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# A Green New Deal for Europe



## Manifesto for the European election campaign 2009

# A Green New Deal for Europe

**Europe needs a new direction.** The financial crisis and credit crunch have brought the failings of current economic and social policies sharply into focus. They have exposed a wider systemic failure. The world is facing a serious and fundamental resource crunch that will impact on every aspect of our lives, from the food we eat to the energy we use. We are also at risk of running out of time to prevent a full-blown climate crisis.

These 'crises' should be seen as an opportunity to transform our economic and social system into one that will offer generations-to-come a future based on stability, sufficiency and sustainability.

Europe faces social, economic and environmental challenges that transcend borders. As the financial crisis once again demonstrated, only by cooperating - at European and global level - can we rise above these challenges. This requires a European Union acting strongly for the future of all its citizens and residents. **The Greens want to build solutions for a sustainable future.**

Rising to the challenges brings real opportunities. Shifting to a greener economy and combating climate change will boost employment and make us more self-sufficient, reducing our damaging reliance on energy imports. A more sustainable approach to our agricultural, marine and energy resources is crucial at a time when energy and food prices are hitting low and middle income people hard.

**The Greens want a responsible Europe.** The European Union should defend social systems and labour conditions from the pressures of fierce and unfettered competition, both within Europe and beyond. Economic interests must not come at the expense of human and civil rights. The European Union must listen and be accountable to its citizens and residents, while championing peace, democracy and human rights around the world.

The dominant neoliberal ideology in Europe has established a system where the interests of the few come before the general well-being of its citizens. They have put the profits of polluting industries ahead of the environment and public health. The mantra of competitiveness and growth has been used to lower social standards and labour conditions. The neoliberal majority in the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission is guilty of bowing to the demands of industry lobbies, putting short-term profits before the general interest. **The Greens offer a real alternative for Europe.**

**The Green New Deal means:** a Europe of solidarity that can guarantee its citizens a good quality of life based on economic, social and environmental sustainability; a truly democratic Europe that acts for its citizens and not just narrow industry interests; a Europe that acts for a green future.

## A real alternative for Europe: securing our energy and environmental future

**We need a resource revolution** to shift from our present course of over-exploitation and environmental destruction. If we continue to ravage our finite natural resources, we will need two planets to sustain our lifestyles within 25 years. This course is not just economically unsustainable, it seriously threatens our climate, ecosystems and biodiversity.

**Business as usual is not an option.** The impact of a resource crunch and dangerous climate change would dwarf that of any financial and economic crisis. Thankfully, most of the solutions are already at hand. The current economic slowdown is an opportunity to transform our system, so that we can avoid the extremes of the resource and climate crises, and secure a good quality of life.

If we are to avoid dangerous climate change, we need to seriously reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. The Greens want the EU to commit to emissions reductions of 40% by 2020 and 80-95% by 2050, based on 1990 levels, in line with the current recommendations of the UN IPCC. Europe must also play a leading role in forging a binding international climate agreement under the UN framework based on the latest updated science. This agreement must commit industrialised countries to the necessary emissions reductions, as well as recognising their responsibility to support mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries, including reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, particularly from tropical forests.

**Combating climate change is a win-win process.** A combination of ambitious and binding targets, of incentives and of public investments into green technologies and services will help create millions of green jobs in Europe and tens of millions worldwide, which are much needed at a time of economic slowdown. The EU must set itself the target of creating five million green collar jobs over the coming five years.

We must significantly improve on the currently wasteful way we use energy, while massively expanding energy from renewable sources. This will reduce our dangerous dependence on the import of dirty energy from unstable countries, with the damaging volatility this causes for our economies and societies.

We must capitalise on the already-existing ways to save energy. Using less energy and using it better will be crucial to maintaining a good quality of life at a time of rising energy prices. **The Greens want Europe to place much greater priority on energy efficiency**, setting a binding target to reduce energy consumption 20% by 2020, as well as supporting and promoting the intelligent design of heating and cooling technology both in industry and in the housing sector.



**Renewables must be put at the centre of European energy policy** for the 21st Century. The Greens are calling for the creation of a European Renewables Community (ERENE) to support the long-term goal of 100% energy from renewable sources. We need a concerted investment drive in green technologies in which the European Investment Bank must play a role. A real renewables boom requires a new approach to energy supply: truly unbundling ownership of distribution and production, while promoting a grid without borders and the smarter use of energy.

