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# **The Left Alliance of Finland and the European Union - an enigmatic relationship**

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## **Parties and Social Movements**

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The purpose of this paper is to discuss the challenges that Finland's joining the European Union year 1995 lifted up for the Left Alliance (LA) in Finland. The situation is enigmatic to the party because the leadership looks at the EU primarily as a possibility whereas majority of the supporters of the party see EU primarily as a threat to the values which they hold as important. Before discussing the EU policies of LA, I give some more general background information about Finland and the Left Alliance.

## 1. Background

### 1.1. Finland

Today Finland is known as a highly industrialised small country in the North. It has a population of c. five million people. Some 20 % of the population live in the capital town Helsinki and its surroundings. The whole country including Lapland in the North is inhabited but great majority of people live in the south-western corner of the country.

Since the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Finland was for more than six hundred years an integrated part of Sweden. Politically the Finnish provinces had an equal status with those in mainland Sweden. So Finland was not a colony. From early on Finland got Swedish settlers to the coast lines of both North Gulf (west coast) and Gulf of Finland (south coast). This is why Finland still today is bilingual. Some 5,5 % of the population has Swedish as their mother tongue. The long common life of Sweden and Finland has also left permanent ties between the two countries and has had a lasting influence in the Finnish culture.

Year 1703 Peter the Great of Russia started building St Petersburg in the eastern bottom of the Gulf of Finland. For securing the defence of their new capital city Russians year 1743 annexed the south-eastern corner of Finland (Carelia) to Russia. Year 1808 the whole territory of Finland was according to a Russian deal with Napoleon and after a war against Sweden annexed to the Russian empire. Carelia was now given back to Finns and Finland was turned into an autonomous Grand Duchy with the Russian tsar as the sovereign monarch.

Year 1905 the Russian tsar had difficulties in Far East in a war against Japan. This gave for the newly founded labour movement in the whole empire - in Finland also for the nationalist movement - a possibility to rise demands for more democracy. In Russia the Duma was founded and in the Grand Duchy of Finland a parliament. In Finland all people, including women as one of the first countries in the whole world, got an equal right to vote in parliament elections. The first elections for the new one chamber parliament were held year 1907.

Juridically the position of the new Finnish parliament was weak because the country still was a Grand Duchy with the Russian tsar as the sovereign monarch, but politically the parliament was very significant. In the elections the newly (1899/1903) founded Social Democratic Party got 80 out of 200 seats. This meant that the labour movement had established itself and had got a rostrum for further mobilisation.

The Russian revolutions in the year 1917 gave Finns the possibility to demand full independence. That was declared in the Finnish parliament the 6<sup>th</sup> of December and accepted by the Bolshevik government later the same month. But the independence started with severe pains. A civil war between Reds (Social Democrats) and Whites (non socialists & bourgeoisie) was fought in the spring winter 1918. The civil war left deep scars and mutual suspicion in the Finnish society for several decades.

The key leaders of the rebellious Reds fled to Russia. In autumn 1918 in Moscow, which the Bolsheviks had made the new capital city of the Soviet Russia, the Finnish Communist Party was

founded by the Finnish asylum seekers. The party was immediately declared illegal in Finland. And so it remained until 1944, the end of the war between Soviet Union and Finland.

Economically the Grand Duchy time was beneficial for Finland, especially from 1840s onwards. Industrialisation started and the Finnish industry could benefit not only of exports to west but it could also trade in the Russian markets on more favourable terms than its western competitors. Finland could apply its own customs regulations, also for the trade with Russia. In 1863 Finland got its own currency, the Finn Mark.

Despite the early industrialisation Finland was still an agrarian country in the last peace time year before the Second World War 1939. That year c. 60 % of the population still got their livelihood from agriculture. Since the end of the war the industrialisation and other economic modernisation has been very quick indeed. Nowadays only c. 8 % of the workforce is in agriculture. There has also been a rapid urbanisation. Nowadays c. 80 % of Finns live in towns.

