

SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC

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# RULES OF THE SENATE

AMENDMENTS ADOPTED  
IN THE AFTERNOON SITTING OF 21 NOVEMBER 2012

*Amendments to Senate Rules 15 and 16 and  
insertion of a new Rule 16-bis on the regulation  
and funding of Parliamentary Groups*

DECEMBER 2012

*The amendments to the Rules published in this booklet were published in the Official Gazette, issue no. 276 of 26 November 2012.*

*These amendments entered into force fifteen days after publication in the Official Gazette and shall become effective immediately following the adoption of relevant implementing measures by the Senate Bureau and in any case before the inauguration of the 17th Parliament (Art. 4(1) of the decision adopted by the Senate of the Republic on 21 November 2012 – Doc. II, no. 35).*

## Rule 15

### *Convening and forming Groups.*

#### ***Approving the rules of a Parliamentary Group***

1. Within seven days following the first sitting of the Senate, the President shall convene the Senators who have declared their intention to join the Groups and the Senators to be registered as Non-Attached Members.

2. Each Group shall be established by submitting to the President of the Senate the list of their members signed by the Leader of the Group, who shall be appointed at the meeting convened pursuant to the provisions of paragraph 1 above. Each Group shall also appoint one or more Deputy Leaders and one or more Secretaries from among their members. These appointees, any changes to these appointments and any changes in the composition of the Parliamentary Group shall be notified to the President of the Senate.

3. During the life of a Parliament, new Parliamentary Groups may be constituted.

**3-bis. Within thirty days of its establishment, the Assembly of each Group shall approve its rules, which shall be submitted to the President of the Senate within five days. Such rules shall be published on the Senate web site.**

**3-ter.** The rules of a Parliamentary Group shall establish that the financial statement of such Group is approved by its Assembly; they shall identify the persons responsible for administrative management and accounting and regulate the ways and criteria pursuant to which the person responsible for administrative management shall allocate funds for the purposes under Rule 16(2) below.

**3-quater.** The Senate Bureau shall establish how documents relating to the internal organization of a Group are to be published, it being understood that the category, job description, duties and work location of all positions within the Group shall be published and made freely available on such Group's web site.

## Rule 16

### *Parliamentary Group premises, facilities and endowments*

1. Parliamentary Groups shall be given premises, assets and a single annual contribution from the Senate budget, in proportion to their size and for the purposes under paragraph 2 below.

2. Contributions from the Senate budget to a Parliamentary Group, as determined and defined under relevant decision of the Bureau, shall be allocated to such Group solely for official purposes relating to parliamentary business and related political activity, research, publishing and communication connected to those,

and operating costs for a Group's bodies and structures, including staff remuneration.

### **Rule 16-bis**

#### *Accounting and financial management of Parliamentary Groups*

1. Each Group shall approve its annual financial statement, within the deadline and following the criteria established by the Senate Bureau through appropriate accounting rules regulating the accounting treatment of revenue and spending, with reference to transfer payments made by the Senate to such Group for the purposes of Article 16(2) above.

2. In order to ensure open and proper accounting and financial management, each Group shall – in the course of a fiscal year – submit its accounts and books to a statutory audit firm, as shall be selected by the Senate Bureau following an open procedure. Such audit firm shall issue an opinion on the financial statement under paragraph 1 above.

3. The financial statement of a Parliamentary Group shall be submitted to the President of the Senate. A report by the Leader of such Parliamentary Group, certifying that the document was approved by the Group Assembly, and the opinion of the audit firm under paragraph 2 above shall be enclosed therewith.

4. Each Group shall make freely available on its web site all payment orders, cheques and bank transfers – including description of pay-

ments – in such mode as shall be established by the Senate Bureau.

5. The Senators Quaestors shall ascertain compliance of a Group's financial statement with the provisions of these Rules, following such criteria and modes as shall be determined by the Senate Bureau. Such financial statements shall then be published on the web site of each Parliamentary Group and attached to the Senate financial accounts pursuant to Rule 165 below.

6. Transfer payments to Groups from the Senate Budget shall be authorised by Senators Quaestors, subject to a positive compliance assessment under paragraph 5 above.

7. Senators Quaestors shall reports to the Senate Bureau on the outcome of work performed under paragraphs 5 and 6 above.

8. If a Group fails to submit its financial statement within the deadline under paragraph 1 above, such Group shall be disqualified from receiving the transfer payment under Rule 16 above for that year. If Senators Quaestors ascertain that a statement they have received or the documents attached thereto do not comply with these Rules, they shall – within ten days of their reception of such statement – invite the Leader of such Parliamentary Group to take such actions as shall be necessary to ensure compliance no later than the date that they shall establish. If such Group fails to ensure compliance within such deadline as shall have been thus established, such Group shall be disqualified from receiving the transfer pay-

ment under Rule 16 above for that year. Disqualification under this paragraph shall be established by a decision by the Senate Bureau, upon a proposal by the Senators Quaestors, and shall require a refund – as established by the Senate Bureau – of the amounts received from the Senate budget and improperly reported.

9. Pursuant to the accounting rules under paragraph 1 above, the Senate Bureau shall regulate the financial statements to be submitted at the end of the life of a Parliament or upon dissolution of a Parliamentary Group. In the latter case, if the transfer payments received by such Group have not been entirely spent for the purposes under Rule 16 above, the Senate Bureau shall determine the terms and time-limits for the repayment of unspent amounts.

10. Unspent and repaid amounts under paragraph 9 above shall be set aside for no less than a year in a fund reserved for such Group and may only be used to repay old debts or deal with intervening liabilities.

