

1994



# ELDR

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## BUILDING A

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## CITIZENS'

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## EUROPE

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ELDR ELECTION  
MANIFESTO 1994

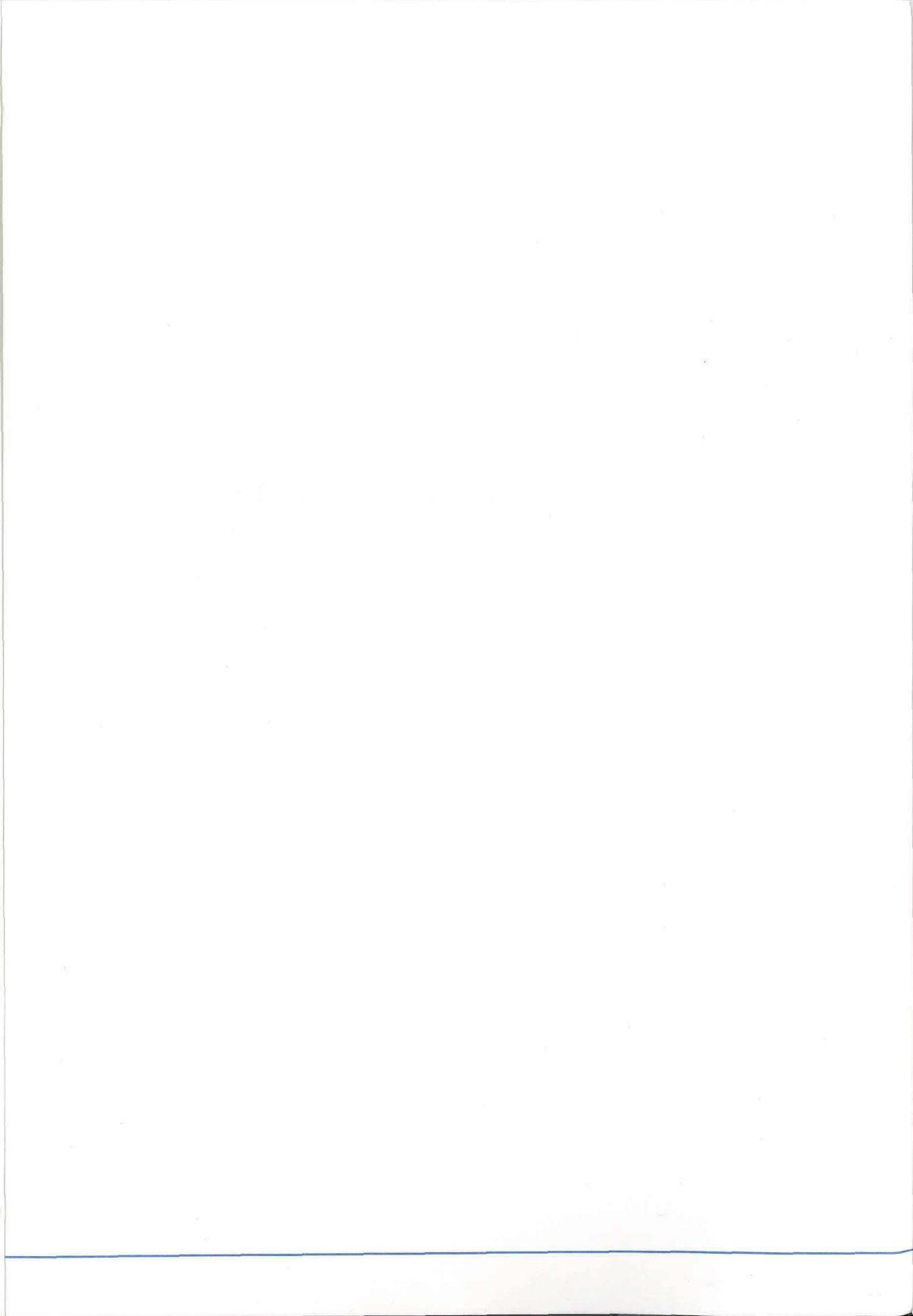
Adopted at the XVI<sup>th</sup> ELDR Congress  
in Torquay, UK  
on 10 December 1993

EUROPEAN LIBERAL, DEMOCRAT AND REFORM PARTY

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**BUILDING A  
CITIZENS'  
EUROPE**

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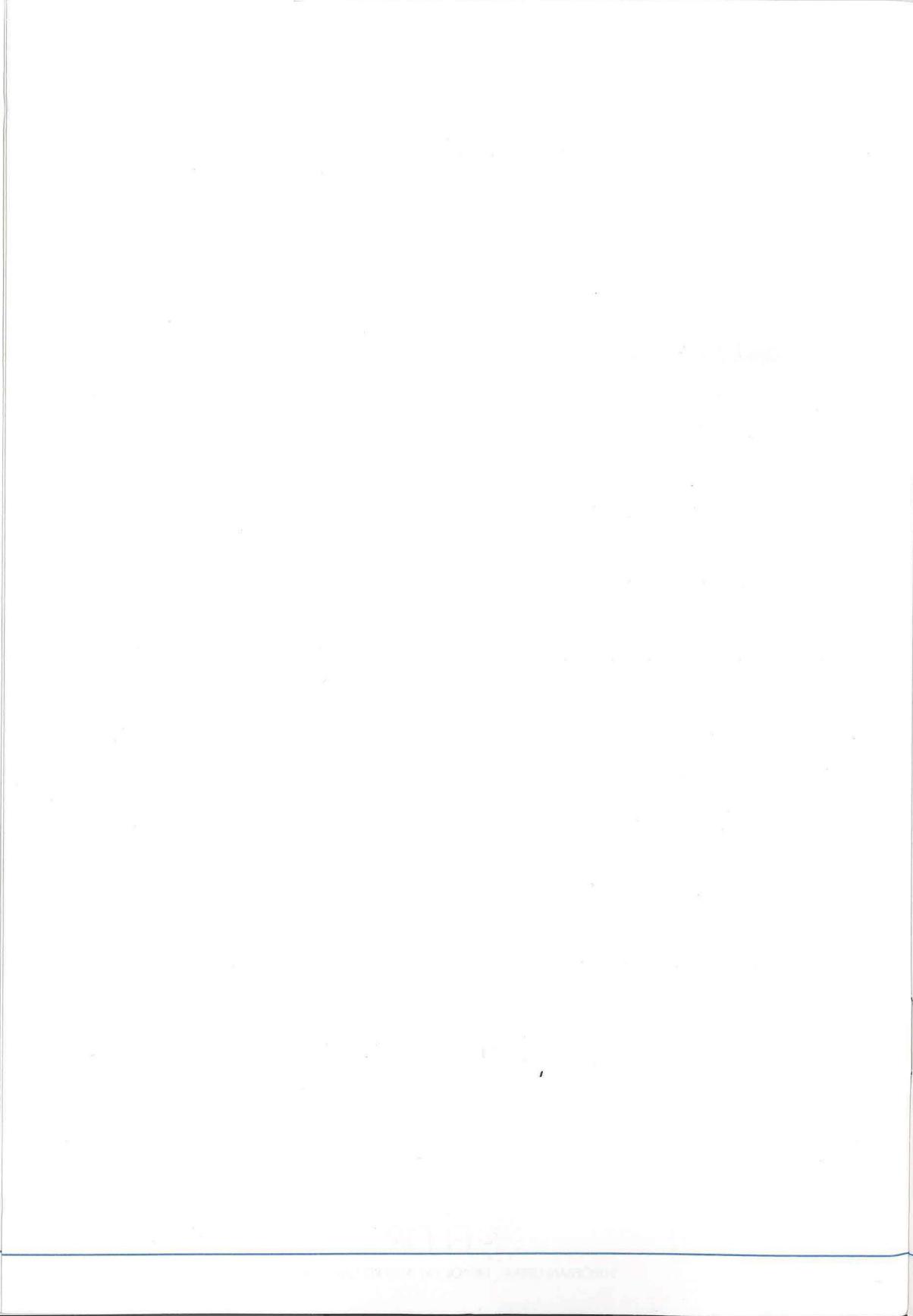


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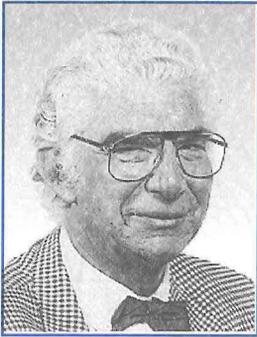
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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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*Introduction by Willy De Clercq, President of the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party*

Fifteen years ago, the then Federation of Liberals and Democrats in the European Community presented their first joint Manifesto for the first direct elections to the European Parliament. Since then the Community has grown and developed to become the European Union, whilst the Federation has grown and become the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party.