The Finnish nationalist movement in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was of course very much influenced by other European nationalist movements of its time. Characteristic for the Finnish movement was that it was markedly non-violent and stressed the education of the whole population. Education was seen as the basis for economic growth, good government, legitimacy of the government and support for the nationalist cause. The lasting heritage of those times is a high appreciation of education among all strata of the population.

In November 1939 Soviet Union declared war against Finland. It was a time when Soviet Union still had a newly agreed friendship treaty with Hitler's Germany. Originally in the negotiations before the war the question was about giving Carelia to Soviet Union for securing the safety of Leningrad. Finland insisted on having the right to remain neutral and thus being no threat to Soviet Union and Leningrad. That did not satisfy SU and they decided to take the whole country. A Finnish "refuge government" was established by SU with Finnish communist living in Moscow as its members; and a war was started.

SU could not during the three months that the war lasted take over the country. Against Soviet expectations also no Finns moved to the Soviet side. But the Soviet troops were able to occupy Carelia, which in the peace treaty was annexed to Soviet Union.

In June 1941 when Germany launched its Barbarossa attack against Soviet Union, Finland joined the attack. Diplomatically it was declared that Finland is not an ally of Germany but fighting a separate war as a cobelligerent to get back Carelia. When Finnish troops very quickly reached the old borders, trespassed them and intruded deep into the Eastern Carelia (which had never been part of Finland) the diplomatic explanation of the Finnish position of course lost a lot of its credibility.

In the autumn 1944 concentrated Soviet forces started rolling back the Finnish troops. With all the concentrated forces they could have been able to occupy the whole country. They had already taken Carelia, but at that moment the Soviet rush to Central Europe and Berlin had started. All Soviet troops were needed there, and thus Finland was left unoccupied. In the peace agreement Carelia was annexed to Soviet Union and the Porkkala peninsula a few kilometres west of Helsinki was rented for fifty years to SU, which built there a naval base. (Porkkala was returned back to Finland already year 1955 during the so called Geneva spirit of international relations.)

The outcome of the war changed Finnish politics considerably. The hostile and later neutral but calm interwar attitude toward the neighbouring Soviet Union had to be changed to official friendship. After the final Paris peace treaty between the allied countries and Finland (plus Italy, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary), which was signed in February 1947, Finland started negotiations about a bilateral friendship treaty with Soviet Union. The so called YYA-treaty (about friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance) was signed the next year. It recognized Finland's neutrality in the sense that it respected Finland's right to stay outside of conflicts and

tensions between big powers in international politics. At the same time Finland committed itself to the military defence of its own territory (if necessary with the help of Soviet military forces) in the case of an attack by Germany or its allies through Finland against Soviet Union.

The military aspects of the YYA-treaty never materialized before the collapse of the SU. To Finland's neutrality the treaty gave a special flavour, but rather helped than hindered Finland's diplomacy in playing an active and constructive role in international politics promoting e.g. UN's role in peace keeping and European security arrangements through CSCE-conference and later the OSCE-organisation.

Finland became an associate member of EFTA year 1961. A free trade agreement with EEC was signed 1873. Year 1986 Finland became a full member of EFTA. Finland applied for EU membership year 1992. In a referendum organized 1994 57 % of votes were given for joining. From the beginning of 1995 Finland like Sweden and Austria have been members in EU.

## **1.2. Left Alliance**

The Left Alliance and The Greens are middle size parties in Finland with a public support round 10 %. The three big parties, whose support oscillates round 20 %, are The National Coalition (conservatives), The Centre Party (former Agrarian Party) and The Social Democrats. In addition to these parties there are with a 3 to 6 percent's public support and a representation in the parliament The Swedish Peoples Party (of the language minority), The Christian Democrats (representing quite fundamentalist or sectarian Christianity) and The True Finns (populist). In the party register, but without representation in parliament there are e.g. The Communist Party, which was newly re-founded in mid 90's.

Left Alliance was founded year 1990 by a merger of The Finnish Peoples Democratic League (FPDL) and its member organisation The Finnish Communist Party (FCP). For understanding the political nature of the Left Alliance you have to know the history of FPDL.

