

Internal regulation of the ELDR Party, aisbl

Following the ELDR Council in Sofia, Bulgaria on the 14th of May 2005, the revised ELDR internal rules have been adopted. Article V.1 was revised at the Council meeting on 12 October 2006 in Bucharest, Romania. Article XI.3 has been revised at the Council meeting on 11 April 2008 in Tallinn, Estonia. Article VII – 12 has been modified on 30 October at the ELDR Council in Stockholm, Sweden.

The Internal Regulations regulate the functioning of the Association and its bodies in general and may not conflict with the Articles of Association.

I. NAME OF THE PARTY

1. The ELDR Party, aisbl, has an official name in all the official languages of those countries where it has a member party. These are published in annex I of these internal regulations.

II. CONGRESS

1. The Congress shall be held in Europe at least once a year

III. AGENDA AND TIMETABLE OF THE CONGRESS

1. The Bureau shall draw up the Agenda and submit it to the Council for approval.
2. The Bureau should act as a Steering Committee for the Congress.
3. If the subject of a draft resolution is not covered by the Agenda, and the Bureau acting as a Steering Committee rejects its inclusion in the Agenda, the Congress may 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 by full members or by the parliamentary Group of the ELDR Party or by the Bureau of the ELDR Party to the secretariat of the ELDR-Party not less than two months prior to Congress.
5. The final Agenda together with draft resolutions and any other relevant items, including reports will be sent to all delegates not less than six weeks prior to Congress.
6. Amendments to draft resolutions must be submitted to the secretariat no later than four weeks prior to the Congress.
7. Amendments submitted by parties must be in the possession of all delegates at the latest three weeks prior to the Congress.
8. The Bureau may for organisational reasons, decide to alter the above schedule for the Congress until six months prior to the Congress.
9. The Council, any full member party, twenty-five congress delegates or twenty-five members of the European Parliament who belong to an ELDR member party may propose urgency draft resolutions in addition to the Agenda. These must relate to current or recent political events, which could not have been dealt with in the draft resolutions two months prior to the Congress. The Congress shall decide whether to debate urgency draft resolutions.
10. The Bureau may propose a draft resolution as the result of the debate at the Congress. The topic of this draft resolution should be included in the agenda. The Congress will decide whether to debate this resolution.
11. In due time before European parliamentary elections the political programme must be discussed and adopted. Amendments may be submitted by a member party, the Council, or twenty-five congress delegates.
12. Any full member party or 25 congress delegates may propose to set up a committee during the Congress.
13. The Parliamentary Group of the ELDR Party reports on its activities to the Congress

IV. PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION AT THE CONGRESS

1. Congress will consist of the elected members of the Bureau and of all full and affiliate

members represented as follows:

a) 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 (until the Congress 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 the results of national elections will apply);

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 European elections (until the Congress 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 the results of national elections will apply), 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.

c) The members of the Council

d) Two representatives from each Affiliate Party.

e) Ten representatives nominated by LYMEC (European Liberal Youth);

2. The following persons will be entitled to attend the meetings of the Congress, without voting right:

a) The non voting members of the Bureau;

b) The ELDR members of the Group of the ELDR Party in the European Parliament and the Committee of the Regions

c) One delegate from each respective established parliamentary group in other European parliamentary assemblies, who must not belong to a party whose representatives in the European Parliament belong to or would belong to any group other than the parliamentary Group of the ELDR Party;

d) One delegate from Liberal International, who must not belong to a party whose representatives in the European Parliament belong to or would belong to any group other than the parliamentary Group of the ELDR Party.

3. Upon prior written invitation from the Bureau, individual members and other persons may be entitled to attend the meetings of the Congress, without voting right.

4. Delegates of full or affiliate members sitting in any international or European Assembly should belong to the Liberal, Democrat and Reform Group of that Assembly.

5. A list of delegates and substitutes shall be sent by each member party to the secretariat at least six weeks prior to Congress to allow verification of credentials.

6. Any verification of credentials will be carried out if required, by the Bureau.

V. ELECTIONS

1. Ballots will be secret.

General rules for the voting system

Delegates may fill in a maximum of two ballot papers per election. Abstentions, blank ballot papers and invalid ballot papers will not be counted among the votes cast.

Election of the President and the Treasurer

The president and the treasurer are elected separately, by a majority of more than 50% of the votes cast. If there are more than two candidates, and no one obtains more than 50% of the votes cast, a second round takes place with the two candidates who obtained the most votes.

