

DRAFT MINUTES of the February Federal Committee meeting

20 January 2024, Online

Start of the meeting: Saturday 20 January, 9:30.

End of the meeting: Saturday 20 January, 13:00.

Opening and welcome speech and political introduction by Domènec Ruiz Devesa, President of UEF

Domènec Ruiz Devesa, UEF President opened the Federal Committee meeting at 9:30 and did the political introduction.

There are two targets this year:

- (i) the challenge of the elections: UEF has to play a role and we started to have a role in two dimensions: a) advocacy to the European political parties (before the end of the last year, UEF had sent its political Manifesto to all the European political parties and now we have to follow up in their congress dimension) and b) to call citizens for support the pro-European political forces that are committed; the next step it's the pledges for the candidates that it has to be done and translated and adapted in the national situations; it is important that national sections engage the most of candidates with standard material; we are already in a campaign mode and our target are the pro-european electorat. Devesa doesn't think that our actions has to have the target with anti-European so they don't receive any visibility from us.
- (ii) The federalization of current constitutional framework: UEF needs to continue the work that we have done until now and this means in practice the reform of the current Treaties. The current situation is that: the EU Parliament has approved the project of the reform of the Treaties on 22 of November. And the Spanish Presidency was able to transmit this proposal to the European Council. So, this is now technically in the field of in the table of the European Council. But of course, what these uncertain is when the European Council will debate or to take a decision to open a convention.

Until now we have sent a letter to the President of the European Council that, in indeed, include this topic on the agenda of the next European Council meeting. We believe that this discussion will take place no more then the end of March and before the end of June and of the Belgian Presidency and the European Elections. Because we don't know what it will happen with the outcome of the election, because it is probably that the next Parliament will be less pro-european due the strong increase of no-pro-European countries as Italy, Netherlands, and Germany. So, it is better to locked in a decision on calling of the convention before the elections. That means not to organize the convention this year but the decision to hold before the elections is the ideal. The novelty is that in the last plenary of the European Parliament the President of Commission is preparing a communication on Treaty Change at the end of February. For us could be positive in the sense of accepting the need for adopting a new treaty. Particularly in view of enlargement. For Devesa, now the establishment has accepted that they have to reform the treaty that they cannot do the enlargement without it. But Devesa thinks also that the Member States will always try to avoid to have a convention and to have the European Parliament involved. And here where we have a big danger because

what they will try to say now and we may expect that in the commission document, it is that we can have a Treaty Change without call a convention. So we have the opportunity to influence the Communication of the European Commission for example in the context of the Second plenary of EU Parliament in February.

We have an opportunity to ask the President of the Commission to come to the plenary to present this Communication and have a debate and calling specifically for the European Council to include in its Agenda. I think that it is a big and also a difficult opportunity.

We need also a paper to explain why we need to reform the Treaty in a federal direction and why we need to be very specific in the way of a convention and not by simplified procedures. The UEF Secretariat will provide those paper and other material in standard material to be used in your communications.

After the political introduction, Devesa informed about that UEF took contact with the Jean Monnet Association to cooperate with them – as we did with the public event to commemorate the first meeting of the action committee for the United States for Europe – and propose to continue this legacy building a group of personalities to promote the reform of the Treaties.

Then the political points, Devesa passed to the points about the Budget 2024 and then the change of the Statutes. About the Budget 2024, Devesa hopes that it is approved to have a proper financial management and about the changes of Statutes, to hold the extraordinary Congress to change our Statutes regarding the role of Secretary General to have the possibilities to have not only a volunteer but also full-time paid Secretary General and with more managerial type. So UEF can have a flexible system and not force for a model.

Formalities

Election of the Presidium

Philipp Agathonos, Michail Montag and Erik Sodermann are appointed Presidium, on a suggestion by Luisa Trumellini, as UEF Secretary General.

Election of the Tellers

Ilaria Caria and Davide Negri are appointed Tellers, on a suggestion by Luisa Trumellini, VP and coordinator of the UEF Secretariat.

Election of a Credentials Committee

Luisa Trumellini, Ilaria Caria and Roland Hühn are appointed members of the Credentials Committee, on a suggestion by Luisa Trumellini.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda is approved by acclamation.

Approval of the Minutes of the Federal Committee Meeting on 21 October 2023

The minutes of the Federal Committee meeting of 21 October 2023 are approved by acclamation with this add by Raffaele de Luca at the point of the votation on the Resolution "*Luisa Trumellini informed that the amendment was reformulated by the Resolution Committee.*".

Decision to convene an extraordinary Congress for the amendments of the statutes

Agathonos introduced the new point giving the word to the Secretary General, Luisa Trumellini, for additional explanations. Trumellini added that could not change, make these amendments to the statutes in our, European Congress in November because of the bureaucratic methods related to the change of the seat. So we had to postpone it. And this is why we are asking for these. For this extraordinary Congress in order to proceed. It will be a very short one in a hybrid format. It will be, also, coinciding with, with, within a federal committee that which will take the other part of the day. So the two meetings will be together joined in order to allow a better participation. We are proposing also to the sections to keep the same numbers of delegates that they had at the end of November.

