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Results From the First "Piratas de Galicia"™ Election!

¿Por que deberías votar a Piratas de Galicia?

	PIRATA.GAL	PP	PSOE	BNG
Transparencia Total	✓	✗	✗	✗
Democracia Participativa	✓	✗	✗	✗
Defensa Dereitos Humanos	✓	✗	✗	✗
Acceso á Cultura Libre	✓	✗	✗	✗
Software Libre	✓	✗	✗	✗
Débedas con bancos	✗	✓	✓	✓

How does it feel to be a Pirate in Rajoy's homeland? The expression "Ben feito Piratas" (?well done Pirates? in the Galician language) describes in one phrase the final assessment of the first electoral participation for Piratas de Galicia.

Galician Pirates are feeling good with the results. They say that they are proud of their work, and will continue working hard after these elections. Low poll results are due to the fact that on one hand, the Pirates had candidates in only 2 of the 4 provinces in the Galician territory and on the other, that it was their first attempt to convince people to vote for them, in the homeland of Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy. PIRATA.GAL got 1518 votes (0,10%), ranked 14th out of the 26 parties participating, but this only marks their first footprint on the political scene. In particular, the Pirates took 0,24% in the province of Pontevedra, almost 1 200 votes, and 0,17% in the province of Ourense.

Isabel Fernandez, Coordinator of Public and International Relations for PPGA said to Pirate Times about the results:

"We are excited and sad at the same time. We haven't expected to get so good results for us, since we have had almost no resources to perform an appropriate campaign at the streets. Besides, we only had the chance to present candidatures to two of our 4 provinces. It's the electoral law that is not fair. There were 36,20% of abstention, the highest percentage in decades. We have a lot of rural population in Galicia, people not used to IT. It's hard for us to get listened to that population, especially the retired people. We feel great! The results encourage a lot to us to keep working hard to reach everyone, because we think everybody can be a Pirate."

Rajoy's party, 'Partido Popular de Galicia' (PPdeG - People's Party of Galicia), won the elections in Galicia with ease (with 45,71%) while Partido Socialista Obrero Español (PSOE, Spanish Socialist Workers' Party) and Bloque Nacionalista Galego (BNG, the Galician Nationalist Bloc) lost seats in the Parliament. A big surprise was the rising of Alternativa Galega de Esquerda (AGE EU ? ANOVA, a coalition of parties and groups from the nationalist wing) from a result of 0,97% in 2009 to 13,99% and taking 9 seats this time. This quick rise of a small party shows that 'Piratas de Galicia' has potential of doing the same.

Galicia is mentioned as a 'key region' in the national and international media and the results of the elections will affect Rajoy's politics. Spain is on the verge of a 'Greek-type' European bailout to keep its borrowing costs under control and ready to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with cuts in wages, pensions and social spending, while unemployment is soaring. Up until now, Rajoy has passed more than four different budget packages.

Pirate Parties across Europe are making their first appearances, by participating in local and national elections. The recent signs of this effort, both in Switzerland with the election of **Alex Arnold as the Mayor of Eichberg**, and in the Czech Republic with **Libor Michalek as a senator** in the Parliament, increase and speed up the widening of Pirate ideology

In this direction, the step made today by Piratas de Galicia is recorded and counted positively, contributing to the explosive growth of the popularity of Pirate Parties in Europe and worldwide.

More **Results** of the Galician elections.

Featured image: CC-BY-SA, Piratas de Galicia

Written by Stathis Leivaditis published at October 23, 2012

## Organising a Regular Meeting



One of the reasons for Germany's Pirate success is the use of a type of local meeting called a Stammtisch (a table in a bar for regulars). If there are enough Pirates in your local geographical area, who would enjoy meeting up on a regular basis, then you can think about setting up a Stammtisch. How you define your local area is up to you but your electorate would be a good template as you can go on to establish a local chapter later on - something that we will look at in another article.

You can get to know fellow Pirates and discuss politics and plan group events. This is without having the problems involved with setting up a formal organisation. No leaders or other officials need to be elected.

The disadvantages include not being able to hold property or funds in common and to organise beyond the most basic of events. You will not have as much influence with local authorities, the press and your national party which may not be able to support as with an officially constituted chapter. However it is best not forming an official chapter too early. Wait until there is a solid core of members for that. This gives people a chance to drop out or take a back seat if they so wish and for talent and dedication to come to the fore.