FPDL was founded in November 1944 when Finland had made armistice with the Soviet Union, but the war was still going on and Finland had - according to the armistice agreement - declared war to Germany to expel its troops from the Finnish Lapland.

The Social Democratic Party had been through all the war years a partner in the Finnish government. A critical attitude among the electorate toward Social Democrats had risen during the war, especially after Finland's trespassing the old borders and occupying Soviet territory. By many the official explanation that Finland was fighting a separate war seemed fake. Finland was seen to glide and eventually become a full ally of Hitler's Germany. This split the party and already during the war a conspicuous peace opposition was created inside the party.

On the other hand the FCP, which had so far been an emigrant party in the Soviet Union and an illegal underground party in Finland, got according to the armistice conditions legal rights for open political activity. The party's membership was very small indeed but the political situation gave it extra prestige.

In this situation these two groups, the Social Democratic opposition and the FCP, decided to join forces. A new party FPDL was founded. About one hundred party clubs left SDP and joined FPDL. Very rapidly also new FPDL party clubs were created all over the country and by the parliament elections next year FPDL had a network of basic party organisations covering the whole country. In the 1945 parliament elections the new party made a convincing breakthrough with 23,5 % of votes and 50 seats out of 200. The electoral support of FPDL was only slightly less than SDP's 25,1 %. The SDP, which in the last peace time elections before the war year 1939 had got 39,8 % of votes, was thus divided in two.

The FCP was taken into FPDL as a collective member organisation, who also started rapidly to create its own local network of basic party cells. No restrictions were prescribed for members of the FPDL clubs to become members in the FCP party cells or vice versa. By 1960's the FCP had some 40.000 members and FPDL some 60.000 members out of which some 8.000 were members in both networks.

In 1950's a tradition was established not only in the press but also in the university politology and political history to call FPDL the communist party of Finland. This has been very misleading and very unfortunate. FPDL was and remained a genuine coalition of socialists and communists.

In mid 60's we see how problematic the growth as a cadre party inside FPDL had become to the FCP. For twenty years the official societal platform of FCP had been that of the common league. The communist ideology especially in the soviet style had remained strange and doubtful to the majority of FCP cadres. This led in 1966 FCP party congress to a change of the party chairman and an election of a central committee majority, which was opposed to Moscow's leadership in both ideological and political matters. Immediately the drafting of a new party program was started and a new democratic program was approved in the next party congress 1969. In the same congress the split of the FCP was finalized as the staunch supporters of the Moscow line marched out when the new party program was discussed and approved. FCP had become Euro-communist before the term was invented.

In other geopolitical conditions the split of the FCP would have led quickly to a formal separation of the two wings and very likely to the formation of something like Left Alliance (or continuation under the name of FPDL but as a unitary party) already in early 70's. But in Finland, where all political parties stood behind the country's official friendship policy with Soviet Union and wanted to maintain good relations with the big neighbour, this was not possible. We also have to remember that FPDL was originally founded to advocate friendship policy with the Soviet Union. The CP of SU advised the quarrelsome wings of the FCP not to separate - obviously expecting that the minority one day would become majority. This never happened and the unhealthy structure froze for twenty years.

The split in the FCP reflected immediately in the electoral results of the FPDL. In 1970 parliament elections voter's support fell for the first time under 20 %. The result 16,6 % (- 4,6) reflects also the public's reaction to Soviet invasion into Czechoslovakia. Also Social Democrats who got 23,4 % were punished and lost 3,8 %. Conservatives in opposition gained 4,2 % getting 18 % of the votes. Centre, president Kekkonen's original party and a permanent government party also fell under 20 % for the first time since 1919 and got only 17,1 % (-4,1 %).

The voter support for FPDL remained through 70's quite stable. A clear drop happened in the first elections of 80's, which perhaps reflected that the Marxist left was now out of fashion. The result in 1983 elections was only 13,5 with a drop of 4,4 %-units. In the next elections 1987 the downward trend continued. The result was only 9,4 % the loss being 4,1 %-units, which was almost exactly the net result of the Greens (4,0 %) who now participated for the first time in parliament elections.

