

## **Θέμα : Κανονισμός για τα Ευρωπαϊκά Πολιτικά Κόμματα**

1. Μετά από μακρές διαβουλεύσεις έχει διαμορφωθεί μια πρόταση Κανονισμού που ρυθμίζει τα βασικά ζητήματα των Ευρωπαϊκών Πολιτικών Κομμάτων. Η πρόταση γίνεται ευρύτερα αποδεκτή, πρόκειται δε να συζητηθεί στο Συμβούλιο Γενικών Υποθέσεων της 29<sup>ης</sup> Οκτωβρίου.

2. Σε ορισμένα σημεία της πρότασης παραμένουν διαφορές, για τις οποίες έχουν διατυπωθεί εναλλακτικές λύσεις. Τέλος, πρέπει να σημειωθεί ότι όλα τα κράτη και φυσικά όλα τα Ευρωπαϊκά Πολιτικά Κόμματα συμφωνούν κατά βάση με τη πρωτοβουλία και είναι διατεθειμένα να συμβάλλουν στην προώθησή της.

3. Οι επικεφαλής των πέντε Ευρωπαϊκών Πολιτικών Σχηματισμών υπογραμμίζουν στην επιστολή τους της 10<sup>ης</sup> Οκτωβρίου 2001 την ανάγκη να γίνει σύντομα δεκτή η πρόταση και αναφέρουν ορισμένα σημεία που πρέπει να επανεξεταστούν.

4. Η Ελλάδα θα μπορούσε να συμβάλλει στη προώθηση της πρωτοβουλίας για δύο κυρίως λόγους: γιατί είχε από την αρχή πρωτοστατήσει σ' αυτήν και γιατί η πρόταση δεν φαίνεται να δημιουργεί προβλήματα.

5. Συνημμένα εσωκλείονται η επιστολή των επικεφαλής των πέντε Ευρωπαϊκών Πολιτικών Σχηματισμών της 10<sup>ης</sup> Οκτωβρίου 2001, ο σχολιασμός του εκπροσώπου του Ευρωπαϊκού Σοσιαλιστικού Κόμματος Tony Robinson και η πρόταση Κανονισμού.

Αθήνα, 16 Οκτωβρίου 2001



"Ludivine Weech"  
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24/10/2001 11:57  
πμ

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Subject: Fwd: Letter PES President on party statute - urgent

please find attached letter on **Council working party discussions on the European Party Statute** which was not attached in first send-out.

My apologies.

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Subject: Letter PES President on party statute - urgent  
Mime-Version: 1.0  
Content-Type: multipart/mixed; boundary="=\_7923997E.4A2BA40C"

Attached please find a letter of PES President Robin Cook on the European Party Statute addressed to the PES Leaders and Foreign Ministers which was distributed at the PES Leaders summit in Ghent. We urge you to see that the letter circulates as soon as possible since it is linked to a General Affairs Council meeting of October 29th. The President will contact PES Ministers and Secretaries of State personally in the course of the week.

The PES Secretariat



- annex.en.doc



- annex.fr.doc

De Europæiske Socialdemokraters Parti • Sozialdemokratische Partei Europas  
ΕΥΡΩΠΑΙΚΟ ΣΟΣΙΑΛΙΣΤΙΚΟ ΚΟΜΜΑ • Party of European Socialists  
Partido de los Socialistas Europeas • Parti des socialistes européens  
Partito del Socialismo Europeo • Partij van de Europese Sociaaldemocraten  
De Europeiske Sosialdemokraters Parti • Partido Socialista Europeu  
Euroopan Sosialidemokraattinen Puolue • Europeiska Socialdemokraters Parti



For the attention of the Leaders and Foreign Ministers of the PES Member Parties

Brussels, 18th October 2001

Dear Friends,

**Re. Council working party discussions on the European Party Statute**

Attached please find a letter addressed to the Belgian Presidency and the European Commission on behalf of the Leaders of the five existing European parties and federations on the European Party Statute

I would like to raise three matters of particular interest for the Party of European Socialists. Since the PES Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers are in the position to directly influence the Council discussions we can and should ensure the adoption of a European Party Statute which brings transparency, legitimacy and a sound financial basis to genuine cross border political alliances in the European Union.

**Background**

The preparation of the European Party statute during 2000/1 has been a positive process with, in the earlier phase, a direct involvement of the European Commission and the European Parliament, and a consultation of the five existing European parties.

It is only recently in the Council working party concerned (preparing a decision by the General Affairs Council) that the draft proposals have been amended in a way that is, for the PES, problematic.

The unanimity requirement (to be replaced by qualified majority decision-making under the Nice Treaty) has led to a discussion at Council working party level, which has been dominated by Austria as the most reluctant member state. The FPÖ of Jörg Haider is not part of any European political party and has, via the Austrian government, made clear under which conditions a statute can be approved:

- The funding for European political parties has to be made available for all **national** parties represented in the European Parliament.
- Reference to the respect for fundamental rights has to be removed from the draft statute.

