



European Liberals and Democrats  
Europäische Liberale und Demokraten  
Europese Liberalen en Democraten  
Europæiske Liberale og Demokrater  
Libéraux et Démocrates Européens  
Liberali e Democratici Europei  
Ευρωπαίοι Φιλελευθεροί και Δημοκράτες

FEDERATION OF LIBERAL AND DEMOCRATIC  
PARTIES OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

S T A T U T E S

Statutes adopted in Stuttgart on 26 and 27  
March 1976 and revised in Venice on 7 May 1982.

Article 1.

The purpose of the Federation shall be to bring together the parties of the countries of the Community who, within the framework of liberal and democratic ideals, wish to contribute to the creation of a European Union.

Article 2.

To fulfil the purpose the Federation will :

1. seek a common position on all the important problems affecting the Community ;
2. inform the public and involve it in the construction of a united and Liberal European Democracy.
3. support and coordinate the member parties in the elections to the European Parliament.

The member parties undertake to fight the European elections on a common platform ;

Article 3.

Membership of the Federation is open to all political parties of the European Community who accept the Statutes, the Stuttgart declaration and the policy programmes, as agreed by the Congresses of the Federation

Article 4.

Any party wishing to join the Federation and which complies with the provisions of article 3 may submit an application for membership to the Secretary-General who will refer it for decision to the Executive Committee.

If the Executive Committee is unanimous the application for membership is accepted.

When the Executive Committee is unable to reach such a decision, then it should be submitted to the Congress, which will make the decision according to the normal voting procedure.

Article 5.

The Federation will be financed by contributions of the member parties in proportions and amounts agreed by the Executive Committee.

Article 6.

Any member party of the Federation may withdraw by notifying its decision to the Secretary-General. Notice shall take effect at the end of the current year.

Article 7.

Any member party of the Federation which no longer complies with the provisions of Articles 1 and 3 may be asked by the Executive Committee to withdraw. Until this request is submitted to the Congress, the member party concerned is suspended from the Federation. At the Congress to which the request is submitted, the party concerned may participate with full voting rights until the Congress has decided on this matter.

Article 8.

1. If a member party fails to meet its financial obligations, the Executive Committee may suspend its rights to vote or to be represented on the Committee and the Congress until it has fulfilled the said obligations.

2. If a party is requested to withdraw from the Federation according to Article 7, the first paragraph of this Article will not be applicable.
3. If a member party has ceased to belong to the Federation from a date fixed by the Congress, its contributions will be refunded proportionally.

Article 9.

1. Newly founded parties who succeed in the rights of member parties may continue to be member of the Federation.
2. Any official contact of a member party with parties, non-member of the ELD or of the Liberal International in other countries where there is a member party of the Federation can only take place after having consulted the member party in the country concerned.

General Provisions.

CHAPTER III

Article 10.

The organs of the Federation shall be :

- the Congress ;
- the Executive Committee.

These two organs shall be assisted by the General Secretariat.

Article 11.

The Federation is represented in the European Parliament by the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Members of the European Parliament, elected or nominated and belonging to one of the member parties of the Federation or presented by them will be members of the Liberal and Democratic Group.

Article 12.

The registered office and the secretariat of the Federation shall be in Brussels.

Article 13.

The official languages of the Federation are the official languages of the European Community.

Executive Committee

CHAPTER IV

Article 14.

The Executive Committee comprises :

- the President of the Federation, as its Chairman ;
- two members for each member party, member parties entitled to more than 10% of the delegates of the Congress shall have a third member. However, there may be no more than four members from any single member-state as party-representatives. These members shall be appointed by their parties for a period of two years. ;
- six members elected by the Congress for a period of two years and to be nominated by 25 delegates at the latest 24 hours before the vote. ;
- the Chairman of the Liberal and Democratic Group of the European Parliament ;
- the members of the Commission of the European Communities who belong to a member party ;
- one member appointed by the Liberal and Radical Youth Mouvement of the European Communities. Such a member should belong to a member party of the Federation of the Liberal Parties.

Article 15.

The Congress will elect the President of the Federation. He shall serve for two years, after which he is eligible for re-election but may not serve for more than six years in total.

Article 16.

1. The Committee shall appoint two Vice-Presidents from among its members.
2. The Committee shall appoint the Secretary-General and the Treasurer.
3. These persons together with the President and the Chairman of the Liberal and Democratic Group of the European Parliament compose the Bureau of the Federation.