Some general observations can be made of the two last decades of FPDL, the 70's and the 80's. The candidates of the party majority (socialists + majority communists) got permanently about 80 % of all votes in both parliament and municipal elections. The minority's 20 % was very stable too. Because the FCP remained a cadre party never participating on its own in elections, communism remained alien and mysterious for the general public (for most frightening but for some also tempting). That the "true" Moscow oriented communism in its "own" party FCP was pushed in corner and was despised by the party majority perhaps explains why the student radicalism of early 70's was attracted by it. That Moscow oriented communism got hegemony at the universities in Finland was internationally a very strange phenomenon. In other countries you had romantic Maoism or Trotskyism, nowhere (or only to a very little extent) romantic Stalinism. The

hegemony of hard line communist student radicalism in 70's left traumas which still today reflect in the Finnish intellectual life.

Very soon after the mid 80's obstacles to merge FPDL and FCP disappeared. Communism in its classical form (vanguard party entitled to leadership because it knows the truth about the course of history) had lost all its credibility partly because of the despised communist student radicalism in 70's, partly because of the rapid new developments in Soviet Union (perestroika & glasnost). The pressure from CP of SU artificially to keep together the two wings on FCP came to an end. Since the 60's the two wings in FPDL's party majority (socialists and communists) had a lot of positive experience about a very close political cooperation and ideological differences were felt to be insignificant.

This was the base upon which the new unitary party Left Alliance was created. The constituting meeting was held in 1990. The new party was declared to be open for all the old FPDL local clubs and FCP local cells to join. A short declaration of principles was adopted, but the drafting of a new party programme was deliberately postponed into the future. In the 1995 party congress there was a lively discussion about the programme. The idea of a "Third Left" was launched. In the following party congress 1998 a party programme was finally adopted. The title of the programme is "The society of freedom, democracy and sustainable development". The idea about a new Third Left in which the Left Alliance identifies itself and of which it wants to be an active part of is built into the text.

According to this philosophy the First Left was the Liberal Left of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, the Left of the French Revolution. The great and lasting historical achievements of the First Left were the ideas about people's sovereignty, civil rights, human rights and democracy. The Second Left was the Socialist Left. Historically it can be placed between 1889 and 1989, the foundation of the Second International and the fall of the Berlin Wall. The social base of the Second, socialist, Left has been in the working class (which for several decades was seen to mean primarily manual workers). The lasting achievement of the Second Left has been the idea of a welfare state (or social service state as opposed to the night watchman state of liberalism) as an essential prerequisite for a functioning and legitimate modern democracy. The time of the Second Left was also characterised by an internal fierce dispute between reformist socialists and communists.

The Third Left is ideally pulling together non socialist political liberals, for whom the values of human and civil rights and democracy are important, and socialists who share the same values. Thus the idea of a Third Left includes a strategic perspective of political alliances and majority building. The new challenges of the Third Left parties are e.g. increasing automation of production processes which lead to a new composition of the working classes and great fear of marginalization and unemployment of vast strata of population, increasing and very rapid globalization which is not only economic but to large extent cultural. The nation state, as during the whole period of the Second Left, is no more the almost only political forum where left parties have to operate. Vital political processes are taking place supra nationally. This raises for the third left parties the vital demand of international cooperation of a qualitatively new kind.

The years 1995 - 2002, two parliament periods, Left Alliance was in a "rainbow government" with the Social Democrats (which was during that period the prime minister party) plus Conservatives, Greens and the Swedish People's Party. In the March 2003 elections Social Democrats got slightly less votes than the Centre, which was the biggest opposition party. In the new government Centre is the prime minister party having Social Democrats and Swedish Peoples Party in the government coalition. Left Alliance and Greens were left in opposition although both parties would have willingly joined the government.

## 2. Left Alliance and the European Union

### 2.1. Referendum 1994 saved the face of LA

The government of Finland decided to apply for membership in the European Union 1992. The conditions for joining were negotiated 1993 and a referendum about joining was organized 1994. In Left Alliance the opinions were very divided. Majority of the executive committee and most members of the parliament group were more or less openly for joining. The problem was that the supporters of the party were very unanimously against.

