

MINUTES of the November Federal Committee meeting

16 November 2024, Budapest

Start of the meeting: Saturday 16 November, 9:41

End of the meeting: Saturday 16 July, 18:00

Opening of the Federal Committee meeting

Chairman Michael Montag opened the Federal Committee meeting at 9:41.

Formalities

Election of the Tellers

Daide Negri, Tomas Carney, and Mathilde Baudouin are appointed Tellers by the Federal Committee.

Election of a Credentials Committee

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

Approval of the Resolution Committee

Luca Lionello, Giulia Rossolilo, Chloe Fabre, Carlo Maria Palermo, Christelle Savall, Daphne Gogou, Francois Mennerat, Alejandro Peinado are appointed members of the Resolution Committee.

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda is approved.

Approval of the Minutes of the Federal Committee Meeting on 6 July 2024

The minutes of the Federal Committee meeting of 6 July 2024 are approved.

Welcome speech by Ezster Nagy, President of UEF Hungary

Ezster Nagy expressed gratitude for the presence of the attendees and acknowledged the efforts of her colleagues in organizing the event.

The event's location in Hungary was a topic of prior discussion due to the country's challenging situation within the European Union, she mentioned the fact that holding the event in Hungary would be seen as supporting the Orban regime, but consensus was reached that it demonstrates solidarity with European values and democracy.

She highlighted that other significant European events (EMI, JEF) are taking place around the same time in Budapest, reinforcing the importance of their gathering.

The event aims to provide attendees with firsthand experience and insights into the local situation in Budapest.

Ezster Nagy wished everyone a productive and enjoyable meeting.

Political introduction by Domènec Ruiz Devesa, President of UEF

The President Domenec Ruiz Devesa emphasized the significance of holding the Federal Committee meeting in Budapest, despite calls for boycotting Hungary due to its political situation under the Orban regime. The meeting is seen as a show of support and an opportunity to understand the local situation firsthand.

The President highlighted the current challenging moment in European and world history, comparing it to the Cuban Missile Crisis. He noted the lack of federalism and the return of significant international competition as key issues.

Domenec Ruiz Devesa discussed the negative impacts of globalization, such as increased social inequalities and the political exploitation of migration flows by the far right, leading to a political malaise in the West, exemplified by the rise of Trump in the United States.

The President argued that the role of the Federalist movement is more necessary than ever. He emphasized the need for a stronger, more integrated Europe to address current challenges and to prevent the far right from gaining more power.

This political report underscored the importance of supporting Ukraine and the need for Europe to develop its own security and defence capabilities, independent of the United States and NATO.

Domenec Ruiz Devesa called for a new treaty to empower the European Parliament and the Council, enabling faster and more substantial decision-making. He criticized the European Council for not addressing the European Parliament's proposal for treaty amendments from November 2023.

The President called for concrete actions from the Federal Committee, such as engaging with the new President of the European Council and re-engaging with pro-European political groups in the European Parliament. He emphasized the need to influence member states and push for a more federal Europe.

The political report concluded with a call to realize the promise of 1989: a world that is democratic, united, and at peace. Domenec Ruiz Devesa encouraged using the Federal Committee as an opportunity to make another step forward in achieving this vision.

Political Debate: The challenges of the 10th EP legislature, the role of European federalists and the Spinelli Group

Lukas Mandl, Chair of the Spinelli Group, could not join the meetings but he sent a video message. He emphasized:

- The need for EU Reform, noting that there hasn't been a treaty reform since 2008 and no new country accession since 2013.
- That Europe faces multiple crises and challenges, including external threats like Putin's aggression and internal issues such as populism and disinformation.
- The importance of unity and addressing these challenges through EU reform, with a call to engage with Member States and various political levels to push for necessary reforms.

He also convened a Spinelli Group meeting in March 2025 in Strasbourg.

Panel:

- CHRISTIAN BECK on behalf of MEP (DE) Daniel Freund, Accredited Assistant of MEP (DE) Daniel Freund and Federal Executive Director EUD
- RAQUEL GARCÍA HERMIDA-VAN DER WALLE, MEP (NL) and Spinelli Group Board Member
- TAMAS LATTMANN, International Lawyer

Moderator: DOMENEC RUIZ DEVESA, President of the Union of European Federalists and Former MEP (ES) 2019-2024

Christian Beck emphasized the importance of aligning European policies with citizens' desires through initiatives like the Conference on the Future of Europe. Beck highlights the urgency of addressing climate change, advocating for a unified European energy network and defence strategy. He also stresses the need for fiscal integration to tackle inequality and enhance security, expressing optimism about upcoming political changes in Germany and the EU under Antonio Costa's leadership.

