

18. DRAFT RESOLUTION ON THE INTIMIDATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Societas Hungary GD Italy, SDY Finland

Civil society plays a crucial role in the life of democracies. It watches how governments exercise their power, raises public concerns about abuses, promotes political participation, encourages voting in elections and educates people.

In a well-functioning state, members of the civil society are respected and consulted by the government, their work is valued.

However, the rise of populism in Europe has a devastating effect on the civil voice. Hungary is a sad example of how anticorruption organizations, watchdogs, civil movements and human rights organizations are harassed and called foreign-backed agents, only because they dare to criticise government decisions. To threaten them, Hungary is following the path of Russia and introduces laws to cut off alternative voices.

Also the totalitarian spirit and many initiatives of the current Hungarian government threaten the European idea and its values. This obstructs the way towards a more unified European Union.

It is highly alarming that such behaviour towards civil society organizations is gaining ground in Europe. It seems to be a regional trend, as these problems have appeared in other European countries as well.

We, Young European Socialists, condemn the intimidation of civil society in Hungary and all over Europe. We express our support to the civil society organizations who work under the constant threat of government crackdown and call on the political leadership of the EU to firmly stand up against such tendencies.