



A COMMON GREEN MANIFESTO FOR THE 1999 EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

GREENING EUROPE - MORE URGENT THAN EVER

Europe could be a major force for ecological and social justice, democracy and peace throughout the world. Under the leadership of political parties whose only answer to all questions is competitive economic growth, the European Union is failing to play this role. Only the Greens are keeping alive the vision of a Europe able to rise to the hopes of its people and contribute to a better world.

Greens are again the newest force in European politics - participating in several governments, the Greens have shown their ability to influence domestic agendas. They accept the challenge to make real policy changes in the European Union, to implement the Green vision for Europe, which centres on improving the quality of life.

The participation in government of Green Parties as in Germany, France, Italy, Finland and the first Green Foreign Minister opens new possibilities and drive, for changing policy in Europe. In Eastern Europe the Greens have an environment minister in Georgia, and deputy environment ministers in Slovakia and Poland. The Greens have shown that they are ready to take responsibility in governments and that they are an important force in changing the day to day - the real - policy. Now, the next step is to do this on the EU - level. It is time for a change.

The Green vision for Europe centers on improving the quality of life, thanks to high standards of ecological, social and democratic rights.

Success for the Green Parties in the June 1999 elections to the European Parliament will be a step toward making this vision reality.

The Green project is to:

build a society respectful of fundamental rights and environmental justice : the rights to shelter, to good health, to education, to culture, and to a high quality of life;
increase freedom within the world of work, not only by tackling unemployment but also by widening people's choices, releasing human creative potential ;
deepen democracy by decentralisation and direct participation of people in decision-making that concerns them.

*The **Green method** is radical, realistic and reformist,*

radical, because a radical critique is necessary for orientation ;
realistic, because immediate goals must be achievable ;
reformist, because every opportunity for progress must be taken, as part of a step by step process.

Green values are solidarity, innovation, independence and openness :

solidarity : to promote and implement equality, at national, European and international levels ;
innovation: to use human intelligence and creativity to promote a society that benefits all its members ;
independence: to remain free of lobbies and special interests ;
openness : to accept differences, to deal with contradictions, and to create fruitful alliances, through public debate, negotiation, and constant re-evaluation.

Greens are working for :

economic and social reforms to make development sustainable for both human beings and the natural world ;

a democratic process linking trade, security, economic and social issues to environmental and democratic rights ;
high ecological, social and democratic standards to ensure the quality of life ;
solidarity, guaranteed human and citizen's rights for everybody, including people who have come from non-EU countries ;
a foreign policy designed to resolve problems by peaceful means rather than by military force ;
improved structures for democratic participation in political decision-making, involving NGOs, Trade Unions and citizens at all levels, with measures to ensure equal participation of women ;
guaranteed equal rights and opportunities, as well as cultural and linguistic diversity for minority groups ;
a redistribution of domestic work and the work of caring for others, in order to end the existing unbalanced division of labour and share the workload more fairly between women and men, ensuring that women are fully able to take part in the formal labour market as well as in political life.

1. GREENING THE ECONOMY

Europe today faces major problems, all created or aggravated by neoliberal economic policies.

Mass unemployment

Unrestrained global market competition is ruthlessly dividing society between winners and losers, between the overworked and the jobless. Poverty and social exclusion are drastically limiting more and more people's freedom to choose the lives they lead. Basic human rights

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are neglected. New walls against movement by people are being built in and around Europe, in line with the restrictive security policies of Europol and Schengen, while capital and commodities move freely without restrictions.

Ecological destruction and the long-term threat to the environment posed by nuclear power plants

Ecological standards have dropped under the pressure of all-powerful lobbies on the pretext of the need to be competitive on the world market. The prospect of nuclear technology exports has blocked the phasing out of nuclear power and the necessary shift to safe, renewable energy technologies.

Depoliticization, which plays into the hands of extreme right-wing, authoritarian parties

Public disillusion with politics is the inevitable result of the failure of elected governments to deal with the problems that concern voters. The undemocratic structure of the European Union further contributes to widespread loss of faith in the political process. Democracy itself is threatened by the unchallenged hegemony of global markets.

The current policy failure of the European Union is part of the worldwide process of economic globalization, presented as natural and inevitable. In reality, this particular "globalization" is a political programme reflecting the hegemony of transnational financial capital. The neoliberal programme is designed to reduce trade barriers in goods and service, remove controls on global capital flows and reduce the tax burden on profits by cutting social welfare. To attract investment capital, each country is drawn into a downward spiral of deregulation, sacrificing social benefits and the environment.

