

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE RENEW EUROPE GROUP IN THE EUROPEAN COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS¹

As revised on 3 February 2020

Introductory comment: As per the rules of procedure of the CoR, unless otherwise stated, the term "members" refers to full members or, where relevant, duly-mandated alternate members.

CHAPTER 1

Constitution

Article 1

The Group shall be called Renew Europe. In legal terms, the Group is the continuation of the ALDE-CoR Group, established in 2005, which in turn was the continuation of the ELDR-CoR Group established in 1997.

CHAPTER II

Purpose

Article 2

The Renew Europe Group:

- a) brings together like-minded politicians from liberal, democrat, and reform parties in a multinational group, enabling them to cooperate and shape the policies of the CoR, on the basis of liberal and democrat principles;
- b) is the representative in the European Committee of the Regions of the Renew Europe Political Caucus, namely:
 - the ALDE Party (including its member parties),
 - the EDP Party (including its member parties),
 - national/regional parties whose MEPs sit with the Renew Europe group in the European Parliament;
- c) actively contributes to the political agenda of the Political Caucus, and its associated organisations, primarily by raising issues of specific local and regional interest; helps to

¹ In case of discrepancy between language versions, the English version shall prevail.

strengthen the Political Caucus' ties with the subnational level; and may in turn help to promote the political objectives of the Caucus within the CoR and beyond;

d) develops close working relationships with the national/regional parties represented in the Group, with the Renew Europe Group in the European Parliament, and with other liberal and democrat groups or representatives in EU institutions and other international bodies;

e) promotes the role and political influence of the European Committee of the Regions as a European institution and representative of local and regional authorities at the European level.

CHAPTER III

Membership

Article 3

As a matter of principle, the Renew Europe Group is composed of members and alternate members of the European Committee of the Regions belonging to our Political Caucus.

Article 4

Members and alternate members of the European Committee of the Regions not belonging to the Political Caucus, and accepting these Statutes, and the Group's policy priorities for the relevant mandate, may apply for membership of the Group. Their applications will require the approval of a two-thirds majority of the members present at the relevant group meeting, provided there is a quorum, and on condition that their applications are approved by a simple majority of existing group members (including alternates) belonging to the same national delegation.

Article 5

A copy of the signed application to join the Group shall be forwarded to the Secretary General of the CoR.

Article 6

Membership of the Group shall terminate a) when the CoR mandate of the member or alternate ceases, b) in the event of a resignation from the Group or from the CoR, c) if the member or alternate joins a political party which is not part of the Political Caucus, d) if the party of the member or alternate ceases to belong to the Political Caucus, or e) following a decision taken at a group meeting by a two-third majority of the Group members present, provided there is a quorum.

Article 7

Observers from candidate countries invited by CoR, may participate in Renew Europe Group activities, with a right to speak and a right to propose items for the agenda. They will receive all Group communications.

CHAPTER IV

Bodies of the group

Article 8

The bodies of the Renew Europe Group shall be:

- the Group Meeting
- the Bureau

The Group shall be assisted by a secretariat, headed by a Secretary General.

The Group Meeting

Article 9

The Group shall:

- establish the political priorities for the Renew Europe Group, both within the framework of the CoR as well as in its external activities;
- decide on applications for membership of the Group;
- determine the position of the Renew Europe group on issues of political importance;
- designate coordinators of the Renew Europe Group in the commissions/committees of the CoR;
- nominate candidates of the Renew Europe Group in the bodies of the CoR, ad hoc groups and CoR Bureau committees/working groups;
- elect the President and Vice-Presidents of the Group;
- adopt the Rules of Procedure of the Group
- approve the agendas of the Group meetings.

The Bureau

Article 10

Duties

The Bureau shall:

- coordinate the strategic objectives and priorities for the Group across the different CoR Commissions and working groups;
- discuss political decisions required of the Group, and make proposals for the Group's approval.

Article 11

Bureau meetings

The Bureau shall convene before every ordinary group meeting or on the initiative of the President, or on a written proposal from one third of the members of the Group, provided there are available funds to cover the related costs.

Article 12

Composition

The Bureau shall consist of CoR members as follows:

- a) members elected by the Group:
- the President
 - the First Vice-President
 - the Second Vice-President
 - the Third Vice-President

At least one of the above should be a man and at least one a woman, but every effort will be made to ensure gender parity in the above positions.