Article 17.

The Committee shall meet at least four times a year at a place and date chosen by the Executive Committee.

Article 18.

The Committee shall reach decisions by a majority of the members present and voting. The quorum consists of twelve members.

Article 19.

Between meetings of the Congress, the Committee will be empowered to speak and act on behalf of the Federation in all spheres of the latter's jurisdiction.

Article 20.

Each member party communicates its list of candidates for the European elections to the Executive Committee.

Article 21.

The Committee may set up advisory or technical committees for any purpose it thinks fit.

Article 22.

The Committee shall adopt its own rules of procedure.

Article 23.

At the meeting of the Congress, the Committee shall on request report on its activities.

Congress

CHAPTER V

Article 24.

The member parties of the Federation which have been designated as the national parties fulfilling the criteria of Article 3, will meet annually in a Congress.

Article 25.

The Congress shall consist of the following members :

1. a) Six representatives from each country. In the case of a country 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 national general election, held at least two months before the Congress.
- b) 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 national general election :
  - one representative for each 100.000 votes or a major part thereof up to three million votes ;
  - one representative for each 250.000 votes or a major part thereof between three and five million votes ;
  - one representative for each 500.000 votes or a major part thereof exceeding five million votes.
2. The members of the Liberal and Democratic Group of the European Parliament and the Liberal and Democratic members of the Commission of the European Communities shall automatically be members of the Congress.



3. Ten representatives nominated by the Liberal and Radical Youth Mouvement of the European Community.
4. The Executive Committee shall be responsible for defining the liberal votes taking into consideration the different national electoral systems.

Article 26.

1. A 2/3 (two thirds) majority of members voting (and present) is needed to make valid decisions.
2. Amendments to resolutions and other proposals are adopted by simple majority.
3. No vote will be taken unless there is a quorum of 100 persons present.
4. The member parties may also nominate substitutes to a maximum of half of the number of their designated representation.
5. Each member has the right to one vote.
6. In the case of absence, 1/4 + 1 of the representatives from each delegation have the right to two votes.

Article 27.

The Congress shall hold an annual meeting in one of the countries of the Community.

The party/parties in whose country the Congress is being held will provide the Chairman of the Congress.

Article 28.

The agenda of the Congress will be drawn up by the Executive Committee. Each member party and the Liberal and Democratic Group of the European Parliament will have the right to

place items on the agenda of both the Executive Committee and the Congress.

Article 29.

The Congress can :

1. - make decisions on all matters within the competence of the Treaties establishing the European Communities and on matters regarding political co-operation of the European Community ;
2. - decide on all other matters which the members have unanimously recognized as falling within its competence ;
3. - deliberate on all proposals submitted to it by a member party or one of its representatives and may deliver an opinion on such proposals ;
4. - receive the report of the Executive Committee and debate it if so desires ;
5. - receive reports from the Liberal and Democratic Group of the European Parliament ;
6. - make amendments to the Constitution ;
7. - make recommendations to the Liberal and Democratic Group of the European Parliament.

Article 30.

The Congress may set up Committees to examine any matters within its competence as defined in Article 29.

Article 31.

The debates of the Congress shall be published. The Executive Committee may decide to publish the debates in full or in part.

Secretariat and Treasury

CHAPTER VI

Article 32.

1. The Federation shall be assisted by a Secretary-General, appointed by the Executive Committee for a period of two years.
2. The Secretary-General must be a national of one of the Member States of the Community. He must be a member of a party affiliated to the Federation.
3. The Secretary-General shall head a secretariat, the composition and organization of which shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

Article 33.

The Secretary-General shall be assisted in the exercise of his functions by national parties.

Article 34.

The Secretary-General shall be responsible to the Executive Committee and the Congress.

Article 35.

The Secretary-General may not be employed by a Government, be a member of a national Parliament or the European Parliament, or engage work incompatible with his duties.

Article 36.

1. The Secretary-General shall organize the meetings of the Federation.
2. He shall attend the annual conferences of the member parties of the Federation and, if asked, shall report to them on the work of the Federation.

3. He shall maintain contacts between the parties of the Federation.
4. The Secretary-General may engage expenses up to an amount to be fixed by the Executive Committee under his own responsibility Any amount above that sum has to be referred to the Treasurer.

Article 37.