First steps:

Check with your national party to make sure there is not already a meeting that you are not aware of and if there are any Pirates nearby who might be interested. Ask the Party headquarters to put them in touch with you.

If there are like-minded Pirates around then you are all set. If not then do not be discouraged. If

you have enough perseverance and the right temperament then you can start one anyway with family, friends or just yourself and begin by recruiting new members to the Party. It might take a while but being a part of building democracy from the grassroots up is a special experience.

#### Where:

It can be in a private home or in a public place but if you want to recruit members then people, especially women, feel safer in a public place. A bar, café or restaurant that is not too noisy, that will allow you to reserve enough places and is not expensive. Try and stick to the same place. If you build a relationship with the owner or manager they can help you recruit new members. Always use some way to identify yourselves so new people can find you and other guests know who you are.

#### Who:

Regularity is a must so people can orient their lives to suit. At the start it would be best to not make them too frequent to avoid a burn out. Monthly or fortnightly is recommended and regular dates rather than days e.g. the 20th of each month instead of the third Tuesday in each month as that allows for a greater breadth of people to attend despite shift work etc.

#### When:

As previously mentioned, ask you national or regional party to put Pirates, who are in your area, in touch with you. Ask members of neighbouring groups to come along and give some support. Also set up a website where people can get details of the meeting. Other ideas to attract people include: putting an advertisement in the local paper and informing their reporters ? with luck they might send one along to do an article, leafleting and holding information stands.(LINK), using social networks, guerilla marketing.

#### What can be achieved:

This depends very much on who joins you but you can do many of the things a formal party chapter can. Spread the Pirate message, get involved in local politics ? start citizen's initiatives and petitions. Just make sure that you work as a group and make consensus decisions as much as possible. No one should feel compelled to do more than he can or want to do.

### Warning

Not everyone who joins will stay. Your numbers will rise and fall with the physical as well as the political weather. Also arguments and personality differences can disturb things from time to time. But slowly you will form a band of people who will bring and develop talents that you can build on to form a more concrete organisation. Take your time - and above all have fun.

Keep in mind we are Pirates and Pirates share.

### Featured Image CC-BY Pirate Times

Written by Andrew Reitemeyer published at October 21, 2012

## Czech PP Celebrates First Pirate Senator



The Czechs have their first elected Pirate Senator. Pirates worldwide will be rejoicing with PPCZ as they celebrate Libor Michálek's success in the senatorial elections.

Famous, in his own country, as a whistle blower for exposing corruption in 1996 when he worked for the National Property Fund. In 2010 his complaints about fraudulent manipulation of procurement and tendering led to the dismissal of ministers and top officials. In March 2011, he

was awarded the Endowment Fund Against Corruption Prize. In May 2011 he was awarded the František Kriegel Award from Charter 77 for the outstanding achievements in the struggle for human rights and civil liberties.

In July 2012, he announced that he would stand for the Senate in District 26 as a Pirate . He went on to win the first round with 24.3% of the votes. In the second round he was elected senator with 74.4% of the votes.

<http://www.libormichalek.cz/> (Czech)

[http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libor\\_Mich%C3%A1lek](http://cs.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libor_Mich%C3%A1lek) (Czech)

Featured image CC-BY-SA Libor Michálek

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Written by Andrew Reitemeyer published at October 20, 2012

## First time elections for the Galician Pirates



The Galician Pirates are going into the elections as a political party for the first time and they are declaring: "We know that the current system of political parties does not work in the twenty-first century society and we want to change it from within the system: to hack the laws and reach our goals of direct democracy and full transparency."

Their programme consists of 8 basic principles: privacy, transparency, sharing, humanism,

diversity, resistance, economy of the swarm and tolerance. Their principles are based on Rick Falkvinge's "[Pirate Wheel](#)" from 2011.

Galicia, an autonomous community of Spain

The parliamentary elections in Galicia, an autonomous community of Spain will be held on 21 October 2012. Galicia has a population of about 2,8 million people. The Parliament (Parlamento de Galicia) is the unicameral legislature of Galicia. It meets at the "Pazo do Horreo" in the Galician capital of Santiago de Compostela and is formed by 75 deputies (deputados). Deputies are elected every four years in ordinary period, or extraordinarily upon dissolution and call of elections by the President of the Xunta of Galicia, by universal suffrage in proportional lists with four constituencies, the Galician provinces: Coruña, Lugo, Ourense and Pontevedra.

