

Statute

Statute of the Party of the European Left

(Full text of the Statute, as it was adopted at the Founding Congress of the European Left in Rome, May 9, 2004, with the amendments approved by the 2nd Congress in Prague, November 2007, by the 3rd Congress in Paris, December 5, 2010, and by the 4th Congress in Madrid, December 14, 2013)

Preamble

We unite democratic parties of the alternative and progressive Left on the European continent that strive for the consistent transformation of today's social relationships into a peaceful and socially just society on the basis of the diversity of our situations, our histories and our common values.

Therefore we refer to the values and traditions of the socialist, communist and labour movement, of feminism, the feminist movement and gender equality, of the environmental movement and sustainable development, of peace and international solidarity, of human rights, humanism and antifascism, of progressive and liberal thinking, both nationally and internationally. We work together in the tradition of the struggles against capitalist exploitation, ecological destruction, political oppression and criminal wars, against fascism and dictatorship, in resistance to patriarchal domination and discrimination against "others".

We defend this legacy of our movement which inspired and contributed to securing the social certainties of millions of people. We keep the memory of these struggles alive including the sacrifices and the sufferings in the course of these struggles. We do this in unreserved disputation with undemocratic, stalinist practices and crimes, which were in absolute contradiction to socialist and communist ideals.

The political and economic developments in the capitalist societies at the beginning of the 21st century create the necessity and the possibility for parties of the Left, for democratic movements and alternative social forces, when working out and realising social alternatives not only to take into account all aspects of globalisation and internationalisation. Europe as a new space for the integration of more and more countries in East and West, in North and South is both an opportunity and a challenge to regain the political initiative for Left forces. We want and have to most closely combine our work on this political level with the social activities of members and sympathizers of the party organisations within the communities, regions and nation states.

We are doing it in sharp rejection of and developing an alternative to capitalism and to the financial hegemonic groups with its worldwide attempts of pushing through neo-liberal policies into the daily life of the peoples by the so-called political and economic elites.

And we want and have to do so being not a force free of contradictions, having differing views on many issues. But we are united in resisting political incapacitation and taking part in common struggles for an alternative that has freedom, equality, justice and solidarity as its goals.

With this international approach we declare:

- The Left is willing to take on responsibility in Europe and the world for the shaping of our societies, to work out political alternatives, to promote them among the public and to win the required majorities.
- Liberal internationalisation and globalisation are no phenomena of nature but the result of political developments and decisions. Therefore we stand consequently against the neo-liberal

policy of dealing with these challenges, against war and militarization. Just now courage and confidence must be given to the people that the world is not a commodity, that a new world of peace, democracy, sustainability and solidarity is possible.

1. General Provisions, Composition and Membership

Article 1

The "Party of the European Left", abbreviated here to "European Left" (EL) is a flexible, decentralised association of independent and sovereign European left-wing parties and political organizations which works on the basis of consensus.

Article 2

- Founding members of the EL are socialist, communist, red-green and other democratic left parties of the member states and associated states of the European Union (EU) who are working together and establishing various forms of co-operation at all levels of political activity in Europe based on the agreements, basic principles and political aims laid down in its political programme (manifesto). Agreement on the European Left's Statutes is prerequisite for membership to the Party of the European Left.
- Membership to the EL is open to any left party and political organisation in Europe that agrees with the aims and principles of the political programme (manifesto) and accepts these statutes. Their membership is granted by decision of the members.
- Other parties and political organisations may apply for observer status or might be invited by the members to become observers to the EL.

Article 3

The European Left consists of the following parties:

- Member parties and political organizations with full rights
- Observer parties or political organizations

Article 4

The party of the EL gets an official name in each of the official languages of the European Union as well as in the official languages of the states where EL member parties exist.