The changes, that will be put under the consideration of the Congress, as said, are two. First is about the role of the Secretary General and its enormous burden as volunteer and often not living in Brussels. So the proposal is come back to the model of ten years ago where Secretary General was a paid figure and was, in any case, living at the running of the office to a technical director. In this case, the choice is - without making a choice as Devesa said – is to have a employed Secretary General running the office and having so this function, in order to restructure the office.

The Secretary General would not be a member of the UEF bodies anymore, would participate but without the right of vote.

Second reform is about the treasurer. At this moment Trumellini showed the guidelines that also the Treasure should not be anymore a member of EB elected by the Congress but should be elected as a volunteer by the Federal Committee following the Congress -like internal auditors- and would attend the meetings, and FC meetings, of course, but without the right to vote and would be responsible for a supervising function of the finances of the UEF and the management of the finances would falling in to the hands of the Secretariat.

Q&A

Reiner Wieland took the floor with an intervention about the necessity to have the text early to start the discussion about the reform of the Statutes and propose to put in written a formulation of the amendments that include the majority that we need to change the status of Secretary General from volunteer status or paid status, and we don't need an Extraordinary Congress. Then he added that he is a bit reluctant to move the Treasurer closer to the Secretariat because the Treasurer has more a role of advocate in front of the Congress and other electives bodies, and has a strong position in EB.

Treasurer Roland Huhn added that he understood the point of view of Wieland but the necessity of a change is due the fact that a future Treasurer has in theory more power than a Secretary General without the right to vote. In his opinion the Secretary General should be the leading person of everything as of

political issues and financial issues and treasurer should supervise but not take the final decision. That needs to be discussed to get a balance between these two positions.

President Devesa added the reform of the Secretary General role is needed and he thought that in UEF has reached the consensus on this change.

The Federal Committee approved the decision on the convening of the extraordinary Congress for the amendments of the statutes on Saturday 6 April 2024

Election of the internal Auditors

Henrik Sondermann took the floor as chair of presidium. He gave the word to Trumellini to present the candidates proposed by the EB. She presented the two candidates, Matteo Roncarà and Emilia Chehtova, for the two positions.

The Federal Committee approved the two candidates.

Presentation and approval of the 2024 Budget

Presentation of the budget by the Treasurer

In his report the Treasurer started saying the positive conclusion of the UEF budget 2022 despite the situation of late submission of the report to the Commission. He thanks the hard work of the Secretariat and especially Ilaria Caria. The good news is that we received the last tranche of EU Grant 2022 around 44.800 euros. Then explained the structure of the budget 2024 submitted to the EU commission on the summer 2023 and approved by EU Commission. The budget 2024 is in total 432.000 € and this is divided in eligible cost and not eligible for the Grant (with the only voice of 26.000 € due the Deloitte repayment 2023). The Staff costs respectively 190.000 € for staff, 30.000 € for the Communication Consultant, 31.000 € as valued volunteer work. The rest of the budget for the cost side is reported in purchases of services and paid activities.

And for the total revenues, there are the 320.000 € from the EU Grant Commission, the 31.000 € from the volunteers conclusions, then the financial contributions membership fees around 37.000 €, the donations and partnership fees around 30.300 €, at the last point there are 26.000 € for the fundraising strategy.

The Treasurer explained the situation of the staff and situation of hiring the new staff members.

Presentation of the Activity Plan 2024

The Secretary General Luisa Trumellini explained the proposal of activity plan for the year 2024. The 3 main objectives that are underlined this program are the promotion of the federalist campaign in the framework of the European elections, the celebration of the 20 years of the 2004 enlargement and the strengthening of the organization. To realize this plan, UEF Secretariat has used an inclusive approach to involve directly national sections and has tried to harmonize all our internal and external activity in a coherent way. In the plan are included regular, on a monthly basis, events in cooperation with the national sections -and also sub-national level- or academy events in order to have both the opportunity to spread our message but also to work for reinforcement of existing groups or creation of new groups and sections.

We have also, planned a monthly political event, especially on the political campaign and on the enlargement. The cooperation with the Spinel group is very important. Then a lot of our activities are focused on the area of the Communication that it will developed by the Communication Consultant in cooperation with the new Policy Officer. Those activities are: internal communication (the goal is to give a information and to have a continuous coordination with our sections), social media activity, the website, social media activity, regular newsletter about the campaign (14 in total in order to update continuously our sections but also to inform outside of our sections), promotional videos about UEF, audio podcasts and communication activities regarding the election campaign and the fundraising campaign.

Report of the Internal Auditors

Report by the internal auditors was not available at the moment and it will provide in next FC meeting. So this point is postponed.