**Nuclear energy cannot be part of the solution to climate change.** Expensive investments in this dead-end technology will not be able to contribute to the urgently-needed emissions reductions and will divert much-needed funds from the promotion of sustainable energy production.

Uranium is a finite fuel source and the EU is overwhelmingly dependent on imports from unstable countries, so nuclear is clearly not the answer to our long term energy security. On top of this, the associated risks of nuclear are as real now as they have always been, whether in terms of operation, fuel production or managing nuclear waste. This is not to mention the possibility of terrorist attacks and nuclear proliferation to questionable regimes and even rogue groups.



Revolutionising how we use energy and ending our damaging dependence on oil means we must also move green. Transport is the fastest growing source of manmade greenhouse gas emissions. **The EU needs to actively work to create a sustainable transport system.**

Ending the direct and indirect subsidisation of inefficient and polluting transport modes, like aviation and road transport, is an important step in ensuring the full environmental costs are taken into account. We want to speed-up investment in trans-European railroad connections and networks. Freight must be shifted from roads to rail and inland waterways on a much bigger scale. Affordable public transport and sustainable transport options in our cities, such as cycling and walking, must be promoted.

The resource crunch we face runs far beyond energy resources. A more sustainable approach to our agricultural and marine resources is vital for our wellbeing, the health of our ecosystems and their wealth of biodiversity.

**The Greens want Europe to ensure its citizens have access to healthy food at fair prices**, rather than the limited options the food industry wants to offer them. Farming, fishing and food policies should encourage mutual responsibility between farmers, fishermen, authorities and consumers.

The Common Agricultural Policy has encouraged agricultural irresponsibility, with agro-industry dictating the market terms and gearing production to capitalise on subsidies, regardless of the environmental consequences. The Greens want to use the upcoming review to transform EU agricultural policy in a way that supports and encourages farmers to produce quality food in a sustainable way. The future of agriculture lies in organic farming and fair trade.

Crucial to this is a ban on genetically-modified organisms (GMOs). GM crops pose a serious threat to Europe's biodiversity, as well as the risks of cross-contaminating organic and conventional farming. For this reason, **the Greens are working to make the European Union a GMO-free zone.**

Farming and food policies should promote local markets for agricultural products, eliminating unnecessary transportation. They must encourage more sustainable production methods that aim to conserve biodiversity and water resources, and enhance soil fertility, reducing the use of toxic and polluting pesticides and fertilisers. This approach will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions from intensive agriculture. It will also reduce the risks to public health caused by industrial farming. Animals must be treated ethically, in agriculture as in all other contexts.



Achieving high levels of animal protection is central to the Green agenda. Europe needs much higher levels of protection for both domestic and wild animals. We will continue to work to end the long distance transport of animals, for higher welfare standards for animal farming, and for better implementation of existing animal welfare legislation. More needs to be done to promote a reduction in meat consumption for reasons of climate change, food security, and animal welfare. We want to see the end of the fur trade, and a swift replacement of animal tests with non-animal alternatives.

The Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) has been an exercise in self-destruction, driving many fish stocks to precarious levels. It needs to be urgently reformed away from the current model of waste and over-exploitation, to a tool which gives fishermen responsibility for sustainably managing fisheries and conserving fish stocks. The EU also needs to greatly enhance binding measures to protect our vulnerable seas and has to revise its exploitative fishing agreements with African countries.

**A healthy Europe is a wealthy Europe.** EU citizens are concerned about the safety of the air they breathe, the water they use and the food they eat. Environmental pollution damages public health, which in turn places a strain on societies and economies. The EU needs to do more to address the threats to public health, whether water- or air-borne, noise, toxic substances, or through the spread of diseases. The EU has to halt the loss of biodiversity at home and overseas territories.

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## **Social justice and globalisation: Fighting for a fairer Europe**

**The system needs change.** The Greens want to end the careless deregulation that has enabled big business to dictate its own terms regardless of the real impact on the economy and society at large. This approach encouraged the risky speculation and over-exploitation that has trapped us in a damaging boom to bust cycle. We want to take this opportunity to **develop a new economy driven by long-term prosperity, not short-term profiteering.** We want a responsible and stable Europe, which invests ethically and where prosperity is defined by the well-being of all its people.

**Financial markets must be put on a leash,** so they cease to be casinos in which people's homes and livelihoods are the chips on the table. Their transnational nature demands a coordinated European response that leads and links in to international efforts. We need an EU-level watchdog with teeth – a body to scrutinise and regulate financial markets and services. EU regulations must rule out any kind of tax evasion and prevent harmful tax competition for corporate revenues and savings, which undermines social justice. The regulation of the financial markets also implies the negotiation of an international agreement to outlaw all tax havens.