The names are:

- "Partit de L 'Esquerra Europea" or "Esquerra Europea" or "EE" in Catalan
- "Strana evropské levice" or "Evropská levice" or "EL" in Czech
- "Party of the European Left" or "European Left" or "EL" in English
- "Euroopa Vasakpartei" or "Euroopa Vasak" or "EV" in Estonian
- "Parti de la Gauche Européenne" or "Gauche Européenne" or "GE" in French
- "Partei der Europäischen Linken" or "Europäische Linke" or "EL" in German

- "Κομμα της Ευρωττακης Αριστερας" oder "Ευρωττακη Αριστερα" or "ΕΑ" in Greek
- "Európai Baloldali Párt" or "Európai Bal" or "EB" in Hungarian
- "Partito della Sinistra Europea" or "Sinistra Europea" or "SE" in Italian
- "Partido da Esquerda Europeia" or "Esquerda Europeia" or "EE" in Portuguese
- "Partidul Stîngii Europene" or "Stînga Europeana" or "SE" in Romanian
- "Európska ľavicová strana" or "Európska ľavica" or "EL" in Slovakian
- "Partido de la Izquierda Europea" or "Izquierda Europea" or "IE" in Spanish
- "Partidul Stîngii Europene" or "Stînga Europeana" or "SE" in Moldovan respectively in Romanian languages,
- "Avrupa Sol Partisi" or "Avrupa Sol" or "ASP" in Turkish language,
- "Партыя Еўрапейскіх левых" or "Еўрапейскія левыя" or "ЕЛ" in Belarusian language,
- "Europese Linkspartij" or "Europees Links" or "EL" in Vlamish language,
- "Европейската лява партия" or "Европейската левица" or "ЕЛ" in Bulgarian language,
- "Euroopan vasemmistopuolue" or "Euroopan vasemmisto" or "EV" in Finnish language,
- "Europæisk Venstreparti" or "Europæisk Venstre" or "EV" in Danish language,
- "Europeiska vänsterpartiet" or "Europeiska vänstern" or "EV" in Swedish language.

The juridical seat of the EL is in Brussels.

Article 5

The EL aims to:

- contribute to common political action of the democratic and alternative Left in EU member states as well as on the European level;
- promote the social, emancipatory, ecological, peace-loving as well as democratic and progressive thinking and acting of the parties, their members and sympathisers, and therefore to reinforce the parties' actions to develop emancipatory, democratic, peace, social, ecological and sustainable policies which is essential to transform the societies and to overcome today's capitalism;
- use democratic forms to struggle for overcoming contemporary capitalist relations;
- consolidate the co-operation of the parties and political organisations at all levels;
- promote the confrontation of their analyses and the co-ordination of their orientations at the European level;
- co-operate with other political organisations at European level pursuing similar targets;
- promote a "European public relations work" that actively supports the development of a European identity according to our values and aims;
- co-operate in the preparation of the European elections and in referenda in the European scale;
- initiate, prepare and support Europe-wide initiatives of the EL and its parties - together with other parties, party-networks and NGOs;
- all decisions concerning choices and attitudes of EL member parties or political organizations in their own countries remain strictly under the sovereignty of national parties.

The EL supports fully gender equality in all areas of daily life. Feminism, gender-mainstreaming and gender-democracy are basic principles for the functioning and development of the EL.

Article 6

(1)

A member party or political organisation of the EL with full rights and duties can become any left party or political organisation that is represented in the European Parliament, or in the National parliaments or in the Parliaments of regions resp. in regional assemblies within the EU member-states.

In EU member states with no regional level it will be sufficient for a party or political organisation to have representatives on the municipal level, if a municipal parliament represents at least 20 percent of the country's population.

Parties or political organisations, coming from EU member states or non-EU-member states, can become members of the European Left with full rights, irrespectively if they have parliamentary representation on different levels.

(2)

Membership in the EL does not prohibit the membership in other associations, including outside the European Union if their acting is not contrary to the aims and principles of the EL. The structure of the EL allows political organisations which are politically close to the EL to take part in its activities in a flexible manner. If desirable for both sides, EL can establish a cooperation protocol for this purpose, and the respective organisations are netitled the designation "EL partner". The main criterion here is the political consent with the basic positions of the EL; the decision-making process inside the EL on this issue follows the rules for decision about membership issues.

(3)

Applications for membership in the EL are discussed and decided by the Council of Chairpersons and ratified by the Congress on suggestion of the Executive Board on the basis of the application, the rules and political programme presented by the applicant. The decision by the Council of Chairpersons has to be based on consensus.

(4)

The temporary / provisional suspension from participation in activities, or the cancellation of membership in the EL in case a member party or political organisation seriously violates statutes and political aims are carried out through the same procedures as the admittance.

(5)

The observer parties or political organisations take part in the meetings, to which they are invited, as consultants. They can make proposals to the Executive Board for examination and decision making.