Election of the Vice Presidents

The vice presidents are elected on one single ballot paper. The delegates must mark as many choices as there are mandates to be filled. Failure to do so invalidates the ballot paper. Those candidates who obtained the highest number of votes are elected until all vacant mandates are filled.

If two candidates obtain the same number of votes for the last vacant mandate, an extra round will be arranged among those two candidates to determine who will fill in the mandate.

2. Each candidate for election to the Bureau can be nominated up to the commencement of

the party Congress.

Candidates for membership of the Bureau must be nominated by a full member of the Association.

VI. CONDUCT OF SESSIONS OF THE CONGRESS

1. The sessions of the Congress will be public unless the Congress decides otherwise.
2. The names of delegates who ask leave to speak will be entered in the list of speakers in the order in which their requests are received.
3. Delegates wishing to speak shall indicate in writing the motion or amendment on which they wish to speak and whether they wish to speak for or against it. The President or Chairperson of that session shall call speakers alternatively for and against and seek to reflect as many points of view as possible.
4. Delegates may not speak for more than the Chair decides, and may not speak more than once, except by leave of the Chair. The Chair is to announce the maximum speaking time before the beginning of the discussion session.
5. A delegate 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.
6. An amendment shall only relate to the text it seeks to alter.
7. Votes will be cast by holding up voting cards. Written ballot may be taken by decision of the Congress. Decisions of the Congress are taken by simple majority if the Articles of Association do not foresee otherwise. For decisions of the Congress at least one third of the total number of delegates must be present and vote.
8. The vote must be written for the appointment and dismissal of members of the Bureau or officers. In the case of a tie vote for the election of members of the Bureau or officers, the outcome will be decided by a lottery. The Congress shall appoint tellers for counting votes.
9. The President or Chairperson of that session shall announce the result, or, if in his opinion the result is not clear, he shall order a count. The President's or Chairperson's decision may be challenged and a written vote held if 30 delegates stand in their places.
10. Separate votes shall be taken on any section of any motion or amendment, if either:
 - a) requested by the President or Chairperson of that session;
 - b) requested by the Bureau;
 - c) requested by any delegate as a point of order and either accepted by the proposer of the motion or amendment as appropriate or put to a vote and confirmed by decision of the Congress.
11. At the end of any debate on each amendment or motion, a vote will be taken.

VII. THE COUNCIL

- 1 The Council shall consist of the members of the Bureau and all full and affiliate members represented as follows:
 - a) two members from each Member Party.
 - b) one additional member for each 500.000 votes obtained by the party at the last European elections (until the Council 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 the results of national elections will apply);
 - c) one member from each Affiliate Party,
 - d) one delegate appointed by LYMEC (European Liberal Youth);
- 2 The following persons will be entitled to attend the meetings of the Council, without voting right:
 - a) the non voting members of the Bureau;
 - b) one delegate from each established Liberal, Democrat and Reform groups in European parliamentary assemblies, who must belong to an ELDR member party.
 - c) one delegate from Liberal International, 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. Upon prior written invitation from the Bureau, individual members and other persons may be entitled to attend the meetings of the Council, without voting right.
4. Delegates of full or affiliate members sitting in any international or European Assembly should belong to the Liberal, Democrat and Reform Group of that Assembly.
5. Members shall communicate the names of the delegates in writing to the Secretariat not later than four weeks before the meeting.
6. Should the President be absent or unable to carry out his duties he shall be replaced by one of the Vice-Presidents who shall have full powers.
7. The agenda for Council meetings shall be drawn up by the Bureau and circulated to members one month before each Council meeting.
8. The President may limit both the speaking time and the number of times a member may speak on any one topic.
9. The Council may set up committees it thinks fit, and shall provide terms of reference and rules of procedure for those working and advisory groups and any other committees set up by Congress or Council.
10. Voting in Council will be by show of hands, but written ballot may be taken by decision of the Council or upon proposal of the Bureau decisions may be taken by circular letter. Decisions of the Council are taken by simple majority if the Articles of Association do not foresee otherwise. For decisions of the Council at least one third of the total number of delegates must be present and vote.
11. In case of dispute on procedure, the ruling by the President or Chair of that session shall be final.
12. The Council may discuss urgency resolutions. Any full member party may propose urgency resolutions. These must relate to current or recent political events or to topical issues that have occurred since the last meeting of the Council.
Urgency resolutions can be submitted to the secretariat until the start of the Bureau meeting prior to the ELDR Council. Draft urgencies can contain maximum 150 words. The Bureau shall decide whether to debate urgency resolutions.