- five further elected members, of whom at least one should be a man and at least one should be a woman

The Group coordinators can be invited to Group Bureau meetings, for specific matters related to their commission, and provided budgetary resources are available or not required.

b) any member the Bureau wishes to co-opt on to the Bureau. The Bureau should, as far as possible and respecting proportions within the Group, reflect the diversity of the Political Caucus as defined in Article 2b.

c) members holding an office in CoR, or who are former CoR presidents, and former presidents of the Group who are still members of the CoR are members ex officio of the Bureau. The Secretary General is a non voting member.

Establishment of a quorum will require the presence of: The President (or one Vice President by delegation) and two other Bureau members.

Renew Europe Members of the CoR Bureau can also attend Group Bureau meetings when invited by the President.

Other secretariat staff can attend Bureau meetings as and when required by the President.

The President

Article 13

Tasks of the President

The President shall:

- convene and chair the meetings of the Group and the Bureau;
- represent the Group and act as a spokesperson for the Group in the Plenary Sessions of the CoR;
- designate spokespersons of the Group in the debates in the CoR plenary where required, giving priority to Vice-Presidents, Coordinators and Rapporteurs;
- represent the Group in the Bureau of the CoR and in the Conference of Presidents;
- represent the Group in external contacts, including meetings and events of the Political Caucus.

Article 14

Election of the President

a) The President of the Group shall be elected by secret ballot (provided there is more than one candidate) for half a term of office of the CoR, at the start of each term of office and at mid-term.

The mandate of the President is renewable. If there is only one candidate, the election will be by acclamation.

b) Should the President's seat become vacant during the term of office, the duties attached thereto shall be discharged by one or all of the Vice-Presidents. The Group shall elect a president for the remaining part of that term of office at the first ordinary group meeting following the vacancy of the President's seat.

c) Candidacies for the presidency of the Group shall be declared to the Renew Europe Secretariat a) in writing, bearing the signature of the candidate, or b) by email from an account bearing the name of the candidate or having been established as belonging to the candidate.

d) The President shall be elected by an absolute majority of the votes of the members present, provided there is quorum. 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, and a relative majority will suffice.

e) The Secretary General shall chair the meeting at which the President is elected, and only during the election of the President. Any other items on the agenda shall be chaired by the newly elected President. Notice of that meeting shall be given to the members of the Group at least 15 days in advance.

The Vice-Presidents

Article 15

The Vice Presidents will substitute the President, when he or she is unable to fulfil a particular duty and has delegated the task in writing or via the Secretary General.

Election of the Vice Presidents:

a) The Vice Presidents and the five elected members shall be elected by secret ballot, where there is more than one candidate for the position, for half a term of office of the CoR, at the start of each term of office and at mid-term. Their mandate is renewable. Positions for which there is only one candidate, shall be elected by acclamation.

b) Should one of the Vice-Presidents' seat become vacant during the term of office, the Group shall elect a new Vice President for the remaining part of that term of office at the first ordinary group meeting following the vacancy of that Vice President's seat.

c) Candidacies for the Vice-Presidencies shall be declared to the Renew Europe Secretariat a) in writing, bearing the signature of the candidate, or b) by email from an account bearing the name of the candidate or having been established as belonging to the candidate.

d) For the first two ballots an absolute majority of the members present shall be required, provided there is a quorum. For a subsequent ballot a relative majority shall suffice.

CHAPTER V

Group Officers

Coordinators

Article 16

Renew Europe shall have a coordinator and a deputy coordinator in each CoR Commission or committee. At least one of these should be a full member of the CoR. Alternate members can be coordinators provided they are in a position to attend plenary sessions regularly.

Tasks of the coordinators

The coordinator shall:

- represent the Group at CoR Coordinators meetings;
- act as a spokesperson for the Renew Europe Group in the relevant CoR Commission;
- chair the Group's preparatory meetings ahead of CoR Commission meetings;
- see to the appointment of shadow rapporteurs;
- report back to the group on the work in progress; advise the group on a common position in the plenary debate, point out important or sensitive issues;
- maintain contacts with Renew Europe members in other assemblies, responsible for the same policy areas.

The coordinator and deputy coordinator will be supported by the secretariat of the group.

Article 17

Election of the coordinators

The Group coordinators and deputy coordinators shall be elected by the Group for half a term of office of the CoR, at the start of each term of office and at mid-term. They shall be elected by relative majority, provided there is a quorum. For positions where there is only one candidate, the election shall be by acclamation. When a coordinator and deputy coordinator are both unable to attend a meeting, another member may represent the Group at the Coordinators Meeting of the relevant CoR Commission.