This, our fourth common election Manifesto, is rooted in the same conviction as our first, namely, that only by achieving an ever closer, more liberal and more democratic European Union can we build the peaceful, secure and prosperous Europe that will be able to play its role in world affairs.

In this political programme for the next five years you will find the result of two years of work by our constituent parties, who come not only from every country of the European Union but also from the wider Europe of E.F.T.A. and the new democracies of East and Central Europe. Soon, we hope they will be able to join us in an enlarged Union. The programme presented here is a truly joint effort, debated and voted during the ELDR Party Congress held in Torquay on 9/10 December 1993, whilst it is extensive in its coverage of political issues there are three crucial and closely linked topics addressed which merit particular attention, these are employment, environment and security.

We Liberals, Democrats and Reformers believe we have elaborated an important policy mix of positive proposals for these three topics, so pointing the way towards a virtuous circle of job and wealth creation, better environmental resource management and hence greater security.

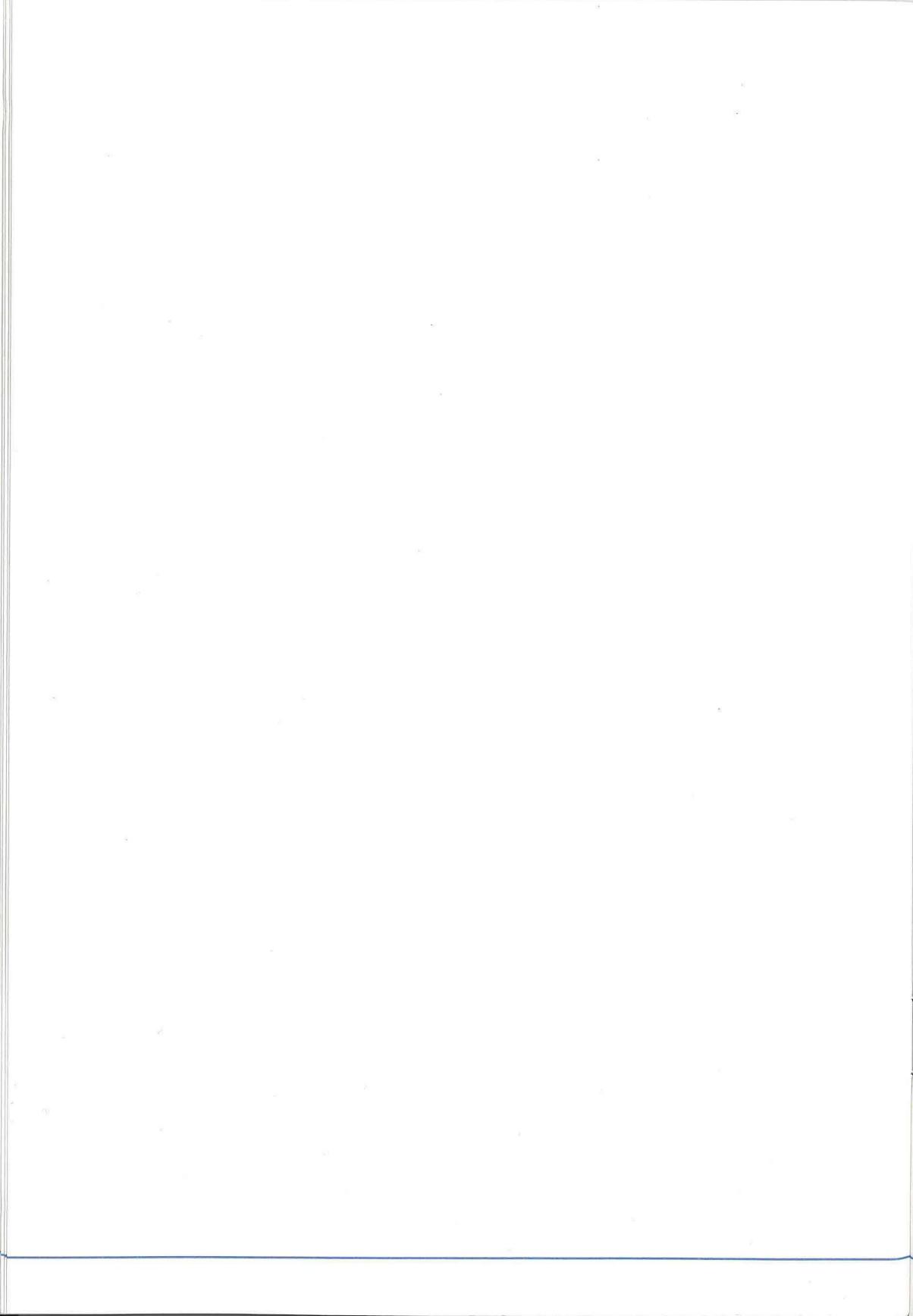
With these distinctive and forward looking policies we are convinced we will win a great deal of support in the June elections and form yet again one of the decisive Groups in the European Parliament, thus being able to influence the policies of the Commission and the Council and the decisions of the European Parliament.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Lery". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left and a large loop at the end.

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# ELECTORAL PROGRAMME

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## INTRODUCTION

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The last five years in the European Parliament have seen several important steps towards real European Union.

The achievement of the internal free market at the end of 1992 has led logically to the further step of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union. During this period communism has virtually disappeared. Germany is now united within the Union. Four other European countries, members of the European Free Trade Area, are now linked with the European Union (EU) in the European Economic Area and have applied for membership. Central and East European countries are seeking to join us in the hope that this will build economic and political recovery in the way Marshall Aid did in Western Europe. We look forward to the further enlargement of the European Union.

At the same time, however, Europe has suffered many setbacks which give our citizens cause for anxiety. We have yet another economic crisis. Unemployment has grown to an unacceptable level. Protectionism and illiberal solutions are supported by too many. In order to foster the economic development of Central and Eastern European countries, the European Union should open its markets to the products of these countries. More effort in terms of political, financial and technical assistance will be needed for Central and Eastern Europe to reach a sufficient level to join the European Union. Furthermore, there has been a resurgence of political and economic instability, a revival of nationalism, outright war and violation of human rights in a number of countries, as for example in former Yugoslavia, which must be resisted.

Some people believe that the process of European integration has reached its limits. They argue that the alleged interference of the Brussels administration in national affairs must be ended. The concept of subsidiarity is in some cases being abused as a flag behind which some of our opponents march to preserve the domination of the nation state. We in ELDR regard subsidiarity as a coordinated sharing of responsibilities between all levels of democratic government. According to the principle of subsidiarity, powers should be exercised at the lowest possible level, and at the European level only when matters cannot be dealt with effectively by local, regional or national government. Subsidiarity should reinforce our campaign for transparency and deregulation.

Citizens feel insecure in the face of economic recession, political instability, and rising crime. They have lost confidence in the ability of politicians and governments to address their fears. During the ratification process of the Maastricht Treaty, Europe has shown its ability to address the concerns of the population of the Member Countries.

European Liberal Democrats and Reformers believe in a society where individual expression is allowed to flourish under the rule of law. Our political objective is to enhance the well-being of society in a healthy environment by building an ecologically sustainable social market economy. Liberals, Democrats and Reformers have always been at the forefront of the process for European Union. The Union shall be based on decentralised federal characteristics. Narrow-minded state nationalism leads to intolerance and isolation. We will combat such adversarial attitudes, and continue to campaign for an open society where liberty and opportunity prevail.

