

March, 2020

Call for Position Papers

Expanding Positions for the Democratic Left in Southeast Europe

The Democratic Left in Southeast Europe (#DemLeft SEE) with the support of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung is looking for **activists, academics, politicians, and other interested individuals** to draft position papers with policy recommendations tackling some of the most pressing concerns in the region.

#DemLeftSEE is a network of activists throughout the Southeast European region working towards creating a more just, green, and egalitarian society locally, nationally and regionally. At the heart of the initiative is an activist manifesto, which has been developed in an inclusive bottom-up process of transnational deliberation. This manifesto is being expanded continuously by means of position papers, proposed by individual activists.

Position papers bring to light contemporary issues in the region and respond with rich analysis and a set of policy recommendations. Past position papers have addressed labor movements in the region, environmental issues, corruption and underdevelopment through the lens of a democratic left perspective.

What does one submit for their position paper proposal?

- A draft of a title simply to offer a general understanding of your topic, which can later be revised.
- 3-5 sentences briefly explaining the content of each of the three main components of your position paper, including: a context section, position section, and policies section (3-5 sentences for each component).

Position papers must be written in **English**. Style guidelines for position papers are provided on the following page.

Please submit your proposals for a position paper topic to sasa.vasic@fes-soe.org and info@fes-soe.org and expect a response within a week of your submission. Those who produce a position paper are subject to a remuneration for their work.

With new position papers, #DemLeftSEE will be able to further diversify and enrich its library, the contents of which are available to any member. In order to become a member of #DemLeftSEE, please visit its official website www.dl.community and create an account through the website, which offers unlimited access to position papers and other features.

You may also follow us on Facebook and Twitter *@DemLeftSEE*. We look forward to enhancing the #DemLeft network with your bright ideas and policy recommendations for the Southeast European region!

Position Paper Template

In order to ensure a streamlined platform, all position papers follow a uniform format. Each paper hence consists of three sections:

- A) Context (1,200 words)**
- B) Positions (200 words)**
- C) Policies (800 words)**

A) The Context section encompasses four sub-sections:

- 1)** MAINSTREAM ARGUMENTS: What are the mainstream narratives regarding the issue and what models are they based on? Are there any international norms and regulations regarding the issue? Are these sufficient?
- 2)** DECONSTRUCTION: Why should and how might “mainstream” narratives, positions and policies be deconstructed?
- 3)** EMPIRICAL RECONSTRUCTION: Which empirical cases and examples can we use to support an alternative narrative? This is where “activist knowledge” is integrated in the broader process of politics and policy making.
- 4)** RELATIONS: Are there any relations across clusters? Is there a regional or international dynamic which is or should be reflected?

B) The Positions section is the normative core of the papers. Based on the analytical sections above, we should aim for at least five demands / positions here. Positions are different from policy proposals / recommendations in that they are communication tools “packaging” a complex problem in such a way that political support is created. More detailed policies are developed in section C).

Guiding questions:

- How can the context analysis be broken down into a short and catchy political demand?
- What may be an interesting heading/title/slogan for a campaign or set of policy proposals? (Example: “End Hunger Now!”)
- Following each position, there should be a short discussion of how policies can be promoted more generally and who might be most interested in it, i.e. what stakeholders could be mobilized (businesses, students, trade unions, international institutions, associations, women's groups, ethnic groups etc).

C) In the **Policies section**, a more detailed set of roughly 3-5 recommendations should be developed per position. Each policy recommendation includes

- a short description of the issue
- a definition of the target audience
- the actual recommendation, as clear and concise as possible, possibly including different options; the objective should be clearly defined (e.g. new legislation, changes to existing laws, new strategy for government, change in direction of existing strategy, policy, service)
- a “rationale” including the expected benefits and impact assumption of the recommendation as well as a reference to the context and “relations” as discussed above (regional, international, other relevant dynamics; existing strategies and legislation)
- means of verification / targets: 'how would we know if the policy was successful, if it were implemented?' (e.g. x number of jobs created in y by z).

This results in the following structure for each policy recommendation:

- Issue:
- Recommendation to [*fill in target audience*]:
- Rationale:
- Targets: