

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei admitted to Germany's federal elections

Our reporters
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The Federal Election Committee has upheld the party status of the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) and accepted its participation in the federal elections on September 26. To stand candidate slates in a federal state, 500 signatures from registered voters must be submitted by July 19 in each case.

The decision, taken at the July 9 meeting of the Federal Election Committee, which is composed of a majority of parties already represented in the Bundestag (parliament), is an important success since the committee uses any formal inaccuracy or missing evidence to reduce the number of competitors and thus limit the democratic rights of the people. This year, more political organisations were rejected than ever before.

In the case of the SGP, representatives from the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) to the Left Party felt unable to challenge its party status. The SGP was able to document its extensive political activities over the last four years in detail in a report showing how it fights for a socialist perspective against the right-wing and militarist policies of all the Bundestag parties in workplaces, at universities, during strikes and protests. The German pages of the *World Socialist Web Site*, published by the SGP, have a wider reach than most other party publications in Germany.

The SGP should be recognised as a party, Federal Election Commissioner Georg Thiel summarised, because it meets the criteria for party status under the Political Parties Act through its state associations, members, participation in Bundestag elections and “sufficient evidence of current work in the public sphere.”

The unanimous decision of the Federal Election Committee means the SGP can participate in the

federal elections with its own candidates. It will give “a voice and perspective to the growing opposition to the right-wing policies of the Bundestag parties,” as it says in the SGP manifesto. “We do not seek to treat the symptoms of a sick system, but advocate the overthrow of capitalism and the building of a socialist society. Together with our sister parties in the International Committee of the Fourth International, we unite workers across all borders in their struggles against social inequality, fascism and war.”

The politics of social inequality and militarism supported by all the parties in the Bundestag are hated among broad sections of society. That is why official politics increasingly take the form of a conspiracy against the people and democratic rights are constantly attacked. This was also evident at the Federal Election Committee.

In total, only 44 of the 87 organisations that had applied for participation were admitted to the election, i.e., just 50 percent. Four years ago, it was 48 out of 63, well over three-quarters. In 2016, the establishment parties introduced a law obliging smaller parties not only to provide evidence of firm stable structures and political activities but also to send complex accountability reports to the Bundestag every year.

This new regulation has now been exploited to ban from the ballot even political parties that have regularly submitted such reports. The German Communist Party (DKP), which was founded in 1968 and has had party status ever since, was deprived of this status by the electoral committee because, although it had submitted the accountability reports correctly, it did not meet the specified deadline.

The DKP is not only barred from taking part in the Bundestag elections but is also threatened with financial ruin, as donations to the DKP will no longer

be tax-deductible. It has only four days to file an appeal with the Supreme Court. While the far-right AfD, with its countless illegal party donations, sits on the electoral committee itself, left-wing parties are being excluded because they miss deadlines.

The SGP protested in the strongest terms against the decision to deny the DKP party status. “Regardless of our known deep differences with the Stalinist DKP, we defend their democratic right to participate in the elections,” SGP Chair Ulrich Rippert said on the sidelines of the committee meeting. “The deprivation of party status for the DKP and many other parties, some of which have been operating as parties for decades, is a fundamental attack on basic rights and is unacceptable.”

The exclusion of half of the organisations seeking to stand candidates by the Bundestag parties is part of the growing authoritarian structures with which the ruling class is seeking to suppress any opposition to its right-wing agenda. This underlines the need to build the SGP as a revolutionary party that opposes the shift to the right by uniting workers internationally. Support the election campaign of the SGP.



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