

General Principles

"The Pirate Party wants to fundamentally reform copyright law, get rid of the patent system, and ensure that citizens' rights to privacy are respected. With this agenda, and only this, we are making a bid for representation in the European and Swedish parliaments.

Not only do we think these are worthwhile goals. We also believe they are realistically achievable on a European basis. The sentiments that led to the formation of the Pirate Party in Sweden are present throughout Europe. There are already similar political initiatives under way in several other member states. Together, we will be able to set a new course for a Europe that is currently heading in a very dangerous direction.

The Pirate Party only has three issues on its agenda:
Reform of copyright law

The official aim of the copyright system has always been to find a balance in order to promote culture being created and spread. Today that balance has been completely lost, to a point where the copyright laws severely restrict the very thing they are supposed to promote. The Pirate Party wants to restore the balance in the copyright legislation.

All non-commercial copying and use should be completely free. File sharing and p2p networking should be encouraged rather than criminalized. Culture and knowledge are good things, that increase in value the more they are shared. The Internet could become the greatest public library ever created.

The monopoly for the copyright holder to exploit an aesthetic work commercially should be limited to five years after publication. Today's copyright terms are simply absurd. Nobody needs to make money seventy years after he is dead. No film studio or record company bases its investment decisions on the off-chance that the product would be of interest to anyone a hundred years in the future. The commercial life of cultural works is staggeringly short in today's world. If you haven't made your money back in the first one or two years, you never will. A five years copyright term for commercial use is more than enough. Non-commercial use should be free from day one.

We also want a complete ban on DRM technologies, and on contract clauses that aim to restrict the consumers' legal rights in this area. There is no point in restoring balance and reason to the legislation, if at the same time we continue to allow the big media companies to both write and enforce their own arbitrary laws.

An abolished patent system

Pharmaceutical patents kill people in third world countries every day. They hamper possibly life

saving research by forcing scientists to lock up their findings pending patent application, instead of sharing them with the rest of the scientific community. The latest example of this is the bird flu virus, where not even the threat of a global pandemic can make research institutions forgo their chance to make a killing on patents.

The Pirate Party has a constructive and reasoned proposal for an alternative to pharmaceutical patents. It would not only solve these problems, but also give more money to pharmaceutical research, while still cutting public spending on medicines in half. This is something we would like to discuss on a European level.

Patents in other areas range from the morally repulsive (like patents on living organisms) through the seriously harmful (patents on software and business methods) to the merely pointless (patents in the mature manufacturing industries).

Europe has all to gain and nothing to lose by abolishing patents outright. If we lead, the rest of the world will eventually follow.

Respect for the right to privacy

Following the 9/11 event in the US, Europe has allowed itself to be swept along in a panic reaction to try to end all evil by increasing the level of surveillance and control over the entire population. We Europeans should know better. It is not twenty years since the fall of the Berlin Wall, and there are plenty of other horrific examples of surveillance-gone-wrong in Europe's modern history.

The arguments for each step on the road to the surveillance state may sound ever so convincing. But we Europeans know from experience where that road leads, and it is not somewhere we want to go.

We must pull the emergency brake on the runaway train towards a society we do not want. Terrorists may attack the open society, but only governments can abolish it. The Pirate Party wants to prevent that from happening."