

# Rules of Procedure

## Group of the Party of European Socialists in the Committee of the Regions

Adopted on 9 March 1994

Subsequently amended on 12 March 1998, on 26 April 2006, on 3 December 2009 and on 3 December 2015.

## Preamble

The Group of the Party of European Socialists (PES) in the Committee of the Regions of the European Union brings together full and alternate members of the Committee of the Regions who, in full respect of the values enshrined in the Treaty of the European Union, in the PES Declaration of Principles as adopted on 24 November 2011, in the PES Statutes as adopted by the 10th PES Congress on 12th June 2015 and in the Committee of the Regions' Mission Statement of 21 April 2009, are committed to working towards stronger social and territorial cohesion within the European Union, sustainable growth, the promotion of fundamental rights and a better recognition of the role of local and regional authorities in the process of European integration.

## Chapter I

### The members of the Group

#### Rule 1

##### Name and aims

1. The Group of the Party of European Socialists (PES) shall be constituted in accordance with the provisions of its own Rules of Procedure and of the Rules of Procedure and secondary rules of the Committee of the Regions (CoR).
2. The aims of the Group are:
  - to increase the role and political influence of the Committee of the Regions in the European decision-making process;
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  - to develop close working relationships with the social-democrat and socialist parties represented in the Group, with the PES, with the S&D Group in the European Parliament, with social-democrat and socialist groups in other bodies;
  - to contribute to the political agenda of the PES and raise issues of specific local and regional interest.

#### Rule 2

##### Membership of the Group

1. Full and alternate members of the Committee of the Regions who belong to a party which is a member of the Party of European Socialists shall be entitled to membership of the Group.
2. A member not affiliated to a political party or affiliated to a political party which is not a member of the PES may submit a request for individual membership to the PES Group.

3. Members of the PES Group shall endorse and abide by the Group's collective values referred to in the Preamble of its Rules of Procedure.
4. The Bureau of the PES Group, after consultation of the national delegation concerned, shall decide on applications from members of the Committee of the Regions for individual membership of the Group.
5. Membership of the Group shall cease when a member has lost his/her mandate in the Committee of the Regions, when he or she resigns.
6. The Bureau of the PES Group may propose to the Group that any Member of the Group, who does not respect the Rules of Procedure of the Group, may be subject to sanctions that may include suspension or exclusion from the Group. The Member concerned is invited to be heard by the Bureau. Pending the Group's decision, the PES Bureau may suspend the membership of the Member concerned. A decision of the PES Group to impose sanctions requires a majority of two thirds of the votes cast by secret ballot at the Group's Plenary Assembly.

**Rule 3  
National  
delegations**

Members of the same nationality may form a national delegation within the PES Group.

## **Chapter II Bodies and Duties**

**Rule 4  
Bodies of the Group**

The bodies of the Group are the Plenary Assembly and the Bureau.

**Rule 5  
The Plenary Assembly**

1. The Plenary Assembly shall carry out the duties assigned to it in these Rules of Procedure.
2. The Plenary Assembly shall adopt the general guidelines for the Group's action in the Committee of the Regions.
3. The Plenary Assembly shall, upon a proposal by the Bureau, approve the general organisation of the Group's work and its budget.

4. The Plenary Assembly shall elect the Chair, the 1st Vice-Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Group.
5. The Plenary Assembly shall adopt the Group's Rules of Procedure.

## **Rule 6 The Bureau**

The Bureau shall consist of the Chair, the 1st Vice-Chair, the other Vice-Chairs and at least one member from each Member State of the European Union represented within the PES Group and proposed by the respective delegations, together with the following members in an ex-officio capacity:

- PES Group members of the Committee of the Regions' Bureau;
- PES Group Chairs of the CoR commissions and the CoR commission on financial and administrative affairs;
- PES Group Coordinators of the CoR commissions.

## **Rule 7 Election of the Chair, 1st Vice-Chair and Vice-Chairs**

1. Applications for the Chair of the Group shall be submitted to the PES Group Secretariat at the latest 5 working days before the meeting of the Plenary Assembly.
2. Under the supervision of a former President of the Group, the Group shall elect the Chair and subsequently the 1st Vice-Chair by an absolute majority of the votes cast by secret ballot.
3. If after the first round, no candidate has received the required majority, the second round should be restricted to the two candidates having obtained the highest number of votes in the first round.. In the event of a tie, the oldest candidate shall be considered elected.
4. The Group has a policy of equality between women and men. For the election of the 1st Vice-Chair, candidatures are restricted to members of the sex opposite to that of the Chair.
5. In the event of election of further Vice-Chairs, the procedure used for the election of the Chair and 1st Vice-Chair is followed.

## **Rule 8 Duration of term of office**

1. The term of office of the Bureau shall be two and a half years. It begins with the CoR constitutive plenary session and ends with the renewal of the CoR Bureau members occurring in the middle of the CoR 5-year term of office. The second half of the CoR term of office ends with the next CoR constitutive plenary session. The term of office of the Bureau is renewable.
2. If a vacancy arises before the end of this period, the substitute shall carry out his/her duties only until the end of the term of office of

his/her predecessor.

