

For the attention of the Renew Europe Bureau

Non-Paper on the Cordon Sanitaire

The '*cordon sanitaire*' has historically been applied in the Parliament by pro-European forces, especially against the far right. For the safeguard of our democratic values, it needs to be applied to extreme forces, in the far right and the far left. The cordon sanitaire draws its legitimacy from a majority of political forces that democratically decides to apply it.

Indeed, democracy is about following the expression at the ballot box. However, is also about guaranteeing freedoms, rights and democratic institutions. When anti-democratic forces abuse democratic procedures to undermine those rights and freedom and destroy the European democracy, we have a duty to counter them. The cordon sanitaire is one instrument to apply.

The *cordon sanitaire* does not curtail the democratic rights of extremist parties to exercise their freedom of speech nor their right to vote on legislation - and even less their right to present candidates in free and fair elections. They can be active in the parliamentary work, such as in committees. What the cordon sanitaire does is to prevent extremist parties from having essential responsibilities and influence within institutions whose fundamental values they stand against and minimise the damage they could do to them, as many of them want to destroy the European project.

In Practice

Two political groups in the European Parliament stand in opposition to the EU in itself and its fundamental, shared values: the Patriots for Europe (PfE) and Europe of Sovereign Nations (ESN). They are clearly far-right groupings with whom our Group cannot and will not cooperate with in our parliamentary activities. The *cordon sanitaire* should be applied, in all cases, to these two groups as a whole.

The European Conservatives and Reformist (ECR) and The Left (TL) groupings are not as clear-cut. Some of their component parties are overtly extremists, nationalistic and openly hostile to the EU and our allies. However, others are more moderate and democratic. Any dealings with ECR and TL should therefore be considered on a case-by-case basis, depending first on the national parties involved and second on the content discussed. It means that, as a principle, Renew Members could agree to positions by certain ECR and TL delegations when it does not run counter to upholding our values and priorities and is strategically necessary.

Non-Paper: Guidelines on <i>cordon sanitaire</i>			
		Patriots for Europe (PfE) & Europe of Sovereign Nations (ESN)	European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) & The Left (TL)
Committee and Plenary Work	Allocation of reports	<p>The EP Rules of Procedure do not impede these Groups to have rapporteurs, this process is always political. However, the allocation system in individual committees will lead to PfE and ESN rapporteurs being nominated at some point.</p> <p>Our Coordinators should always use their best endeavours to ensure that reports are not allocated to Members of PFE or ESN - or, if not possible, at least the politically sensitive or important reports.</p> <p>This implies ensuring that a Member from a pro-European Group is available to act as rapporteur.</p>	<p>During the process of the allocation of reports, our Coordinators should request the names of the prospective rapporteurs of the ECR and The Left Groups.</p> <p>If the prospective rapporteurs are not from extremist national parties, the allocation to their Groups can be supported.</p>
	Amendments tabled by the respective Group	Always vote against	Case-by-case basis: vote in favour, only if the content is acceptable and tabled by an acceptable Member. Remarks can be made on the voting lists.
	Compromise amendments and Joint Resolutions	<p>No joint resolutions or compromise amendments should be negotiated or co-signed with the PfE or the ESN.</p> <p>In case these groups or their individual Members want to co-sign we should refuse. If they manage to co-sign, we should withdraw Renew signature and support.</p> <p><i>In any case, the standard practice should be that Renew Europe draws and table its own resolution as soon as possible</i></p>	<p>The basis of any cooperation on joint resolutions or compromise amendment should always be the pro-European coalition.</p> <p>If the ECR or The Left agree to the content this should be assessed on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p><i>In any case, the standard practice should be that Renew Europe draws up its own resolution before negotiating a joint resolution</i></p>