Galicia has been an autonomous community in Spain since 1981. In 2005 a debate started about possible reforms of the statute that gives the Galician parliament full powers with control e.g. over the economy and taxes. But it is expected now and in the future, that political discussions on the question of "nationality" will not be resolved easily.

36 candidates in 2 provinces

Isabel Fernández, Coordinator of Public & International Relations says that there are about 40 - 50 Pirates in total, but the number of affiliated people is growing more and more every day. The Galician Pirates are campaigning with a total of 36 candidates in 2 of 4 constituencies in Pontevedra and Ourense. Her expectations of the elections aren't that high, because they only had the chance to present candidates in two of their provinces: "If anything this election will help the Pirate movement to be better known in Galicia."



## Torrent portal for educational material

But the Galician Pirates don't have to be humble: one of their candidates participated in a panel discussion about the draft of education reform that the central Government is preparing in Spain. Additionally the Galician Pirates are coordinating a project called 'Parents2Parents', in short P2P which original stands for peer-to-peer (P2P: computer network is one in which each computer in the network can act as a client or server for the other computers in the network, allowing shared access to various resources such as files - wikipedia.org), together with the Pirates of Catalunya and the Pirates of Madrid, who had received approval from the Spanish ministry last month . The three Pirate Parties opened a portal with torrent links where they offer each student the opportunity to access the materials he needs for class. The proposed links are referencing education material for primary, secondary and tertiary schools and the Pirates are adding new content daily.

## No pirate is more important than the other

The Galician Pirates do not like the system of hierarchical candidate lists since they think no Pirate is more important than another. So they blame the law for making them choose the names in an order of priority. They decided that order in one of their assemblies held last month. The first criteria was being a bilingual speaker, since the local press prefer to talk in Galician rather than the Spanish language, after that they chose Spanish speaking affiliates and finally other supporters to cover all the positions.

## We defend the rights of citizens

Rafael Couto, the head of the candidate list from Pontevedra was **reacting** on the question of a local Galician newspaper about the name of his party: "We use the name "Pirates" to get attention because we are almost the opposite of what a pirate is: we defend the rights of citizens."

Website: <http://piratasdegalicia.org>

Facebook: <http://facebook.com/pirata.gal>

Twitter: [@piratasgalicia](https://twitter.com/piratasgalicia)

Featured image: CC-BY Piratas de Galicia

Written by Patrick Schiffer published at October 19, 2012

## Greek Pirates Reach 1% In Polls And Are Ready For Their 1st Congress



????? ?????????? ???????? (Pirate Party Greece) looks eagerly ahead to the future.

A recent poll gave them twice as much electoral influence as they had in the May elections. The Greek Pirates are now full of optimism, ready for their first Conference on [3-4 November 2012 in Athens](#). The aims of the Conference are to vote in the first elected board leading the party into the EU Regional Elections in 2014 and will ratify its statutes and principles.

With only nine months on the political stage and experience in only two elections, PPGR reached almost 1% in September, and raised its own bar, according to the [poll by VPRC](#). The conditions in Greece, after the failure of the incumbent political system to solve the problem of the debt crisis, have motivated people to turn towards minority parties today with aspiration to become dominant ideological currents tomorrow. During this crisis, many young people were mobilized to join the emerging Pirate Party. They have attracted attention with slogans about direct democracy and transparency, digital rights and freedom, and they

have become accepted by the local communities.

PPGR members, about 1100 today, cover a wide spectrum of many political and ideological spheres. In statistics published by Pirate Times, PPGR is in the 10th place on Twitter out of 49 PP. **PPGR is 20th on Facebook out of 53 in August**, and is 11th out of 54 on Twitter and 21 out of 55 on Facebook **on September**.

#### PPGR Timeline

PPGR was founded on January 14th, after five months of consultations and meetings in Athens, Thessaloniki and online.

10 February 2012, statutes were submitted to the Supreme Court for official recognition as a political party.

14 April 2012 , the PPI General Assembly in Prague unanimously accepted PPGR as its 27th member ([http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbPxZYQBZrE&feature=player\\_embedded#!](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SbPxZYQBZrE&feature=player_embedded#!)).