Democratic national and local authorities have steadily lost policy-making power to undemocratic international bureaucracies such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation. More accords such as the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) are being drafted that would go even further towards destroying any political power to make the economy work for the general well-being of society. Projects like the Transatlantic Economic Partnership (TEP) as part of the New Transatlantic Agenda, largely bypass not only democratic participation in the negotiations, but also return from multilateral seeking of solutions to bilateral decision taking of the two major blocks, USA and EU anticipating any debate in multilateral fora.

This one-dimensional form of globalization is deliberately designed to get rid of any appropriate political framework for regulating the free movement of goods and services, or the flow of capital and financial transactions.

The Greens reject the claims of traditional parties that politics must bow helplessly to "the markets". This resignation masks an absence of political will to defend democratic society and the environment. The current economic system can and must be democratised.

On the European Union level, ***the Greens demand :***

RE-REGULATION : For years the Greens have been pressing for minimum environmental and social standards to be applied at all levels of economic decision-making. Only intelligent re-regulation of the economic sphere can ensure reconciliation between the economy, the environment and the European social model.

FISCAL FAIRNESS : Tax competition between EU Member States, taking such forms as lowering taxation on capital or facilitating tax avoidance and tax evasion by large firms and

wealthy individuals, is all too common. This can only further decrease Member States' revenues and narrow their scope for political action. Joint measures need to be introduced to combat this harmful tax competition.

LEGAL SPACE FOR PIONEER LEGISLATION : Single Market Legislation must be revised in order to allow Member States to introduce stronger environmental and health protection provisions in their national legislation without being brought before the European Court of Justice for hindering the free movement of goods. There must be encouragement, not discouragement, of pioneering legislation which could foster innovation and create new fields for employment.

TAXATION OF SPECULATIVE FINANCE CAPITAL : The European Union and its Member States must translate a new approach to economic policy into strong initiatives on WTO, IMF and World Bank level. Greens demand concerted European efforts for regulation to achieve more control over the ever-increasing power of the financial markets.

Speculative attacks from huge private financial institutions on national currencies from Mexico to Asia have already dealt heavy blows to developing countries. Taxpayers pay the bill for IMF interventions serving to limit the losses of private capital from the industrialised countries, without saving the economies of the countries affected.

To reduce the effects of financial speculation, the Greens propose agreement on taxation of speculative capital movements, which would mean taxing international financial transactions (e.g. a "Tobin Tax") at a rate that would leave the normal business basically untouched but would create a disincentive for very short-term, speculative currency exchanges.

The traditional parties have shown their inability to solve the current economic problems. Conservative parties continue single-mindedly to pursue economic growth and market competition on the global scale with disastrous consequences for the environment and social welfare. Social Democrats increasingly follow suit, abandoning their traditional role as protectors of the welfare safety net. Right wing nationalist parties scapegoat immigrants, undermine democratic human rights and create tensions within communities.

In contrast to this dismal record of failure, the Green Parties of Europe, inside and outside the European Union, demand political change. The guiding principle of change should be environmentally and socially sustainable economic development. This involves creation of new socially and ecologically useful jobs, as well as the redistribution of domestic and paid work between women and men. The economy is not an end in itself, but can and should be made to work for people.

2. SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT

Production processes and consumption levels in Western society are severely damaging the environment, threatening people's health and jeopardizing future generations.

Climate Change

Climate change is accelerating. The greenhouse effect is increasingly evident. The succession of record-breaking heat waves since 1980 and the increasing frequency of severe weather phenomena across the globe are strong indications that climatic disruption is already upon us. There is an urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions now.

The European Union's proposal to cut greenhouse gas emissions to 15 percent below 1990 levels by 2010 can be only a starting point for discussions on far deeper cuts. Even though the international agreements reached at the December 1997 Climate Conference in Kyoto fail to face up to the seriousness of the problem, they are at least a first step on which to build.

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The truly global agreement required to deal with global warming can be achieved only if based on genuine equity. A policy based on per capita emissions, with countries agreeing on a global limit and converging to meet that limit on a per capita basis would allow developing countries to continue their necessary development while encouraging the use of clean technology, and oblige the industrialised world to cut emissions to realistically necessary levels.

The Greens propose a shift to renewable and sustainable energy production, together with industrial and domestic energy efficiency. One important instrument to reach this goal is a progressive tax on pollution and on resource use, particularly fossil fuels, and incentives for safe energy in industrial as well as private use.

