

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei of Germany authorized to stand in European elections

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On Friday, the German Federal Election Committee authorised the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) to stand in the European elections. The committee verified that the SGP had submitted all of the required documents and well over 4,000 confirmed supporting signatures from registered voters, thus ensuring its participation in the election. In addition to the SGP, 34 other parties are on the ballot. Ten parties that had submitted an election proposal were not authorised.

“Our authorization to stand in the election is of great significance,” said SGP Chairman and lead candidate Christoph Vandreier following the meeting. “The SGP is the only party that opposes genocide in Gaza, the insane policy of war and the worsening social devastation, and fights for a socialist perspective. We will use the election campaign to build a powerful movement against war and capitalism.”

The election authorisation procedure is deeply undemocratic. The majority of the Federal Election Committee members are representatives of the establishment parties (including the far-right Alternative for Germany, AfD). They decide whether their political opponents and rivals can stand in an election in which they themselves participate.

Legally, only the formal requirements are supposed to be scrutinised. The bureaucratic hurdles are high, and the checks are “rigorous,” as the Federal Election Commissioner put it. All parties must provide precise information about the meeting at which their candidates were elected, submit their statutes, programme, declaration of consent and certificate of eligibility for each individual candidate, as well as evidence of the democratic election of the party executive committee, whose members must sign the election proposal and submit it on time. Many parties, even established ones,

have seen some of their candidates fail to gain authorisation.

The hurdles for non-established parties are particularly high. For this election, they either had to submit up to 2,000 signatures per federal state, or 4,000 for a joint list for all federal states.

Each person providing a signature had to state his or her full name, address and date of birth, and each signature was then checked individually by the local electoral office. The election officials also check whether the signatory is actually authorised to vote and has not already signed for another party. All signatures, together with the original certificates, must then be submitted to the Federal Returning Officer for further verification.

Vandreier spoke out strongly against this undemocratic practice at the meeting of the Federal Election Committee. He said:

In view of the enormous opposition to the genocide in Gaza, the war policy against Russia and the social devastation, which are supported by all of the parties in the Bundestag [parliament], there is a bias to keep anyone who opposes this off the ballot. So, it is all the more important that we fulfill all of the requirements and stand in the European elections.

While Vandreier was saying this, his microphone was switched off so that it could not be heard during the live broadcast. “I don’t think we’re running an election campaign here,” said Federal Election Commissioner Dr. Ruth Brand, in an attempt to justify the muzzling of Vandreier’s criticism of the undemocratic procedure.

The official representatives of other left-wing parties were also prevented from commenting on the proceedings.

This undemocratic procedure underscores the importance of the SGP's participation in the elections, in which it is resolutely opposing the attacks on basic democratic rights and the danger of fascism. In its election statement, the party warns that the ruling class is continuing its fascistic traditions by sending German tanks against Russia, normalizing genocide as state policy, and arming the Bundeswehr (Armed Forces) to a degree not seen since Hitler. The election statement declares:

In order to suppress the growing opposition to this hated policy, the coalition government is donning the moth-eaten garb of fascism. It is inciting hatred against refugees and immigrants and abolishing basic democratic rights. The far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) is being courted and right-wing extremist terror networks among the police and the secret services and within the army are being shielded by the highest authorities.

But the toxic nationalism of those in power is countered by a powerful international movement. Millions of people around the world have demonstrated against the genocide in Gaza in recent weeks, despite the propaganda from the politicians and the media, and have indicated how strong and globally networked the working class is today. This movement must be expanded and armed with a socialist perspective.



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