6 May 2012, preterm national elections were held. By decision of the majority of its members, PPGR took part in the elections, and it collected 0.51% (almost 34000 votes). An astonishing 19.02% of the votes went to parties that didn't enter Parliament (there's a 3% threshold to enter). If the electoral system was a single-winner method, Greek Pirates would have elected 2 MPs.

17 June 2012, national by-elections were held. Because of polarization and voter intimidation, support for many small parties sank as non-voters reached over 37%. Greek Pirates were limited to 0.23%.

22 August 2012, **a meeting was held with German Pirates** in Mumble to discuss the situation in Greece.

In September 2012, participation through a representative in the PPEU meeting held in Barcelona. Polling for the electoral influence of political parties in Greece, pushed Pirates to 1%.

And concluding, 3-4 November 2012, the first conference will be held in Athens when the first elected Board will emerge.

Greek Pirates will take part with pride in the school teachers' elections in the Department of Education, on 7 November 2012, with a separate paper ballot under the name 'Pirates in Education'.

Featured Image CC-BY PirateTimes

Written by Stathis Leivaditis published at October 18, 2012

## Pirate Party in ACT Australia Elections



pirateparty  
australian capital territory

The Australian pirate Party will be contesting seats in the ACT (Australian Capital Territory) elections being held on 20 October 2012. Unfortunately they were not able to field candidates under the Pirate Party name as they fell **six members short** of the 100 required to be able to register as a political party in the territory. The ACT branch of the party was started in June 2012, the same month that party registrations were due, so getting to nearly 100 members in such a short time was a herculean effort.

The **policies**, being offered to the voters, range wider than the core Pirate values of transparency, privacy and copyright and patent reform. They include empowering local

community groups, restructuring of the transport systems and a new vision for art and culture in and around Canberra.

The voting system being used is a version of proportional representation called the Hare-Clark system. This system is a modification of the single transferable vote (STV) voting system. You can learn more about it [here](#).

They will be listing three candidates as independents; one each in the three electorates of Brindabella, Ginninderra and Molongo. You can meet the candidates [here](#). And remember to check back with the Pirate Times to see how they did.

<http://pirateparty.org.au/> Pirate Party of Australia

<http://actpirates.org.au/> Pirate Party of the Australian Capital Territory

Featured image CC-BY Pirate Party of Australia

Written by Andrew Reitemeyer published at October 17, 2012

## Introduction of The Pirate Party of Slovenia



The Pirate Party of Slovenia ([Piratska stranka Slovenije](#)) is having a constitutional congress on 17 October 2012, and all Pirates in Slovenia are very excited about this. We asked its leader a few questions about this event and a few other things related to party activities in the past.

Pirate Times: What are the most important topics the Pirate Party of Slovenia focuses on?

Rok: For the time being, more or less usual pirate themes, like freedom and privacy on the internet. Government transparency is also there. And of course, reform of copyright and patent legislation. Our program is outlined in 7 brief points, and is also available in [English](#).

Pirate Times: Do you have any unique topics that are specific for Slovenia? Do you plan to broaden your program?

Rok: The most burning political issue in Slovenia right now is the government paralysis due to political right and left being so busy blocking each other that nothing gets done. Perhaps that is not very unique, but it is specific enough.

The program is not chiseled in stone. It will be developed further. However, we will need to stay focused on core Pirate values for some time. We don't see the benefit of getting bogged down in day-to-day politics too quickly. We need to grow before we are ready for the big league game in politics. This organic growth will take some years.

Pirate Times: How long has the Pirate Party of Slovenia existed?

Rok: For almost three years. The Society of Pirates exists for about two years.

Pirate Times: Currently, you are very busy with preparations for official registration. Why did these preparations take almost 3 years, and what obstacles did you find on your way?

Rok: It is mainly about the numbers. Slovenia is a small country, 2 million people. We needed time for the movement to take roots, to gain momentum. Ironically, ACTA was very helpful in gaining a critical level of popularity.

Pirate Times: What do you think will be the positive and/or negative results of official registration?

Rok: We are not thinking in such categories yet. We think sooner or later you need to enter the political game, so it is just the question of timing.

Pirate Times: How does your party get finances? Is it through membership fees, donations or some other ways?

Rok: For the moment it is membership and donations. We are open for ideas like crowdfunding, and are eager to try them out.