The Greens call for :

a combined energy/CO₂-emission tax. Since Greens do not want to increase the overall tax burden, the income from eco-taxes should be used to ease the tax burden on labour and to finance investment in the most important fields of ecological conversion. Compensation must be provided for potential negative social effects ; legally binding reduction targets for the EU of 20 percent below 1990 levels by 2005, 25 percent by 2010 and 50 percent by 2025.

Chemical Pollution

Chemical pollution and ozone smog are damaging human health. More and more people are suffering from allergies, irritations, and cancer, while pesticides and other chemical substances take their toll on the human body.

The Greens call for :

conversion of the chemical industry to biologically degradable substances ; use of hazardous chemicals only in zero-emission pollution constructions ; reassessment of the 100,000 chemicals permitted on the EU market, starting with the most frequently used ; reducing the pollution of chemical plants by using best available technologies, and by introducing organic farming.

Transport

Road transport is responsible for major pollution, environmental damage and huge costs to society. It accounts for the largest share of air pollution in urban areas (up to 80% of particle pollution), 26% of total EU CO₂ emissions in 1995, considerable noise pollution, hundreds of thousands of casualties from traffic accidents, the breakdown of ecosystems and loss of biodiversity - just to name the most serious effects.

Europe needs a radical reduction in the volume of road transport and a shift to an integrated system involving alternative forms of transport such as rail and water shipping.

The 40% of European households who do not own a car should enjoy the basic human right of mobility. A dense and well-developed public transport system as well as adequate conditions for cyclists and pedestrians are needed to meet the basic needs of people. Green priorities are to avoid unnecessary transport, to shift as much transport as possible to rail and waterways and to reduce the negative impact of transport by setting top technical standards for emissions and noise.

The Greens call for :

full internalisation of external costs into all modes of transport by fair pricing and taxation, starting with the road and air sectors ;

*promotion of public transport, as well as provisions for safe walking and cycling to ensure basic mobility for all citizens ;
withdrawal of EU financial support for construction of highways and airports.*

Energy

Nuclear power must be phased out, in both Western and Eastern Europe. Waste problems remain unsolved and the risks of accident too high. Aging nuclear power plants threaten not only their immediate surroundings but the entire planet. The Chernobyl nuclear explosion has provided a disastrous basis for study of the effects of man-made low-level radiation on human health.

The Greens call for :

*replacement of nuclear power by safe and renewable energy sources ;
replacement of the obsolete EURATOM Treaty by a new energy accord within the European Union based on promotion of renewable energy sources and energy conservation ;
study of European medical statistics for areas with different levels of nuclear fallout, to demonstrate the association with radiation related illness ;
reversal of the EU directive (Basic Standards) which permits grossly and unsupervised levels of radioactivity in foods and manufactured products ;
incentives to save energy.*

Agriculture

The "mad cow" crisis has decisively exposed the irresponsible threats to public health of a profit-driven industrial agriculture. Genetically modified crops and animals also pose unknowable risks to the environment and to the health of consumers.

The Greens have long championed the development of organic farming to replace costly and unsustainable industrial over-production of foodstuffs using dangerous pesticides and fertilisers, which reduces agriculture to a subsidiary of the chemical industry. The Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) of the Union must be reformed to promote sustainable rural development by favoring modern organic farming.

While modern biotechnology may contribute to medical progress, the potential environmental and social effects require thorough democratic control, transparency and accountability. Greens are strongly opposed to any patents on life.

The Greens call for :

*promotion of organic farming ;
a moratorium on the genetic manipulation of crops and animals ;
as a first step, the immediate introduction of a strict labelling of food produced using genetically modified organisms ;
a ban on patenting forms of life ;
an end to export subsidies for agricultural products ;
making agricultural subsidies conditional with respect for environmental standards ;
recognition of animal rights ;
a ban of animal tests in cosmetic industry.*

Fisheries

The Greens call for :

*the conservation of fish stocks ;
the reduction of the catching capacity of permitted fleets to sustainable levels ;
the banning of unsustainable and ecologically harmful fishing practices ;*

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*the provision of proper support for coastal and island communities, particularly those which, in adverse circumstances are striving to make their living from the sea ;
a revision of the fishery agreement of the EU.*

3. EMPLOYMENT AND WORK

Eighteen million people are officially registered as unemployed in the European Union today, and the real figure may be as high as 30 million. Unemployment rates in Central and Eastern Europe are staggering. Unemployment is becoming the greatest threat to a socially just and democratic Europe.

