



European Elections Manifesto 2004 COMMON PREAMBLE

As adopted at 15th EFGP council, Luxembourg, 8th November 2003

EUROPE CAN DO BETTER YOU DECIDE!

Greens make the difference in Europe. The outcome of the 2004 European elections, which will be held in an enlarged European Union of 25 countries, will determine our common future. Greens have been among the most convinced promoters of fair enlargement. The reunification of Europe after the fall of the Berlin Wall was and remains one of the main duties of the Union. Greens in Europe are already playing a crucial role in building a more tolerant, social, ecological and democratic Union.

A strong Green presence in the European Union is the best guarantee for a European commitment on better governance of globalisation. Economic and trade rules must be put at the service of environmental and social objectives.

We Greens want the EU and all of Europe to make a difference for peace, solidarity, respect for diversity and equity in an increasingly fragile and divided world that needs concrete proposals for a sustainable and just future. Greens are working in favour of an independent and cohesive European foreign policy based on democratic and ecological values.

We want Europe to take up its environmental responsibilities and therefore to implement a radical shift in energy and transport policy. Nuclear energy must be phased out and replaced with cleaner and safer alternative energy. The future belongs to sun, wind, biomass, hydrological and other renewable sources.

The EU we want is open and tolerant with strong protection of both cultural and natural diversity. Our Europe is committed to high social and ecological standards on a regional, European and international scale that must take preference over purely commercial interests.

In our Green Europe, the rule of law and the rights of local peoples and individuals shall prevail over military might and economic dominance. Greens are already making a difference, and with your support in the 2004 European Elections, our influence will be even more decisive in the future.

The new constitutional treaty must make the EU more accountable, transparent and democratic and bring it closer to its citizens. We are convinced that the Convention that produced the proposal for a new European Constitution went in the right direction. It wrote an historic document. The nightmare of Nice – where behind-the-scenes horse-trading decided the content of the treaty – has to be overcome. Our position is that the European Constitution should be ratified by referendum.

In order to advance the aim of greening Europe, we will not hesitate to use the possibilities offered by the clause in the constitution which obliges the Commission to propose a European law when one million citizens ask for it. Citizen empowerment and more participatory democracy for civil society and NGOs are among our priorities.

We want a social Union built on the basic principles of equality and solidarity and a European Union that strives for sustainable ecological development for the whole continent.

In our Green Vision, the European Union must be synonymous with and emblematic of the concept of peace. The European Union must stand for peace and should be a prime actor in working for peace in the unstable international situation.

The Greens' objectives are:

1. SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT

We Greens have two priorities in this area. The first of our priorities is SAFE, HEALTHY AND TASTY FOOD for everyone. In order to achieve this we will continue to seek and support radical reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), with a strong reorientation towards organic farming, regional food products and rural development. This is also the way forward to safeguard the diverse landscapes of Europe and protect the biodiversity of its flora and fauna.

We must ensure that the consumer comes FIRST, and in order to ensure safe food for all, animal rights must be safeguarded. This includes their rearing as well as how they are transported. We must also ensure that the consumer receives adequate protection by mandating correct food product labelling which guarantees traceability of contents. Of course, Greens are always in favour of the precautionary principle, and therefore refuse genetically modified organisms in food. We want to rein in the power of the chemical industry and make them take responsibility for the safety of their products and processes.

The second Green priority is a SHIFT IN ENERGY POLICY. We will do everything possible to put an end to the anachronistic and nuclear-supportive Euratom-Treaty. We must work unceasingly to make our governments comply with the Kyoto Protocol as a first step to reduce CO2 emissions. The EU is a leader in the battle to combat climate change - mainly due to Green pressure. This position has to be enhanced. We ask for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol through the establishment of a European Climate Stability Pact. The Union has to continue to face up to its Kyoto commitments while making all efforts to convince reluctant countries to sign up. Our transport system must be reformed to increase efficiency and reduce pollution. This is a pre-condition for climate stability and a necessity to prevent increasingly hot summers, extreme floods and their dramatic consequences.

We want a better quality of life for all. In order to encourage all this to happen, a shift in taxation is essential: tax on labour must be reduced and eco-taxes on pollution must be introduced.

2. GREENING THE SOCIAL DIMENSION

The major goals that we Greens will strive for are STRONG COMMUNITIES AND LIVABLE CITIES; with SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SECURITY for all European citizens and the deployment of European Union REGIONAL AND STRUCTURAL AID in order to give life to SOLIDARITY throughout all Europe. Tax dumping by Member States should be stopped.

The Union's competition policies have to be adapted to include social and ecological parameters.

