

Popular Orthodox Rally

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The **Popular Orthodox Rally** or *The People's Orthodox Rally* (Greek: Λαϊκός Ορθόδοξος Συναγερμός, *Laikós Orthódoxos Synagermós*), often abbreviated to **ΛΑ.Ο.Σ** (LAOS) as a pun on the Greek word for *people*, is a Greek radical right-wing populist political party.^{[3][4][5]} It was founded and is led by journalist Georgios Karatzaferis. Karatzaferis formed LAOS in 2000; a few months after he was expelled from the centre-right New Democracy.

In 2004, LAOS secured support from the Party of Hellenism and the Hellenic Women's Political Party. In 2005, LAOS absorbed the nationalist^{[7][8]} Hellenic Front.^[9] The youth branch of LAOS is the Youth of the Orthodox Rally (NEOS) (which is also a pun on the word for "youth" in Greek). The Popular Orthodox Rally is a member of the Europe of Freedom and Democracy group in the European Parliament, and was a member of the Alliance of Independent Democrats in Europe Europarty until the AIDE's dissolution in 2008.

The party failed to reach the 3% threshold of the popular vote in the 2004 elections, with 2.2%; three months later it gained 4.12% of the vote and one seat in the 2004 European Parliamentary Elections. LAOS received 3.8% of the vote in the 2007 elections, electing 10 members of parliament. In 2009 LAOS managed to elect two representatives in the European Parliament, receiving 7.14% of the vote. After receiving 5.63% of the vote and electing 15 members of parliament in the 2009 elections, LAOS dropped below the 3% threshold in 2012 and failed to secure any seats in parliament.

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Popular Orthodox Rally <i>Λαϊκός Ορθόδοξος Συναγερμός</i>	
	
Leader	Georgios Karatzaferis
Spokesperson	Georgios Kirtsos
Founded	14 September 2000
Split from	New Democracy
Headquarters	52, Kallirois Avenue, 117 45 Athens
Youth wing	Youth of the Orthodox Rally
Ideology	Conservatism ^[1] Greek nationalism ^[2] Right-wing populism ^{[3][4][5]}
Political position	Far-right ^{[4][5]}
European affiliation	AIDE (disbanded in 2008) Movement for a Europe of Liberties and Democracy (2011-present)
European Parliament group	IND/DEM (before 2009) Europe of Freedom and Democracy (from 2009 on)
Colours	Dark blue
Parliament	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">0 / 300</div>
European Parliament	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">2 / 22</div>
Regions ^[6]	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">121 / 725</div>
Website	
www.laos.gr (http://www.laos.gr/) (in Greek)	
Politics of Greece Political parties Elections	

Ideology

According to the Popular Orthodox Rally, "the demarcation of the political world into the Right Wing and the Left Wing is no longer relevant after the end of the Cold War. Nowadays, everyone in every aspect of his or her everyday life is either in favour or against Globalization". The party claims to consist of radically diverse groups that span the entire Left-Right political spectrum. Party president Karatzaferis, speaking on the 6th anniversary of the party's creation, stated "We are united in the only party that has in its ranks labourers and scientists, workers and the unemployed, leftists and rightists".^[10]

Karatzaferis has described the Popular Orthodox Rally as "a profoundly democratic party", consisting of everything from a "pre-dictatorship Right" to a merger of Left and Right to a "Popular Liberalism" in official party literature. He has also stated that he supports "patriotism and social solidarity, taking from all ideologies and personalities I like. I don't care if it's called communism, liberalism or socialism."^[11]

However, the Popular Orthodox Rally is often characterized by opposing politicians and in the media as "far-right",^{[12][13][14][15][16]} "populist", "radical right",^[17] "right-wing"^{[18][19]} and "nationalist". It has also been argued that its founding declaration (now withdrawn from the web) included antidemocratic, anti-parliamentary ideas, and the proposal that decisions should be taken by a council, which would include military officers and Church officials.^[20] The Popular Orthodox Rally began as a party with an Orthodox Christian religious identity, but also one with a radically nationalist political identity. Although it has since allegedly tried to 'moderate' the nationalist part of its appeal, with some of an extreme-nationalist or neo-fascist bent, such as Konstantinos Plevris, then leaving the party to join Patriotic Alliance or other fringe political organizations, more extreme-nationalists have recently once again joined its ranks and been elected to parliament. Of the ten Popular Orthodox Rally candidates who entered the parliament in 2007, four are considered to be part of the "nationalist bloc": Makis Voridis, Thanos Plevris, Adonis Georgiadis, and Kiriakos Velopoulos.^[21]

Platform

The main points of the Popular Orthodox Rally platform are as follows:^[22]

- No accession of Turkey to the European Union
- Ban immigration from outside the European Union and deport all illegal immigrants.
- Opposition to the European Constitution and the Lisbon Treaty
- A strict stance in the Macedonia naming dispute; no recognition of the Republic of Macedonia under any name that includes the term "Macedonia."
- Drastic tax cuts for both individuals and small businesses.