Vote on the new Financial and Contribution Order

The Presidium's member Henrik Sondermann explained the point: UEF needed to confirm the rate of the membership fee at every starting new mandate and so the FC had to confirm the current fee of 3,00 € per member and of 48 € for individual membership.

The Federal Committee approved the decision to maintain the current fee per member and individual membership.

Vote on the Budget 2024

Henrik Sondermann asked for approval of the FC.

The Federal Committee approved the budget 2024 with 2 vote against and 2 abstentions.

Approval of the proposal prepared by the EB of the new Political Commissions

The Presidium's member Michael Montag took the floor and presented the proposal received by EB as follow:

PC1 – On Federalist Strategy for a Federal Reform of the EU

- Chair Luca Lionello
- Rapporteur Alejandro Peinado

PC2 – On social justice, culture and education

- Chair Gloria Vara Giner

PC3 – On Foreign and Security Policy, Defense and Cybersecurity

- Chair Carlo Maria Palermo
- Co-rapporteurs Wolfgang Wettach and Antonio Argenziano

PC4 – On the European Green Deal, Energy union, digital transition, and related economic policies

- Chair Chloé Fabre

- Rapporteur Markus Ferber

PC5 – On migration, rule of law and justice

- Chair Mădălin Blidaru
- Co-rapporteurs Daphne Gogou and Christelle Savall

Q&A

Giorgio Clarotti offered to be Rapporteur of the PC2 and proposed also to change the title of the PC2 including the word “health” in agreement with Gloria Vara Giner.

The Federal Committee approved the proposal with amendment.

Workshop on the federalist political campaign up to the European Elections

Luisa Trumellini took the floor and after an introduction about the common framework of UEF campaign, gave the word to Davide Negri, UEF Communication Consultant to explain the actual status of the preparation of the campaign.

During the presentation, Negri showed the instruments that they were actually done (the UEF Political Manifesto, other political documents, the proposal to build a network of personalities inspired by Jean Monnet’s Action Committee for the United State of Europe) and those ones that are in phase of preparation (i.e. the pledge for the candidates that it will be ready on March). Then illustrated the actions to mobilizing the citizens and civil society.

He showed also the proposal of Logo for the UEF political campaign prepared by the graphic designer Lorenzo Epis and of other materials connected to the UEF political campaign.

Then he described the project for the UEF action with pledge (using the website for publicity and the multilingual proposal) and the instruments under construction for citizens and civil society actions. At the end he cited the media instruments, tools and collaborations to share the UEF positions.

Q&A

During the debate several interventions were formulated.

Closing remarks by the Vice-President Giulia Rossolillo

UEF Vice President, Giulia Rossolillo, took the floor. UEF is aware of the current situation and it is facing two big challenges: the Treaty Reform and the European Elections.

The European elections is a very important point because this change the treaties because if a convention is convened there is the possibility to discuss in a democratic way all the proposal that came out from the conference on the future of Europe, all the proposals of the European Parliament and also to add more points on which the reform treaty proposal of the European Parliament was changed in the plenary. And

so if we have a convention, we have really the possibility to discuss deeply on a deep reform of the European Union.

On the other side, as Devesa said, the attempt of many is to link the Treaty Reform with the enlargement, not in the sense that Giza said that we have to push for not enlarged without, deepening so to push the two processes together.

So just to modify the points of the Treaties. That are necessary for new States to come in. This is not enough because many of the reform that we need and we know that we need them. Are not necessary for other states to come in but are necessary to transform the European Union in a federal state and in the real international and supra-national democracy.

For example, the abolition of the unanimity would be necessary for new States to come in but the strengthening of the European Parliament wouldn't be. So, we have to be very clear that treaty reforms means a very radical reform of the treaties and that means a democratic debate that can happen just in the convention and not through other means.

Stressing why the European solutions are needed. Then we have the citizens and we have to campaign not just to convince them to vote at your elections but also to support the candidates that have pro-European and profit released ideas And so for that it is very useful to explain to the citizens the reasons why more Europe is needed.

Europe is needed and we can do it through our communications trying to simplify the reasons why we need more. Europe and a federal Europe. And then we have also the governments because are the governments that must decide if they open a convention or not and for this reason, I consider very important to have a positive attitude. So, to try to convince all those governments that have anti-European positions.

Like an apparently the Italian government because it is in their interest to open a Treaty Reform. Because, in many cases, the national interest now coincides with European interest. They must know they cannot solve a lot of problems. Just having a nationalist position and just closing their borders and thinking just of the national issues and not European issues. And so the point is that a reform is needed and it is in the interest also of many of the governments that apparently have an anti-European position.

So, we must try to push in this way. And we are trying for example in Italy to do it with some exponents of the government that seems to be more open and so more open to the discussion and so our task is very, very difficult, but I think that we have we are very motivated. We have good ideas.

We can cooperate very well with chefs. And so I'm very confident that our campaign will be a success. And we will have a very important step towards a federal Europe in the next month. And thank you to everybody.