VIII. BUREAU

1. Candidates for membership of the Bureau must be nominated by a full member of the Association.
2. The Secretary-General of the Association will serve as Secretary of the Bureau.
The following persons will be entitled to attend the meetings of the Bureau as observers, without voting right:
 - a) The Honorary President(s) of the Association;
 - b) The President of the parliamentary Group of the ELDR Party in the European Parliament, The Secretary-general of this Group may also assist upon invitation from the Bureau.
 - c) The President of the Group of the ELDR Party in the Committee of the Regions, the Secretary-general of this Group may also assist upon invitation from the Bureau.
 - d) The President of the Group of the ELDR Party in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Secretary-general of this Group may also assist upon invitation from the Bureau.
 - e) The President of LYMEC (European Liberal Youth).
3. Should the President be absent or unable to carry out his duties he shall be replaced by one of the Vice-Presidents and/or the Treasurer who shall have full powers.
4. The Bureau may propose to set up working groups, advisory bodies and committees to the Council and the Congress and shall provide terms of reference and rules of procedure.
5. The Bureau may admit other third parties as observers without voting right, by unanimous consent.

IX. SECRETARY GENERAL

1. The Secretary-General:
 - a) will assist the Association;
 - b) must belong to a full member of the Association;
 - c) will head a Secretariat, the composition and organisation of which will be proposed by the Secretary-General to the Bureau;

- d) will be assisted in the exercise of his/her functions by the full and affiliate members;
- e) will be accountable to the Council;
- f) will organise the meetings of the organs of the Association;
- g) will maintain contacts among full and affiliate members and the Association;
- h) on behalf of the Bureau, will report on the Associations' activities to the Congress.

X. TREASURER

1. The Treasurer, on behalf of the Bureau:

- a) will propose the annual budget and the financial contributions of the members to the Council;
- b) will account for the expenses of the Secretariat and all other organs of the Association;
- c) will be responsible for the accounts of the electoral fund at the disposal of the Association.
- d) may propose to the Bureau - which may agree - a variation in the financial obligations of any full or affiliated party.

2. The Treasurer will take a particular role with the Secretary General in administration and personnel management of the Association.

XI. MEMBERS

1. Individual membership

a) Individual members should pay a membership fee. The membership fee is proposed by the Bureau and adopted by the Council.

b) They should have access to frequent e-reports on events, initiatives and news of the ELDR.

c) They may attend the Annual Congress of the ELDR Party, as observers (non-voting) upon prior invitation of the Bureau.

d) The Bureau has the right to object (on reasonable grounds) to an application for individual membership, has the right to annul individual membership of any individual, and has the right to expel an individual member. An individual that has been rejected membership of the association by the Bureau, or has been expelled, can ask for his/her case to be put before a vote in the Council.

2. Member parties

Newly founded full or affiliate member parties who succeed to the rights of full or affiliate member parties of the Association must reapply to be members of the Association.

3. Observer parties

ELDR membership shall consist of full and affiliate member parties. A third category of members is established under the following conditions.

Parties applying for ELDR membership have the possibility to apply for observer status if their situation does not allow them to become full member straight away.

Parties who can not pay their contributions for 2 years, will - subject to the approval by the ELDR Council - fall back in the status of observer and if after 3 years they still don't pay their fees, they will automatically be considered as having resigned from ELDR membership.

Observer members:

- pay a membership fee of 2.000€;
- do not have the right to vote;
- do not get reimbursement of their travel expenses;
- can only be observers for a period of 3 years. At the end of that period they can decide to apply for affiliate or full membership.

XII. POLITICAL LEADERS

1. The Bureau convenes the Political Leaders and Ministers Meeting at least twice a year to exchange views on items on the agenda of the European Council and the actual European political situation.

2. The Political Leaders' Meeting shall consist:

- a) The President and Vice-Presidents of the Bureau;
- b) The Political Leaders of members;
- c) The President of the Group of the ELDR Party in the European Parliament
- d) The President of the Group of the ELDR Party in the Committee of the Regions
- e) ELDR Ministers and Commissioners.
- f) The President of LYMEC

3. The Bureau may invite leading personalities to take part in the meetings of the Political Leaders' Meeting e.g. leaders of affiliate members or leaders of political parties which share the same liberal, democrat and reform values members of the European Commission and Council that belong to a full member and the Presidents of the Liberal, Democrat and Reform-Groups in other international fora.