



## **ALLIANCE OF LIBERALS AND DEMOCRATS FOR EUROPE**

### **Rules of Procedure**

Adopted at the Group meeting on 4 February 2009

## CHAPTER I CONSTITUTION OF THE GROUP

### Rule 1 The Group

1. The political group is called:

in Basque: Europarako Demokrata eta Liberalen Aliantza  
in Bulgarian: Алианс на либералите и демократите за Европа  
in Catalan: Aliança dels Demòcrates i Liberals per Europa  
in Czech: Aliance liberálů a demokratů pro Evropu  
in Danish: Alliancen af Liberale og Demokrater for Europa  
in Dutch: Alliantie van Liberalen en Democraten voor Europa  
in English: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe  
in Estonian: Euroopa demokraatide ja liberaalide liit  
in Finnish: Euroopan liberaalien ja demokraattien liitto  
in French: Alliance des démocrates et des libéraux pour l'Europe  
in Gaelic: Comhaontas Daonlathaithe agus Liobrálaithe na hEorpa  
in German: Allianz der Liberalen und Demokraten für Europa  
in Greek: Συμμαχία Φιλελευθέρων και Δημοκρατών για την Ευρώπη  
in Hungarian: Liberálisok és Demokraták Szövetsége Európáért  
in Italian: Alleanza dei Democratici e dei Liberali per l'Europa  
in Latvian: Eiropas Liberāļu un demokrātu apvienības  
in Lithuanian: Liberalų ir demokratų aljansas už Europą  
in Maltese: Alleanza tal-Liberali u d-Demokratiċi għall-Ewropa  
in Polish: Porozumienie Liberalów i Demokratów na rzecz Europy  
in Portuguese: Aliança dos Democratas e Liberais pela Europa  
in Romanian: Alianța Liberalilor și Democraților pentru Europa  
in Slovak: Aliancie liberálov a demokratov za Európu  
in Slovenian: Zavezništvo liberalcev in demokratov za Evropo  
in Spanish: Alianza de los Demócratas y Liberales por Europa  
in Swedish: Alliansen liberaler och demokrater för Europa

2. The Group is called "ALDE" in its abbreviated form.
3. The Group promotes the ALDE programme for Europe and seeks a common position on all important problems affecting the European Union.
4. The Group develops close working relationships with its national and/or regional parliamentary groups, its parliamentary group in the Council of Europe, and its party colleagues in the European Council, the Council, the Commission, the Committee of the Regions, and its regional parliamentary groupings outside Europe (such as CALD and ALDEPAC).

## **Rule 2**

### **Membership of the Group**

1. The Group shall consist of representatives elected to the European Parliament on the lists of the member parties of the European Democratic Party (EDP) and the European Liberal, Democrat and Reform Party (ELDR) (i.e. at the time of the EP elections).
2. Other Members of the European Parliament may become Members of the Group, if the Group so decides by a majority of two thirds, when a quorum exists, on a proposal from the Bureau and after seeking the opinions of the Members of the same nationality of the Group and after the applicants have subscribed to the programme for Europe of the ALDE Group.
3. Each new Member shall sign a declaration of membership of the Group which shall be preserved in the Group records and kept at the disposal of the Secretary-General of the European Parliament.
4. In case of members referred to in sub-paragraph 2, the Group may decide, after deliberation and after having heard the member concerned, to terminate membership, in which case the decision shall be taken by a majority of 2/3, when a quorum exists.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **ELECTED POSITIONS**

## **Rule 3**

### **Nomination of candidates**

1. At the beginning of each constituent sitting of Parliament, the Group shall nominate the candidates for the posts laid down in Parliament's rules of procedure and for the posts within the Group.
2. Without prejudice to the Rules of Procedure of the Parliament, the term of office of the elected positions in the EP and in the Group shall be two and half years and shall be renewable.
3. The Bureau shall decide on a case by case basis which, if any, positions it wishes to exclude from the D'Hondt procedure.
4. The Bureau shall when necessary make proposals to the Group to fill vacancies.