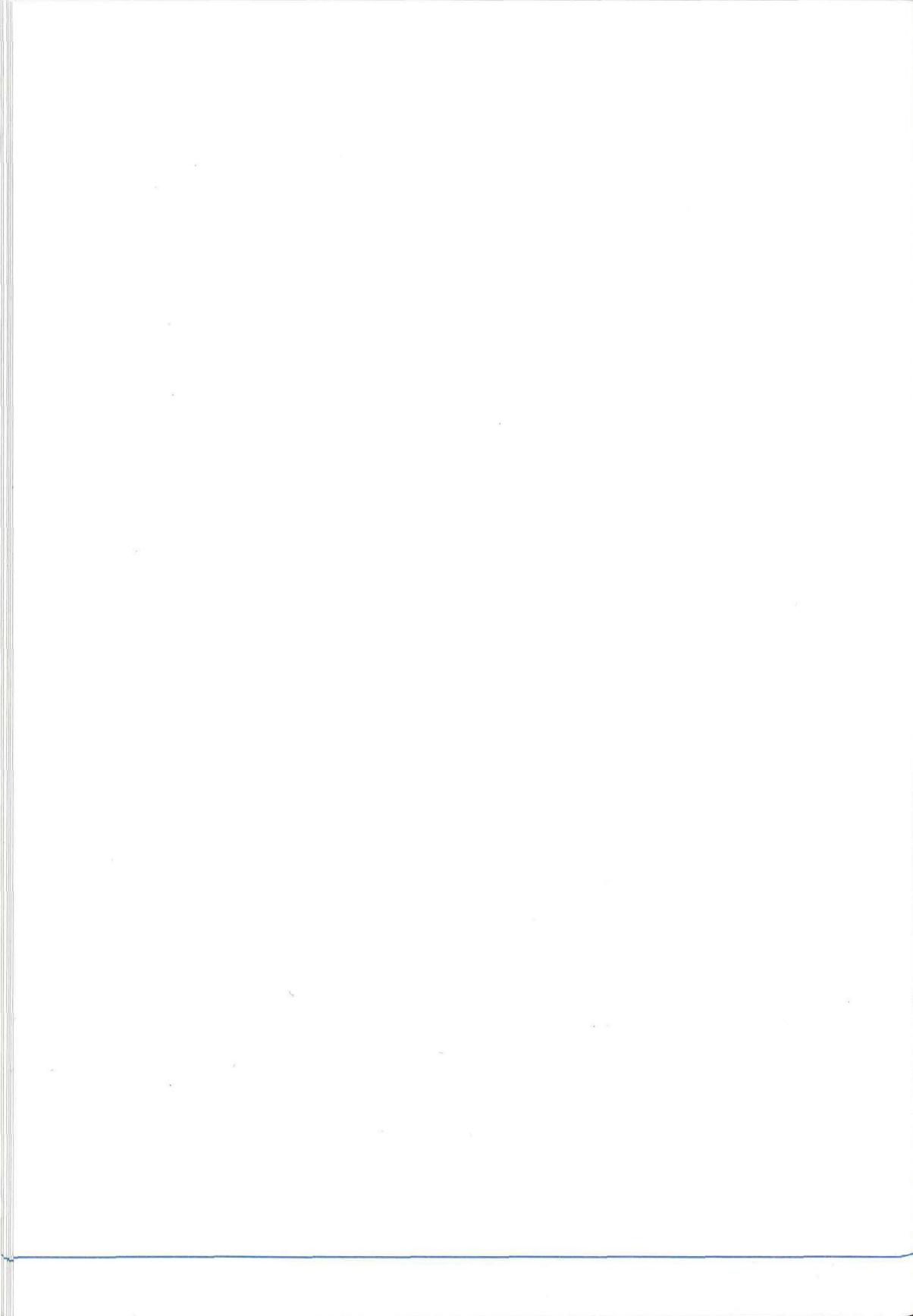
Our priority for the next Parliament is to put into effect the Maastricht Treaty, to strengthen representative democracy in the Union and to introduce open government. We will work to draw the European Union closer to the citizen, and to encourage our citizens to exercise their rights and duties at all levels of government.

#### **On behalf of European citizens ELDR demands:**

- *the evolution of the European Parliament to become a full legislative body of the European Union;*
- *the strengthening of the market economy and the promotion of social stability;*
- *structural, regional and social policies to reinforce cohesion and ensure solidarity;*
- *agriculture, energy, transport, waste and international development policies that ensure environmental sustainability;*
- *cooperation in justice and home affairs, including immigration policy, to be based on the principle of subsidiarity and aimed always to deepen individual liberty and social justice, and to ensure security;*
- *common foreign, security and defence policies to ensure freedom, democracy, peace, advancement of all peoples, human rights and world-wide security;*
- *high standards in education, culture and scientific research which are a precondition for economic progress and social emancipation.*

We believe that these demands require continued European integration in order to ensure efficiency and coherence among governments and solidarity among the citizens.

We call upon all those who believe in our values to support our cause.



## BEYOND THE SINGLE MARKET

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European economic integration cannot be an end in itself but must contribute to economic growth, prosperity and social justice for our citizens. Over the last five years the European economy has become significantly more integrated, but unemployment has risen to unacceptable levels. There are clear benefits from low inflation and a stable currency in terms of a sustainable growth, enhanced job opportunities and a higher standard of living.

### ECONOMIC AND MONETARY INTEGRATION

The realisation of Economic and Monetary Union requires enhanced efforts for economic convergence, given the more difficult economic situation. This demands from all Member States a rigorous policy of economic stability and a solid budget policy. The virtual, but not yet completed Single Market programme, and the commitments in the Maastricht Treaty to Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) raise important new questions. These focus on how to combine our steadily integrating economies with a reliable monetary system. The deep economic recession, imbalances in fiscal and monetary policy, and the damage done to the European Monetary System (EMS) by currency speculation requires the Member States to stick to the convergence criteria, the phased timetable foreseen in the Maastricht Treaty and to give necessary and clear political signals of their determination.

Recent monetary crises have seriously hampered government efforts to secure sustainable economic recovery in Western Europe. Competitive devaluations bring only short-term advantages and are no basis for sustained economic recovery. All in all, the present monetary situation puts another set of obstacles in the way of the vital goals of reducing unemployment and inflation. The foremost priority of a monetary policy is to create low inflation and stable currencies.

#### **Therefore ELDR demands:**

- *the strict adherence to the convergence criteria as a precondition for entering the third phase of the European Economic and Monetary Union;*
- *reinforced commitment to economic and monetary integration and a single currency;*
- *strict adherence of all Member States to a stable monetary policy;*
- *the creation of independent national central banks as an important step towards establishing a European Central Bank;*

- *a tough and convergent fiscal policy, aimed at reducing budgetary deficits;*
- *a tax burden which allows the citizens to enjoy a substantial part of their revenue and savings.*

Whilst recognising that the current social and economic conditions make it difficult for all member States to fulfill the convergence criteria of the Maastricht Treaty according to its timetable, we reaffirm our support for the long-term objective of EMU. We urge the European Monetary Institute (EMI) to use its best endeavours to promote consistency among EU central banks in their policy towards price stability and governments towards sound public finance, and for the EMI to collaborate closely with the Commission and ECOFIN to establish coherent economic policies aimed at enhanced competitiveness, economic recovery and the reduction of unemployment.

The present situation in Europe, with floating exchange rates among several countries, undermines the objective of economic recovery. European citizens would all benefit from stable prices and economic security in order to maximise job opportunities.

**Therefore ELDR demands that:**

- *the management of EMS should be adjusted to allow, if necessary, for orderly realignments, taking into account a fair "burden-sharing", aiming to prevent competitive devaluations and monetary turmoil and lay a sound foundation for the establishment of EMU.*

## SOCIAL POLICY AND EMPLOYMENT

ELDR is working for the strengthening of the social dimension of the European Union. Unemployment disenfranchises and marginalises millions of European citizens.

The liberal market economy has proven to be the best way to guarantee a high living standard to a maximum of people, and to keep up the direction of social, technological and human progress.

The surest way to fight unemployment efficiently and permanently is to reduce rules, bureaucracy, taxes and costs that kill all initiative, work and savings - thereby allowing individuals and companies to create and safeguard jobs.

### **Therefore ELDR demands that:**

- *lower unemployment must be a major goal of the Union's social and economic policies;*
- *workers and managers should be motivated by their own interest in profits and, as far as big companies are concerned, by their joint participation in important decision-making.*

The Maastricht Treaty should be the starting point for addressing these problems. We are all working for the development of social and labour market policies which promote a flexible and dynamic labour market, equality of opportunities and improvement of working conditions, especially among the lowest paid and less qualified. The European labour market needs to become more flexible, but it would be wrong to try to enhance European competitiveness by forcing workers to accept less safe, less healthy working conditions. All Member States should ensure a basic standard of living for all citizens, regardless of status in society.

The completion of the Single Market will require businesses to rapidly adapt to changes. This involves major consequences for employees. Retraining will become a continuing part of the European citizens' career. Use of the European Social Fund (ESF) for the co-financing of retraining programmes is a crucial element in building up the social dimension of the European Union.