Regretfully this position, in combination with the unanimity requirement, has led to a considerable watering-down of the proposals within the Council working party.

**A minimum threshold for recognition and funding**

The PES is of the opinion that in order for a European Party to be eligible to receive EU funding it has to have elected representatives in the European Parliament, the national Parliaments in the regional parliaments of at least one third (at present five) of the Member States. In the course of this year, in order to increase the likelihood of a decision being made and in order to make a gesture to smaller European party alliances, we indicated that a quarter (at present four) of the Member States could be acceptable as an absolute minimum.

In this discussion one should keep in mind that, on the basis of a 25% threshold, four elected regional representatives in four different member states would be a sufficient basis for a European party to be recognised and funded. The Council Working party has replaced the 25% threshold by "three member states" and we now run the risk that the European Party statute would no longer constitute a basis for the funding and formation of European parties but would instead become a subsidy scheme for national parties, whether they are part of a European party or not.

In our opinion " 25 % of the Member States" is such a low threshold that any further watering-down opens the door for "de facto national parties" or insignificant regional alliances to be recognised and funded by the EU. Moreover since a part of the scarce budget will be divided equally between recognised European parties, the 'so-called' or insignificant European parties would in relative terms receive more EU funding than the genuine European parties.

We would like to ask our PES governments to support the position of the European Commission, the European Parliament and the five existing European parties, namely that funding be restricted to those European parties which have elected representatives in the European Parliament, national Parliaments or one of the regional parliaments in at least a quarter of the Member States.

The Austrian government representative is still opposing the latest proposal for 'three member states' in the Council working party. Apart from being too low, we would like to point out that a threshold in the form of an absolute number (instead of a percentage) of Member States is illogical in the context of the enlargement.

#### **A condition of democratic credibility**

All existing parties, the Commission and Parliament would like the statute to make clear than in order for European parties to be recognised and funded their statute and activities have to respect fundamental values, liberties and human rights.

The Austrian government wants any reference to this to be removed from the statute. Council working party level discussions are continuing on this point and the option of moving the articles concerned from the statute itself to the "considerations" has been suggested.

The issue of fundamental rights and values cannot be subject for compromise or to ambiguous references and we would like to ask the PES representatives to ensure that an explicit condition regarding the democratic legitimacy and respect for fundamental values is incorporated in the statute and not in the considerations.

#### **An adequate financial basis and transition period**

A final concern is elaborated in the letter attached from the five existing parties. Even after a doubling of Member Party contributions planned for 2002, the PES cannot be expected to generate more than around 20% in own resources. The moment the statute enters into force the support from the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Group will end and all costs involved (infrastructure, personnel, travel, translation and information technology) will have to be born directly by the PES. We would, therefore, like to stress the need for the financial conditions and transition period as presented in the letter to the Presidency to be taken into consideration in the statute itself as well as in the EU Budget.

#### **Strategy**

The PES and its Parliamentary Group have had a leading role in promoting the adoption of an official EU statute for European political parties from the very beginning and will continue to claim that position. Now that the internal Council discussions have led to a deterioration of the draft statute we will insist on a correction so that an acceptable proposal is presented to the General Affairs Council.

If this is not possible we will have to keep in mind that qualified majority will replace the unanimity requirement the moment the Nice Treaty enters into force. In this situation the discussion can no longer be taken hostage by one or a small minority of Member States.

The PES would regret a delay but, to put it bluntly, we prefer a good European Party Statute worthy of its name in one and a half years than an unacceptable watered-down version now. However it is most important that a statute is in place in time for the next European Elections campaign. I am confident that a European Party statute can be adopted during 2002 and by 2003 at the latest and that this project of bringing more transparency and accountability to the EU political institutions can be successfully concluded.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robin Cook". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Robin COOK  
PES President

Brussels, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2001

For the attention of :

Mr. Guy	VERHOFSTADT	Prime Minister
Mr. Louis	MICHEL	President in office of the Council
Ms. Annemie	NEYTS	Delegated Minister for EU affairs
Mr. Romano	PRODI	President of the European Commission

Dear Presidents,

In our capacity as leaders of the five existing parties and party federations at European level, we would like to express our satisfaction with the fact that the Belgian EU-Presidency has made the adoption of a statute for parties at European level one of its priorities. We support the objective of giving European political parties an autonomous organizational and financial basis, thereby creating the necessary clarity and transparency when it comes to their relations with the European Parliament and its respective political Groups.

