

## ALDE-5 Star Movement deal collapses

Written by Julie Levy-Abegnoli on 10 January 2017 in News  
News

Parliament's ALDE group has rejected 5 Star Movement's request to join forces.



**Guy Verhofstadt** | Photo credit: *European Parliament audiovisual*

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The merger between Parliament's ALDE group and the 5 Star Movement has collapsed before even being submitted to a vote by the Liberals.

The news comes as a number of MEPs voiced their opposition to the possible alliance. Sylvie Goulard, a member of the ALDE group who briefly ran for the Parliament presidency, had warned that, "Cooperation in the same parliamentary group could only lead to disavowals or contortions. Personally, I, like a certain number of my ALDE colleagues, am not prepared to do this."

Meanwhile, Patrizia Toia, head of the Italian delegation in the Socialist group, commented, "The manoeuvre currently ongoing between the 5 Star Movement and ALDE to build an alliance in the

European Parliament is not an edifying sight. Beppe Grillo, after forging an alliance with Nigel Farage, now wants to move from the Eurosceptics to the Federalists, forcing voters to the humiliating ritual of a fake online election that only serves to affirm the arbitrary choices of their 'leader'.

“For his part, Guy Verhofstadt, running for President of the European Parliament, negotiator for Brexit and enemy number one of the Eurosceptic Farage, now does not exclude an alliance with the 5 Star Movement, which was rejected on the grounds of decency from political groups such as the Greens. This sort of incoherent backroom deal is exactly what alienates citizens from the European project.”

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Guy Verhofstadt himself, in a now-deleted Facebook post from 2014 following the elections to the European Parliament, said the 5 Star Movement was "incompatible" with ALDE's "pro-European political programme" and that allowing them to join the group "would be to abandon the European project and the urgent reforms it desperately needs. It is impossible for any responsible, pro-European group to take MS5 on board."

Last night, after an ALDE bureau meeting, he said, "I have come to the conclusion that there are not enough guarantees to push forward together a common agenda to reform Europe. There remain fundamental differences on key European issues, like for example the common currency. However, on issues of shared interest, such as the environment, transparency and direct democracy, the ALDE Group and the Five Star Movement will continue to work closely together."

In a blog post, 5 Star Movement leader Beppe Grillo accused "the establishment" of blocking his party's accession to the ALDE group, and said its Parliament delegation would "continue its work to create an independent political group for the next European legislature: the DDM ( Direct Democracy Movement )."

## About the author

Julie Levy-Abegnoli is a journalist for the Parliament Magazine

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