### **Therefore ELDR demands:**

- *the establishment of minimum standards of social provision throughout the EU in order to avoid the danger of exploiting the workforce;*
- *new approaches to the concept of work such as voluntary part-time working, retraining, career breaks for family and personal development, mobility of the work force, reduction of those social costs affecting employers and employees which hinder the creation of jobs, and other labour market measures;*
- *that all remaining obstacles - legal barriers and discrimination - to the achievement of equal opportunities between women and men be removed: this includes discrimination in pay and employment, taxation, and sharing family responsibilities; maternity and parental leave provisions for both men and women to take care of their children and opportunities to support relatives who need special attention, as well as provisions for adequate and affordable child care facilities;*
- *that a new approach to flexible retirement be found in the light of the demographic changes facing Europe;*

- *that the tax burden on labour be reduced and compensated for by an increasing tax burden on environmentally damaging consumption and production;*
- *that in order to combat unemployment, we achieve competitive employment costs in Europe;*
- *that non-public employment agencies be allowed to operate throughout Europe, to enhance labour market performance;*
- *that the United Kingdom joins with the other eleven countries and abandons the "opt-out" clause.*

## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC COHESION

Social and economic cohesion remains a priority for us. It is essential to clarify that cohesion is not only a question of transfer of funds: in the terms of the Treaty, the principle of solidarity should be present in all Union policies and actions. Regional comparative advantage and competition should guide investment decisions. Ecological sustainability must be incorporated into EU cohesion policy.

### **Therefore ELDR demands that:**

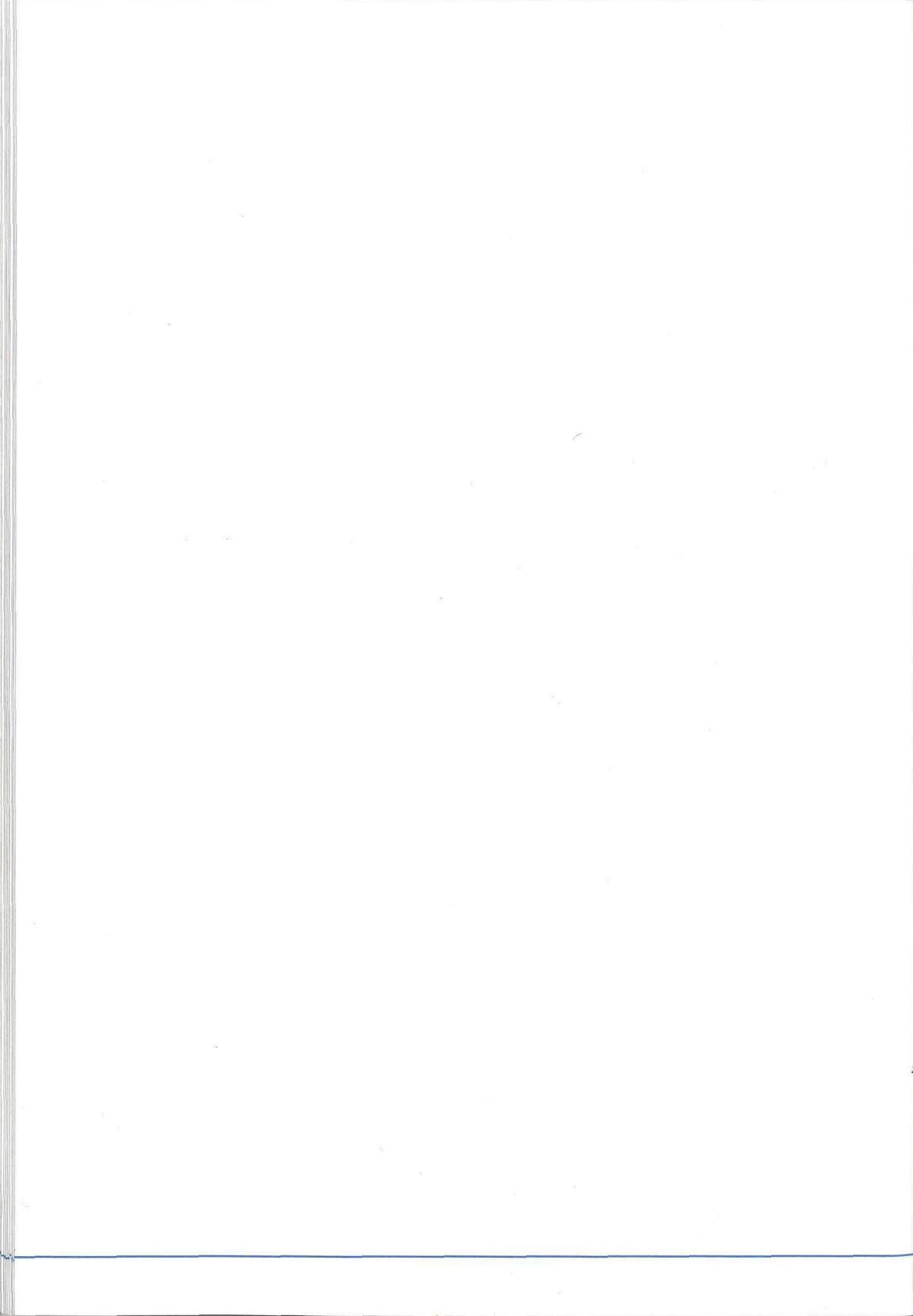
- *cohesion policy should promote investment in environmentally friendly production processes;*
- *structural funds are used by regions to provide training and enhance skills, as well as to improve the infrastructure of deprived and disadvantaged areas; investment aid should be limited to a certain period of time and be given to encourage self-help. Coordination between the local, regional and European level must be improved;*
- *as a significant contribution towards the Single Market, transnational transport, energy and telecommunications infrastructures should help weld national economies together and bring about economic recovery;*
- *better public scrutiny and tighter financial control be introduced by the Commission, with the assistance of the Court of Auditors and under Parliamentary supervision. The Court of Auditors should be authorised to recommend sanctions;*
- *special attention be given to a policy of the Union geared to the development of small and medium-sized enterprises necessary for their adaption to new markets and technologies and new challenges on markets outside the Union.*

EU spending must be transparent and unbureaucratic and in line with the principles of democratic, open government.

The further development of industry and commerce in Europe requires a competitive, innovative and entrepreneurial environment.

Europe needs a recovery strategy based on the convergence of macro-economic policies as provided for under Stage II of EMU. Common action is needed to increase investment in transport and communications infrastructure, training, science, research and technology in ways that will strengthen EU competitiveness, improve the environment and at the same time, provide for a phased reduction in fiscal deficits as the European economy recovers. The EU must identify which sectors of the economy are crucial to its future success. Within those sectors, industries and firms must be networked to devise with the Commission coherent Research and Development strategies and to campaign for market access to third countries. The EU should focus its efforts on basic research too expensive to be undertaken by national governments alone.

The Single Market must be made to work: vigorous competition within Europe will both reinforce global EU competitiveness and provide a better deal for the consumer.



## **A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT**

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A sustainable environment is a global concern which can only be achieved through a truly international approach.

ELDR is convinced that not only can there be reconciliation between economic development and protection of the environment, but also that the market economy in its response to present ecological challenges will create new jobs, new industries and thus economic growth. Events in Eastern Europe have proved that interventionist and centralised economies lead to ecological disaster, with alarming consequences for public health.

Nature is a unique resource and its depletion and pollution must bear a price. An efficient and competitive economy in a healthy environment needs to manage its natural resources according to the principles of sustainability. This reconciliation of economy and ecology requires a change of consumer behaviour and of production. In general, market mechanisms are the most effective way in which to change behaviour and to create new economic opportunities, since they are least bureaucratic and allow most scope for individual choice. Only where price mechanisms are ineffective should regulation be considered.

### **ELDR demands:**

- *internalising environmental costs in the economy: we need to shift the tax burden from labour to environmentally damaging consumption and production;*
- *the use of economic incentives and fiscal instruments to create an ecological dimension to the Single Market, and so contribute to sustainability.*

These instruments must be particularly applied to the following three sectors:

- transport, which is a major source of economic development and of prosperity, is also a source of pollution; taxation of fuel and road pricing for heavy goods transport are appropriate means to limit further damage to the environment and enhance the infrastructure and its economic management. The shift of transportation from road to rail and water has to be encouraged.

- fossil fuels, which are a limited resource and whose use is a charge on the environment. Truly costed energy gives an incentive for conservation and makes renewable energy competitive. A comprehensive system of energy efficiency standards and eco-labelling for products, industrial machinery and buildings must be introduced.
- agriculture, where the intensive use of certain substances is another source of pollution; observance of the European rules in this field should not only be more strictly supervised, but also be furthered by economic incentives and fiscal instruments on a national basis. Recommendations by the Commission should further harmonise these incentives.

#### **ELDR therefore supports:**

- *the immediate start to a phased implementation of a European-wide energy/CO2 tax as a major contribution to the fight against the greenhouse effect and to ensure that all forms of energy, including nuclear power, bear the costs of their impact on the environment. In applying the tax, the principle of fiscal neutrality must be respected. The European Union should simultaneously work closely with the USA and Japan to achieve a similar energy/CO2 tax in these countries.*

Sustainability also requires a real change in our approach to waste.