Raquel Garcia Hermida-van der Walle introduced herself as a Spaniard by birth, Dutch by choice, and a European by conviction. She emphasized the importance of advancing towards an ever-closer federal union, not just as an ideal, but as a practical necessity for ensuring peace, safety, and a livable world. Garcia Hermida highlighted the challenging global context and the need for a united Europe to thrive and address environmental and geopolitical challenges. She stressed the importance of countering nationalistic narratives with a compelling European vision that resonates emotionally with citizens. Her background in civil society and communications drove her focus on effective messaging to connect with people on both rational and emotional levels. She expressed her eagerness to discuss the technical aspects of achieving these goals.

Tamas Lattmann discussed the complexities and challenges faced by Federalist thinking and the Spinelli group, particularly focusing on treaty reform and the role of veto power within the EU. He views the EU as currently functioning akin to an international organization, recognizing the hurdles in transitioning towards a federal state. Tamas Lattmann suggests that external pressures, such as those potentially exerted by the US under a Trump administration, could offer opportunities for the EU to forge common solutions and responses, especially in trade and foreign policy. He underscored the importance of credibility in modern politics and the rise of populism, advocating for Federalists to adopt careful and credible messaging. Additionally, Tamas Lattmann argued that Federalist thinking should leverage the existing framework of state sovereignty within the EU, rather than dismissing it, to effectively tackle current challenges.

Presentation of the budget by the Treasurer, Roland Hühn

The budget for 2023 was discussed and approved in the last session and was then under final review by the Commission. The final annual accounts are awaiting approval, marking the end of the budget

year 2023. For 2024, the budget is on track but includes two significant extraordinary expenses. The first is a repayment of €8,972.92 due to an audit discrepancy from a 2021 project with JEF Europe, where staff costs could not be adequately substantiated. The second is a provision of €4,100 for a reimbursement claim by a former Secretary General, which is still under negotiation.

The budget for 2024 shows a balanced budget with revenues matching expenses at €410,000. However, this balance relies heavily on donations. The organization has secured €256,000 from the Commission, which is 80% of the applied grant, ensuring liquidity for the year. Membership fees are expected to be around €37,000, and volunteer contributions are valued at €32,000. Participation fees and donations are also part of the revenue stream, with a goal to raise €16,000 in donations to balance the budget.

Projection of Budget 2025

For 2025, the budget needs approval by the Federal Committee and includes a detailed plan to increase staff costs to €200,000, covering a full year of employment for all staff members, including a new half staff position for fundraising. The budget also accounts for travel costs of €22,000, office rent and equipment at €27,000, and consumables at €14,300. The main priorities include treaty change and strengthening national sections, with plans for more interregional conferences.

The organization aims to reduce non-eligible costs and improve cooperation with the EU Grant officer. A fundraising task force has been established, but the implementation of the fundraising strategy remains an open issue. The goal is to achieve a balanced budget through increased donations and improved financial management.

The budget is approved unanimously.

Presentation of the Activity Report by the Secretary General, Ilaria Caria

Ilaria Caria, Secretary General, presented the activity report for 2024 highlighting several key activities and strategic initiatives undertaken by the European Federalists. Over the summer, the UEF collaborated with various European organizations to host events, including a demonstration and public debate at the European Parliament, among others to gather support for the Spinelli group. The UEF also participated in the Europe Forum in Turku, Finland, engaging in discussions on federalism and European integration with high-level speakers like Enrico Letta.

In September, the UEF actively contributed to the International Seminar of Ventotene, adopting a proactive role and launching the Action Committee for the United States of Europe. This event included workshops on communication and advocacy, and they promoted a movie to engage younger audiences in federalist ideas.

In October, efforts were made to advocate for treaty changes through letters to European leaders, and the UEF organized events in Southern Italy to foster cooperation between national and local sections. The report also mentions ongoing efforts to strengthen internal and external networks, with a focus on expanding their reach in Eastern Europe and enhancing cooperation with schools, universities, and media partners to shape public opinion and foster a federalist mindset among young people.

Ilaria Caria concluded with a call for unity within the organization to effectively pursue the goal of a federal Europe, emphasizing the importance of overcoming internal misunderstandings to present a united front.

Meeting of the Political Commissions and of the Resolution Committee

New Section: Welcome of UEF Romania

The FC is unanimously voting in favour of the cleansing of the old Romanian section and the new Romanian is approved unanimously.

Alin Mituta, Vice-President of the UEF and President of the Romanian Section expressed gratitude for becoming the first Romanian delegates at the Federal Council of the Union of European Federalists and shared their journey of establishing a UEF section in Romania. Over the past year, they organized several events, including a launch event in Bucharest, an event on Europe Day promoting EU benefits, and a discussion in Timișoara about Europe's future. They are planning an Interregional Conference in Bucharest on December 13th and 14th to strengthen UEF sections in Eastern Europe. Their future plans include expanding their activities and establishing local branches across Romania to spread the principles of federalism. Alin Mituta concluded by expressing happiness in joining the federalist family and thanked everyone for their support.

