

Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei certified to stand in German federal election

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On Tuesday, the Federal Electoral Committee certified the Sozialistische Gleichheitspartei (Socialist Equality Party, SGP) to stand in the German federal election on February 23. The certification of the SGP is of great significance. Of the 56 parties that had submitted a notification of participation, only 31 were certified, significantly fewer than the 44 that had been admitted to the 2021 federal election.

In order to gain ballot access, parties must collect 2,000 signatures for each state list they wish to put forward and submit them to the respective state electoral committee. These will then decide on the certification of the respective lists in the coming week. Because the deadlines for the new election were extremely shortened, but the required number of signatures was not lowered, only very few smaller parties can stand nationwide.

The very process of determining party eligibility at the Federal Electoral Committee is deeply undemocratic. The majority of its members are representatives of the parties already represented in the Bundestag (federal parliament), who are allowed to decide which of their competitors they will allow to stand for election and which not.

To prove their party status, the smaller parties have to fulfil numerous conditions and, for example, prove that they exert “influence on the political will-forming process,” what the “scope and stability” of their organisation is, that they have enough members and that they are publicly active. In addition, they must have submitted a detailed statement of accounts in the last six years so that they do not lose their party status.

Many parties have been excluded from participating in the February election due to minor formal errors. In the case of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Germany (MLPD), a Maoist organisation, the Federal Electoral

Committee initially decided, in an extraordinary session, that the party could not submit a valid notification of participation because, according to its statutes, it only elects its executive committee every four years and not every second calendar year as prescribed, and therefore did not have an “executive committee capable of acting.” As a result, the MLPD first had to elect a new leadership at a special party congress in order to be admitted to the February election.

The SGP could not be excluded from the election because it has fulfilled all the formal criteria and there can be no doubt about its party status. In a 31-page document submitted in advance, the party demonstrated its extensive work over the last four years. It has intervened with a socialist perspective in numerous workplaces and strikes, where it distributed tens of thousands of leaflets, conducted interviews and initiated rank-and-file action committees in a wide range of areas. At universities, it has led a fight against the pro-war policy with its youth and student organisation, the International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE). In the last student parliament elections at Berlin’s Humboldt University, it achieved a record result of 7.7 percent.

It has organised several public events with hundreds of participants on major political developments, such as NATO’s war against Russia and the genocide in Gaza. The *World Socialist Web Site*, which is published in German by the SGP, has a wider reach than most other party publications in Germany. Numerous bourgeois media outlets have also reported on the work of the SGP and the IYSSE in recent years.

“There can be no doubt about the party’s character,” said SGP leader Christoph Vandreier at the Federal Election Committee meeting. “We are very active

against the all-party coalition for war and cuts, which has also gathered here to decide on the admissibility of its challengers. We have held dozens of rallies against the genocide in Gaza, organised dozens of events against the escalation of the war against Russia and put forward a socialist perspective.” The SGP must therefore be admitted, Vandreier demanded. This was approved unanimously by the election committee.

Following the meeting, Vandreier said that the party would put forward a slate of candidates at state level in Berlin and would also field numerous constituency candidates. “Our participation in this election is of great significance. The SGP is the only party to oppose the insane pro-war policy being pushed by all the parties represented in the Bundestag.”

Above all, the SGP openly states that social cuts and war cannot be stopped without overcoming capitalism. “The big banks and corporations must be expropriated and placed under democratic control. Such a socialist programme requires the mobilisation of the international working class, that is, all those who create all the social wealth and have to bear the full brunt of war and crisis. This is the goal of our election campaign. We want to revive socialist consciousness among workers.”

More information about the SGP’s election campaign can be found here. Register to support the election campaign and become a member of the SGP!



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