1. The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Executive Committee for a period of two years.
2. The Treasurer will propose the annual budget and the contribution of each of the member parties to the Executive Committee.
3. He will account for the expenses of the Secretariat and all other organs of the Federation.
4. He will also be responsible for the accounting of the electoral fund at the disposal of the Federation.
5. All payments are signed by at least the Treasurer and the Secretary-General.

Rules of Procedure

I. CONGRESS.

1. The Congress shall be held at least once a year.
2. The Executive Committee shall determine the date and the duration of the Congress.
3. The Executive Committee shall fix the place of the Congress in one of the Member States of the Community.

II. AGENDA AND TIMETABLE OF THE CONGRESS.

1. The Executive Committee shall draw up the agenda.
2. Draft resolutions and amendments, concerning items on the agenda, may be submitted by the Executive Committee, the Liberal and Democratic Group in the European Parliament, any one member party or twenty-five delegates.
3. If the subject of a draft resolution submitted by delegates is not covered by the agenda, the Executive Committee, and, if it rejects its inclusion in the agenda, the Congress will decide by simple majority whether the motion will be admitted for discussion and decision.
4. Items, including draft resolutions, for the agenda must be submitted not less than ten weeks prior to Congress.
5. The agenda will be sent to all member parties not less than eight weeks prior to Congress.
6. Any other relevant items including reports will be sent out at the same time as the agenda.
7. Amendments must be submitted to the Secretary-General no later than four weeks prior to the Congress.

8. The Executive may for technical reasons decide to lengthen the timetable of the Congress.
9. The amendments submitted must be in the possession of all members of Congress at the latest one week prior to Congress.

### III. REPRESENTATION AT THE CONGRESS.

1. A list of representatives and substitutes shall be sent by each member party to the Secretary-General at least three weeks prior to Congress.
2. Any verification of credentials will be carried out, if required, by the Executive Committee.

### IV. ELECTIONS.

1. All members of the Executive Committee, elected by the Congress or appointed by member parties, shall serve for two years.
2. No person may serve as President for more than a total of six consecutive years.
3. Ballot will be secret and will always be held even with the same number of candidates as there are posts to be filled.
4. Each member party may make one nomination for the presidency.
5. The Congress shall elect by single transferable vote six members to serve on the Executive Committee.

### V. CONDUCT OF SESSIONS OF THE CONGRESS.

1. The sessions of the Congress will be public unless the Congress decides otherwise.



2. The names of representatives who ask leave to speak will be entered in the list of speakers in the order in which their request are received.
3. Representatives may not speak for more than five minutes.
4. Proposers of resolutions will be allowed extra time at the discretion of the Chairman.
5. No representative may speak more than twice on the same subject except by leave of the Chairman.
6. A representative who asks leave to speak for a procedural motion, in particular :
  - a) to raise a point of order ;
  - b) to move the closure of a debate ;
  - c) to move the adjournment of a debate .shall have a prior right to do so.
7. Amendments shall relate to the text it is sought to alter.
8. Amendments shall be put to the vote before the text.
9. Normally the Congress will vote by a show of hands but a written ballot may be taken.
10. In all matters relating to the conduct of the Congress, the interpretation of the rules by, and the decisions of, the Chairman of the Congress shall be binding.

#### VI. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

1. The President shall direct all the activities of the Federation under the conditions laid down.
2. Should the President be absent or unable to discharge his duties he shall be replaced by one of the Vice-Presidents who shall have full powers.
3. The Executive Committee shall formulate its own rules of procedure.

4. The Executive Committee has powers to set up advisory and technical committees and to determine terms of reference and procedure.
5. In the case of dispute, the ruling by the President shall be final.

NOTE.

The founding parties of the Federation at its 26 - 27 th March 1976 Stuttgart Congress were :

- België/Belgique : Partij voor Vrijheid en Vooruitgang, Parti de la Liberté et du Progrès, Parti Libéral.  
(in 1979, the PLP and the PL joined forces in the Parti Réformateur Libéral).
- Danmark : Venstre, Danmarks Liberale Parti, Det Radikale Venstres Landesforbund (left the Federation in 1979).
- France : Fédération Nationale des Républicains Indépendants (since 1977 : Parti Républicain), Parti Radical-Socialiste, Mouvement des Radicaux de gauche (suspended its membership in November 1976).
- Germany : Freie Demokratische Partei.
- Italy : Partito Liberale Italiano, Partito Repubblicano Italiano.
- Luxembourg : Parti Démocratique.
- Netherlands : Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie.
- United Kingdom : The Liberal Party.