We represent the vast majority of political forces within the EU and throughout Europe and are determined, in the light of Article 191 of the EU Treaty, to further develop parties at EU level as complementary elements of EU democratic life. As a minimum we demand a statute and budget which would enable us to continue our present scale of activities. With this in mind we have carried out an assessment of the latest proposals of the Belgian Presidency and would like to draw your attention to the following points:

**The criteria to qualify for funding**

We are of the opinion that financial support for European parties has to be reserved for genuine cross border political alliances with elected representatives in at least one quarter (25%) of the EU Member States. A “watering down” of the criteria to qualify for funding risks not to respect the Nice Declaration which states that political parties at national level can neither “directly nor indirectly” be funded and would in our view be an inappropriate interpretation of Article 191.

**The implementation of a new statute**

For the five existing European parties and party federations the new statute and budgetary basis will result in the purchase or renting of new premises, the installation of new information technology as well as the recruitment and replacement of most staff members.

For this transfer our organizations need as a minimum a nine-month period after the new statute is adopted. Therefore we insist that the unrealistic "20 days" changeover period mentioned in the draft statute be replaced.

### **The own resources required**

With only a few exceptions national political parties throughout Europe have limited resources and cannot be expected to transfer major sums as membership fee to their respective European parties. All five European parties and federations are currently assessing the consequences of a future statute for the annual subscriptions of their member parties

We have come to the conclusion that in relation to an adequate annual contribution from the EU budget we can expect to raise around 15% own resources. We hope such a percentage can be referred to in the European party statute.

### **Annual budget**

All our parties are in the process of establishing an official assessment of costs related to full independence from the European Parliament in terms of activities, personnel and infrastructure. We will address the EU budgetary authorities with a detailed letter in a few weeks time.

A first assessment is based on the present number of staff and activities, a 15% percentage of own resources as well as the likelihood that one or two additional European parties might qualify for funding. Our conclusion is that a yearly EU budget of 15 million Euro would cover around 85 % of the running costs of six or seven European parties.

Furthermore we are in the process of assessing the "start-up costs" for our five parties and federations (purchase or rent, recruitment and information technology) which will lead to an additional request to the budgetary authorities to support European parties qualified for funding with a start-up subsidy in order to establish the necessary infrastructure.

### **Sponsorships and donations**

Our parties and federations so far have made very modest use of both sponsorship and donations. We do not expect these additional resources ever to become a major source of income.

We recommend that the future statute determines clear conditions of transparency as well as a fixed maximum amount both when it comes to general donations of individuals as well as to sponsorship of particular events or activities. Furthermore sponsorships from publicly owned or majority publicly owned companies or other organizations should be banned.

### **Legal personality of European parties**

Recognized European parties will have to be able to act as organizers and employers throughout the Union on the basis of an agreed common legal basis. We recognize the complexity of some issues raised in this context, but nevertheless stress the need to address this issue in the statute on the basis of concrete proposals now that European parties and federations in future will become fully independent of the European Parliament.

We hope that our goal to come to a statute enabling the five existing parties and federations to make the transfer to the new situation is shared by the Belgian Presidency and the other EU governments. Furthermore we hope that our common position on the six issues mentioned above will contribute to the establishment of an all over agreement at Council level. We wish you success and wisdom for the coming deliberations and are available for further consultations at all times.

Yours Sincerely,

Arnold CASSOLA  
Secretary General European Federation of Green Parties

Robin COOK  
President of the Party of European Socialists

Werner HOYER  
President of the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party

Nelly MAES  
Leader Democratic Party of the Peoples of Europe – European Free Alliance

Wilfried MARTENS  
President of the European People's Party



Bruxelles, le 10 octobre 2001

A l'attention de:

M. Guy	VERHOFSTADT	Premier Ministre
M. Louis	MICHEL	Président du Conseil Européen
Mme Annemie	NEYTS	Ministre déléguée aux Affaires européennes
M. Romano	PRODI	Président de la Commission européenne

Madame,  
Monsieur,

En notre qualité de présidents des cinq partis politiques et fédérations de partis existants au niveau européen, nous souhaitons exprimer notre satisfaction de constater que la Présidence belge de l'UE a fait de l'adoption d'un statut pour les partis politiques européens une de ses priorités. Nous soutenons l'objectif de donner aux partis politiques européens une base financière et organisationnelle autonome, donnant ainsi la clarté et la transparence nécessaires à leurs relations avec le Parlement européen et plus particulièrement leurs groupes politiques respectifs.