#### **ELDR therefore supports:**

- *efforts to extend the life-cycle of products and the use of recycled raw materials.*

To reduce waste, our environmental priority ranking is: 1. avoidance, 2. re-use/re-fill, 3. recycling, 4. recovery, 5. compost, 6. landfill. Any downgrading should be justified by an improvement in the eco-balance.

#### **ELDR demands:**

- *international regulations to avoid uncontrolled dumping of hazardous waste.*

The incorporation of environmental factors in international trade is crucial to achieving sustainability at a global level. As long as there is no international harmonisation of such legislation, the effect will be trade distortion. Ecology is part of a dynamic development: it is to be seen as a stimulating factor, not as a brake or a step backwards.

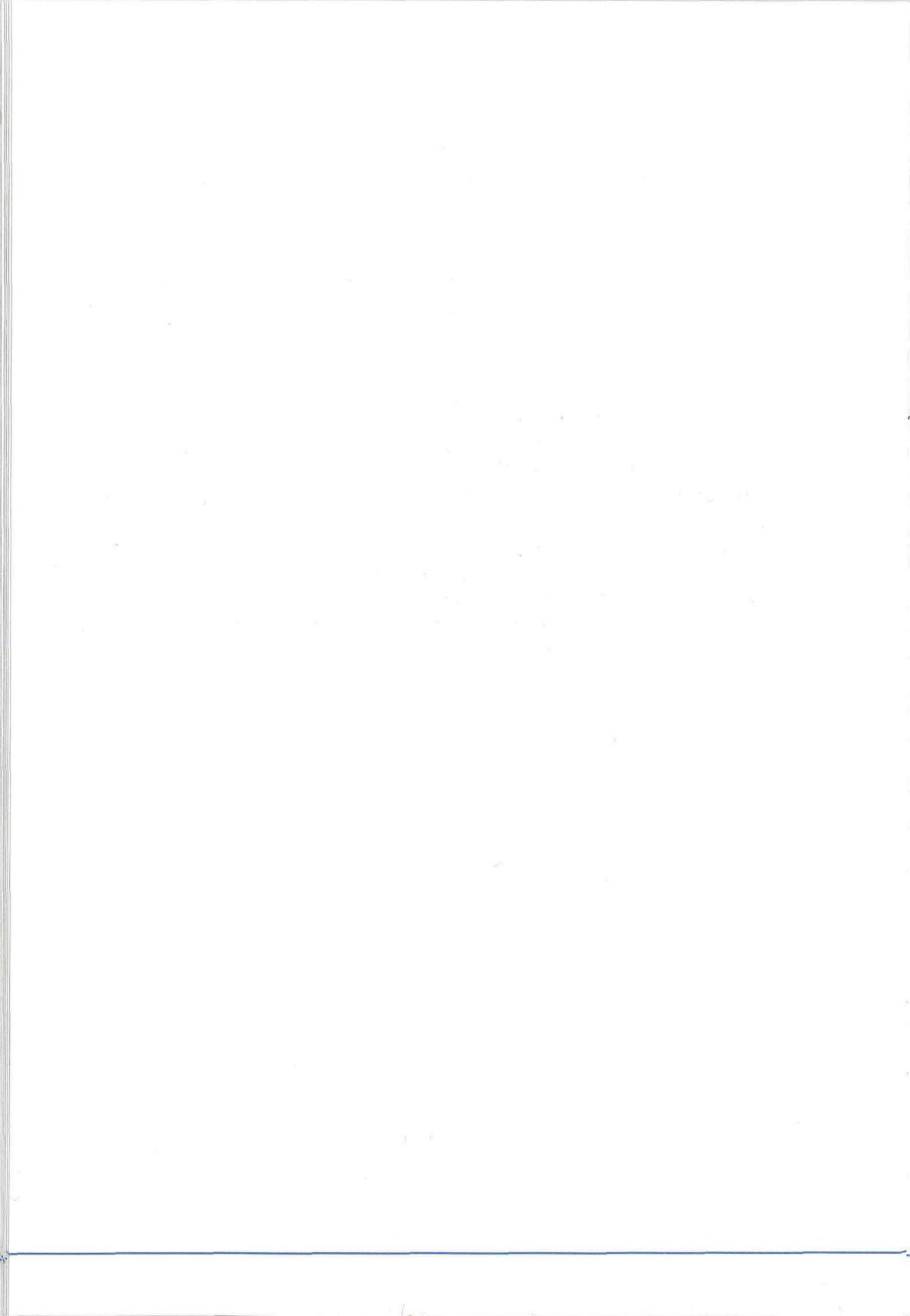
**ELDR demands therefore that:**

- *tariffs or monetary compensatory amounts may be levied to avoid environmental dumping. These should be subject to negotiation within GATT.*

The risk of a nuclear disaster - caused either by old nuclear power stations or carelessly guarded and protected nuclear arms - represents a severe threat to all people of Europe.

**ELDR therefore demands that:**

- *the EU provide the necessary funds to set up in an effective way the programmes for training of nuclear engineers and specialists to advise the management and security of East European nuclear power plants;*
- *the EU promote conversion to cleaner industries and greater energy efficiency, for example through energy saving programmes, in order to ensure the rapid phasing out of unsafe practice and environmentally damaging use of energy in Central and East European countries;*
- *the Commission should undertake as a priority a comprehensive public enquiry into the safety and long-term viability and competitiveness of the nuclear energy industry throughout Europe.*



## **AGRICULTURE AND RURAL POLICY**

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European agricultural policy must create suitable underlying conditions so that farming can face the economic and social challenges of today. With its agricultural policy ELDR wants to achieve an entrepreneurial and competitive market-oriented agriculture in harmony with the environment. Farming would thus be best able to achieve the high quality required by today's consumers without damaging the environment and also to maintain the diversity of cultivated landscapes.

The CAP was conceived to ensure stable markets, security of food supply, a fair return to farmers and reasonable prices for the consumer. But it has become a good example of EU overregulation.

Administrative control of the reformed CAP becomes more difficult every year. For decades, the aim of the CAP was to guarantee prices by market regulation. Farmers who sought increased income were induced to increase production. New techniques of mechanisation, enhanced use of chemicals and advanced plant and animal breeding led to ever greater increases in production and intensification. Thus, by the mid-1970s, the market was over-supplied.

ELDR wants a new CAP which actively embodies the principle of sustainability in agriculture. We are convinced that market mechanisms should be strengthened in order to bring production into balance with market needs. We recognise that the eventual loss of income resulting from meeting environmental, social and regional targets must be compensated for, and underline that this approach must be taken into account during the GATT negotiations. Payment will depend on a number of fundamental aspects: to fight the risk of desertification and depopulation of some rural regions where agriculture is the sole activity, protection of the countryside and landscape; and in peripheral countries, the uniquely heavy dependence of the economy on agriculture.

The consumers' interest in reasonable prices and good food quality are as important as producers' interests. In any case consumers and tax payers must know the real price of the food they buy.

The process of reform in farming must continue, particularly as the EU allows wider access for agricultural exports from our new partners in Central and Eastern Europe.