**Rule 9**  
**The Chair's duties**

1. The Chair shall coordinate all the activities of the Group and shall chair its meetings.
2. The Chair shall represent the Group in the CoR's constitutive bodies and in both internal and external activities.

**Rule 10**  
**The 1st Vice-Chair's duties**

The 1st Vice-Chair shall take over the Chair's duties in case of absence, of impediment or if the Chair has a conflict of interest with regard to a particular point of the agenda of a Group meeting

**Rule 11**  
**The role of the Bureau**

1. The Bureau shall carry out the duties assigned to it by the Rules of Procedure.
2. The Bureau shall prepare Group meetings, shall examine matters submitted to it by the Group for a decision or for its prior consideration, and shall draw up proposals which it shall submit to the Group.
3. Upon a proposal by the Chair and the Secretary-General, the Bureau shall decide on all matters relating to the working methods and organisation of the work of the Group Secretariat.

## **Chapter III**

### **Organisation of work**

**Rule 12**  
**Convening Group meetings**

1. At the invitation of the Chair, the Group shall meet before each plenary session of the Committee of the Regions.
2. The Chair may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Group at the request of one half of the members of the Bureau or one third of the members of the Group.
3. The Group holds one external meeting per year on a theme relevant to its political priorities

**Rule 13**  
**Convening Bureau meetings**

1. The Chair shall convene a meeting of the Bureau before the meetings referred to in Rule 12.1 of these Rules of Procedure.
2. The Chair may convene other Bureau meetings with the agreement of the 1st Vice-Chair and the other Vice-Chairs.

**Rule 14**  
**Organisation of work**  
**within the Group**

1. On a proposal by the Bureau, the Group shall take the appropriate steps to designate candidates to the political positions within the various bodies of the Committee of the Regions.
2. Before each plenary assembly, the Chair shall draw up the draft agenda and submit it to the Group for its approval.

**Rule 15**  
**Quorum**

1. A quorum shall exist when more than one third of the members are present.
2. All votes shall be valid whatever the number of voters unless the Chair, on a request made by at least ten members before voting begins, establishes at the moment of voting that the quorum is not met. In this case, the vote shall be placed on the agenda of the next meeting..
3. Members who have asked for the quorum to be established shall be counted as being present within the meaning of paragraph 2, even if they are no longer in the Chamber.

**Rule 16**  
**Voting**

1. The Group shall adopt decisions by a simple majority of the votes cast, if a consensus has not been reached.
2. The Group would expect that members would vote at the Committee of the Regions' Plenary Assembly and CoR commission meetings in accordance with the consensus reached in the PES Group.
3. The right to vote is a personal right.
4. As a general rule, the Group shall vote by a show of hands, except in the cases referred to in Rules 2.6. and 7.2.

**Rule 17**  
**Organisation of work**  
**within the Bureau**

1. The Bureau shall take decisions by a majority of the members present, if it has been impossible to reach a consensus.
2. The Bureau may vote and adopt decisions only when one third of its members are present.
3. The Chair shall inform the Group regularly about meetings of the Bureau.

## Chapter IV

### The secretariat and financial provisions

#### **Rule 18** **The Secretary-General**

1. The Group shall be assisted by a Secretary-General who shall head the Secretariat.
2. The Chair, on a proposal by the Bureau, shall make recommendations to the Group concerning the appointment, employment and dismissal of the Secretary-General.

#### **Rule 19** **Composition and organisation of the Secretariat**

The Bureau, on a proposal by the Chair, shall appoint members of the Secretariat in accordance with the establishment plan submitted by the Secretary-General.

#### **Rule 20** **The Treasury**

1. The Chair shall delegate another member of the Bureau to act as Group Treasurer, assisted by the Secretary-General. The Group Treasurer should be a member of the CoR commission on financial and administrative affairs.
2. The Treasurer shall present to the Bureau an overview of the Group's annual budgetary means made available on the basis of the adopted CoR budget. He/she will validate, inter alia, the projects launched under the CoR's communication budget line.
3. The Treasurer shall present to the Bureau an annual report on the execution of the Group's budgetary means as well as on the execution of the budget line financing the political and information activities of CoR members.
4. On the basis of this report, which shall include observations by the Bureau, the Group shall approve the financial management.

## Chapter V

### Interpretation and amendment of the Rules of Procedure

#### **Rule 21** **Interpretation of the Rules of Procedure**

The Chair shall arbitrate on 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, and the Group, on a proposal from the Bureau, shall settle the dispute.

#### **Rule 22** **Amendment of the Rules of Procedure**

1. Any member may propose amendments to these Rules of Procedure.
2. On a proposal from the Bureau, the Group shall vote on amendments by a majority of the votes cast.