This was a “spinal cord” reaction of the party supporters. For years they had learned that EC/EU was a “to western” and therefore dangerous organisation for Finland if it wanted to guard its neutrality between east and west. Another lesson had been that EC/EU is an organisation of supra national capitalism and therefore dangerous. The third lesson had been that because of its supra national nature EU is going to take away our national sovereignty and independence. Among Social Democrats and Greens there were originally strong support for same kind of attitudes. Because the Social Democratic leadership was united in its “for” stand the opinions of the party supporters also changed before the referendum quite unanimously “for”.

In LA the fact that party’s supporters had mainly negative attitudes toward European integration and Finland’s joining EU gave an opportunity for those LA politicians, who were in no-camp, to be very vocal. The government decision to organize a referendum was a relief to the party. The party needed not to take stand in the issue. It was only decided that after the referendum the party will respect the majority opinion of the people whatever it is. In the referendum 57 % of the population voted “yes” for joining. Only 24 % of the Left Alliance supporters were in favour of joining. Even Centre party supporters voted “yes” more often (36 %); and in agriculture there were very material values at stake.

An opinion survey published last year shows that only very little “softening” has taken place in the opinions of both Left Alliance and Centre party voters. When asked what is the attitude of the respondent now to Finland’s EU membership, 48 % of the Left Alliance voters still say it is negative, 44 % of Centre voters say the same, when the average for the whole population is 31 %. Left Alliance and Centre are the only parties (among big and middle sized parties) above average. The number of negatives in Social Democratic party and Conservatives is round 15 %. Among Greens the “softening” has been considerable; they have now only 23 % negatives (in 1994 referendum 45 %).

A negative attitude toward EU does not necessarily mean though that you want to disjoin from EU. Only 24 % of the total population would now be in favour of Finland’s separation.

When we look at the development of public opinion at large before the referendum we can note that already year 1987 some 40 % of Finns were for Finland’s joining. That attitude has been very steady ever since. It rose slowly and was at highest year 1992 with 50 % support. This was the year of governments decision to leave to EU Finland’s application for joining.

Year 1987 the average “no” attitudes were very weak, only 10 %, whereas most people, 50 %, said “don’t know”. To year 1992 the “no” attitudes had risen to 35 % and “don’t know” diminished to 15 %. When the referendum campaign really started the next year the situation was very interesting: both “yes” and “no” attitudes got now 40 % support and support for “don’t know” had again risen a little being now 20 %.

When we look at the different political issues, agriculture is the only area, that was unanimously (not only by farmers themselves) and constantly seen to come to suffer after Finland’s joining the EU. In all other areas assessments varied. From the left wing point of view most interesting areas

were assessments concerning effects in e.g. employment, level of wages, social security and taxation. In Finland's case with country's positive experiences in international neutrality and active role in security policy also these areas were an object of a very intensive left wing debate.

In other Scandinavian countries there has been a left wing "dialectic" according to which, when Social Democrats have taken a more positive stand toward European integration, the smaller Socialist parties have taken benefit from the general public's negative attitudes and reservations. The Socialist parties have wanted to profile themselves as defenders of the Nordic welfare concept in a situation when the welfare state is seen to be threatened by the integration. The LA of Finland did not want to go into this "dialectic". For this there were two reasons: 1) pragmatic realism and 2) the party's own analysis about the globalization phenomenon.

As pragmatic realism we can see the assessments of the situation both in the larger society and especially in the trade union movement. There is in Finland a very deep rooted way of thinking that what is good for the economy is also good for working people. EU membership was originally advocated by representatives of economy and business life. There were only some very few weak voices warning that Finland's exports might also become more difficult in dollar (and sterling) areas. Most representatives of economy were convinced that joining EU is the right decision from the international competitiveness point of view for the Finnish economy. During early 90's Finland's economy had suffered a very sudden deep recession causing an exceptionally high unemployment rate. Thus the argument that EU membership is good for the economy was very convincing argument for joining also in the left wing. Among trade union people the argument was especially biting. In Finland the level of unionization is very high indeed and the trade unions have a strong position in public discussions and public opinion building.

