

PRESS RELEASE 3/2025
(NOTE: UNOFFICIAL DOCUMENT FOR MEDIA USE)

The Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations adopted a decision on sanctions concerning the Party of the European Left ('EL'), and relating to :

- 1) *Acceptance of travel costs relief from non-EU origin for a trip by a delegation of EL representatives to Venezuela on the occasion of the presidential elections in that country on 28 July 2024, following an invitation issued on behalf of the Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela by a person subject to EU sanction. The delegation participated in activities which it describes as election observation, albeit in breach of several key principles recognised by the EU in this respect, and with political signalling supportive of one of the contestants in that election.*

Consequently, the Authority found that EL accepted a donation prohibited by Article 20(5)(d) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 on statute and funding of European political parties.

A fine of EUR 3 106.80 is imposed on EL in this respect.

- 2) *The financial contribution of EL to an activity on 'Haiti and its revolution', which took place on 2 February 2024 in France, at the national headquarters of the Parti communiste français ('PCF'). Contrary to PCF that perceivably acted as host, the European political party EL neither achieved meaningful visibility at the event, nor traceably had any co-ownership of the event's substance or organisation.*

Consequently, the Authority finds that the EL provided indirect funding to a political party at national level, which is prohibited by Article 22(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 on statute and funding of European political parties.

A fine of EUR 1 880 is imposed on EL in this respect.

The Director of the Authority explains: "The legislator mandated the Authority to control and, where necessary, to sanction European political parties and European political foundations, and thus to contribute to a resilient democracy at European level. In this case, the Authority applied key provisions of EU legislation which bar European political parties from receiving donations from non-EU countries and from providing funding to political parties at national level. These prohibitions protect European democracy from foreign interference and give an opportunity for European political parties to be more visible and make a difference for citizens of the EU, with European content of their own - complementary to, but going beyond, local politics interests of their national partners and members."

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A) Summary of applicable law, facts and procedure, and reasons of the decision relating to the acceptance of a prohibited donation by EL:

Article 20(5)(d) of the Regulation provides that “*European political parties and European political foundations shall not accept any of the following: [...] (d) donations from any private entities based in a third country or from individuals from a third country who are not entitled to vote in elections to the European Parliament.*”

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Following submission of the annual financial statements of EL for the financial year 2024 in June 2025 and the replies to further questions of the Authority thereon, the Authority became aware that a delegation of EL representatives travelled to Venezuela on the occasion of the presidential elections on 28 July 2024, following an invitation by the *Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela* (‘PSUV’).

The invitation on behalf of the PSUV was extended to EL by an individual who was already at the time of the invitation subject to sanction by the European Union as being “*Involved in undermining democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela and the repression of civil society and democratic opposition, including by using the media to publicly attack and threaten political opposition, other media and civil society and giving orders to detain individuals, including to the Bolivarian National Intelligence Service (SEBIN)*”.

Once on the ground, the EL delegation participated in organised activities such as a video-transmitted speech of one of the contestants in the election of 2024 and a visit to a polling station. The delegation also had a photograph taken in front of a portrait of one of the contestants in the election of 2024, as well as a photograph with a flag carrying the EL logo and with raised fist in front of a poster *Encuentro con acompañantes internacionales - Elecciones Presidenciales 2024* ‘.

The expenses of EL related to this activity, as reported to the Authority, amounted to a mere EUR 673.20. EL therefore manifestly received financial support from its hosts in Venezuela, amounting to the difference between the payment made by EL for its delegation and the minimum real cost of travel (European Union-Venezuela and back) and accommodation (at least 2 nights), i.e. a minimum of EUR 3106.80 (= 7x480 + 7x60 - EUR 673.20).

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By letter of 17 October 2025, the Authority informed EL to have opened an investigation concerning the above-mentioned interaction with PSUV and provided a summary of the available facts, as well as an interim assessment indicating that EL had infringed of Article 20(5)(d) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014. The Authority gave EL the opportunity to comment until 18 November 2025 and to take appropriate corrective measures to remedy the situation pursuant to Article 29(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 until the same date. EL did not reimburse any advantage received, nor implemented or proposed any other remedial action.