Pirate Times: How is your party structured? How many members do you have at the moment? Can foreigners become members of Pirate Party of Slovenia?

Rok: Foreign citizens are not allowed full voting membership in Slovene political parties by law. We have more than 200 members which is just enough for the official registration. The party has a pretty simple and conventional organisational structure with the activism board, steering board and supervisory board. This is obviously just for getting things started. Until we are ready to accommodate more direct democratic processes by implementing interactive voting solution for our members, we will continue working for official registration.

Pirate Times: Do you plan to participate in elections? When would that be, and what are your expectations?

Rok: Yes. Our first aim is the EU Parliament elections in 2014. We intend to coordinate with other EU Pirate parties through PPEU. But for the moment our 100% focus is the constitutional congress. First things first.

<http://piratskastranka.si/> Pirate Party of Slovenia (Piratska stranka Slovenije)

Featured image CC BY-NC-SA by [Å iÅjko](#)

Image Source: CC BY-NC-SA [Å... iÅ...Åjko](#) <http://www.flickr.com/photos/shishko/>

Written by Matic Urbanija published at October 16, 2012

## Belgian Pirate Party Election Results, 14 votes short



The Parti Pirate de Belgique is pleased with the result from the elections: 0.5% and 5.16% of the votes in the municipal elections. In the region of Ottignies-Louvain-le-Neuve they were 14 votes short of gaining a seat in the city council.

As we explained [earlier](#) the Belgian election system is strongly fragmented, carrying large differences between the french-speaking and dutch-speaking parts. This fragmentation took over in partaking of the parties as well as on their success in these regions. One of few parties participating in both shares was the Pirate Party, but we can see a clear division in results. The french-speaking areas (Wallonie and Brussels) brought a better result and reached a median of 2.41% whilst the dutch-speaking areas reached a median of 1.1%. The [full list of results](#) is available as well as a [breakdown of numbers](#) (for those our readers comprehensive in french and want to do some number-crunching).

The first elections PPBE has taken place in was 2010 where they scored 0.26% in the only region they candidated in. Latter elections, this past weekend, they were in nearly all provinces



and in the city of Ottignies-Louvain-la-Neuve (population of 30,000) they gained 5.16% of the votes. During the entire night the official results declared that the Pirate Party won a seat in the city council. Many journalists called the main candidate, Lionel Dricot, for interviews. This prognosis of one seat gained changed in the last result of the night when the seat was declared lost by missing 14 votes. Lionel Dricot [explains the results](#) on his own blog and states:

"This should be a lesson for everyone who is not voting: every single vote counts."

Written by Josef Ohlsson Collentine published at October 15, 2012

## Czech Pirate Party Election Results



The Czech Pirate Party had a successful regional election with an average of 2.19% in the different regions. The first part of the senator elections also took place where one Pirate candidate advanced to the second round.

With a total vote count of 57 000 for PPCZ they did not manage to get elected in the regional elections but it is a good sign for the future. Compared to the last election they managed to increase their votes with 275%. In the different regions they scored between 1.41% and 3.03%.

"The growing popularity of the Pirate Party points to the fact that other parties do not solve the problems that concern citizens. In addition, people simply do not believe in well-established political parties. Pirates, in the past, have shown that they listen to their constituents" -PPCZ President Ivan Bartos (translation from Czech)

During Friday and Saturday the first round of senator elections also took place. The pirates had two candidates (3% and 4%) and shared a third candidate with two other political parties (Greens and Christian Democrats). This third candidate is Libor Michalek, who scored 24.31%

and won the first round over the other candidates. The next round will be a face off against a Social Democrat who got 17.82% of the votes.

The Czech Pirates are worried about the low turn-out of young people and are rethinking their strategy for the 2014 elections. In the mock school elections, that took place a month ago, they managed to get 21% of the votes and win the elections that took place throughout 170 schools. Another worrying factor is that the current government seems to be suppressing the visibility of PPCZ by not displaying them on charts and removing the school election results from the website an hour after publishing it.

Featured image: CC BY-SA 2.0 [Pirátská strana](#)

Written by Josef Ohlsson Collentine published at October 15, 2012

## Regional and municipal elections in Belgium



Tomorrow, on the 14th October 2012 the regional and municipal elections are taking place in Belgium, which has compulsory voting for every citizen from 18 years of age. Legal sanctions still exist, but they haven't been enforced by prosecutors since 2003 [1].