The party's own analysis about European integration had to start from the fact that the prime moving interest in the integration is economic. European Union was correctly seen primarily first as a customs union, then as a free trade area and finally as a single market. The first question to answer was: is this economic integration stoppable? The answer was no. Neither would stopping it be desirable. At the bottom lies development of science and technology, which creates more and more productivity, which is not bad per se. The problem is who is going to benefit about this modernization and globalization.

The Nordic welfare model has rested on two pillars: 1) high level of trade unionization and long traditions in binding trade union agreements about wages and working conditions and 2) the welfare state, meaning that public authorities (state and municipalities, and also some special agencies like in the case of pensions) take care of a lot of social welfare services. This model has been created inside very sovereign nation state conditions. In the new conditions of integration, when the sovereignty of the nation state can not any longer be protected by customs and devaluation of the currency, the question is: can the welfare model be adapted on a supra national level? Philosophically, ideologically and morally this question is the more acute when the world is shrinking not only by intensified international trade but also by new international and global consciousness due to rapid mass communication.

The questions get this shape: Can the nation state any more be defended as the only political forum where democracy and welfare model are possible? Are we not moving into an age where we must create supra national political fora for defending and extending the welfare model? Can the democratic decision making model be adopted to supra national fora? Or is the idea of democracy by the nature of things limited to nation states?

The answer of the LA especially in connection to EU has been that the union can not any longer be seen only as an economic project. EU must be politicised and developed into a new democratic political forum. This seems to be the only way how traditional left wing values can be protected and advocated in modernizing conditions.



But the dilemma was in the referendum year there: the attitudes of the constituency did not support the analysis of the party. To a very large extent the dilemma has prevailed.

## **2.2. Development of opinions after the referendum**

During the negotiation period when Finland not yet was a member state in EU, there were only round 20 % of people who said they were not at all interested in news and articles about Finland's EU membership. After Finland's joining the number of not-interested rose dramatically to round 40 %. The number of those who are satisfied with the news coverage and other information about EU has since 1992 (18 %) risen steadily year by year being now 50 %.

When recently asked about the different issues in which Finland's EU membership has had an effect people see more positive than negative effects, but some negative evaluation are very strong indeed. E.g. people see that those working in agriculture have been exposed to negative effects (71 %), bureaucracy has increased (67 %), criminality has increased (54 %), we have suffered losses in national self determination (58 %).

Positive effects are seen e.g. in foreign trade (45 % positive, 4 % negative), in economic activities by and large (31 % positive, 6 % negative), in interest rate (39 % positive, 7 % negative), in science and research (28 % positive, 2 % negative) and even in environment protection (31 % positive, 13 % negative).

In most issues people do not see any considerable effect at all and at the same time mentions about positive effect are outweighed by mentions about negative effects. To this category of issues belong e.g. education (66 % see no effect), culture (64 %), Finland relations with Russia (65 %), cooperation of Nordic Countries (54 %), gender equality (74 %), working conditions and surroundings (68 %), own life and position (68 %) and even the level of taxation (67 %).

Very interesting are the answers given to the issue of Finland's security political position. 50 % do not see any effect at all, 23 % see positive effects and 13 % see negative effects from Finland's EU membership.

When the current evaluations about EU's effects were compared to previous expectations in year 1994, most positive surprises were in social security, Finland's relations to Russia, health care, gender balance, the quality level of food and interest rate. Most negative surprises were in the price level of food and price level in general, position of entrepreneurs and foreign trade. About positive surprise areas you can say that before Finland's joining EU there had been unjustified fears and whereas in negative surprise areas there had been unjustified expectations.

Among Social Democrat's and Conservatives supporters there has been almost no change at all in general attitudes toward EU after the referendum. The number of negatives in both parties is very low (16 % and 14 %). The number of positives in both parties is above 50 % (52 % and 62 %). When you add those who are neutral the number of satisfied is high (82 % and 86 %).