Credit must be tied to realistic valuations and risk. The worst excesses of uncontrolled markets must be reined in, particularly dangerous short-selling practices by traders, such as hedge funds. Astronomical financial sector salaries and bonuses that reward risk and recklessness must be capped. The Greens have long advocated the introduction of a financial transaction levy, which would reduce speculation and generate resources which could be used to finance various social and environmental goals that are presently overlooked or underfunded.

Financial markets must be restructured so that the general public can be offered protection.

This means guaranteeing savings and keeping loans affordable. During the financial crisis, low-cost credit must be available to support European enterprises, especially those contributing to the shift towards a more sustainable Europe.

**A Green New Deal calls for massive investment in education, science and research** in green, future-oriented technologies to put Europe at the forefront of a global economic revolution.

A truly prosperous, innovative, stable and sustainable economy requires a fairer society guaranteeing fair working conditions, equal opportunities and a decent standard of living for all. Europe must defend social values and justice while adapting to the needs of changing times. Cutbacks on environmental protection or compromises on social values would be counterproductive.



**The Greens want to strengthen workers' rights.** The European Union suffers from profound imbalances. It has developed cutting edge rules on business competition, but labour legislation and social rights have not kept pace. Loopholes and uncertainties have led to decisions by the European Court of Justice that tend to put business interest before workers' rights.

Europe must lead by raising standards, rather than by a race to the bottom in terms of employment conditions. The Greens want a Europe that rejects social dumping and exploitation. Social and labour rights must be reinforced and workers must have a better say in decisions that affect them, through collective bargaining.

There must be equal pay for equal work for men and women alike, as well as for posted, immigrant or temporary workers. Equal opportunities for all must be guaranteed both within and outside the workplace and regardless of sex, age, ethnicity, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

EU policies that weaken public services in the name of competition must end. Public services such as health and education are crucial to the general interest and must not be frittered away by competition rules. We need to balance the freedom to provide social services and services of general interest with the obligation to guarantee equal, affordable and universal access to these services.

**Nobody should suffer the indignity of living in poverty.** The Green New Deal aims to reverse the widening gap between rich and poor and guarantee a decent minimum living standard for all Europeans. Governments should introduce minimum wages by law or collective agreements and a minimum income above the poverty line, guaranteed by social security, for all in need. The EU should be guided by the principle of equal pay for equal work and not be a battleground for the lowest wage.

Europe must offer greater stability to people of all ages. Senior citizens must be guaranteed a voice in society, enabling them to actively participate in economic, social and civic life. This implies guaranteeing sound pensions. Community-based services must exist to address the individual needs of the frail and vulnerable. Young people must have access to more secure jobs and better access to education, training and housing.

Europe must also play its part in building fairer societies and eliminating poverty in other parts of the world. We need to speed up efforts to deliver on the Millennium Development Goals. The principle of global social and environmental justice must guide all EU policies and its position in global institutions. The Greens want to ensure that European governments finally fulfil their longstanding

promises and raise EU overseas development aid to 0.56% of GDP by 2010 and 0.7% by 2015.

**The Green New Deal puts fair trade first.**

Trade must deliver a good deal for all involved. Europe's power in international negotiations is much too often used to strike a bargain for the rich at the economic, social and environmental expense of the poor. Export subsidies for EU agricultural products continue to threaten the economies of poor countries and must be stopped immediately. Socially unfair or environmentally-damaging practices by multinationals elsewhere in the world should be no more acceptable than they would be in our own backyard. Social and sustainable development clauses in trade partnerships should therefore be binding. The WTO must be made to transform its free trade agenda to a fair and sustainable trade agenda, putting the protection of common goods and poverty reduction first. **Europe must practice what it preaches.**

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**Democracy and human rights: a responsible EU that listens and is heard**

**Europe needs to listen and everyone's voice should be heard.**

The Greens want to reform the EU, so that it can become a truly participatory democracy.

As the only EU institution directly-elected by the people, the European Parliament should be granted the right to initiate legislation. A proportion of MEPs should be elected on Europe-wide transnational lists, which would allow citizens to vote for candidates that represent the whole of the EU, rather than just their national or local constituency. More needs to be done to encourage young people to participate, for example by lowering the voting age. Citizens should also have the opportunity of direct democracy through European referenda on issues of Europe-wide concern.

