



Article 2: Membership Criteria, EGP Rule Book

2.1 Full members shall meet the criteria for membership as indicated below:

Membership criteria	Compliance according to the committee	Comment of De Groenen
<p>1. be established as a political party in a country, state or politico-geographic region of Europe;</p>	<p>The party is registered (<i>annex 4</i>).</p> <p>However:</p> <p>The party does not have a developed national structure (no local boards, regional representations, etc.).</p> <p>Their representation is concentrated in Utrecht (the official registered address) and Amsterdam, as most of the few members they have come from these cities. Although membership is spread across the country with only two local boards remaining (Amsterdam and Amsterdam West). It has no publically accessible offices.</p> <p>De Groenen's total membership is 33; according to membership fees paid in 2016/2017, 28 members have voting rights (source: party newsletter Gras nr 69, April 2017).</p> <p>After conflicts within the board in late 2016, the party has split in two factions. Since both sides are claiming legitimacy, the party does not fulfil its legal administrative obligations toward the state of the Netherlands. The party's bank accounts are also blocked due to the unresolved authorisation issues. The case has been taken to the Dutch authorities but the issue has still not been resolved.</p>	<p>The register which the committee quotes in Annex 4 is not the Dutch register of political parties. De Groenen is registered as a political group for the European elections. This information is publicly available at https://www.kiesraad.nl/verkiezingen/europees-parlement/partijnamen-en-logos/register-europees-parlement</p> <p>De Groenen has applied to register as a political group for the national elections (<i>Annex 1 - 20171023 Antwoord Kiesraad</i>).</p> <p>De Groenen does have a national structure consisting of a national board (partijbestuur), a general assembly (congress), a financial audit committee, a congress working group and a political programme commission. The first four are statutory bodies (<i>Annex 2 - 20140228 Statutes De Groenen</i>), the programme commission is created in the Rule Book (<i>Annex 3 - 20170923 Huishoudelijk reglement</i>).</p> <p>As of November 4th De Groenen's total membership is 37, 36 members have voting rights. 14 members are female, 16 joined De Groenen in 2014 or later (<i>Annex 4 - 20171104 Members of De Groenen</i>).</p> <p>Since the congress of September 23rd there is only one faction left which fulfils its obligations towards its members. The Chamber of Commerce accepted</p>

		<p>the election of Rijndert Doting as new chair of the board (<i>Annex 5 - 20170927 Uittreksel handelsregister De Groenen</i>). There hasn't been filed an objection against this appointment.</p> <p>De Groenen does not have administrative obligations towards the state of the Netherlands so she cannot fail to fulfil them.</p> <p>The party's bank account is blocked by the Triodos Bank (<i>Annex 6 - 20171006 Triodos Bank handhaaft blokkade</i>). The board of De Groenen has objected against it (<i>Annex 7 - 20171016 Klacht bij Triodos Bank wegens blokkering rekening</i>) but it has not yet been resolved (<i>Annex 8 - 20171024 Antwoord Triodos Bank op klacht</i>). The case has not (yet) been taken to the court.</p>
<p>2. promote Green politics which are ecological, social, democratic and progressive;</p>	<p>The party has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a political programme, Amsterdam Congress, 21 January 2017 (<i>content page (EN) in annex 5</i>). - an Activity Plan 2016-2019, as decided by Congress, March 2015 (<i>annex 6</i>). <p>However:</p> <p>The party has not developed any specific election manifestos; instead, it has used the general political programme of the party to participate in elections (if running at local and European level). The EGP was informed (by the party Chair – who is now in dispute) that the party's board brings amendments to the programme to the Congress for updates, when it considers this is necessary.</p> <p>The party has no structure or substantial programmes which reflect any relevant engagement in political life</p>	<p>Our political programme has been reviewed and amended by our 67th congress of September 23rd (<i>Annex 9 - 20170923 - Basisinkomen - brandstof van de economie - partijprogramma 2017 v2</i>). The Policy plan (as we call it) 2016-2019 has been established by the national board March 19th 2015 and approved by the 61st congress of May 23rd 2015.</p> <p>De Groenen creates for every local or regional election where it participates a specific programme for that election (<i>Annex 10 - 20140206 Verkiezingsprogramma De Groenen Eindhoven 2014-2018; Annex 11 - 20140224 Verkiezingsprogramma De Groenen Amsterdam 2014-2018 Samen groen, gewoon doen!; Annex 12 -</i></p>