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The Authority, having considered the legal framework and the facts of the case in light of EL’s submissions, finds that EL accepted a donation from third country origin, which is prohibited pursuant to Article 20(5)(d) of the Regulation.

This financial support made available to EL by PSUV was not counterbalanced by any lawful and legitimate assistance provided by EL that could have justified discounting as mere expense reimbursement any ‘economic advantage’ of the financial support. More particularly, EL did not contribute to forming Union citizens’ European political awareness, nor did it provide any European added value on behalf of Union citizens, as required in light of Article 10(4) of the Treaty on European Union, when it participated in events relating to a presidential election in a third country upon invitation of its currently ruling party.

More particularly, EL's delegation presents itself as part of an international election observation effort, especially in light of the invitation letter, the 'international accompanier' status, and a visit to a polling station. This allegation to act as election observers also is confirmed by EL in its reply of 18 November 2025 to the right to be heard. However, the delegation breached several fundamental principles of electoral observation as recognised by the European Union for such activities, in particular by accepting to attend upon invitation of one of the political forces of the host country competing in that election, presenting itself with supportive political signalling in context of one of the contestants in said elections, and accepting financial advantages from the political party of the latter.

EL thus also contributed to an organised attempt by the currently ruling party to make the 2024 Venezuelan presidential elections appear legitimate, which the European Union found not to be the case, as was entirely foreseeable for EL at the time given information on prior treatment of an official EU observation mission and a European Parliament resolution that already then pointed out arbitrary detentions of candidates for the 2024 presidential elections.

The sanction by the Authority is without prejudice to measures of the Authorising Officer of the European Parliament and of competent national authorities, within their respective remits.

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B) Summary of applicable law, facts and procedure, and reasons of the decision in relation to indirect funding to a party at national level by EL:

Article 22(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 provides that “*Notwithstanding Article 21(1), the funding of European political parties from the general budget of the European Union or from any other source shall not be used for the direct or indirect funding of other political parties, and in particular national parties or candidates. Those national political parties and candidates shall continue to be governed by national rules.*”

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Following submission of the annual financial statements of EL for the financial year 2024 in June 2025 and the replies to further questions of the Authority thereon, the Authority became aware of a financial contribution provided by EL to an activity involving the *Parti communiste français* (“PCF”) on 2 February 2024 in Paris, France, entitled “Soirée Haïti et sa révolution” at “Espace Niemayer”, which forms part of the national headquarters PCF.

The event, during which no EL-labelled poster or lectern, nor any scene background or stand displaying EL’s logo was visible, was moderated by member of PCF leadership and opened by an intervention entitled “*Histoire et significations internationales de la révolution haïtienne*” by a member of the national executive of PCF. The introduction was followed by an academic contribution with the title “*Histoire et significations internationales de la révolution haïtienne*”. A round table

discussion followed with the title “*D’hier à aujourd’hui : comment la révolution haïtienne résonne dans les luttes d’émancipation actuelles des peuples?*”, which included speakers of State bodies and civil society relating to Latin America/Caribbean in France (Embassy of Colombia, Embassy of Haiti, France-Haiti associations) together with one participant referred to in the programme as having a function in EL. This was followed by a music and dance performance and catering. On programme material displayed on the PCF website, the EL logo appears, albeit small and between PCF’s own logo as well as those of private entities such as “Rhum store”.

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By letter of 17 October 2025, the Authority informed EL to have opened an investigation concerning the above-mentioned activity and provided a summary of available facts, as well as an interim assessment indicating that, on the basis of the available facts, the activity constituted an infringement of Article 22(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014. The Authority gave EL the opportunity to comment until 18 November 2025 and to take appropriate corrective measures to remedy the situation pursuant to Article 29(1) of the Regulation until the same date. EL did not propose corrective measures within the meaning of Article 29(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 nor showed it any intention to do so.

Pursuant to Article 29(2) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014, the Authority therefore was required to decide the appropriate sanction in accordance with Article 27 thereof for the following reasons:

The Authority, having considered the legal framework and the facts of the case in light of EL’s submissions, finds that the funding by EL of the activity constitutes indirect funding to a national party.