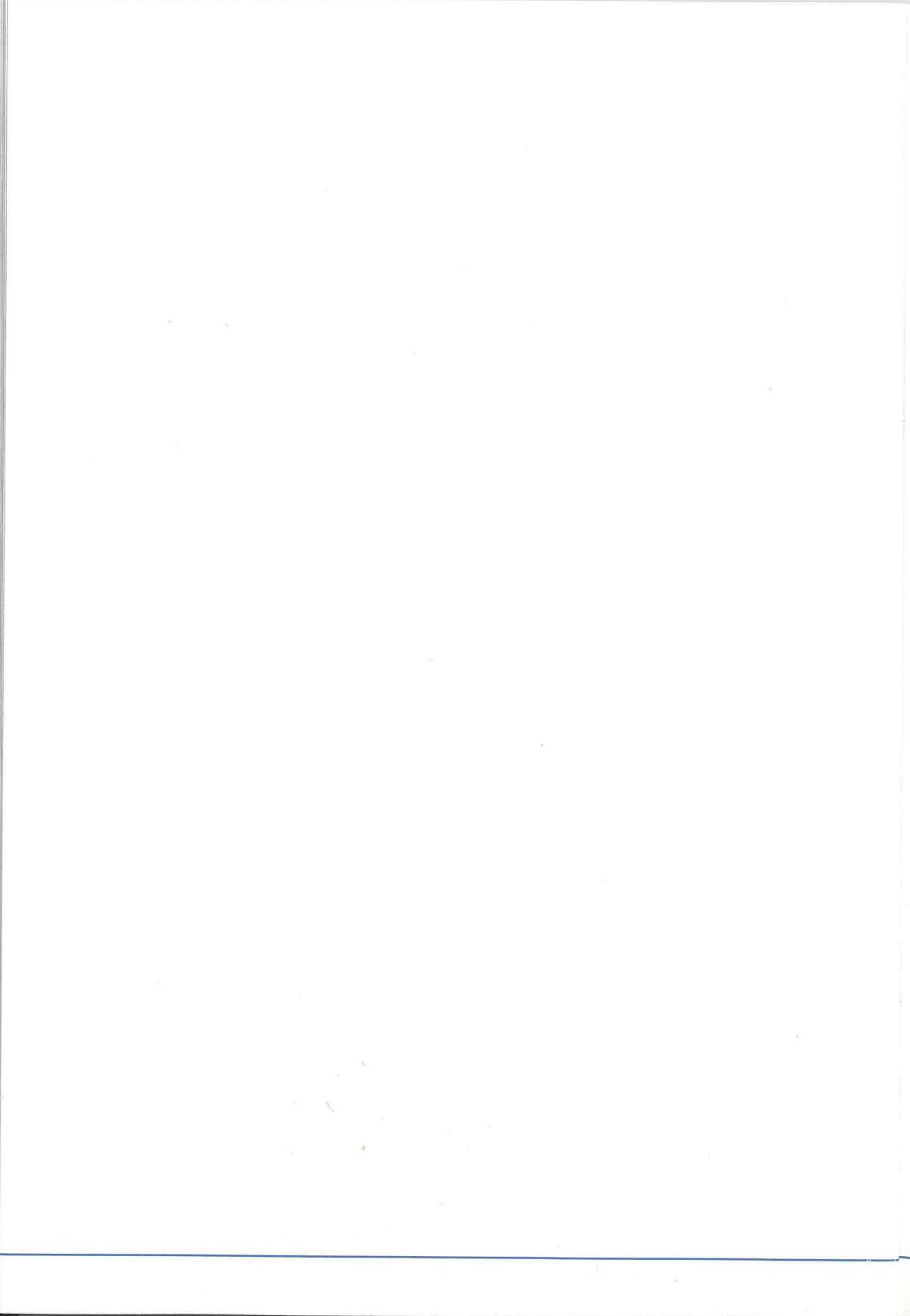
Rural economies need help to diversify if they are to survive as thriving and dynamic communities. The CAP needs to be transformed into a common rural policy with the clear aims of protecting rural communities and the countryside. Policy should be directed at providing farmers with a decent income rather than at paying high prices for surplus food production.

**Therefore, ELDR demands that:**

- *the market place plays a much bigger role through the progressive transfer of market management mechanisms to income support schemes, aiming to establish continuity of agricultural activity in the Union;*
- *EMU be created as set out in the Maastricht Treaty in order to rule out currency-dependent price fluctuations in agricultural markets;*
- *the European Union affirms the desirability of ensuring food sufficiency by maintaining a well-functioning agriculture;*
- *the future agricultural policy of the Union should rely to the greatest possible extent on market forces to determine the output of agricultural products;*
- *a code of good conduct be adopted to define agricultural practices and forest activities respecting soil, water, air and biological diversity;*
- *payment of subsidies will depend on following this code;*
- *CAP rules must be scrupulously enforced throughout the Union;*
- *agricultural activities which put a burden on the environment should have legal limits and that their costs be assessed and charged to the enterprise according to the "polluter-pays" principle;*
- *while food production is a matter for market mechanism and EU legislation, additional payments for the protection of landscape, biotopes and rural communities should be organised and financed on a regional basis, that is according to the principle of subsidiarity: it is important that policy allows for economic support which makes it possible for those living in rural areas to continue working in new activities not requiring continuing support from taxpayers and consumers;*
- *structural changes in farming which reduce employment prospects be accompanied by matching measures in the strategic framework of rural development in order to create jobs which enable people to remain in rural areas, thus avoiding depopulation;*
- *the current system of set-aside by rotation be phased out, and permanent uses of lasting benefit to the environment be found for land that is no longer viable for food production;*

- *extensive agricultural practice be encouraged and stimulation be given for:*
  - *scientific research into non-food use of farm production*
  - *new industries using farm products.*

We want to see an attractive and productive rural environment with a range of farms, many of them family-run, occupying the central role in thriving rural communities that provide a range of jobs and activities. Structural funds should encourage the cooperation needed to reach this goal.



# CIVIL RIGHTS AND JUSTICE

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## BUILDING A CITIZENS' EUROPE

Liberals, Democrats and Reformers have always been in the forefront of the struggle for civil liberties. We therefore adhere to the principle that any policy should be based on the respect and equal treatment of individuals, without any kind of discrimination. Any person having the nationality of a Member State is a citizen of the Union and should enjoy the same civil and political rights and liberties wherever they are resident in the EU. In due course, these common rights, together with measures to safeguard the position of all non-EU citizens, should be prescribed in a European Constitution including a Charter of European Citizenship attached to the Treaties. As a first step, the European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms and its relevant Protocols should be ratified by the EU, thereby rendering them justiciable in the European Court of Justice and the Court of First Instance.

## BORDER CONTROL AND JUDICIAL COOPERATION

The European Union will have no internal boundaries and those remaining now are increasingly obsolete. In order to prevent the abuse of free movement of people, goods, services and capital throughout the Union, we need certain measures to be taken to curb terrorism and other forms of serious crime, and develop a common policy at the external borders of the Union. Up to now, national judicial authorities have been much too secretive about these quite normal activities taking place within the framework of the EU, within the intergovernmental Trevi agreements and under the Schengen Treaty. In due course, all such intergovernmental agreements should be signed by all Member States and incorporated within the EU Treaties so that they become justiciable by the Court of Justice and subject to democratic EU procedures.

### **In particular, ELDR insists that:**

- *the police and judiciary are entitled to operate throughout the Union in a legally defined and coordinated way; agreement should be reached on indictment, extradition, banking control and the fight against money laundering;*
- *the authorities shall not be allowed to take any action without the possibility of parliamentary scrutiny;*

- *all Member States must ensure fulfilment of their Treaty obligations with regard to the freedom of movement of people;*
- *Europol must be established as an effective instrument to fight against international crime, drug trafficking, and to allow for the confiscation of goods gained from criminal activities.*

## IMMIGRATION AND ASYLUM

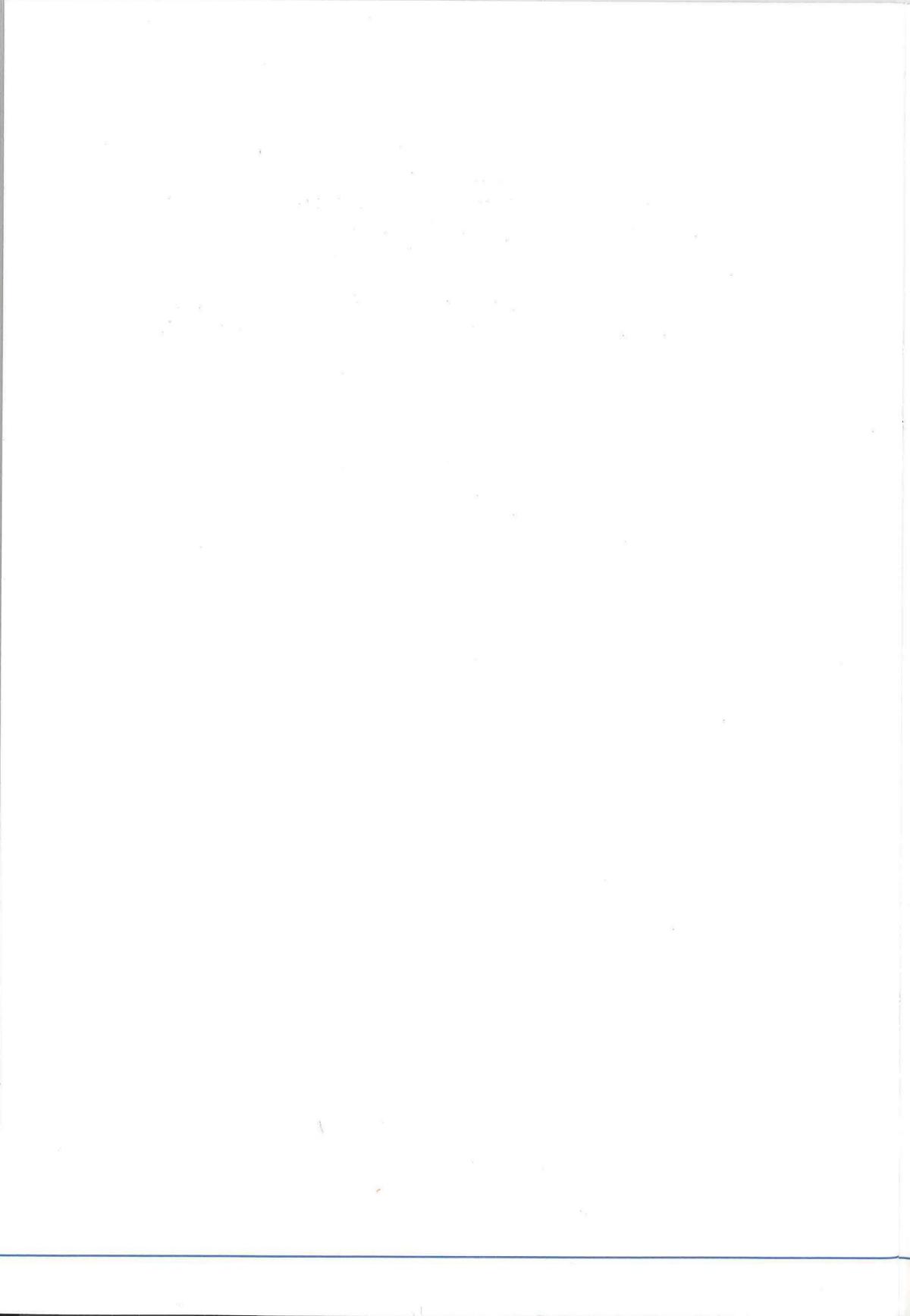
We are aware of the fact that a European immigration and refugee policy cannot solve the increasing problem of immigration. This is only possible through the improvement of living conditions in the countries of origin of those who migrate to and within Europe.