## **Rule 4**

### **Election of the President**

1. The President shall be elected first and by secret ballot. Nominations shall be handed before each ballot to the oldest member, who shall announce them to the Group and take the Chair until the President has been elected. If after two ballots no candidate has obtained an absolute majority of the votes cast, the third ballot shall be confined to the two members who have obtained the highest number of votes in the second ballot; in the event of a tie, the elder candidate shall be declared elected.
2. No business shall be transacted while the oldest Member is in the Chair unless it is concerned with the election of the President.

## **Rule 5**

### **Duties of the President**

1. The President shall lead all the activities of the Group and shall represent the Group within the framework of the provisions of these rules of procedure.
2. The President shall be responsible for coordinating press statements on behalf of the Group and for communications to third parties. Should the President be absent or unable to discharge his/her duties, he/she shall be replaced by the Vice-Presidents in order of precedence.

## **Rule 6**

### **Election of the Vice-Presidents**

1. A minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 Vice-Presidents shall be elected according to the single transferable vote system (STV) by secret ballot. Nominations shall be handed before each ballot to the President.
2. The Vice-Presidents shall take precedence in the order they were elected.

## **Rule 7**

### **The Treasurer and the Whip**

One of the Vice-Presidents will be Treasurer and one will be the Whip.

## **Rule 8**

### **The Presidency**

1. The Presidency shall consist of the Group President and a maximum of six Vice-Presidents.
2. The Presidency shall be responsible for preparing the meetings of the Bureau and for taking decisions in urgent cases instead of the competent body; any such decisions shall be submitted to the competent body.
3. The Presidency shall also be responsible for convening and presiding over Group meetings and leading the Group in plenary sittings; representing the Group externally; preparing Group decisions; the day-to-day administration of the Group, and other issues delegated to it by the Group.

## **Rule 9**

### **Members of the Bureau**

1. The Bureau shall consist of :
  - a) Members elected by the Group: the President; the Vice-Presidents, including Treasurer and Whip;
  - b) Members whose appointment shall be automatic: Members of the Group who are Members of the Bureau of the Parliament, Questors, Chairmen of parliamentary committees, former Presidents of the European Parliament and of the Group;
  - c) One representative appointed by each party, including the one of the President when they are not otherwise represented.

2. The number of votes of the representatives of each national political party delegation corresponds to the number of Members of the respective party in the Group. A party delegation which has more than one representative in the Bureau must indicate to the President which representative will assume the number of votes of the Members of his party.
3. After fresh elections to Parliament, the outgoing Bureau shall remain in office until the new Bureau has been formed.

## **Rule 10**

### **Duties of the Bureau**

1. The Bureau of the Group shall prepare the strategic decisions of the Group, approve the draft annual budget and shall be responsible for the composition of the secretariat (recruitment, termination of contracts and promotions).
2. The Bureau can decide on the creation of permanent working groups involving Members from different parliamentary committees and temporary working groups on specific issues with a view to a more effective preparation of the Group's deliberations and decisions. The Bureau shall decide the membership, tasks and terms of reference of these working groups.
3. The President shall regularly inform the Group of the Bureau's decisions. The summary of decisions of Bureau meetings shall be put on the intranet.

## **Rule 11**

### **Co-ordinators**

1. The full Members of each parliamentary committee shall elect from among themselves a Coordinator for a period of two and a half years. The Bureau shall confirm the election of all the Coordinators in order to guarantee a fair representation. The Coordinators shall provide a political steer for all the Group through the range of policies that will be dealt with by the particular committee, according to the policy line taken by the Group. They will advise the Bureau on policy matters. Meetings of the Coordinators will be chaired by the Whip.
2. The Coordinators shall, in particular, co-ordinate the activities of the Members of their committee and shall ensure that the Group is both coherent and well represented in the respective fields of competence of their committees. Within their committee, the Coordinators shall coordinate the nomination of (shadow) rapporteurs, and they shall represent the ALDE committee members at meetings of the Coordinators and Bureau of that committee.
3. A Member who cannot participate in a vote of a parliamentary committee should inform his or her Coordinator as soon as possible.
4. The Coordinators can decide on the creation of temporary working groups on specific issues involving members from different parliamentary committees.

