Simpol. If they say 'yes' that demonstrates efforts at raising awareness have paid off. If they say 'no', then you have just successfully added another person to the growing number who have heard of Simpol. If you spend a few minutes explaining what it is about, you have raised their awareness still further.

If this makes 'raising awareness' sound simple, then good. It is.

Do not worry overly about signing people up as Supporters or having an answer to every question. A person may pay more attention next time they come across Simpol. Or the fact you are the tenth person to mention Simpol may be enough to convince them that it is a credible movement.

So to raise awareness all you have to do is talk about Simpol. For further ideas, see below.

If you have read an Simpol leaflet you know more than someone who has never heard of Simpol. Even better if you have read John Bunzl's book *The Simultaneous Policy* or others in the *Making it Happen* series.

You will find further information in the Simpol-UK newsletter and website and the other sheets in this pack. You can join in Simpol email discussion groups.

You are qualified to spread the word about Simpol, but do not be afraid if you don't know the answer to a question. Direct people to Simpol-UK, the website or your local group.

Leaflets and posters

Simpol-UK produces a variety of leaflets and posters and can provide templates for your local group to adapt.

Ideas for how to use these:

- Giving leaflets to friends and colleagues.
- Putting leaflets and posters in the local library, development education centre churches and

other faith meeting places, wholefood shops, cafés, anywhere.

- Distributing leaflets at other groups you belong to, such as youth groups and campaigning organisations.
- Send email versions to groups in your area. You can send electronic versions of posters with a request they be displayed.
- Hand out leaflets at meetings or rallies.
- If political or campaigning speakers are visiting you could hand out leaflets outside the event or ask to put them on a table or chairs inside.
- You may wish to conduct door-to-door leafleting, particularly during elections (see the sheet *Elections and candidates* for more information).

Stalls

Keep your eyes and ears open for local events where you can publicise Simpol by putting out leaflets and/or posters. You may also be able to have a stall at some events. Sometimes there may be a charge for this. If so, make contact with the Simpol-UK via the website/email. We may be able to provide matching funds (i.e. 50% of the total) or full funding if the stall will have an impact beyond your local area, such as at a national conference.

Possible locations for stalls include:

- Festivals and fairs.
- University or college events.
- Conferences of partner organisations (see the *Networking* sheet).

Your local council may permit you to have a stall on the high street or market square, possibly on a regular basis. Your local library may also have a space for local organisations to put posters and leaflets. Call the council for details.

Leaflets and posters

Watch for opportunities to speak about Simpol. If you are invited to do so, prepare in advance in a way that makes you most comfortable. You may wish to write key points on small cards to remind you of the different themes in your talk. You may prefer to write everything word for word and read it out.

Familiarise yourself with what you will say, speaking out loud to check the timing. You could also practice by recording yourself or delivering your talk to friends. Reading from a prepared text is not a bad thing to do – most politicians, for example, do this, often with an auto-cue so they don't appear to be reading - but try to speak as naturally as possible.

Make sure to allow time for questions. This is when the discussion can really come alive. Make notes while the question is being asked if there are points that come to mind so you don't forget to cover them and pause to compose yourself before answering. You should be able to anticipate most questions and have thought about answers. If a question catches you by surprise, you could admit this by saying something like: "*That is a good question. No one has asked that before. Off the top of my head I imagine...*" But also be prepared to say: "*I'm not sure of our position on that. I'll have to check with Simpol-UK and get back to you.*"

Remember that for many people new to Simpol it seems so very different and ambitious that they do not commit to it on first hearing. Do not be disappointed if your enthusiasm is returned only by a few people. You have done Simpol a great service by spreading the word.

What to say

Study the variety of ways in which SP is presented in this pack and on Simpol-UK leaflets. Select the explanations that make most sense to you. Or write your own.

It is a good idea to speak of your personal motivation. Why did Simpol catch your attention? What possibilities does it offer that other campaigns do not? Try to give examples that illustrate the type of problems Simpol aims to address. Virtually every day in the news there are stories you can refer to.

It is good to stress that Simpol is a long-term parallel strategy. We still need campaigns to try to make changes before Simpol is implemented. We need people to change their own habits. And there are many areas that are outside the scope of Simpol.

Invite your audience to bring their experience and ideas into Simpol and to get involved in the policy development process. Simpol is not a campaign with all the answers, it is a campaign enabling the answers to be found and made a reality.

Letters, phone-ins, journalists

When you see or hear stories that make you cry out: "*This is why we need Simpol!*" you have found an opportunity to say so. Write a letter or send an email to the newspaper or programme. You can call phone-in programmes (see the sheet *Working with the media* for more ideas).