

ELDR MANIFESTO FOR THE EUROPEAN ELECTIONS 2009

Adopted at the Stockholm Congress, 31 October 2008

EUROPEAN LIBERALS' TOP 15 FOR EP ELECTIONS

Over 60 years, Liberals in the European Union have contributed much to achieving peace, unity and prosperity. We continue to work towards a more capable and democratic Union, the completion of the single market, a safer environment, and the promotion of civil liberties and fundamental rights. We want the Union to take the lead in tackling global security challenges and in responding to the international financial crisis and its consequences. The Union must be modernised and strengthened according to the values and principles of liberal democracy and market economy.

Liberals are the third largest group in the European Parliament and frequently make the difference in terms of law and policies.

ELDR believes in the necessity to adopt the Lisbon Treaty and call for its implementation. The Treaty considerably reforms the institutions of the European Union, enhances transparency, strengthens its democratic character and equips the EU with the necessary tools for today's global challenges. European Liberal Democrats urge EU member states to agree on methods for its swift implementation.

Civil liberties

Civil liberties and freedom are the foundations for a liberal Europe.

1. ELDR demands respect of all fundamental freedoms in the EU, especially freedom of press, thought, speech, liberty of association, religion and ownership, and upholding the rights of minorities and those of individuals to privacy and protection of their personal data and dignity.
2. ELDR wants the EU to become a real area of freedom, security and justice, and calls for stronger co-operation between police and judicial services to effectively combat cross-border crime, terrorism and corruption. The fundamental procedural rights of suspects must be respected under all circumstances.

EU Single Market, Growth and Employment

Cross-border competition, knowledge sharing and free trade in goods and services are essential for increasing the EU's international economic competitiveness.

3. ELDR supports the notion of a 'fifth freedom' - the free movement of knowledge, including greater mobility for students, academics

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and researchers - between member states, so as to encourage inventions and discoveries. ELDR calls for a single market for intellectual property.

4. ELDR believes a competitive European business environment is essential to achieve the highest possible standard of living for Europe's citizens and to promote EU standards at global level. The single market should be reinforced and extended in energy, postal services, financial services, railways and health care, while further facilitating the free movement of services and workers, including the further mutual recognition of qualifications. Within WTO the EU should be the driving force for the abolition of customs duties and non-tariff barriers, and for opening Europe's single market to the wider world.
5. ELDR reaffirms that sustainable growth, independence of the European Central Bank and national central banks, and a sound fiscal policy according to the Maastricht criteria followed by all member states – including those yet to join the euro – remain essential for prosperity and welfare. Only a truly competitive Europe, creating jobs and opportunities for all, will underpin the social dimension of the single market.
6. ELDR welcomes steps to reform the financial system and emphasises that these must be based on better regulation coupled with proper supervisory implementation. A key guarantee for prosperity lies in the high-level personal responsibility of all market participants. A relapse into policies of nationalisation, over-regulation and protectionism would be a major mistake. ELDR supports intensified international cooperation among regulators and strengthening of international standards and believes a reformed IMF should play a leading role in this process in order to prevent future financial crises.
7. ELDR supports the introduction of an EU “blue card” system, administered by each member state, to ensure measured economic migration for the benefit of EU citizens.

Environment and energy policy

The unique challenge of climate change and energy security demands unified action across Europe. Europe must become an efficient low carbon economy leading the world in conservation, renewable energy and creative market instruments, thereby ensuring incentives for new jobs.

8. ELDR emphasises that in the EU climate package, business needs reduced administrative burdens and incentives to stimulate investment in techniques to enhance a strong low carbon economy. ELDR wants increased investments in technologies providing solutions, efficiency and increased security of energy supply.
9. ELDR wants to unbundle Europe's energy industry to ensure transparency and serve consumer interests, to integrate climate

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and energy policy based on sustainable economic growth, and to protect the natural environment; all to exercise global leadership.

10. ELDR actively promotes an ambitious reform of the Common Agricultural Policy within a multilateral framework (WTO). This reform will enable EU farmers to compete in a free global market, to better meet increasing global demand for food in an environmentally responsible way, to direct funding for research in renewable energies, including sustainable new generation bio-fuels, and to guarantee long-term food supplies. ELDR supports the continuing reduction of the CAP budget after 2013.

Enlargement, foreign, security and defence policy

In a globalized world, no EU country can tackle the threats and challenges we are facing today on its own: military and civilian crisis management, securing energy supplies and international trade, arms control and disarmament, the fight against terrorism, organized crime, climate change, poverty and the violation of human rights. EU citizens expect the EU and its Member States to stand together, to act together and to play an effective role in global affairs.

11. ELDR considers that the EU enlargement process has been a success and supports the honouring of existing EU enlargement commitments for those countries fulfilling the Copenhagen EU accession criteria which includes integration capacity as an important consideration.
12. ELDR believes the EU should play an important role in contributing effectively to global security, where appropriate in cooperation with NATO structures. Therefore we call for major new efforts to strengthen and extend the European Security and Defence Policy by bringing together European defence-related resources and capabilities. This would enhance the EU's military defence cooperation and its responsiveness to international security and humanitarian emergencies.
13. ELDR believes EU Member States' interests can best be served through a Common Foreign and Security Policy, speaking with one voice through the High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy.
14. ELDR emphasises that the EU should further strengthen its civilian crisis management capabilities and use its experience to guarantee stability, the rule of law and the principles of good governance in countries that are facing or have known a situation of conflict.
15. ELDR urges the EU to use and further extend its considerable post-conflict institution-building and nation-building experience in order to be better prepared to deal with situations of regional instability, terrorist threats emanating from failed states, and humanitarian emergencies.

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