## **Rule 12**

### **Presidents of working groups**

1. The Presidents of different permanent working groups shall be elected by the Group on a proposal from the Bureau.
2. The Presidents of different temporary working groups shall be elected by the Group on a proposal from the Coordinators.
3. The working methods of permanent working groups shall be annexed to the ALDE Rules of Procedure.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **ORGANISATION OF WORK, QUORUM AND VOTING**

## **Rule 13**

### **Meetings of the Group and Bureau**

1. The Group and the Bureau shall be convened on the initiative of the President, or on a proposal from the Bureau or from one third of the Members of the Group with a previously fixed agenda.
2. The proceedings of the Group and its various bodies shall not be held in public.
3. Guests may be allowed to attend the proceedings of the Group and its various bodies if invited or authorised to do so by the President.
4. The Presidents of the European Parties forming the ALDE Group will be invited whenever there are subjects in the agenda concerning these bodies. The Secretaries-General of the European Parties forming the ALDE Group will also assist whenever an invitation has been forwarded to their Party Presidents.
5. In the conduct of its proceedings the Group shall be guided by the internal rules and usual practice of the European Parliament.

## **Rule 14**

### **Quorum**

1. The Group may deliberate and fix the agenda whatever the number of Members present.
2. A quorum shall exist when more than one third of the Members are present.
3. Decisions shall be valid whatever the number of voters, provided that the President has not been asked by a Member before the vote begins to establish the numbers present. In the absence of a quorum, the vote shall be placed on the agenda of the next meeting.

## **Rule 15**

### **Voting**

1. Except where otherwise provided for in these rules of procedure, a simple majority shall be required for the decisions of the Group and its various bodies.
2. Voting by proxy shall be permitted, but no one may be appointed proxy for more than one Member. A proxy vote has to be notified in writing to the Secretary-General.
3. Normally the Group shall vote by show of hands or, where the result is doubtful, by electronic vote or by sitting and standing.

4. Group decisions of minor importance can be taken by e-mail or intranet vote within a fixed deadline unless 1/10 of the members of the Group object, in which case the decision will be referred to the next Group meeting.

### **Rule 16**

#### **Voting by roll call vote and by secret ballot**

1. The vote shall be taken by roll call if so requested by a third of the Members of the Group before voting begins. The roll shall be called in alphabetical order, beginning with the name of a Member drawn by lot. The President shall be the last to be called to vote.
2. In addition to the case provided for under Rule 4, voting may also be by secret ballot if requested by a third of the Members of the Group before voting begins.
3. A request for a secret ballot shall take priority over a request for a vote by roll call.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **SECRETARIAT - FINANCE**

#### **Rule 17**

##### **Group Secretariat**

1. The secretariat shall assist the Group. The staff of the Group shall undertake to give loyalty to the Group.
2. The secretariat shall be headed and coordinated by the Secretary-General of the Group, who shall be appointed by the Bureau on a proposal from the President. The Bureau may also appoint, on a proposal from the President, two or three Deputy-Secretaries-General. In all cases before putting forward his proposals to the Bureau, the President shall consult the Presidency.
3. The Secretary-General shall take all the necessary measures to ensure the smooth running of the secretariat. In particular, he/she shall assign members of the secretariat in accordance with the aims and needs of the Group.
4. The Bureau, on a proposal from the Secretary General, shall authorise the President to employ and terminate the employment of members of the secretariat, in accordance with the provisions of the Staff Regulations and the Parliament's implementing provisions.

#### **Rule 18**

##### **Group budget**

1. Before the beginning of a new financial year, the Treasurer shall, with the assistance of the Secretary-General, submit to the Bureau the Group's provisional budget for the following year.
2. The Treasurer shall present the draft budget adopted by the Bureau to the Group for its approval.
3. Financial transactions shall be governed by the Group's financial regulations.
4. The Secretary-General is responsible for the implementation of the budget.
5. Based on the annual report of the external auditing, the Treasurer shall seek the discharge by the Group for the implementation of the budget.