Nous représentons la grande majorité des forces politiques au sein de l'UE et de l'Europe, et nous sommes déterminés à poursuivre, dans le cadre de l'article 191 du traité sur l'UE, le développement des partis au niveau de l'UE en tant qu'éléments complémentaires de la vie démocratique de l'UE. Nous demandons avant tout un statut et un budget qui nous permettent de maintenir notre niveau actuel d'activités. Gardant ceci en mémoire, nous avons établi une évaluation des récentes propositions de la Présidence belge et souhaiterions attirer votre attention sur les points suivants:

**Critère de qualification pour le financement**

Nous pensons que le soutien financier aux partis européens doit être réservé à de véritables alliances politiques trans-frontalières ayant des élus dans au moins un quart (25%) des Etats membres de l'UE. Une dilution du critère de qualification pour le financement risque d'être en contradiction avec la Déclaration de Nice qui spécifie que les partis politiques nationaux ne peuvent être financés, "ni directement, ni indirectement", et constituerait à nos yeux une interprétation inappropriée de l'article 191.

**Mise en œuvre du nouveau statut**

Pour les cinq partis et fédérations de partis européens existants, le nouveau statut et sa base budgétaire auront comme conséquence l'achat ou la location de nouveaux bureaux, l'installation de nouvelles technologies de l'information ainsi que le recrutement ou le remplacement de la plupart des collaborateurs.

Après l'adoption du nouveau statut, nos organisations ont besoin d'une période d'au moins neuf mois pour mener à bien ce transfert. C'est pourquoi nous insistons pour que la période transitoire irréaliste de "20 jours" prévue dans le projet de statut soit modifiée.

### **Ressources propres requises**

A de rares exceptions près, les partis politiques nationaux en Europe ont des ressources limitées et le paiement de sommes importantes en cotisations à leurs partis européens respectifs ne peut être espéré. Les cinq partis et fédérations européens sont en train d'évaluer les conséquences d'un futur statut sur les cotisations de leurs partis membres.

Nous sommes parvenus à la conclusion qu'avec une contribution annuelle adéquate du budget de l'UE, nous pouvons espérer réunir environ 15% en ressources propres. Nous espérons que le statut pour les partis européens puisse faire référence à un tel pourcentage.

### **Budget annuel**

Tous nos partis sont en train d'établir une estimation officielle des coûts engendrés par une totale indépendance vis-à-vis du Parlement européen en termes d'activités, de personnel et d'infrastructures. Nous enverrons dans les prochaines semaines un courrier détaillé aux autorités budgétaires de l'UE.

Une première estimation est basée sur le nombre actuel de salariés et d'activités, sur une part de 15% de ressources propres ainsi que sur la probabilité qu'un ou deux partis européens supplémentaires se qualifient pour le financement. Nous sommes parvenus à la conclusion qu'un budget annuel de l'UE de 15 millions d'euro couvrirait environ 85% de frais courants de six ou sept partis européens.

Par ailleurs, nous sommes en train d'estimer les coûts de démarrage de nos cinq partis et fédérations (achat ou location de locaux, recrutement et technologies de l'information). Ceux-ci entraîneront une demande additionnelle aux autorités budgétaires pour soutenir les partis européens qualifiés pour le financement en leur octroyant une "aide de démarrage" afin de leur permettre la mise en place de l'infrastructure nécessaire.

### **Sponsors et dons**

A ce jour, nos partis et fédérations ont peu fait appel tant à des sponsors qu'aux dons. Nous ne pensons pas que ces ressources supplémentaires puissent un jour devenir une source importante de revenus.

Nous recommandons que le futur statut fixe des conditions claires de transparence ainsi qu'un montant maximum, tant en matière de dons individuels que de sponsors d'événements et d'activités spécifiques. De plus, des compagnies ou organisations publiques ou majoritairement publiques ne devraient pas pouvoir être des sponsors.

### **Caractère juridique des partis européens**

Les partis politiques européens reconnus devront pouvoir agir comme organisateurs et employeurs dans toute l'Union européenne, avec une base juridique commune décidée. Nous reconnaissons la complexité de certaines questions soulevées dans ce contexte, mais insistons néanmoins sur la nécessité de mentionner ce point dans le statut, sur la base de propositions concrètes, au moment où les partis et fédérations européens deviendront totalement indépendants du Parlement européen.

Nous espérons que notre objectif d'aboutir à un statut qui permette aux cinq partis et fédérations existants d'effectuer le passage à la nouvelle situation est partagé par la Présidence belge et les autres gouvernements de l'UE. De plus, nous espérons que notre position commune sur les six questions mentionnées ci-dessus contribuera à trouver un accord global au niveau du Conseil. Nous vous souhaitons succès et sagesse pour les débats à venir et sommes à votre entière disposition pour toute éventuelle consultation.

Bien à vous,

Arnold CASSOLA  
Secrétaire Général de la Fédération des Partis Verts Européens

Robin COOK  
Président du Parti Socialiste Européen

Werner HOYER  
Président du Parti Européen des Libéraux, Démocrates et Réformateurs

Nelly MAES  
Leader du Parti Démocratique des Peuples d'Europe - Alliance Libre Européenne

Wilfried MARTENS  
Président du Parti Populaire Européen