In Centre's, Greens' and Left Alliance's supporters development or change has taken place. In all these groups there is now less rejection of EU and more acceptance of EU at least as a reality. If you add those who are positive to those who are neutral and call these groups satisfied, you get the following figures: Centre 56 %, greens 76 % and Left Alliance 50 %. The comparison of the Greens and Left Alliance is most interesting. The development toward supportive attitudes has been much more rapid in the supporters of Greens than among the supporters of LA. The explanation is to be found, I think, in the personalities of respective party's representatives in European parliament. The Greens have had two MEPs in both compositions after the 1995 parliament elections. LA had in the first composition two and now only one. The MEPs of the Greens have been very conspicuous (and very popular) representatives of the yes-group whereas

the representative of LA sitting both periods with very high electoral support has represented as the only one of the Finnish MEPs (16 altogether) critical and negative general attitudes toward EU.

### 2.3. Future perspectives

When not speaking about Finland's membership in EU the Finnish attitudes about EU as an institution are still very divided. In one of the yearly opinion surveys there is the statement: "Although EU has its problems it is anyway the only force that can lead and steer the development of Europe". Since 1993 you have got every year almost the same division of answers: about 35 % of people agree with the statement, about 35 % disagree and about 30 % don't know.

The correct interpretation of this result is, I think, that the nationalist frame of reference is taken for granted and is still natural for most people. When people are put in front of evaluating supra national institutions they feel themselves lost. This is where the democratic left parties of Europe have their positive challenge and an opportunity to create new attractive politics. If the common answer of all the democratic left parties to the aforementioned statement would be clearly and programmatically affirmative, it would create a new and convincing base for a new and fresh left wing political approach. The basic evaluation must be common because convincing European democratic left wing policies can be created only from an all European platform supported in several member states of the EU.

The next 1<sup>st</sup> of May will change EU considerably. The enlargement creates a new political situation in the EU. We can be fairly satisfied in the LA about our supporters' attitudes in the enlargement question. Only 28 % disagreed with the statement "Although EU's enlargement in East creates expenses its realisation is politically and morally necessary". The enlargement was supported by 72 % (38 % being expressly positive and 34 % being neutral). These figures were almost the same as the national average.

In the enlarged EU political questions related to classical socialist, labour and left wing values will not diminish. They will rather increase. They are questions related to such values like equality and solidarity. Politically the questions are in several areas like employment, income, taxation, education, health care, social services etc. There are also a lot of "new questions" in e.g. environment problems, gender, culture etc. Would it be possible to start drafting some kind of common European (Union) action programme departing from the understanding that EU is not only a capitalist single market project but can and must be turned into a peoples democratic project?

This kind of approach would necessarily also lead to proposals and demands to diminish the "democracy deficits" of EU's present structure. Which analysis without doubt leads to the more general question about preconditions of democracy in the new era of intensive globalization. Europe inhabits some 350 m people, but outside Europe there are hundreds and thousand of millions more. The crucial question for us as Europeans is, if (or when anyway) EU is an international political actor, what kind of actor is EU in the globalizing world?

One question in which the LA in Finland has been very active is the common foreign and security policy of the union. We depart from the premiss that you have to separate very clearly the concepts of "defence" and "international crisis management". We can not see "defence" in the sense of mutual security guarantees as a very topical issue for European states today. This is why we also agree with Finland's official military non alignment policy. There is no security deficit which would be diminished by Finland's joining a military alliance. We also (as Finland officially) are against forming of a military alliance (with mutual security guarantees) inside EU. The old NATO can satisfy all the needs of this kind for members of EU.

What is important in our mind is the common EU capability in international crises management. We depart from the belief that EU also is much more reliable in this area if its military cooperation

aims primarily to guarantee this capability and the questions of “defence” per se (that is mutual military security guarantees) are dealt with on other fora. We also believe that crises management never is primarily a military operation, but rather a civil operation (diplomatic, political, economic etc.). Therefore we stress the utmost importance to develop civil crises management capabilities and structures of EU. We would also like to see this area, EU’s foreign and security policy, as an area of common interest among democratic left parties of the EU.