



# *Parti Européen des Libéraux, Démocrates et Réformateurs* *European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party*

1 October 2001

## ELDR PARTY STATUTES

**Adopted: 28 September 2001**

### ARTICLE 1:

The Liberal, Democrat and Reform Parties in Europe constitute the "European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party", hereinafter referred to as 'ELDR Party'. It replaces and is the legal successor to the Federation of European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Parties.

### ARTICLE 2:

The purpose of the ELDR Party shall be to bring together parties in Europe who, within the framework of liberal, democratic and reformist ideals, wish to contribute to the European Union.

The ELDR Party is the forum where Member Parties discuss and develop agreed policies. They establish a common political programme for the European elections. The Group of the ELDR Party, hereinafter referred to as ELDR Group, participates at all levels in this process, and it promotes this programme in the European Parliament.

### ARTICLE 3:

To fulfil this purpose the ELDR Party will:

- strengthen the liberal, democrat and reform movement in the EU and throughout Europe;
- seek a common position on all important matters affecting the European Union;
- inform the public and involve it in the construction of a united European democracy;
- support and co-ordinate the Member Parties in the elections to the European Parliament.
- promote the constitution of a Liberal, Democrat and Reform parliamentary Group in all international parliamentary assemblies;
- develop close working relationships with and among its national parties, their national parliamentary groups, the ELDR Group of the European Parliament, the Liberal, Democrat and Reform Group in other international fora and Liberal International.

The Member Parties shall fight the European elections on a common platform.

## **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE ELDR GROUP IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

### ARTICLE 4

1. The ELDR Party is represented in the European Parliament by the ELDR Group;
2. Members of the European Parliament belonging to one of the Member Parties of the ELDR Party will be members of the ELDR Group; Members who are elected as independents on a member party's list shall, if invited by the ELDR Group, become members of the Group;
3. If members of a Party not belonging to the ELDR Party ask for membership of the Group of the ELDR Party in the European Parliament, the Group may approve applications by 2/3 majority. If the application is approved by the Group, but does not reach the qualified majority, the application shall be referred to the ELDR Council.
4. The ELDR Party and its Group shall support each other in every possible way and shall adopt a common approach towards political activities identifying and bringing forward for discussion relevant issues of public concern;
5. The ELDR Party shall be a link between its Group and the Member Parties, particularly those who are not represented in the European Parliament;
6. Representatives of Member and Affiliate Parties sitting in any international or European Assembly should belong to the Liberal, Democrat and Reform Group of that Assembly.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

### ARTICLE 5:

Membership of the ELDR Party is open to all political parties in Europe and individual citizens that accept these Statutes, the Stuttgart Declaration and the policy programmes, as agreed by the Congresses of the ELDR Party.

### ARTICLE 6:

Individual citizens, who wish to support the ELDR Party and want to be informed on European Politics and ELDR, can apply for individual electronic membership of the ELDR Party. In the event of an objection by a member party to an application for membership under this article the Secretary-general shall refer the matter to the Bureau for adjudication. The Bureau shall decide on such matters by simple majority vote. The detailed rights and responsibilities of e- members shall be identified in a separate section to the Internal Rules of Procedure of the ELDR Party. Any party wishing to join the ELDR Party and which complies with the provisions of Article 5 may submit an application for membership to the Secretary General who will refer it to the Council. The Council decides on this matter by a two-thirds majority.

If the Council is unable to reach such a decision, it should be submitted to the Congress, which will then take the decision by a two-thirds majority. If neither the Council nor the Congress approve the application by a two-thirds majority, the application shall be considered rejected.

### ARTICLE 7:

Any political party which complies with the provisions of article 5 may submit an application for affiliate membership to the Secretary General.

The Council takes note of the application and by simple majority authorises the Secretary-general to scrutinise the application so as to ensure that the applicant is in compliance with Article 5 of these Statutes. At the next Council meeting a decision will be taken on the basis of the Secretary-general's report. A two-thirds majority is required for an application to be accepted.

Failing that, Council may decide on the basis of a simple majority to forward an application to the next Congress which will decide by a two-third majority. If neither the Council nor the Congress approve the application by a two-thirds majority, the application shall be considered rejected.

Affiliate Parties may attend meetings of the ELDR Party, have the right to speak, but without the right to vote.

Any party which has been an affiliate for at least two years may ask to become a member party of the ELDR Party. The Council shall decide on such a request by a two-thirds majority.

#### ARTICLE 8:

The ELDR Party will receive annual contributions from the Member and Affiliate Parties and the ELDR Group in proportions and amounts agreed to by the Council. Contributions must be paid before 1st April of each year.