A new model of full employment must be based on fair distribution between men and women of salaried work on the one hand and domestic and caring work on the other, as well as on better income redistribution through taxes and social welfare. There must be no discrimination on the basis of gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and identity, religion or ethnicity. A new model must allow for full social protection and a more flexible lifestyle, combining phases of employment, education and training, as well as for time to care for children, the elderly and sick family members, to do household work and to enjoy a social life.

The basis for this model is a drastic reduction of working time, to make gainful employment available to everyone. This should include the option of flexible working time according to individual need. The social value of unpaid activity, voluntarily undertaken, should be recognised and supported. For this, adequate legal frameworks should be created. To carry out this programme we need the support of all the groups and unions which are in favour of social and ecological renewal.

A vast range of social services and public welfare activities are currently being carried out, mostly by women, for low pay or for no pay at all. New salaried jobs should be created to meet the environmental, social and cultural needs that have been neglected by the private sector. Many more jobs may be created by such local employment initiatives than by larger businesses.

Employment must be at the heart of Europe's economic policy. The Pact for Growth and Stability with its purely neoliberal agenda must be balanced by a Pact for Sustainability and Employment. The Pact should include effective measures to reduce unemployment and prevent tax competition between countries.

The Greens call for :

*a Pact for Sustainability and Employment designed to dramatically increase sustainable employment over the next 5 years ;
initial subsidies and a legal framework to kick-start the social and welfare economies, which should eventually become self-financing ;
a general reduction of working time in paid employment ;
the introduction of models for reducing working time through sabbaticals and voluntary part-time work, as well as enhancing basic social standards throughout the whole EU ;
affirmative action for people marginalised on the basis of gender, disability, age, sexual orientation and identity, religion and ethnicity. This means campaigning against involuntary part-time jobs that only create a class of working poor.*

4. ENLARGEMENT: EUROPE IS MORE THAN THE EUROPEAN UNION

Applicant Countries

The Union must be - within the framework of a complementary process of deepening and enlargement - open to all democratic European States in which the majority of the voters

want to join. A pan-European approach is the only way to prevent new borders from being drawn between the European Union and the rest of Europe, borders which will pose a severe threat to peaceful cooperation. Within this process, the existing policy of geographical cohesion as in the Mediterranean area should be respected, and the strengthening of the Barcelona process to enhance the Euro-Mediterranean dimension of the EU is greatly welcomed.

All membership applications should receive equal treatment, regardless of the individual size, strategic importance and economic position of the candidate countries. The only preconditions should be the existence of democratic structures, the respect for civil, economic, social and cultural rights in general, the rights of minorities in particular, and the will of the people, preferably as expressed in referenda. To avoid potentially disastrous shock effects on local economic development, new member states may opt for limited transition periods. During this transitional period, applicants must have the right to protect their markets unilaterally. The EU should generously help the applicant states to raise their ecological and social standards.

A combined and simultaneous process of institutional reforms and enlargement is necessary to give the European Union a structural framework able to function democratically with more than 20 Member States, without holding up negotiations with the applicant countries. The applicant States should have the right to participate fully in the process of institutional reforms which will shape the Union they are to join.

The Greens call for :

opening the European Union to all applicant states which respect democratic and human rights ;

the Union needs profound institutional reforms to create a democratic political system at the European level and to allow for a more efficient and transparent policy process. The negotiations of Amsterdam were a failure on this issue. This is why the Greens are supporting the project of a new round of negotiations on institutional matters involving both the EP and national parliaments ;

at least the doubling of the pre-accession aid currently foreseen ;

offering of good conditions for cooperation and trade for countries which do not want to or cannot be a part of the EU.

Security

The ongoing enlargement of NATO is not a step towards a peace-orientated Security Policy. It creates new borders in Europe. NATO and WEU should both be replaced by a pan-European security system, based on the OSCE and encompassing all European countries. National military capacities should not be used independently, but only when controlled by the OSCE or the UN in the framework of peace-keeping. Peaceful conflict prevention and de-militarisation should be the guiding principles of a Security Policy.

Security can no longer be defined solely in military terms. The European Greens start with a larger comprehensive concept of security which takes into account social, economic, ecological, cultural and psychological aspects, as well as structural violence. Peace is more than the absence of war or the management of conflicts. Peace cannot be built by a treaty, it is a continuous process of mediation. It has to do with employment, clean water, health, basic human rights and fundamental freedom. Peace must be organised. Neutral countries must play a vital role in framing such a policy.