(6)

Member parties or political organisations that want to leave the EL have to declare this officially.

(7)

The EL introduces the opportunity of individual membership as a contribution to its future development. In countries where full-right member parties or political organizations exist each member party or political organization is free to decide to carry out this opportunity and to adopt - for its own country - the most convenient approach and practical methods. According to that approach women and men residents of an EU member state can become individual members of the EL. In countries where full-right member parties or political organizations exist they can form friendship circles associated to these parties of the European Left. Citizens of other European countries associated to the EU can also apply for individual membership. They can join or create a national group of individual members applying for observer status in the EL.

(8)

The political foundation on European level Transform!Europe is affiliated to the EL.

2. The Organs of the EL and the Decision-Making Process

Article 7

The European Left has the following organs:

- the Congress
- the Council of Chairpersons
- the Executive Board

Mode of work

Article 8

- The work of the EL organs has to be performed openly and transparently, its documents are to be published. The EL documents and materials are supplied to all member parties and political organisations.
- For the concrete mode of work of all bodies as well as regulations concerning the decision-making process rules of procedures have to be worked out and to be adopted by these organs on proposal of the council of chairpersons.
- Respecting the values of gender democracy the share of women in all organs (except the Council of Chairpersons) must be 50%.
- Being a pluralistic association, proceedings of the EL have to be chosen that guarantee the rights of different sensitivities.

Article 9

1. The EL is striving to cooperate closely with parliamentarian groups of the Left in other European bodies and networks.
2. The EL will establish forms of cooperation with youth organisations of the European Left - both representing national or regional organisations as well as European structures and other international networks.

The Congress

Article 10

The Congress:

- The Congress approves and adopts the basic documents and the statute.
- The Congress ratifies the admission of applicant parties or political organisations.

The Congress:

- elects the EL chairperson and Vice-chairperson/s on the basis of a proposal by the Council of Chairpersons following a rotation principle;
- elects the treasurer on the basis of a proposal by the Executive Board;
- elects the Executive Board consisting of two members of each party in accordance to the nomination by each respective member party;

- elects at least three and odd auditors;
- establishes in accordance with the Council of Chairpersons the plan of action;
- decides on political statements of the EL and recommendations to the Executive Board;
- elaborates common guidelines for the elections to the European Parliament;
- comments on the report of activities for the preceded period and on the program for further work presented by the Executive Board;
- proposes discussions of and/or within member parties or political organisations on political developments or special questions.

Article 11

The Congress shall hold at least one session every three calendar years. It is convened by the Executive Board, which can also decide on convening an extraordinary congress.

Before election to the European Parliament, a Congress or Electoral Conference must be convened at least six months before the European elections.

The Congress takes place alternately in different member states of the European Union or in European states where EL member parties or political organisations exist.

A Congress can be convened at the request of at least 25% of its delegates.

Article 12

The Congress consists of:

12 Delegates of each member party. The key for the number of delegates is decided upon by every Congress for the next Congress.

The delegates are elected by their parties with respect to the gender equality, i.e. with at least 50 % of women.

The key for the number of delegates to the Foundation Congress is fixed by agreement of the Council of Chairpersons. Parties do not have to use the full number of delegates.

All other participants are observers without the right to vote: i.e.:

- Representatives of the observer parties resp. organisations
- Members of the Executive Board, not being delegates
- Invitees and guests, including members of the Parliamentarian groups of Left parties in the European Parliament, the National Parliaments or in other European bodies resp. networks

Article 13

In addition, the Executive Board is permitted to invite representatives of other parties or organisations to the Congress.

The Council of Chairpersons

Article 14

The Council of Chairpersons is meeting at least once a year.

Members are:

- the Chairpersons of all member parties
- the EL Chairperson and Vice-chairperson/s

The Council of Chairpersons can invite other representatives of EL bodies or from EL member parties

resp. political organisations to participate in its meeting.

For the preparation of the EL Foundation Congress a preliminary Council of Chairpersons consisting of the Chairpersons of all member parties is built up.

Article 15

The Council of Chairpersons has, with regards to the Executive Board, the rights of initiative and of having objection on important political issues.

The Council of Chairpersons adopts resolutions and recommendations that are passed to the Executive Board and the Congress.

The Council of chairpersons decides about applications for EL membership.