The territory of Belgium is divided into three Regions, two of which, Flanders and Wallonia, are in turn subdivided into provinces; the third Region, Brussels, is neither a province nor a part of a province. Belgium's political institutions are complex; most political power is organised around the need to represent the main cultural communities: there are six different governments running the country: the Federal government, the combined Flanders and Dutch speaking government,

the Walloon government, the French speaking government, the German speaking government and last but not least the capital Brussels government.

Since around 1970, the significant national Belgian political parties have split into distinct components that mainly represent the political and linguistic interests of these communities. The major parties in each community, though close to the political centre, belong to three main groups: Christian Democrats, Liberals, and Social Democrats. Additional notable parties came into being well after the middle of the last century, mainly around linguistic, nationalist, or environmental themes and recently smaller ones of a specific liberal nature like the Pirate Party Belgium, founded in 2009 [2].

Twitter hash tag #helloworld was used as a campaign

Earlier this year, the Belgian Pirates had a hard time entering the elections. The first problem was that an application document for the provincial elections necessary to gather signatures did not yet exist. The other problem was that the official site of the ministry had two contradictory rules. On one page it was stated that people could only register as a candidate in the constituency where they were also a resident. On another page it was clearly stated that it was not obligatory to be registered in the same voting district. This has now been corrected with the help of the community and protesting Pirates. The twitter hash tag: #helloworld was used as a campaign to get these necessities fixed [3].

Present in 14 municipalities and 26 provincial districts

At the moment the Belgian Pirates are not having candidates in every province or region of the country because of lacking personnel resources. Currently, the structures are built upon differently sized pirate crews scattered throughout the country. For many pirates and candidates it is their first time showing up in the political landscape of Belgium. The Pirate Party was already present in Brussels-Halle-Vilvoorde in 2010, gaining 0.26% of the vote. This time it will

be present in 14 municipalities including Brussels, Schaerbeek, Ixelles, Namur, Liege, Ottignies LLN, Leuven, Ghent and 26 provincial districts.

Many of the Pirates in Belgium are connecting and organizing their actions like Anti-ACTA or Anti-INDECT demonstrations, flash mobs and the "Freedom not Fear" week in Brussels via their forums and Facebook in so-called crews and squads meeting regularly at the "Pirate Beers" or working meetings. They also managed to install a liquid feedback instance, in which they've decided several issues such as their statutes [4].

Pirate Party represents a natural evolution of society

The Belgian Pirates don't have an officially approved political programme but a common Pirate codex: the Walloon Pirate Party e.g. calls it under the name of "Values" [5]. One of their goals is to get transparency into every layer of Belgian politics. In their words, the Belgian Pirate Party "makes sense [because] it represents a natural evolution of society, that is what you will do if you vote pirate".

An outlook to their performance in the coming elections: they're young, so they don't expect a majority or to become part of a coalition, but "the elected pirates count on the knowledge of citizens and the participation of everyone and therefore you, to act for the public good. Vote Pirate, it means advancing with the world and puts the citizen at the center of the game." [6].

List of regional and municipal candidates: <http://pirateparty.be/?p=805&lang=en>

[1] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belgian\\_provincial\\_and\\_municipal\\_elections,\\_2012](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belgian_provincial_and_municipal_elections,_2012)

[2] <http://pirateparty.be/>

[3] <http://piratetimes.net/belgium-pirates-struggled-entering-elections/>

[4] <http://lqfb.pirateparty.be/>

[5] <http://www.ppbw.be/quisontlespirates.php> (french)

[6] <http://www.ppbw.be/propositionsirates.php> (french)

Featured image CC-BY by [Lionel Dricot](#) and Pirate Party West-Vlaanderen

Image Source: Pirate Party Belgium, map in background by Piratenpartij West-Vlaanderen

Written by Patrick Schiffer published at October 13, 2012

## Pirate Party Sweden Sees Major Member Surge



Swedish hosting company PRQ were raided October 1, causing a shutdown of up to 50 file sharing sites. As a result, the member count of the Swedish Pirate Party increased rapidly, almost doubling in just two weeks.

Though the circumstances of the raid were long clouded in mystery, it has since been revealed that the target was [Tankafetast.com](#), one of the largest Swedish language torrent sites. The site has since been down, but plans to return as soon as possible. While down, they redirected their domain name to the Swedish Pirate Party, first to the Facebook page, and later to a form for becoming a member.

