

Le Directeur

Brussels, 25 May 2023

APPF D(2023)17090

For the attention of all registered
European political parties

copies:

All registered European political
foundations


*Director-General for
Finance of the
European Parliament*

- by email only -

**Subject: European elections 2024 - campaigns of the European political parties -
European Campaign Action Plan (“E-CAP”)**

Dear Madam or Sir,

following confirmation by Council of the dates for the European elections of 2024¹, the Authority for European Political Parties and European Political Foundations (the “Authority”) would like to recall and further specify, for its area of competence, the practical implementation of Article 21 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 (the “Regulation”) which provides as follows:

“Financing of campaigns in the context of elections to the European Parliament

1. Subject to the second subparagraph, the funding of European political parties from the general budget of the European Union or from any other source may be used to finance campaigns conducted by the European political parties in the context of elections to the European Parliament in which they or their members participate as required by point (d) of Article 3(1).

¹ See press release, https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/64327/338_23_statement_en.pdf.

In accordance with Article 8 of the Act concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage, the funding and possible limitation of election expenses for all political parties, candidates and third parties in, in addition to their participation in, elections to the European Parliament is governed in each Member State by national provisions.

2. Expenditure linked to the campaigns referred to in paragraph 1 shall be clearly identified as such by the European political parties in their annual financial statements”.

1. Principles

The Authority underlines, first of all, that Article 21 of the Regulation applies only to European political *parties*. European political foundations are therefore in copy only for information.

The Authority also recalls that the prohibition of directly or indirectly funding other political parties or candidates remains applicable alongside Article 21 of the Regulation².

Nonetheless, **Article 21 of the Regulation encourages European political parties to conduct their own European elections campaigns, which must remain in line with Union values³, and which are complementary to but distinct from the campaigns of their member parties**. It is on this basis that the Directorate-General for Finance of the European Parliament jointly with the Authority developed 5 guiding principles for European Parliament election campaigns which were conveyed in 2018.

The document made available in 2018 remains relevant and is attached again in annex for your convenience. The corresponding **5 principles for the campaigns of European political parties in the context of European elections** were also recalled in the Annual Activity Report 2020 of the Authority, and can be summarised as follows:

- 1) Scope: Several Member States
- 2) Content: Predominant focus on European topics
- 3) Ownership: Responsibility of the European political party
- 4) Authorship: Visibility of the European political party
- 5) Compatibility with national law⁴

² See Article 22(1) of the Regulation and Declaration No 11 of the Conference annexed to the Nice Treaty, OJ C80, 10.3.2001, p. 1. The Authority recalls that the criteria for assessing compliance with Article 22(1) of the Regulation are available in its public guidance which can be retrieved here: <https://www.appf.europa.eu/appf/en/guidance/prohibition-direct-indirect-funding>. It should be noted in this context that, while exchanges of information with national authorities may take place, assessments by national authorities in relation to national parties or candidates, e.g. whereby co-financing of joint activities by European political parties might be considered as revenue of the corresponding parties or candidates under national political parties financing law, are not prejudging the Authority's assessment pursuant to Article 22(1) of the Regulation.

³ “[I]t must observe, in particular in its programme and in its activities, the values on which the Union is founded” (Article 3(1)(c) of the Regulation).

⁴ National law as understood here includes provisions of, or determined by, Union law other than Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014, where implemented by national authorities (e.g. the General

2. Practical implementation

In light of the 5 above-mentioned principles, and in order to increase efficiency for European political parties that engage in a European elections campaign, the Authority provides the European campaign action plan (“E-CAP”) tool.

What is an E-CAP and what should it contain?

E-CAP, or European Campaign Action Plan, is a short and easy to provide advance summary on how the European political party intends to align its European elections campaign with the 5 above-mentioned principles for application of Article 21 of the Regulation. E-CAP does not need to contain any political strategy assumptions or sensitive content such as specific electoral aims. It does however need to show succinctly,

- how the European elections campaign as planned is consistent with the 5 above-mentioned principles, and
 - how this consistency will be continuously monitored by the European political party itself throughout the European elections campaign
- (“E-CAP main part”, max. 5 pages, template in annex).

Groups of activities planned within the campaign (“E-CAP activities”, template in annex) complete the E-CAP. These groups of activities do not need to be itemised or specified by date, but require (i) a unique number, (ii) a title reflecting the main focus, as well as (iii) information on partner organisations or local candidates foreseen to be involved in the activity group and, if so, which compliance risk mitigators the European political party plans to apply in this respect. It should also be indicated (iv) where a lead candidate (“*Spitzenkandidat/-in*”) takes part in groups of activities, as this boosts their European nature.

European political parties remain free to conduct any lawful activities they see fit beyond those included in the E-CAP activities, but only activities traceable to an E-CAP previously submitted on time will come into consideration for the simplification effects below.