The Greens will fight to apply the Charter of Fundamental Rights, to include all members of society and defend the rights of vulnerable and minority groups. This implies fighting for equal rights for women, ethnic minorities including the Roma, people with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people and religious minorities as well as for social and civil rights. This also means continuing the fight against racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and other religious intolerance, sexism, discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity and all forms of violent political extremism in the European Union. Human rights are for all, particularly within EU Member States.

**The fundamental right of equality between men and women must be made a reality.**

Good legislation already exists but is scattered around Europe. The Greens want to see the best national laws applied across the EU, whether regarding equality, pro-choice issues, domestic violence, maternity and paternity leave or political representation. Only one-third of MEPs and European Commissioners are women. The Greens have an equal number of male and female MEPs and we want the EU to follow our lead.

The Greens demand full transparency for all involved in EU decision-making processes. This implies taking a tough stand against corruption at all levels. The EU itself must be more accountable to its public. It is time to open closed files and closed doors. The Greens will also continue to put the spotlight on the shady and powerful lobbies that seek to influence decisions in Brussels. **Transparency must be an obligation, not an option.**

Organised crime has become a transnational phenomenon and constitutes an emergency in many Member States. Its profits have been growing exponentially both within and outside the EU. Efforts to prevent criminal organisations, while safeguarding civil liberties, is one of the priorities of the Greens.

Media play a crucial role in the democratic process. The Greens will continue to defend media pluralism and independence and freedom of the press in the European Union and beyond.

The Green New Deal stands for European values and individual freedoms. All who live here should enjoy freedom of opinion and religious expression within a secular society.

Hard-won rights and freedoms must not be sacrificed in the name of the “fight against terrorism” or alleged threats to security. The same applies online. The Greens believe that digital rights should be on a par with civil rights. Governments and commercial interests should not have primacy on your privacy. **Your data is your business.**

Europe has always been a continent of migration and immigration. A Green New Deal will deliver a European immigration policy that provides a fair chance for people who wish to live in the EU. The siege mentality of ‘Fortress Europe’ must not prevail.

**Immigration is an opportunity, not a threat.** We need positive-minded policies that will allow people to come here legally and efficiently. Immigrants who work in the EU deserve equal rights and equal pay, as well as the

opportunity of European citizenship and the right to participate in the political process.

**People who seek asylum in Europe deserve to be treated better.** The Greens have opposed repressive laws on returning unauthorised migrants and will continue to fight inhumane or xenophobic legislation. Europe has a duty to provide shelter and protection to those who need it. Europe should be a bridge that will allow people to come and live here in a legal way. It will only be able to do this effectively when all EU countries share the effort instead of leaving border countries to take the strain. A revision of the Dublin Convention, which aims to harmonise EU asylum policies and guarantees protection in line with international obligations, is a must. Europe must also do more to fight the despicable trafficking of men, women and children across its borders.

The European Union must lead by example in its engagement with the rest of the world: this implies a new style of foreign policy. It must devote its energy to solving root causes of international tensions and not just fighting their manifestations. The EU should strengthen multilateral bodies and international law, focus on civilian foreign policy instruments and follow the principle of maximum fairness in all of its external policies, including trade. European policies must champion peace, democracy and human rights in the world and do so consistently and coherently. The EU should also devote more energy and resources to support the international community (particularly the UN) in addressing conflicts that have been long overlooked.

International cooperation and humanitarian aid must be a priority. Establishing a European Civil Peace Corps ready to make non-military interventions for humanitarian purposes would play an important part of this.

We want a European Union that fosters democracy and human rights, while promoting a pluralistic civil society across the globe. **Human rights must not be sacrificed in the name of economic interest.**

# Delivering a Green New Deal for Europe

The Greens have fought for a sustainable, social and more democratic Europe since our entry into the European Parliament in 1984. Recognising the need for truly European solutions to European problems, we are the most closely cooperating political family in the European Parliament. This has helped us punch above our weight and have a much greater influence on decisions at European level than our numbers would otherwise allow.

We believe a Green New Deal is needed to overcome the financial, economic, resource, energy and climate crises we face. The Green New Deal means massive investments in sustainable sectors, putting the quality of life first and ensuring the creation of millions of 'green jobs'.

Realising the Green New Deal means building alliances. We will look for allies in civil society, in parliaments and in governments that will work to achieve this change of course. However, ensuring that Europe gets back on track means getting involved, convincing others and voting Green. You can influence what is happening in Europe.

## Choose a Green New Deal