Many websites hosted by PRQ suffered, both file sharing sites as well as personal and entirely legal sites, even though PRQ has made themselves famous for hosting controversial sites such as The Pirate Bay and WikiLeaks.

Largest increase in three years

The party member increase, from 7 600 on October 1 to over 14 000 on October 12, was the largest increase in over three years. In the spring of 2009, the party quickly increased its member count five-fold as a result of several factors, including the ongoing Pirate Bay trial.

At the same time, followers in social media has increased as well. The Pirate Party's [Facebook page](#) is now the most liked party page in Scandinavia, with almost 80 000 likes. In comparison, Sweden's largest party, [the Social Democrats](#), has less than 30 000.

"This time the pirates are ready"

In 2009, the party did not manage to keep many of the members, returning to pre-surge levels a year later when many chose not to renew their memberships. This time, according to party leader Anna Troberg, many things are different.

Within a few days, local meet-ups started forming throughout Sweden on a daily basis, where new members could meet and discuss both the recent events and the pirate movement in general.

Troberg soon published a series of blog posts, [welcoming the new members](#) and covering [what happens next](#). In a blog post with the optimistic title "[This time the pirates are ready, are the anti-pirates?](#)", she notices that while in 2009 the party was poor at receiving the members, a lot has changed since. The party has grown, has become better at offline activities, and has become better at talking to its members in the social media.

When Pirate Times seeks her for comment, Troberg says:

It's wonderful to get so many new members. And this time we are prepared and able to guide them through our organisation and make them active members. I think this will increase our chances to do really well in the upcoming EU and national elections in 2014. I am very grateful to Tankafetast for directing people to us, and to all our old members that are working so hard to make the new members feel welcome.

Increase in youth members and outlook for upcoming elections

The party's youth organisation **Ung Pirat** (Young Pirate) has also seen an impressive increase, doubling their numbers from 2 000 to 4 500 in two weeks. The sudden rise in activism has also led to discussion on forming several new local wings, including one in Gothenburg. Ung Pirat receives state support for their member count, leading to a much higher 2013 budget than previously expected.

This in turn leads to a larger campaign for the 2014 elections for both the European and the national parliament - even though the youth organisation has an economy separated from the party, their work in an election campaign clearly influences especially the younger voters.

The member count is a good signal for the possible votes in an election - in 2009, when the party managed 7 % in the elections to the European Union, the party had almost 50 000 members. Still, the member registration is also good for reaching people, informing them of what is going on and what they can do for the movement.

The same goes for the vast increase in followers on Facebook and other social media - while the party has no purely economic gain from these people, it creates a free platform for advertisement, as well as it shows a clear signal that the party ideals are growing in popularity.

Featured image: [Swedish pirates rallying against ACTA in February 2012](#). CC BY-NC Dennis Startrek.

Written by Anton Nordenfur published at October 12, 2012

## Czech Pirates Prepare for National Elections



The Czech Pirate Party is getting ready for both regional and national elections this weekend, with pre-election polls ranging around 2 %.

Česká pirátská strana ("Czech Pirate Party") was formed in June 2009 by the euro-wide success of the movement and participated in its first election the following year, receiving 0.8 % of the votes.

Apart from traditional pirate topics such as copyright reform, a right to privacy and the freedom of information, the party also focuses on more unique topics. Much like the German Piratenpartei, they advocate direct democracy and liberation of drug regulations. They also push government transparency and organisation topics, in regulating political parties as well as in education reform.

The pre-election polls look positive, with results at around 2 % and one as high as 4 %. By all accounts, the results will beat those of the 2010 national elections, but they may not be the 5 % needed to enter senate.

Meanwhile, Czech pirate news site [Pirátské Noviny](#) calls the methodology of the surveys into question, pointing out the vast difference in results from different surveys taken at approximately



the same time. While most surveys show the Pirate Party receiving 2 - 4 % of the votes, **another one** only shows a 1 % result. The same goes for other parties, with some receiving higher results in some surveys.

Nevertheless, the results clearly show that the party is gaining ground as a grass-root movement in the Czech Republic, without a big budget and without influential supporters.

**Featured image by Mimi and Eunice, free of copyright.**

Written by Anton Nordenfur published at October 11, 2012

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