People have the right to move around. We live in and benefit from an open society, where everyone can live in harmony and freely express their personality - whatever their ethnic, religious or cultural origin. Nevertheless, the increasing number of refugees in Europe and the abolition of border controls between EU Member States make it urgently necessary to introduce common European Union legislation on asylum seekers and refugees. ELDR is led by the principle that politically persecuted people have a right to claim political asylum in all Member States of the Union. We should share the responsibilities and the burdens of admission, settlement and support for asylum seekers and refugees. Close collaboration, in particular with Central and Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean countries, is essential if the Union is to cope with the social, economic and political dimension of the problem.

### **To this end, ELDR demands that:**

- *anybody is initially allowed to enter an EU Member State if they have a claim to be persecuted which is not manifestly ill-founded, and if they do not enter the EU from a safe state;*
- *the fight against illegal immigration leading to third country citizens working and residing in the EU, be intensified by increased cooperation between Member States;*
- *common criteria and legislation for asylum with separate legislation for refugees are created; the distinction between the two must accord with the existing international conventions;*
- *the fight against illegal immigration be intensified by increased cooperation between the Member States and that common standards in matters relating to immigration policies, issuing visas, control at the entry to European Union territory be elaborated;*

- *once the application for entry has been rejected by one Member State, all others shall be bound by this refusal;*
- *the right of appeal against refusal shall exist, according to national laws - with appropriate interpretation facilities provided;*
- *applicants shall be assisted during these proceedings, which should be as short as possible;*
- *the burden of costs and services of asylum and refugee treatment during these proceedings shall be shared equitably between member states.*



## CULTURE, YOUTH AND EDUCATION

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ELDR wants a Europe rich in cultural diversity - tolerant of and knowledgeable about our common heritage. European citizenship should be fostered through youth and cultural exchange programmes in order to develop a European dimension in education.

We strongly support the rights of cultural minorities, and believe that such groups should have the right to have their own language, schools and media.

Contrary to widespread fears, we believe that cultural diversity and tolerance is enhanced by European integration because it encourages and increases exchange of experience between the cultures. Sport is an important factor of European integration.

### YOUTH AND EDUCATION

Young people represent the future and continuity of every society. With their lives before them and with open minds, youth are the key to European integration and our investment in the future. In order to enhance their knowledge of each other, the EU should encourage mobility within this group.

#### **ELDR therefore urges:**

- *the encouragement of the teaching of at least two foreign languages spoken within the EU in the school curricula of all EU member states at the earliest possible age;*
- *that Member States encourage civic education by the teaching of the history of Europe at all levels;*
- *a substantial increase in exchange programmes for all young people, especially trainees and people in education, in the EU: these programmes should preferably be undertaken on an individual basis, person-to-person and family-to-family;*
- *that the EU should encourage Member States to introduce a period abroad as a part of the education system;*
- *that the EU must guarantee the mutual recognition of exams and course elements throughout the Union;*
- *the EU-wide availability and distribution of European films and television programmes;*
- *that a European media initiative be developed to bring the European point of view and the European idea to the citizens of the Union.*



# **ACTING TOGETHER IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

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## **SECURITY POLICY AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

After the end of East-West confrontation, European foreign policy should provide for an open and stable system of security and cooperation on our continent, in close cooperation with the United States and Canada. Strong partnerships with the United Nations (UN) as well as the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO including the North Atlantic Council and North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC)) and the European Union are vital in this process.

There is a need for a new concept of security in a multi-polar world, comprising, in addition to the traditional military dimension, economic, sociological and ecological dimensions. Throughout the world we want the European Union to play a major role in the pursuit of human rights, social justice and sustainable development on the one hand, and to fight against racism and deprivation on the other. This requires a common foreign and security policy consistent with the substance of our domestic policies and integrated with the Union's proper legal and political processes. Its aims should be the creation of political, economic and environmental stability and an intensification of relationships with the developing world. Our deep commitment to human and civil rights worldwide and the fight against racism and deprivation presents us with enormous responsibilities. The European Union must play a major part in reforming the UN to reflect the end of the Cold War to secure peace and to enhance the global protection of Human Rights and of environment.

In a time of fundamental change in Europe, NATO remains the most important organisation for collective defence and stability. ELDR supports the European-American partnership within the North Atlantic Alliance. However, Europe must assume more responsibility within the transatlantic partnership. The Western European Union (WEU), as an integral part of the European Union, represents the European pillar within this partnership.

Within Europe, it is up to the Union to play a major security role. We should move as quickly as possible to a situation where the Union will have a limited but effective military force for rapid response to armed conflicts within Europe.

The next revision of the Treaty should prepare the way for the foreign and security provisions of the Maastricht Treaty to be rolled up into the Union, and for the Union to assume the defence responsibilities of the Western European Union (WEU). Neutrality amongst certain existing or new Member States must not obstruct the development of armed European Union forces, operational in defence, UN peace-making and peace-keeping.

#### **ELDR demands:**

- *the establishment of a European security and defence policy with efficient military structures and forces to implement it;*
- *the strict adherence to the timetables for and implementation of existing arms control agreements, restraint of arms exports and an end to production and proliferation of all weapons of mass destruction;*
- *that the European Union plays a major part in reforming the UN to meet its new challenges of securing peace more quickly and efficiently, to improve the protection of human rights and of the environment.*

## **ENLARGEMENT**

ELDR welcomes the prospect of the accession of Austria, Finland, Norway and Sweden to the European Union. The unreserved commitment of these countries to the "acquis politique", the "acquis communautaire" and the Maastricht Treaty should enable a rapid conclusion of the negotiations. The EFTA countries, with their deep democratic tradition, will further strengthen democratic and open decision-making processes within the Union.

#### **ELDR therefore demands that:**

- *the European Union remains open to new members who have fully subscribed to the "acquis communautaire" and the "acquis politique";*
- *with the enlargement of the European Union, a reform of the structure of the Union must be carried out which maintains the capability of its institutions to act, guarantees the representation of all Member States and strengthens the rights of the European Parliament through specific reforms concerning the elimination of the democratic deficit and the consolidation of the principles and aims on which political union is based.*

## CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Most Central and East European countries with which the European Union has concluded association agreements have established democratic and peaceful societies. In order to foster this development, it is indispensable to open up European Union markets to their products. ELDR looks forward to the future accession of these countries.

ELDR believes that the Union must give all possible support to the economic and political development, environmental improvement and social stability of Russia and the other former Republics of the Soviet Union.