One focus of Green Politics is on social inclusion and efficient basic public services for all. Green social and employment policies include active efforts to further the interests of women; gender mainstreaming is part of all our policies. It is of great importance to facilitate a good work and family life balance, particularly by providing affordable child care. Greens believe that people with disabilities have the right to live a normal life. Barriers to work and to facilities must be removed. We are in favour of inclusive health care, access to gas, water and electricity services; fair pensions for senior citizens; the right to good education; job security; sharing out of labour time - job sharing; safeguarding health and safety at work; decent minimum wages; insistence on fair labour conditions - not cheap labour; enhancing a solid welfare system and developing the Tradition of the Welfare State, which entails solidarity and a regulated market economy. We resist the neo-liberal tendency to leave everything to the market. We Greens will also work to ensure that Regional and Structural Funds are used to guarantee social inclusion.

3. DEVELOPING DEMOCRACY

Developing democracy demands strong CITIZEN EMPOWERMENT. This means that at the forefront of our Green Vision we must have the full protection of Citizen Rights, Human Rights, Women's Rights and Minority Rights. Minorities should be integrated and their diversity and cultural rights must be respected. We Greens will work for more Participatory Democracy for Civil Society and NGOs. With respect to European justice and police cooperation: we Greens demand more civil right guarantees. We will take all possible initiatives to ensure that the Charter of Fundamental Rights is fully applied. Enlargement countries have to respect fully the need to have stable political institutions that guarantee democracy, justice and human rights

In our vision of a tolerant and open Europe there is no room for the intolerance of extreme right wing forces and undemocratic nationalistic or violent religious movements. All citizens - independent of gender, colour, disabilities, sexual orientation, religion, language, origin or culture – must have equal civil and political rights. Non-EU citizens established legally in the Union should have the right to become European citizens after not more than five years. Long-standing immigrants without legal status must have the opportunity to regularise their situation.

The EU has an important role to play in combating cross-border crime. However, increasing justice and police cooperation should not be at the expense of civil rights. The introduction of the European arrest warrant has bypassed the safeguards built into extradition procedures. The Greens demand guarantees of fair trials.

To sum up: for us Greens, DEMOCRATIZATION OF EUROPE means more solidarity amongst people; more transparency; more accountability and democratic control of the European Parliament. It means increased subsidiarity, with decentralized powers given to regions and cities; more participatory democracy - including through referenda. Finally, fair and equal access to and by the Media is an essential part of our democratic process.

4. STRENGTHENING THE PEACE POLICY

Greens believe that Europe should undertake conflict prevention, not launch pre-emptive strikes.

The Greens in Europe are in favour of multilateralism and disarmament. We are opposed to weapons of mass destruction and want to free our continent from their menace. We work to prevent further production and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Weapons exports should be submitted to a strong and binding scrutiny. The Greens want to stop trafficking in small arms as well as production and use of landmines. We strongly believe that Europe must always act in the spirit of peace. The Greens point out that the existence of neutral countries within the EU should be highly valued by the Union itself.

The Greens will help to build a Europe that has international solidarity and cooperation as its priorities. Therefore Greens are working in favour of an autonomous and cohesive European foreign policy that actively defends human rights and democratic, social and ecological values. We Greens will encourage the formation of a European Peace Corps that should be involved in conflict prevention. This means giving solid support to developing countries in order to achieve a better economic balance amongst the countries in the world.

The priorities which we Greens insist upon are that peace policy should be centred on mediation, diplomacy and early conflict resolution, cultural appreciation, fair trade and fair control of energy resources as well as post-conflict restoration.

Finally, as Greens we believe that the UN is the best institution to deal with global threats, whilst promoting a joint European Policy, we maintain that European international actions should be under the control of the United Nations.

5. PROMOTING GRASS ROOTS GLOBALIZATION

For us Greens, the EU must play an important role in reforming and regulating the presently unfair system of globalization. The EU has the weight in international bodies (World Bank, IMF, etc.) to bring about change. Europe must be at the forefront in the fight for shaping the reform of the current system. A Tobin-type tax must be introduced. We Greens insist that ecological and social criteria must be taken into account in trade issues. We must therefore re-regulate the world economy in order to make it more sustainable - there must be more democratic control of the economy.

In matters pertaining to world trade, we Greens believe in corporate responsibility - with strong and binding rules for corporations. In transnational governance, Europe must have a strong role in North-South aid and development cooperation. The rules of free trade must take into account the necessity to protect the quality of food and the living conditions and income of small farmers.

We Greens believe that there should be more consideration of and participation by regional and local economies. We will also work to maintain cultural diversity, for instance, by allowing incentives to the public broadcasting, or the film industry.

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6. GREEN ACHIEVEMENTS

Throughout the last 20 years the Greens in the European Parliament have helped to produce a significant political and cultural shift. Before the forthcoming European elections, the members of the European Federation of Green Parties have decided to build a European Green Party with strong common goals.

We want to green Europe; you have the power to decide!

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