When should the E-CAP be submitted?

The deadline for submitting your E-CAP main part to the Authority is 31 October 2023⁵. The list of E-CAP activities is submitted by 29 February 2024 at the latest.

What are the effects of the E-CAP?

E-CAP does not change applicable rules and principles⁶. However, it mitigates risks by frontloading compliance management and thus can simplify certain of the Authority’s checks.

More specifically, the E-CAP will assist European political parties in planning their campaigns in light of the applicable rules and principles. Thus the subsequent checks of the Authority can be simplified for activities reported in the financial submissions for 2024, if clearly traceable to an E-CAP that was previously submitted and which is consistent with the above-mentioned 5 principles.

Data Protection Regulation or the future rules on political advertisement). While the Authority is not competent to apply national law as such, it may exchange information with Member States, having regard to the respective scopes of application of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 1141/2014 and national law.

⁵ Requests for extension of this deadline can be granted if governing bodies’ meeting dates so require.

⁶ These include, in particular, Article 22(1) of the Regulation, as well as rules and principles set out in the Financial Regulation and the contribution agreements with the European Parliament, such as rules on procurement and service contracts.

The Authority will neither “approve” nor “reject” an E-CAP, but may provide preventive compliance recommendations and will also later take into account the E-CAP when controlling the financial submissions for 2024.

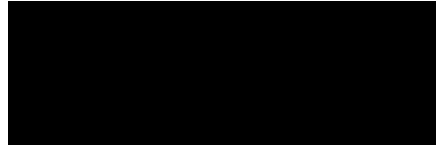
This approach will be reflected in a separate table for E-CAP activities in the Authority’s reporting templates for the 2024 financial submissions, where the previously submitted E-CAP activities can be cross-referred, and simple reporting would then apply to them (focusing on evidence of prominent visibility of the European political party throughout the activities as implemented, as well as on actual implementation of the risk mitigators foreseen in E-CAP). This does not exclude the possibility of further questions and controls on E-CAP activities, but can significantly reduce the need for the Authority to do so.

As an additional simplification, an E-CAP submitted on time and demonstrating consistency with the 5 above-mentioned principles also constitutes evidence of the European political party’s intended participation in the 2024 European elections within the meaning of Article 3(1)(d) of the Regulation (see also the letter of the Authority of 20 April 2023, APPF D(2023)14085).

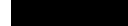
European political parties are strongly encouraged to contact the Authority with any questions they may have on the above, in good time before the E-CAP submission deadline.

The present letter is without prejudice to procedures and assessments of the Authorising Officer of the European Parliament and competent national authorities.

Yours sincerely,



 Pasca Schonard



Annexes



2. E-CAP main part template
3. E-CAP activities template

Annex 2: E-CAP main part template

***European Campaign Action Plan of [name of the European political party]
Submitted by: [name and function of the authorised representative of the European
political party]***

TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE AUTHORITY BY 31 OCTOBER 2023

1) Scope of the overall campaign: several Member States

a) Summary description

b) How will EUPP monitor actual implementation throughout the campaign?

2) Content of the overall campaign: Predominant focus on European topics

a) Summary description

b) How will EUPP monitor actual implementation throughout the campaign?

3) Ownership: Responsibility, including consistency with own political programme, of the European political party

a) Summary description

b) How will EUPP monitor implementation throughout the campaign?

4) Authorship: Visibility of the European political party

a) Summary description

b) How will EUPP monitor actual implementation throughout the campaign?

5) Compatibility with national law

a) Summary description

b) How will EUPP monitor actual implementation throughout the campaign?

Annex 3: E-CAP groups of activities template

E-CAP Groups of activities of [name of European political party] planned in the framework of the 2024 European campaign

TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE AUTHORITY BY 29 FEBRUARY 2024

Unique number	Descriptive title of activity group	Where	Approx. budget	If partner organisations or local candidates involved		Additional risk mitigator: EU lead candidate participation
				Identification of partner	Risk mitigators	
1	<i>Example: Lead candidate tour during [period]</i>	<i>Member States</i>	<i>Amount</i>			✓
2	<i>Example: Events on [topic relevant to European elections and consistent with campaign]</i>	<i>Member States</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Eg: Member parties xyz</i>	<i>Eg: percentage of co-financing by member party + prominent visibility of EUPP logo...</i>	
3	<i>Example: cross-border breakfast series</i>	<i>Member States</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Eg: Local candidate(s)</i>	<i>Eg: Local candidate(s) contributes to cost of event + prominent visibility of EUPP logo or visibility of EUPP logo only</i>	
4	<i>Example: Flagship events of EU lead candidate with leads of national list</i>	<i>Member States</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Eg: Member parties xyz and local candidates</i>	<i>Eg: percentage of co-financing by member party + prominent visibility of EUPP logo...</i>	✓
<i>Add rows as required</i>						