Any Member or Affiliate Party of the ELDR Party, which no longer complies with the provisions of Article 3, Article 4 and Article 5 may be asked, on the basis of a two-thirds majority, by the Council to withdraw. The party concerned may appeal the decision of the Council to the next Congress and the Congress may overrule the Council's decision by a two-thirds majority. Failing that membership will automatically end.

#### ARTICLE 9:

Any Member or Affiliate Party of the ELDR Party may withdraw by notifying its decision to the Secretary-general, who shall place the question on the agenda for the next meeting of the Council, which shall consider the matter. The notice shall take effect at the end of the current year.

#### ARTICLE 10:

If a Member or Affiliate Party fails to meet its financial obligations for the preceding year its representatives will no longer have the right to vote and will no longer benefit from the travel reimbursement scheme. Within three months the party concerned must inform the Secretary General, in writing, when and how it will settle its debts. If a Member or Affiliate Party fails to meet its financial obligations for two years, membership will automatically end unless the Council shall decide otherwise. The appeal procedure in Article 10 will apply.

#### ARTICLE 11:

The registered office and the Secretariat of the ELDR Party shall be in Brussels.

#### ARTICLE 12:

Newly founded parties who succeed to the rights of Member Parties must reapply to be members of the ELDR Party.

### **INSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS**

#### ARTICLE 13:

1. The organs of the ELDR Party will be:

- ELDR Political Leaders' Meeting
- the Bureau
- the Council
- the Congress;

2. In all the organs of the ELDR Party, efforts shall be made to establish the broadest possible measure of agreement among all the member parties, following full consultation.

3. These four organs will be assisted by the Secretary General.

#### ARTICLE 14 (The Political Leaders):

1. The Political Leaders' Meeting of the ELDR Party, convened at least twice a year by the Bureau, shall consist, with full rights of:

- The President and Vice-Presidents of the Bureau;
- The Political Leaders of the Member Parties;
- The President of the ELDR Group in the European Parliament.

2. The Bureau may invite leading personalities i.e. leaders of the Affiliate parties, or leaders of political parties which share the same liberal, democrat and reform values members of the EU Commission and Council that belong to a Member Party and the Presidents of the Liberal, Democrat and Reform-Groups in other international fora.

#### ARTICLE 15 (The Bureau):

1. The Bureau comprises as voting members:

- a) - The President of the ELDR Party;
- Four Vice-Presidents;
- The Treasurer;

These members of the Bureau shall be elected by the Congress for a period of two years, after which they will be eligible for re-election, but none shall serve for more than six years consecutively.

b) The President of the ELDR Group in the European Parliament, or a representative mandated by the Group.

c) The Chair of the ELDR Group in the Council of Europe

2. The Bureau comprises as non-voting members:

- The Honorary President(s) of the ELDR Party.
- The Secretary-general of the ELDR Party,
- The Secretary-general of the ELDR Group
- The President of the Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Union (LYMEC).

3. The Bureau shall propose the Secretary General to the Council.

4. Between meetings of the Congress and the Council, the Bureau shall be empowered to speak and act on behalf of the ELDR Party according to policy guidelines established by the Council and Congress to which bodies it shall be accountable in all matters.

5. Members of the Bureau shall come from Member Parties.

6. If the President shall for any reason step down during his or her term of office, one of the Vice-Presidents shall be appointed by the Bureau to undertake the duties of the President until the next meeting of the Party Congress.

ARTICLE 19 (The Treasurer):

The Treasurer

1. will propose the annual budget and the contributions of the Member and Affiliate Parties to the Council.
2. will account for the expenses of the Secretariat and all other organs of the ELDR Party.
3. will also be responsible for the accounts of the electoral fund at the disposal of the ELDR Party.

ARTICLE 20:

All payments are signed by at least the Treasurer and the Secretary General, except in those cases where the amount does not exceed the expenses authorised by the Secretary General as stated in Article 19.8.

ARTICLE 21:

The Bureau shall appoint the auditors who shall report to the annual Congress.

**GENERAL PROVISIONS**

ARTICLE 22:

Article 16 (1) third indent will only come into force for elections to the Council following the first elections to the European Parliament to be held by the uniform electoral procedure envisaged under the terms of Article 138 (3) of the Treaty of Rome as modified by the Treaty on European Union. Until such time the composition of the Council will comprise one additional member for each 500,000 votes obtained by the party at the last national elections.

ARTICLE 23:

Article 17 (2) shall only come into force for Congresses following the first elections to the European Parliament to be held by the uniform procedure envisaged under the terms of Article 138 (3) of the Treaty of Rome as modified by the Treaty on European Union. Until such time, representatives to Congress shall be allocated to each party on the basis of support gained at national elections.