The Greens call for :

a Security System guided by the OSCE and UN ;

abolishment of nuclear weapons, starting with the British and French nuclear arsenal ;

a stricter European arms export code ;

the creation of a civil peace corps.

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Instead of just focussing on the EU, the Greens want increased cooperation within European organisations such as the Council of Europe, OSCE and UN-ECE.

5. BUILDING A CITIZENS' EUROPE

Democracy is being challenged by the domination of market forces and globalization. Legislative power has been shifted to the European Union without any real strengthening of the powers of the European Parliament. Europe needs more democracy: on the regional, national and European level.

Current methods such as Intergovernmental Conferences have failed to produce an adequate democratic reform of the European Union. The European Union needs to be democratically constituted. The people's elected representatives in the European Parliament and the National Parliaments must be fully informed and included.

The Greens call for :

a public "constitutional" debate on the future of Europe in which all members of society can participate.

Human Rights and Citizenship

Guaranteed human rights are a cornerstone of a democratic Europe. However, the European Union has not signed the Human Rights Convention. Specific measures should be taken against any discrimination on the basis of gender, age, disability, sexual orientation and identity, ethnicity or religion.

The fundamental democratic rights of all residents in every Member State should be guaranteed and respected. Their freedom of movement particularly needs to be guaranteed. A framework directive on a statute for resident citizens from third countries should be adopted at the European level, including specific rights to family reunification and access to employment as well as electoral rights.

The Greens call for :

*adoption by the European Union of a charter guaranteeing civil rights as well as social, economic and ecological rights as an essential part of its founding treaty ;
easy access to citizen status in both their country of residence and in the European Union for citizens of third countries who have legally resided in an EU country for three to five years, with the option of retaining the nationality of their country of origin (double nationality);
recognition of the right to asylum as a fundamental right of the individual, respected in all EU countries. The Geneva Refugee Treaty should be enshrined in the EU Treaty, in a way which guarantees full judicial review by the European Court of Justice ;
access to refugee status for persons fleeing from war, including civil war, racism, sexual mass violence and from natural and ecological catastrophes ;
creation of a European fund for refugees, which partially reimburses the costs member states make for the reception and integration of refugees.*

Democratic structures

The present European Union is deeply undemocratic. The European Parliament has no right to initiate laws and the EU's legislative powers are not separated from its executive power. All powers are concentrated in the Council of Ministers and the Commission, which meet behind closed doors following negotiations over which representative bodies have virtually no control.

The confusion between executive and legislative responsibilities leads to a plethora of obscure procedures, understandable only to a small number of specialists. Moreover, the independence of the European Central Bank will unfortunately lead to the loss of any control over monetary policy. The people of Europe are faced with a Union that appears to be a non-transparent, bureaucratic body.

Full information about negotiations and decisions on the EU level should be widely available to encourage everybody to participate. The Greens favour simultaneous referenda in all member states for important changes of the EU Treaty.

The Greens call for :

*extension of the European Parliament's powers of co-decision and control to all fields of policy for which the EU is competent ;
extension of European Parliamentary co-decision to all fields of political activity ;
extension of European Parliamentary powers to initiate legislation and to nominate the Commission, including the right to reject individual candidates and to dismiss individual Commissioners.*

Internal Security

The Schengen Treaty and Europol are not under the democratic control of either the European Parliament or the European Court. Not even their finances are subject to supervision. The Schengen treaty creates a core Europe with restrictions on free movement of people and an information system that is a threat to personal data security. Europol has been given competences which no national police force would be allowed to have.

The Greens call for :

*limiting the role of Europol to information exchange ;
democratic and judicial control of Europol on the European and national parliamentary level.
guaranteed safety of personal data ;
replacement of the Schengen Treaty by agreements guaranteeing the free movement of all people who live in the European Union.*

GREENS : POLITICS OF THE FUTURE

A young movement turned toward the future, Greens are already active in over 30 European countries, with tens of thousands of local representatives and over 200 members of national parliaments. Green cabinet ministers participate in the governments of 7 countries all over Europe.

In the European Parliament, some 30 Green members from nine countries have been working to apply green principles at European Union level. Success in the June 1999 European elections would enable Greens to work more effectively to build a truly "citizens' Europe".

For a more democratic, social and ecological Europe, we invite you to vote for Green Party candidates in the June 1999 European elections.