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	Final votes in committee on reports by the respective Groups	<p>Case by case basis:</p> <p><u>Consent votes:</u> vote in favour, if content acceptable and is essential for advancing the policies we favour. If the report does not carry an essential feature but its content is still fully acceptable, abstention is required. Otherwise, vote against.</p> <p><u>Technical reports:</u> vote in favour where the content is fully acceptable and/or has been modified through amendments tabled by us or other pro-European Groups and is essential for advancing the policies we favour. If the report does not carry an essential feature but its content is still fully acceptable, abstention is required. Otherwise, vote against.</p> <p><u>Sensitive/controversial reports:</u> By principle, these reports should not be allocated to such Groups. If this step was absolutely inevitable, vote in favour where the content is fully acceptable and/or has been modified through amendments tabled by our or other pro-European Groups and is essential for advancing the policies we favour. If the report does not carry an essential feature but its content is still fully acceptable, abstention is required. Otherwise, vote against.</p> <p><i>When voting in favour of such reports, Renew should seek the support from the other pro-European groups as well, including the S&D and/or the</i></p>	<p>Case by case basis:</p> <p>If the ECR/The Left rapporteur comes from a party that is considered 'extreme' the rule applying to PFE/ESN applies also here.</p> <p>If the ECR/The Left rapporteur comes from a party that is considered acceptable then:</p> <p><u>Consent votes:</u> vote in favour, if content acceptable.</p> <p><u>Technical reports:</u> vote in favour where the content is acceptable and/or has been modified through amendments tabled by us or other pro-European Groups.</p> <p><u>Sensitive/controversial reports:</u> vote in favour where the content is acceptable and/or has been modified through amendments tabled by our or other pro-European Groups.</p> <p>At all times, the committee team can table a voting declaration explaining why an ECR or The Left report was supported (as above) or rejected.</p>

		<p><i>Greens. In case more than one of the three other pro-European groups do not follow, Renew should abstain.</i></p> <p><i>At all times, the committee team can table a minority position under Rule 56(4), explaining why a PfE or ESN report was supported (as above) or rejected.</i></p> <p><i>Renew should use the opportunity offered by rule 56 of EP RoP to draft minority positions explaining the reasons of their votes.</i></p>	
	Final votes in plenary on reports by the respective Groups	<p>The same rule that applies in the final vote in committee should apply for the final votes in plenary.</p> <p>The Group can consider further tabling of amendments in the case of legislative reports. Concerning INI reports, an alternative motion for a resolution or vote against should be considered.</p>	The same rule that applies in the final vote in committee should apply for the final votes in plenary.
	Oral questions by the respective Groups	Do not co-sign nor support.	<p>Do not co-sign nor support if coming from a party considered as extreme.</p> <p>If party considered acceptable ok to co-sign or support if in agreement with content.</p>
	Initiatives (i.e. hearings, conferences and proposals)	Do neither support nor participate	In principle, do neither support nor participate.
	Candidates for committee or delegation posts	<p>The Rules for the constitutive and midterm session apply also to the PfE and ESN Groups. Individual Members may support private initiatives that would put forward alternative candidates from pro-European groups to stand for committee or delegation posts of responsibilities.</p>	Case-by-case basis: vote in favour, only if the candidate is an acceptable Member.

These guidelines provide a framework for the cordon sanitaire the Renew group could apply. However, the Members should do their utmost at every stage of the parliamentary process to avoid the scenarios mentioned above. It will require a strategic cooperation with pro-European groups to cement this approach.

In this regard, Renew should include as much as possible pro-European provisions in line with our values and goals in all texts so that extremist forces cannot support and sign those texts. Due to our reduced influence in Committees, Renew Europe should table amendments starting in Committees and at Plenary to ensure that our values are reflected, and also to ensure that our Members are not left exposed due to difficult amendments from groups included in the Cordon Sanitaire.

In addition, in the event that groups included in our Cordon Sanitaire do co-sign, resulting in the situation where Renew must abstain or vote against, we should proactively table amendments - especially at Plenary - to clearly stipulate our position on the file. Doing so, we will strengthen the credibility of our stance against extreme forces.

The non-cooperation with extremist forces at the European level should remain a Renew trademark. It is of utmost importance to explain clearly the voting behaviour of our Members and the lines we draw. Whenever it is possible, Renew Members should speak against the extremist forces, in committees as well as in plenary.