---

#### ARTICLE 16 (The Council):

1. The Council comprises:
  - the President of the ELDR Party who presides;
  - two members from each Member Party. These members will be appointed by their parties for a period of 2 years;
  - one additional member for each 500.000 votes obtained by the party at the last European-elections;
  - the members of the Commission of the European Union who belong to a Member Party;
  - one Member appointed by the Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Union, who must not belong to a party whose representatives in the European Parliament belong to or would belong to any group other than the ELDR Group
  - Members of the Bureau ex-officio.
  - one member from each Affiliate Party, appointed for two years.
  - one representative from established Liberal, Democrat and Reform groups in other European parliamentary assemblies, and a representative from Liberal International as observers, who must not belong to a party whose representatives in the European Parliament belong to or would belong to any group other than the ELDR Group.
2. The Council will meet at least two times a year.
3. Between meetings of the Congress, the Council will be empowered to speak and act on behalf of the Party in all spheres of the latter's jurisdiction.
4. The Council will reach decisions by a majority of the members present and voting unless specifically required otherwise. The quorum consists of one-third of voting members. The Council is responsible to the Congress.
5. The Council will appoint the Secretary General on a proposal of the Bureau for a period of two years.
6. The Council will adopt an annual budget, prepared by the Treasurer.
7. The Council will plan and propose to the Congress a programme to campaign during the European elections.
8. The Council may set up advisory or working groups for any purpose it thinks fit.
9. The Council will adopt rules of procedure and may interpret the ELDR Party's statutes.

#### ARTICLE 17 (The Congress):

1. The Member and Affiliate Parties of the ELDR recognised as parties meeting the criteria of Article 3, Article 4 and Article 5 will meet annually in a Congress.
2. The Congress will consist of the following members:
  - Six representatives from each Member State. In the case of a Member State, where there is more than one Member Party, these representatives shall be allocated to each party as far as possible in proportion to the number of votes cast for each party at the last European elections;
  - For each Member Party a number of representatives based on the following relationship to the number of votes cast for that party at the last European elections, corrected according to the % turn out at the elections;
    - \* one representative for each 100.000 votes or a major part thereof up to three million votes;
    - \* thereafter, one representative for each 250.000 votes or a major part thereof between three and five million votes;
    - \* and one representative for each 500.000 votes or a major part thereof exceeding five million votes.
  - The members of the ELDR Group of the European Parliament;
  - The members of the Council;
  - Ten representatives nominated by the Liberal and Radical Youth Movement of the European Union, who must not belong to a party whose representatives in the European Parliament belong to, or would belong to any group other than the ELDR Group
  - Two representatives from each Affiliate Party.
  - one representative from established Liberal, Democrat and Reform groups in other European parliamentary assemblies, and a representative from Liberal International as observers, who must not belong to a party whose representatives in the European Parliament belong to or would belong to any group other than the ELDR Group.
3.
  - a. The quorum is one-third of the delegates present;
  - b. A simple majority is 50% + 1 of the delegate present and voting;
  - c. A qualified majority is two-thirds of the delegates present and voting;
  - d. In general, votes should be taken by simple majority unless the statutes provide for a different majority;
  - e. Votes are taken by the system of limited transferable voting. Each voting delegate can cast a maximum of two votes on behalf of the party that s/he is representing.
4. The agenda of the Congress will be drawn up by the Bureau and approved by the Council. Each Member Party and the ELDR Group in the European Parliament will have the right to place items on the agenda for the Council and may suggest items for the agenda of the Congress.
5. The Congress can:
  - make decisions on all matters within the competence of the Treaty of the European Union;
  - decide on all other matters which the members have unanimously recognised as falling within its competence;
  - deliberate on all proposals submitted to it by a Member Party and may deliver an opinion on such proposals;
  - make amendments to the statutes by a two-thirds majority;
6. The Secretary General will report on the ELDR Party's activities to the Congress.
7. The ELDR Group in the European Parliament will report to the Congress on its activities.
8. The Congress may set up working groups to examine matters within its competence.
9. The proceedings of the Congress may be published in full or in part.

### ADMINISTRATIVE PROVISIONS

#### ARTICLE 18 (The Secretary General):

The Secretary General

1. will assist the ELDR Party;
2. must belong to a Member Party of the ELDR Party;
3. will head a secretariat, the composition and organisation of which will be proposed by the Secretary General to the Bureau;
4. will be assisted in the exercise of his functions by the Member Parties.
5. will be responsible to the Council.
6. will organise the meetings of the ELDR Party.
7. will maintain contacts among Member and Affiliate and the ELDR Party.
8. may authorise expenditures up to an amount to be fixed by the Bureau under his own responsibility.