**CHAPTER V**  
**INTERPRETATION AND AMENDMENT OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

**Rule 19**  
**Interpretation**

Should doubt arise over the interpretation of these rules of procedure, the President may make an immediate decision or, in the case of a serious dispute, refer the matter to the Bureau for decision.

**Rule 20**  
**Amendment of the rules**

1. On a proposal from the Bureau, the Group shall decide on amendments to these rules of procedure by an absolute majority of its Members.
2. Without prejudice to Rule 20, these rules shall be put to a confirmatory vote at the constituent meeting of the Group in the July following each general election.



## **ANNEX**

### **ALDE WORKING GROUPS**

#### **WORKING METHODS**

- WGs are open to all ALDE Members irrespective of the committee to which they belong, and irrespective of the legislative or otherwise nature of the committee.
- The week preceding the plenary week, WGs discuss and decide mainly on the amendments and resolutions to be tabled on behalf of the Group and on the sensitive/controversial/key reports to be adopted in Plenary or in Committee.
- During the plenary session weeks, the WGs discuss and decide mainly on the voting lists of the reports to be adopted during the plenary week.
- At the start of each WG meeting, the agenda will be adopted and all the points agreed will be discussed. If the responsible Member (shadow or his/her substitute) is not present when his/her point should be dealt with, he/she will be replaced by the Chair. The policy advisor in charge of each WG will provide the Chair with the necessary information to introduce, in this case, the relevant point of the agenda.
- Each issue decided by the WG is considered to be adopted by the Group and cannot be re-opened in the full Group meeting.
- Before closing a point in the WG's agenda, the Chair will inform Members if a particular controversial issue (i.e. case of a tie vote) will go to the full Group.
- Any decision on whether to bring a particular issue (controversial amendment or paragraph of a resolution), to the full Group belongs to the Chair (at his/her own initiative or at the request of a Member).
- The Chairs of the WGs will immediately inform the Group of the WG's decisions.

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## **ALDE RULES OF PROCEDURE**

### ***WHY STV IS GOOD NEWS FOR LIBERALS AND DEMOCRATS***

#### What is the Single Transferable Vote?

The Single Transferable Vote (STV) is a system of proportional representation which empowers voters.

Voters list the candidates they would like to support in order of preference: 1,2,3 etc.

#### How are votes counted in an STV election?

To be elected a candidate needs to pass a quota. The quota is the number of valid votes cast divided by the number of candidates to be elected.

Ballot papers are sorted according to voters' first choices. Candidates who fulfil the quota are then declared elected in order of precedence.

Surplus votes of these successful candidates – that is, the number of votes over the quota - are then transferred to other candidates according to voters' second choices.

If not enough candidates have been elected, the candidate with the lowest number of votes is eliminated. That candidate's votes are then transferred to the (unelected) candidates marked as second choice.

The transfer of surpluses and the elimination of candidates continue until the required number of candidates has been elected.

No vote is wasted.

#### What's it like for the voter?

Simple! If the candidate who is your first choice receives more votes than he or she needs to be elected, the surplus votes will be transferred to your second choice.

If, in turn, your second preference candidate has more votes than are needed, then the surplus is again transferred to your third, and so on.

If the candidate who is your first choice has so few votes that he or she does not have enough support to be elected, your vote will be transferred to your second choice. Similarly, if that candidate also does not have enough support, your vote will be transferred to your third choice, and so on.

#### What if I want to vote for only one candidate?

Your favourite candidate will not be disadvantaged if you list other preferences: these preferences will only be used if your first choice candidate is either safely elected or eliminated.

The more preferences you mark, the more likely it is you will influence the outcome of the election.

#### How accountable is STV?

STV is ideal for a more sophisticated electorate (like the ALDE Group). It is more proportional than other PR systems because it takes account of voters' comprehensive opinion of every candidate, and not just No. 1.

So every candidate – and every one elected – is very accountable. With STV, more voters will have a representative for whom they voted.

So how good is STV, really?

Voting is simple, and the choice is wide.

Computers make counting a synch.

The result will be broadly proportional to voters' wishes in terms of personality, nationality and gender.

STV eliminates the need for tactical voting: the more popular candidates will win!

*A.N.D*

*27-11-08*