The Executive Board

Article 16

The Executive Board consists of:

- the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson/s
- the treasurer
- further Members elected on the basis of a key of two persons from each member party by the Congress at a gender-quoted basis
- the Head of the secretariat (without the right of vote)

Article 17

Executive Board meetings take place at least four times a year.

The convening of a meeting of the Executive Board can also be asked for by a member party or political organization.

Article 18

- The Executive Board carries out the decisions on the basis and orientations of the Congress and in accordance with the Council of Chairpersons
- The Executive Board is responsible for organizing the daily work of the EL. It is responsible for the creation, composition and functioning of the Secretariat. The Executive Board has to adopt the rules of its own work as well as the rules of the work of the Secretariat.
- It determines the political guidelines of the EL between the Congresses. It proposes, plans and convenes political initiatives, for the EL, convenes conferences or thematic meetings. It sets up permanent or ad-hoc working groups, whose responsible staff are chosen by, and whose tasks are fixed by the Board.
- The Executive Board convenes the Congress, fixes the proposals for time-table and venue, and suggests the standing orders and agenda.
- The Executive Board is also authorised to name ad-hoc working groups etc. on special political issues and questions in accordance with the plan of action established by the Congress in accordance with the Council of Chairpersons.

The Chairperson

Article 19

The Chairperson is elected by the Congress. A candidate for the EL Chairperson is presented by the Council of Chairpersons until and including the next Congress. The candidacy should follow a rotation principle.

On a proposal of the Council of Chairpersons the Congress elects one or more Vice-chairpersons on a gender quota basis.

Article 20

In case the post of the Chairperson becomes vacant before the next ordinary Congress, the Executive Board can name a Chairperson ad interim until the next Congress.

Article 21

The Chairperson has to perform the following tasks with help of the Secretariat:

- running the regular business and preparing the meetings of the Executive Board
- maintain close relationships with the whole prime executives of the member policies
- developing close relations with all the observer-parties
- executing the decisions and respective orders of the Executive Board
- maintaining the contact of the EL with the Parliamentarian Groups in which there will be deputies of Left parties in the EP and other European /international institutions etc.;
- representing the EL in the contacts with representatives of organisations and institutions, including the EU authorities, Trade Unions, non-governmental organisations and associations.

The Vice-chairperson/s support/s the Chairperson in fulfilling his/her duties.

The Secretariat

Article 22

The Secretariat carries out the decisions of the EL organs. It is an auxiliary committee lead by the Chairperson. Its composition and functioning are the responsibility of the Executive Board, including financing and staff. In particular it is responsible for:

- supporting the Chairperson
- preparing and organizing meetings
- maintaining contacts to the member parties and political organizations
- supporting the EL working groups
- maintaining relations to the media
- running the archives
- securing transparency of all political work
- guiding the work of the EL office
- reporting on its work to each Executive Board meeting

3. The Finances of the EL

Article 23

The EL is financing itself by membership fees, contributions and public subsidies.

The Executive Board approves the budget, as proposed by the Treasurer after its adoption in the meeting of treasurers of the member parties. The budget has to be prepared and approved in accordance with the regulations and rules regarding the funding of the political parties on European level.

4. General Remarks

Article 24

Changes of these statutes and the Manifesto are decided by the Congress after a thorough debate on the issue within each member party. If, due to changes in European legislation, a conflict arises between this Statute and the valid European regulations in the time between two Congresses, the Council of Chairpersons is entitled to adopt, on the basis of proposals made by the Executive Board, provisional changes to the Statute which will bring it to correspondence with the European regulations. These changes are considered temporary, and their validity or rejection would be decided by the next EL Congress.

Dissolution of the EL

Article 25

The dissolution of the EL requires a decision of the Congress. Any assets of the EL as well as all obligations should at the time of the dissolution be divided among the member parties according to their financial contributions.

Transitory provisions of the foundation congress

Article 26

If not laid down otherwise all regulations of the statutes by the foundation congress are preliminary set until the first regular Congress of the EL. During that period all parties have the opportunity to ratify the expressed membership-status by the competence organs of each party in accordance to their national party statutes.

During that period the Council of Chairpersons gets particular responsibility for guaranteeing all aspects of the EL's further development in close cooperation with the Executive Board.

(1) Pending on the decision by the PCF-members till July 31, 2004