CHAPTER VI

Organisation of work

Meetings

Article 18

- a) The Group shall meet as a rule before every plenary session at the invitation of the President, who establishes the Draft Agenda.
- b) The President may convene an extraordinary meeting of the group at any time in compliance with CoR organisational and financial rules, and shall also do so upon the request of the Bureau, or one third of the group members;
- c) Any member may request that an item be entered on the agenda of a Group Meeting.

Article 19

- a) The President can invite any guest speakers and/or observers to a group meeting or Extraordinary Group Meeting.
- b) The proceedings of the Group and its various bodies shall not be held in public.

Voting

Article 20

The Group shall adopt decisions by a simple majority of the votes cast, unless stipulated otherwise in the Rules of Procedure.

Article 21

Every member has one vote.

Article 22

A quorum shall be established when one third of the members are present.

Except where these Rules stipulate that a quorum is required, all 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. If it has been established that a quorum has not been reached, the vote shall be deferred until a quorum is reached during the same meeting, and failing that, the matter shall be referred to the Bureau to decide whether to place it on the agenda of the next meeting, modify the proposal, or hold a vote by written procedure at a later date.

CHAPTER VII

The Secretariat

The Secretary General

Article 23

Duties of the Secretary General:

- The Secretary General is responsible for proposing and implementing the Secretariat's strategy and the day-to-day running of the Secretariat, as well as giving effect to decisions taken by the Group, the Bureau or the Group's elected representatives.
- The Secretary General is the head of the Group secretariat, and is responsible for ensuring a motivating and safe working environment for the staff, providing them with clear job descriptions, and ensuring they enjoy opportunities for career development within the means available to the Group.

Article 24

Appointment of the Secretary General

The Secretary General shall be nominated by the Group at a proposal of the Bureau, following a selection procedure which will identify the most suitable candidate for the position as outlined in Article 23. The Secretary General shall be committed to the political objectives of the Group. The President shall request the CoR Secretary General to recruit the nominated candidate in accordance with the EU Staff Regulations and the CoR implementing provisions.

The Staff

Article 25

Duties of the Staff of the secretariat:

- Give political advice, operational and administrative support to the Group in particular with a view to achieving the objectives outlined in Article 2;
- Assist the members in the preparations of their work as CoR members

Article 26

Appointment and termination of contracts of staff members:

- Members of the staff are nominated by the President, following a proposal by a selection panel composed of the Secretary General and at least one Member, who may be the President or a Member delegated by the President. In accordance with CoR recruitment procedures, CoR staff representatives independent of the Group may be part of the panel. The President may consult with the Bureau or the Group before informing the CoR Secretary General of the nominated candidate.
- The Group supports an open and inclusive working environment and protects against discrimination based on any grounds, such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity.

- In accordance with the EU Staff Regulations and the CoR implementing provisions, staff in political groups are hired on an indefinite basis, following a period of probation. In accordance with the relevant staff regulations and following a proposal by the Group Secretary General, the President may request that the CoR Secretary General terminate a staff member's contract. The President may seek the approval of the Group Bureau. By analogy with Article 24, and in accordance with the EU Staff Regulations and the CoR implementing provisions, the contract of the Group Secretary General may be terminated by the Group, following a proposal by the Bureau and requiring a majority of the Group's members.

Article 27

All staff members of the Group shall undertake to give absolute loyalty to the group and in particular to consult, as appropriate, with the Secretary General or the relevant member of the Renew Europe Group, upon receiving instructions from persons outside the Group.

CHAPTER VIII

Interpretation and amendment of the Rules of Procedure

Article 28

The President of the Group shall settle any doubts about the application or interpretation of the Rules of Procedure. In the event of serious dispute, he/she shall submit the details to the Bureau for its consideration. The Group shall, on a proposal from the Bureau, settle the dispute.

Article 29

Any proposal to amend these Rules of Procedure shall be presented to the Group for approval at

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a Group Meeting. Members shall receive at least 10 days' notice of the proposal.

The Secretariat will provide a copy of the Rules of Procedure to Members and Alternates upon joining the Group, or at any time upon request by any Group Member or Alternate; the Secretariat will ensure the latest version of the Rules is publicly available on the Group website.

End of Renew Europe Rules of Procedure