In particular, the Authority points out that the activity “*Haïti et sa révolution*” held on 2 February 2024 in Paris, France, at “Espace Niemeyer”, to which EL provided financial support, appears to the onlooker as an event of PCF. This follows, firstly, from the event venue which forms part of the national headquarters of the *Parti communiste français* (PCF). Secondly, EL was neither present with a poster, lectern labelling, stand or scene display. By contrast, thirdly, the moderator was designated as a PCF representative and the introductory presentation was given by a person described as a leading PCF member. In light thereof, the logo of EL on a programme document, between private entities and PCF’s logo and no bigger than those, accessible online on the event page of PCF below a large PCF logo, and only when zooming in after scrolling below the explanatory text of the event, does not change this overall impression. This is all the more the case since no material link can be established by the reader between the logos of “Rhum store” and other private entities shown alongside EL, and any role as a co-organisier, even less a co-host of the event.

Also in substance, the topics discussed lack relation with EU-specific matters and, additionally, any sort of perceivable EL influence on content and scope of the event. Based on the materials available, EU policies or related perspectives were not discussed during the activity. One intervention contained marginal, high-level reference to the EU, but in the context of French foreign policies. The EU, or EU policies toward Haiti, or the impact of the situation in Haiti on the EU, or a desire to change current EU policies in a democratic process, are not mentioned in their own right. The event, to the contrary, was focused on Haitian local culture, politics, sociology and economics, as well as, as “*solidarité avec les luttes actuelles du peuple haïtien*”. Moreover, in any event, no speech or other form of self-standing agenda point by or on behalf EL has occurred at the event. In particular, the presence of one participant from EL is not that of ‘one out of four speakers at the event’ as EL alleges in its reply of 18 November 2025: that participant was merely at a round table alongside multiple Latin America/Caribbean-

specific participants (Embassy of Haiti, Embassy of Colombia, Haiti associations in France...). This round table followed self-standing speeches of PCF and an academic with their own agenda points, and moreover overall moderation of PCF accompanied the event as a whole. Thus, EL's relation to the substance of the event is so marginal and subordinate that it does not convey any relevant co-ownership of the activity next to PCF, as would e.g. identifiable agenda setting on European topics, keynote speech, introduction, conclusion, or other forms of content influence traceably attributable to the European political party.

Consequently, the Authority found that the financial support to the event, which was visibly and in substance one of PCF, thus relieving PCF of expenses, amounts to indirect funding of a political party at national level, as is prohibited by Article 22(1) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014.

The sanction by the Authority is without prejudice to measures of the Authorising Officer of the European Parliament and of competent national authorities, within their respective remits.

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Background:

The Authority has been established by Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 as an independent body of the European Union with a mandate consisting of three main aspects:

- It registers European political parties and European political foundations if they fulfil the conditions and requirements provided in the Regulation, which is a **pre-condition** to obtain funding from the European Parliament. The Authority also conducts regular **verifications** to ensure that all European political parties and European political foundations still fulfil the criteria on the basis of which they were registered. Currently, 10 European political parties and 10 European political foundations are registered by the Authority.
- Furthermore, the Authority **controls compliance** by European political parties and European political foundations with their obligations under Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 in cooperation with the Authorising Officer of the European Parliament and the competent Member States' authorities. In line with its mandate, the Authority controls compliance of the donations and contributions accepted by European political parties and European political foundations as well as certain rules on the use of funding.
In exercising its compliance controls, the Authority identifies potential infringements of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 by a European political party or foundation and, subject to the opportunity to adopt corrective measures and the right to be heard, imposes a sanction on them, where the Regulation so provides.
- Taking into account its findings in the verification and compliance control processes, the Authority also provides **transparency services** to the citizens of the Union by publishing key sets of information on European political parties and European political foundations, in particular on structure of, as well as contributions and donations accepted by, European political parties and European political foundations.

Disclaimer: Please note that this press release is an unofficial document prepared for media use, which is not binding for the Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations. The details of and reasons for the decision are published [here](#). Questions of the press can be addressed in writing to contact@appf.europa.eu.