Christelle Savall, President of JEF, intervened to welcome the new section and asked to hold the votes after the presentation of the section and not before. She also asked what is the concrete plan of UEF Romania to liaise and work together with JEF Romania.

Michael Montag explained that the vote before the presentation is his fault.

Alin Mituta answered about the cooperation with JEF Romania, that he is determined to work together. That they have done so already in the past and he is looking forward to cooperating.

Domenec Ruiz Devesa took the floor to congratulate Alin Mituta and the section of UEF Romania. He feels grateful that the organization has been able to build a new section.

Presentation permanent working group wfm/uef on global governance

Daphne Gogou, EB Member, discussed the cooperation between the Union of European Federalists and the World Federalist Movement (WFM), highlighting key developments over the past five years. Since 2019, they have engaged in regular dialogue to establish a cooperation framework aimed at promoting common goals. A significant milestone was the celebration of the Altiero Spinelli Declaration in December 2022, which showcased synergy between the two organizations and facilitated the participation of individuals from countries requiring visas to attend EU events.

Following a recent congress, efforts have been made to create a clear cooperation framework. This includes the adoption of the Pact for the Future at the UN level in September, which aims to revise international governance. The collaboration seeks to address global challenges such as peace, justice, accountability, environmental crises, and disinformation. To achieve this, a working group comprising European and World Federalists will be formed to produce a reflection paper with concrete proposals for future cooperation. Additionally, a report on the environmental impact of the war in Ukraine was mentioned as a valuable resource for evaluating conflict areas and guiding the group's work. Volunteers are ready to contribute to this joint effort.

Michael Montag wished success to the working group and reminded the names of the members: Samuel Tammekann (JEF), Carlo Maria, Daphne Gogou, Alejandro Peinado, Alexandre Marin.

The working group is approved unanimously.
--

Reports from national sections and from the Young European Federalists on their activities

JEF Europe

Christelle Savall presented the recent activities of JEF Europe, focusing on their campaign for the European elections, EurHope, which gathered 5,000 proposals and 1.5 million votes from young people about the future of Europe. They engaged with decision-makers to advance their agenda. Additionally, they are continuing their long-standing campaign, "Democracy Under Pressure" to raise awareness about breaches of the rule of law in Europe through conferences and street actions. They have also restarted their "Don't Touch My Schengen" campaign, advocating for freedom of movement in Europe, highlighted by a recent demonstration in Schengen. Furthermore, they plan to expand their efforts through the Federal Academy to spread historical knowledge and ideas within their network.

UEF Italy

Stefano Castagnoli, President of the MFE, outlined several key activities and events organized by the Italian section. These included a campaign for the European elections, participation in the Federal Committee meeting in June, involvement in the Strasbourg action in July, and the organization of the

traditional national and international seminar in Ventotene, with Joseph Borrell (HR/VP). Additionally, they conducted numerous initiatives focused on the Draghi report, including debates and public events. Recent activities included a meeting with Sandro Gozi and Domenec Devesa, the opening of a debate office in Cagliari, Sardinia, the publication of three issues of their magazine "L'Unità Europea" and the organization of 15 events by local and regional sections over the past two months, primarily focusing on the Draghi report and the current state of the European Union.

UEF Hungary

Eszter Nagy described a challenging year due to simultaneous European and municipal elections in Hungary, which complicated organizing debates among political candidates because of rising tensions between opposition parties. Despite these difficulties, she expressed happiness about recent discussions and the 20th anniversary of Hungary's EU membership. She highlighted efforts to improve their social media presence and enhance cooperation with JEF, despite facing communication challenges. Eszter Nagy concluded on a positive note, emphasizing the importance of regional cooperation and expressing enthusiasm for future collaborations, including an upcoming trip to Vienna and continued cooperation with UEF Romania.

UEF France

Luc Landrot reported significant growth in membership for the European Federalists in France, with a 150% increase this year, attributed partly to better cooperation with the European movement in France. Key activities included publishing articles in major newspapers like Libération and Le Monde, hosting seminars on topics such as the rule of law and terrorism, and conducting monthly online meetings on various federalism-related topics. Upcoming events include a webinar on the Draghi report in November and the Spring University in Lyon in April, focusing on resistance and federalism. Additionally, they are working on a major report to propose reforms to the French constitution to better align with a European Federation.

Groupe Europe

Catherine Vieilledent explained that Groupe Europe, historically formed for individuals in EU institutions seeking independence from their nationalities, is primarily based in Brussels. In 2023, they focused on public conferences and media engagement regarding EU enlargement and conditionality. Key activities included a conference with a former head of the European Commission's legal service and collaborations with various partners, such as the Belgian section and publications like Federal issues. They also contribute to "The Federalist Debate" and work with networks like the European Public Service. Despite challenges in engaging busy experts, they remain committed to collaborating and sharing insights on federalism and the rule of law.