### **ELDR therefore demands:**

- *the forging of close and open partnerships with all genuine democracies in Central and Eastern Europe, and that the European Union further opens its markets to these countries;*
- *that the EU seek a friendly partnership with Russia on a broad basis and support close cooperation of all new independent states within the region, especially between Russia and the Ukraine, which is essential for stability and peace within the region; this should be reflected in special cooperation agreements with the European Union; Russia must become the 8th member of the Economic Summit;*
- *that all democratic countries work towards the creation of an all-Europe free trade area;*
- *that all countries work towards the development of direct investment in and transfer of technologies to Central and East European countries.*

## DEVELOPMENT POLICY

North-South cooperation must be conceived within a global context, be based on the protection of human rights, the environment and free and fair trade. To this end, ELDR considers that the EU should move on from a phase of mere "coordination" of the twelve development policies, to a leading role in favour of a European development policy; ELDR greets therefore with satisfaction the incorporation of development cooperation into the Maastricht Treaty, allowing the EU to complement and coordinate Member States' policies in this area. It is natural for those living in persecution, conflict and poverty to search for peace and prosperity. Successful development policy and the establishment of just, fair and self-sustained societies in the countries concerned is the only way to remove the main cause for migration.

### **ELDR therefore demands that:**

- *a rapid and balanced conclusion of the GATT Uruguay Round be achieved. Free trade is a prerequisite of the success of economic reform; international protection must be dismantled;*
- *the resources for future generations be preserved. Environmental protection must be included in the cooperation with developing countries. Furthermore efforts should be made to allow development funds to be used for financing the possibly higher development costs due to environmental requirements;*
- *the developing countries put in place sustainable democratic and economic structures which allow individuals to participate fully in political processes and use their abilities to best advantage;*
- *development aid should be concentrated on those countries which respect human rights and democracy, are setting up a market economy, pursue environmentally sustainable policies, efficiently control population growth and restrict military spending;*
- *Member States continue to aim for the international target of 0.7% of GDP for official development aid, and for a greater effectiveness in its use;*
- *industrialised countries must contribute to easing the debt burden of developing countries by further opening their markets and by debt rescheduling: any proposal for debt relief must be evaluated on individual merit;*
- *development policy must help people to help themselves: its effectiveness and sustainability should be increased;*
- *the EU regards as a priority the development of its relations with the countries of the Mediterranean Basin, particularly those of North Africa, and builds policies that contribute directly to the social, economic and political stability of that region.*

# THE FUTURE OF DEMOCRACY IN THE UNION

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The European Union is unique. No blueprint exists. ELDR has for many years sought to turn the European Community into a European Union with decentralised federal characteristics.

This is not the centralised all-powerful European superstate caricatured by our nationalist opponents of left and right. Under an institutional framework, democratic authorities at different levels - local, regional, national and supranational - share power with each other in a coordinated way. Our aim is to make the institutions that govern the EU efficient, by using light regulation wherever possible, and retaining a pluralistic and decentralised federal character.

We demand a European constitution to be drafted by the European Parliament in close cooperation with the other political institutions of the European union, the national parliaments and governments.

The provisions of the European constitution must reflect as closely as possible the concerns of the citizen about democratic control of the Union, lack of transparency in the EU and consequential national legislation and the loss of national, regional and cultural identity.

## **ELDR demands that:**

- *the European Union be democratic at all levels, fair to its citizens, open and efficient in all activities, and embody the principles of human rights, including respect for minorities;*
- *co-decision between Parliament and Council, which is the key to the development of European Union, must be made to apply to all legislation;*
- *modifications of the Treaties on which the process of European integration is based be subject to the assent of the European Parliament;*
- *at the political level, a separation of powers should be accomplished. The legislative power should consist of a directly elected parliament, which embodies the sovereign will of the peoples of Europe, and the Council, which represents the political majorities of the Member States. Both branches of the legislative power must operate on the basis of equality and should meet and decide in public;*

- *the Council of Ministers must evolve into a full democratic legislative body: the first step being that the voting record of the Council should be public; another step being the extension of majority-vote decision making within the Council to other main policy areas;*
- *a uniform electoral procedure be introduced for the European Parliament so that seats won broadly match votes cast: fair votes for the citizen and equal treatment for the parties;*
- *the appointment of the Commission as the executive body of the European Union be made by the legislature (European Parliament and Council) within sixty days of the elections.*

Intergovernmental arrangements among Member States should be incorporated in the European Union framework.

ELDR considers that the political recognition of the regional dimension embodied in the Treaty on European Union through the Committee of Regions, represents an encouraging advance from the point of view of both the involvement of local and regional authorities in the construction of Europe and the possibility of improving the effectiveness of the structural policies of the Union.

**ELDR therefore demands that:**

- *the two intergovernmental pillars of the Treaty of Maastricht, along with other arrangements such as the Schengen Agreement be brought fully under the auspices of the European Union, and eventually involve all Member States;*
- *European integration at variable speed - although it may be unavoidable in some areas of competence - does not lead to a Europe "à la carte";*
- *the Committee of the Regions develops rapidly into a powerful forum for autonomous regional and local institutions.*

The ELDR requests that by 1996 the European Union be based on a Constitution which defines the rights of the citizen vis-à-vis the Union, its competence and the rule of democratic decision-making. This Constitution must also include a Charter of Rights for the European citizen.

The constitutional settlement shall only be brought into effect by popular endorsement according to the practices of individual Member States.

# **ANNEX: MANIFESTO OF THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND REFORM GROUP**

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Adopted on 16 June 1993, on the occasion of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the LDR Group

The Members of the Liberal, Democrat and Reform Group have been firm supporters of European unity from the very beginning. Their objective has been not simply to turn Europe into a free-trade zone. Their belief was that a shared political future should bring together the democratic nations of Europe as a guarantee of peace and to enable them to act together resolutely in a world dominated by the superpowers and threatened by totalitarian ideology.

Today, forty years after a Liberal, Democratic and Reform Group was created in the European Parliament, the threats have changed because the world has changed. But these changes serve only to reaffirm the commitment towards a European Union which respects the national identity of its Member States. The creation of this Union calls for an act of political will as it cannot come about as a mere automatic consequence of economic integration. Our Europe is not just a Europe of business, it is a Europe of individuals. The Maastricht Treaty which the Liberals support, as they have supported the whole struggle for Political Union, has confirmed this approach.

The Liberals are working towards completion of Political and Economic and Monetary Union in accordance with the timetable set out in the Maastricht Treaty. They want the ECU to become a truly European currency. They support the development of new Community policies, particularly in the advanced technology sector. Decentralised federalism which they advocate implies the principle of subsidiarity: powers which cannot best be exercised at the local, regional or national level should be transferred to the European level. Their concern for good management means they apply this principle rigorously, in the form of balanced budgets avoiding any form of inefficiency.

Their attachment to parliamentary democracy underlies their vision of European Union. Those in the LDR are opposed to excessive bureaucracy and any slide towards a purely technocratic approach; they seek a new balance between the institutions by strengthening the democratic powers of scrutiny of the European Parliament which should be elected by a uniform system of proportional representation with more extensive political, legislative and budgetary powers. Their vision of Europe is first and foremost a People's Europe.

It is also a Europe of openness. Freedom of movement of persons, which needs to become a reality, will herald European citizenship defined by the rights and duties common to all Europeans. It will facilitate the development of a system of education better able to bring out each individual's talents, which will respect the finest traditions of humanism and which will increase opportunities for each individual without any constraints on freedom of thought.

It is also a balanced Europe. A balance between countries and regions, between urban and rural areas: the Common Agricultural Policy needs to create an equilibrium which will guarantee quality products at reasonable prices for consumers while holding out the prospect of growth and prosperity for modern family farms. The Members of the LDR Group want Europe to provide policies enabling a marriage, and not a divorce, to be achieved between industrial development and protection of the environment.

Finally, it is a Europe of solidarity. Solidarity within the Union through greater economic and social cohesion: completion of the Single Internal Market should be accompanied by voluntary action in support of the least favoured regions and sections of society. Solidarity with the rest of the continent: the LDR believes that Europe is One. They want the Union to be open to the other Europe - Central Europe emerging from its years of captivity, with which there is a need for close political cooperation and economic aid pending accession at some point in the future, when the countries in question have caught up in material terms and the process of building Europe has been strengthened prior to enlargement. Solidarity with the rest of the world: cooperation with developing countries, often portrayed as exemplary, needs to be improved. The priority areas are self-sufficiency in food and the promotion of decentralised projects by small businesses. Aid should not be frittered away on administrative expenditure or prestige projects. Furthermore aid should be accompanied by initiatives on human rights.

With regard to Europe's external policy, which presupposes a defence policy inextricably bound up with the very concept of Union, the Liberals expect something more than the creation of a new superpower. Their ultimate objective is to make Europe a paragon and an example in terms of civil liberties, tolerance, emancipation and development of the individual and dialogue between cultures. A Europe of influence; a Europe of enlightenment.

ELDR Party  
RUE BELLIARD, 97 • B-1047 BRUSSELS  
TEL. 32 2 / 284 31 69 - 284 22 07 • FAX 32 2 / 231 19 07