Election results

Results since 2004 (year links to election page)				
Year	Type of Election	Votes	%	Mandates
2004	Parliament	162,103	2.20%	0
2004	European Parliament	252,429	4.12%	1
2007	Parliament	271,764	3.80%	10
2009	European Parliament	366,615	7.15%	2
2009	Parliament	386,205	5.63%	15 (Member of the Coalition Cabinet of Lucas Papademos from 11/11/2011 to 10/02/2012)
2010	Local (peripheries)		4.0%	89
May 2012	Parliament	183,467	2.90%	0
June 2012	Parliament	97,099	1.58%	0

LA.O.S members in the European Parliament

- Niki Tzavela
- Nikolaos Salavrakos

Notes

1. ^ Papadopoulos, Alex G. "The Puzzle of the 2012 Greek Elections (<http://www.internationalpolicydigest.org/2012/05/08/the-puzzle-of-the-2012-greek-elections>)", 8 May 2012, International Policy Digest. Retrieved 2012-06-02.
2. ^ Lacroix, Justine; Nicolaïdis, Kalypso (2011). *European Stories: Intellectual Debates on Europe in National Contexts* (<http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=HNhV5Bdv2QwC>). Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 188. ISBN 978-0-19-959462-7.
3. ^ ^a ^b Gemenis, Kostas (2008) "The 2007 Parliamentary Election in Greece (<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/content~content=a790476516~db=all~order=page>)", *Mediterranean Politics* 13: 95–101 and Gemenis, Kostas and Dinas, Elias (2009) "Confrontation still? Examining parties' policy positions in Greece (<http://www.keele.ac.uk/research/lpj/kgemenis/download/Gemenis-Dinas-CEP.pdf>)", *Comparative European Politics*.
4. ^ ^a ^b ^c Hainsworth, Paul (2008), *The Extreme Right in Western Europe* (<http://books.google.de/books?id=jCtm2UeUQFIC&pg=PA66&dq=popular+orthodox+rally+far+right&hl=de&sa=X&ei=lv0vT5-JDYP5sgacuYzXDA&ved=0CDAQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=popular%20orthodox%20rally%20far%20right&f=false>), Rotledge, p. 66
5. ^ ^a ^b ^c Art, David (2011), *Inside the Radical Right: The Development of Anti-Immigrant Parties in Western Europe* (<http://books.google.de/books?id=9dUTXJakqLoC&pg=PA188&dq=popular+orthodox+rally+far+right&hl=de&sa=X&ei=lv0vT5-JDYP5sgacuYzXDA&ved=0CDwQ6AEwAg#v=onepage&q=popular%20orthodox%20rally%20far%20right&f=false>), Cambridge University Press, p. 188
6. ^ The counselors of the Regions.
7. ^ Davies, Peter; Jackson, Paul (2008), *The far right in Europe: an encyclopedia*, Greenwood World Press, p. 416.
8. ^ Tzilivakis, Kathy (5 March 2004), *Voices from the far right* (http://www.athensnews.gr/old_issue/13056/11004), Athens News, retrieved 2012-03-01.

9. ^ "Decision of Hellenic Front, 15 May 2005" (<http://www.e-grammes.gr/article.php?id=1797>). E-grammes.gr. Retrieved 2011-01-10.
10. ^ "Georgios Karatzaferis, "6 Years Popular Orthodox Rally", 14 September 2006" (<http://www.e-grammes.gr/article.php?id=2256>). E-grammes.gr. Retrieved 2011-01-10.
11. ^ ND's nemesis is named Karatzaferis, 1 June 2007 (<http://www.athensnews.gr/articles/13237/01/06/2007/19995>)
12. ^ "'French-Greek axis' with the same extreme views, 4 January 2006" (<http://web.archive.org/web/20110710175508/http://archive.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/news/content.asp?aid%3D64795>). Ekathimerini.com. Retrieved 2012-04-23.
13. ^ Helena Smith in Athens (2007-09-13). "18 September 2007, The" (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/farright/story/0,,2167883,00.html>). *The Guardian* (London). Retrieved 2011-01-10.
14. ^ "18 September 2007, The Age quoting Los Angeles Times, Reuters" (<http://www.theage.com.au/news/world/greeks-return-firedamaged-conservatives/2007/09/17/1189881430865.html>). *The Age* (Melbourne). 2007-09-18. Retrieved 2011-01-10.
15. ^ 17 September 2007, New York Times (<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/17/world/europe/17greece.html?em&ex=1190260800&en=2f5f4e0b7be1c034&ei=5087%0A>)
16. ^ Post Store (2007-09-16). "16 September 2007, Washington Post" (<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/16/AR20070916000085.html>). *The Washington Post*. Retrieved 2011-01-10.
17. ^ See Gemenis (2008) as above, Gemenis and Dinas (2009) as above, Cas Mudde (2007), *Populist radical right parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
18. ^ ""First term judged by second," 10 August 2007" (http://www.ekathimerini.com/4dcgi/_w_articles_columns_100032_10/08/2007_86656). Ekathimerini.com. Retrieved 2011-01-10.
19. ^ "Wall of flame threatens to engulf birthplace of the Olympic Games," 27 August 2007 (<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article2332345.ece>)
20. ^ ""The hidden 'Orthodoxy' of LAOS", 14 June 2007" (<http://www.tanea.gr/default.asp?pid=2&ct=1&artid=4521704>). Tanea.gr. Retrieved 2011-01-10.
21. ^ "With A Hard Group of Five on National Issues, 18 September 2007" (<http://www.ethnos.gr/article.asp?catid=5347&subid=2&pubid=133138>). Ethnos.gr. 2007-09-18. Retrieved 2011-01-10.
22. ^ "PROGRAM LAOS (*PLAISIO THESEON*)" (http://www.laos.gr/PROGRAM_LAOS.pdf) (PDF). pp. 1–96. Retrieved 2011-01-15.

See also

- List of political parties in Greece

External links

- Official website (in Greek) (<http://www.laos.gr/>)
- Greek Ministry of Internal Affairs – Greek Election Results (<http://ekloges.yypes.gr/>) accessed October 10, 2012.
- Official Representation in Germany for the state BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG (in Greek, English and German) (<http://www.laos-bw.com/>) This page appears to be almost all Greek language with no apparent link to an English language website. - accessed October 10, 2012.

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