UEF Spain

Alejandro Peinado expressed gratitude to the Hungarian hosts for organizing the Federal Committee meeting and congratulated the Romanian colleagues on their membership approval. He summarized

recent activities of UEF Spain, highlighting a busy period with multiple elections that helped maintain a high profile for their European message. Key activities included updating and translating materials for their website, spreading the Federalist pledge to political candidates, and organizing significant events such as Europe Day celebrations in Bilbao and the first Congress on Federalism in Barcelona. Peinado praised the active involvement of their Catalan section, which organizes monthly Federalist dialogues and launched a song contest to promote Federalist values. He concluded by expressing Spain's interest in hosting future events with UEF Europe.

UEF Germany

Gwynn Wettach discussed the status and activities of UEF Germany (Europa Union Deutschland), the largest section of the UEF, which is currently experiencing tensions with the UEF. Despite this, the organization has managed to maintain its membership numbers, addressing the challenge of an aging membership by incorporating younger members, particularly through dual membership with JEF. They conducted a significant campaign for the European elections promoting a positive message of hope and support for pro-European parties. They recently held a major congress in Stuttgart, where they passed the Stuttgart Signal, excluding the left nationalist party BSW from membership due to its conflicting ideals. This action mirrors a previous exclusion of the right-wing AfD party. Wettach also mentioned the financial support received from federal and state governments, which has been crucial for their operations. They are now strategizing to cope with potential reductions in federal funding and advocating for stronger support for civil society organizations like theirs.

UEF Greece

Daphne Gogou recalled that this year celebrated the 5th anniversary of UEF Greece, which now has around 120 members and aims to increase this number. They have strong cooperation with JEF Greece and work with three major political families in the Spinelli group. Key achievements include organizing events with Spinelli group members and establishing a new regional section in northern Greece. They also hosted significant discussions on the need for a common EU health policy, Cyprus' EU accession, and the Draghi report. Recent activities include publishing a newsletter on the U.S. elections and focusing on defence and migration issues, particularly in the context of the Middle East crisis. Future plans involve organizing events on EU enlargement and migration in the Mediterranean region.

Report from the pc-meetings, presentation of resolutions, voting on resolutions

Political Commission I - Resolution *Building consensus for Treaty change*

The resolution is approved with 3 votes against and 1 abstention.

Political Commission I and 4 - Resolution *A fiscal capacity to achieve our ecological and competitiveness objectives*

The resolution is approved unanimously.

Political Commission 5 - Resolution *Opposing continued introduction of internal border controls in the Schengen Area -need to preserve the exceptional character of this measure which affects free movement of persons*

First, a vote was held to discuss only amendment line 59. With one abstention, the vote was approved to first discuss only this amendment.

The amendment line 59 is approved with 8 abstentions, 1 vote against.

The resolution as a whole is approved with 3 abstentions.

Political Commission 3 - Resolution *A European foreign and security policy in a Changing World*

Carlo Maria Palermo, Chair of PC3 proposes to vote in block the amendments agreed by the PC and to vote in plenary the amendments that could not be discussed.

This proposition is approved with 3 abstentions.

Amendment paragraph 6 line 77

The amendment is approved unanimously.

Amendment point (paragraphs) F-G-H-I line 24 to 34

The amendment is approved with 3 abstentions.

Amendment line 38 and 39

The amendment is approved with 4 abstentions and 3 votes against.

Amendment line 42 to 46

The amendment is rejected with 12 abstentions and 16 votes against.

Amendment line 47

The amendment is rejected with 21 votes against.

Amendment line 49-50

The amendment is rejected with 17 votes against and 3 abstentions.

Amendment line 59-68

The amendment is approved with 1 abstention.

Amendment line 61

The amendment is approved with 2 abstentions.

Amendment line 68

The amendment is rejected with 13 against.

Full resolution

The resolution is approved with 3 abstentions.

Resolution *A reminder: the “Declaration of European resistance movements” 1944*

The resolution is approved unanimously.

Statement on migration - Recalling the need to speed the implementation of the migration pact

The statement is approved unanimously.

Statement - Is the European Union at risk of losing the enlargement battle as well?

The statement is approved with 5 abstentions.

Closing remarks by Domenec Ruiz Devesa President of the UEF

In his concluding remarks, President Domenec Ruiz Devesa expressed gratitude to everyone for their hard work and dedication. He highlighted the objective to establish a liaison with Lukas Mandl as part of their ongoing efforts. Additionally, he recalled that Sandro Gozi was nominated as the honorary president of the organization in recognition of his contributions as a former president of the UEF.

Chairman Michael Montag closed the Federal Committee meeting at 18:00.

Brussels 11/06/2025

Mathilde Baudouin, Policy Officer.