	<p>in the Netherlands; nor is it interacting with any stakeholders from other sectors. There are no party-produced documents (internal or external communication) providing the party's perspectives or reactions on relevant issues raised in the Dutch political sphere.</p> <p>In recent years, individual members have been involved in some of the topical movements (basic income, no-TTIP) but this has not been reflected in any developments within the party (e.g. no structures/working groups/policies building/lobbying activities/media).</p> <p>The party has no own-initiated initiatives and does not conduct external processes.</p>	<p>20140228 flyer noord binnenkant final; Annex 13 - 20150303 Waterschap Amstel, Gooi en Vecht).</p> <p>We address controversial subjects in Dutch political life in the first place by amending our political programme. So the 65th congress of January 21st 2017 excluded the controversial conservative politician Fred Teeven from participating in the new government (<i>Annex 9, p.3</i>). He not only retired as an active politician, but even withdrew his application for the Council of State (Raad van State) after an online petition and a blunder in an interview.</p> <p>A key point in our programme is the choice to lower taxes on labour and to raise taxes on consumption. De Groenen proposes to abolish the low and zero vat-tariffs, with the sole exception of unprocessed fruit and vegetables (<i>Annex 9, p.5</i>). None of the political parties participating in the Dutch parliamentary elections of March 15 had a raise of vat in their programme. Nevertheless it appeared end of October in the coalition agreement to raise the lower vat-tariff from 6% to 9%. GroenLinks opposed.</p> <p>Aside from our programme members and guests discuss actual political themes in our party magazine <i>Gras</i>. In <i>Gras</i> 70, July 2017 (<i>Annex 14</i>) Otto discusses if the maximum bonus of 20% of the yearly basic salary is enough to attract skilful employees and a reasonable return on investment for shareholders. This based on the information supplied by the general meeting of shareholders of Triodos Bank N.V. In the same issue of <i>Gras</i></p>
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<p>3. maintain a democratic political base and a democratic internal structure;</p>	<p>De Groenen has 33 members, 28 with voting rights as of April 2017. For information, in 2000, there were 400 members, but in 2004 only 200 members remained. Numbers continued to decline gradually with 93 members in 2009, 77 in 2013, 50 members in 2016 and dropping further to the current figure.</p> <p>The party should have the following statutory bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Main board (minimum 3), - Financial control committee (3), - Gras magazine editorial board, and - EGP Council delegates (2). <p>Even within the undeveloped structure and small membership, positions tend to overlap, thereby accumulating mandates. Gender balance does not seem to have been observed.</p> <p>Several internal issues have been raised previously concerning an imbalance of power on the board, among the membership and in the financial management. All of these issues are due to the</p>	<p>As explained at point 1 and Annex 4 the number of members has risen to 37, 36 with voting right as of November 2017.</p> <p>The round numbers of 2000 (400) and 2004 (200) are inflated, because members were not removed despite failing to pay contribution for years. The history of De Groenen's membership based on actual paid membership contributions since 2009 is shown in Annex 4. In 2013 47 members paid their annual contribution, not 77.</p> <p>The statutory minimal number of members of the financial control committee is two. Neither the statutes nor the rule book demand an editorial board for Gras magazine. The main board is responsible for the content.</p> <p>Gender balance has been observed at all councils since the 16th council in Copenhagen in May 2012 (<i>Annex 15 - 20171105 De Groenen history of gender balance</i>).</p>



	<p>accusation of a lack of internal democracy and transparency.</p> <p>There are records of EGP administrative interaction with the Chair of De Groenen, which were not being communicated to the whole board and to the delegates to the EGP Council of De Groenen.</p> <p>The EGP Committee was informed about the internal conflict within the De Groenen board in late 2016. The main issues focused on undemocratic decision-making (chair taking decisions contrary to other board members or even without their knowledge), non-transparent membership records, and untidy state-reporting documentation.</p> <p>Later, within the organisation which had just a few members, the conflict resulted in the formation of two factions, each headed by one board member (the former chair and a board member). The factions formed new boards (one comprising three people and the other of just two people) and are currently maintaining parallel structures and carrying out statutory activities (double congresses, newsletters, communications).</p> <p>The dispute, which has been taken to the Dutch authorities, is focused on the leadership and official representation, authorisation of bank accounts, and communication channels.</p> <p>Due to the internal rules on proxy votes and quorums, the congresses of both sides are following the internal rules and are able to claim legitimacy and binding decisions.</p>	<p>The board of De Groenen requested the committee to provide sources for their allegations (<i>Annex 16 - 20170912 Questions for the committee – signed</i>). The committee was not able or willing to provide any source (<i>Annex 17 - 20170918 EGP reply to OtHaar questions</i>).</p> <p>As explained before, after the 67th congress of September 23rd and the subsequent registration by the Chamber of Commerce there is only one faction left. The dispute has not been taken to the court because there was no need for anymore.</p>
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4. participate actively in political life and in elections at a credible level;

The party participates in elections in a very irregular way.

Elections:

De Groenen has not participated in national elections since 1998. At the last national elections (March 2017) they were unable to collect enough signatures to be eligible to run (1000 signatures needed).

In local and regional elections, they last participated in 2011 and 2014, winning 0.02% of the votes.

In the last EU elections in 2014, they formed a coalition with the Pirate Party, winning 0.2% of the vote.

De Groenen also negotiated with the Pirate Party to form a coalition for the 2017 national elections, but nothing materialised.

In June, the Pirate party claimed no plans for future cooperation, referring to De Groenen as politically non-relevant.

Currently, the only elected mandate for De Groenen is Ronald Schönberger the Water Board, Gooi en Vecht (18 March 2015 – common candidate lists with the Pirate Party).

During the June 2017 fact-finding mission, stakeholders from academia, politics, civic organisations, etc. (report in annex 2) assigned no political relevance to De Groenen, either at the national level or concerning any topical debate.

The party has no active campaigns or activities.

Over the years, there are records of local activities conducted by individual members on a couple of

De Groenen states its goals for upcoming elections in its Policy Plan. It does so since 2012 (*Annex 18 - 20120421 Policy plan De Groenen 2012 – 2015; Annex 19 - 20150319 Policy plan 2016 - 2019*).

The Policy plan 2012-2015 says: *“The plans for the period 2012 – 2015 are to participate in the local elections of March 2014, the European elections of June 2014 and the provincial elections of March 2015. In the municipal elections, we want to participate in any case in the municipality of Amsterdam and its boroughs South and West. In the provincial election we want to participate in any case in the province of North-Holland.”*.

The realisation was:

Date	Election	votes	%
19 Mar 2014	Council Amsterdam	1427	0,45
19 Mar 2014	Council Eindhoven	107	0,14
19 Mar 2014	Amsterdam Noord	421	1,43
19 Mar 2014	Amsterdam West	1290	2,37
19 Mar 2014	Amsterdam Centrum	527	1,29
22 May 2014	European Parliament	10883	0,23
18 Mar 2015	Water board Amstel, Gooi and Vecht	23660	5,94

With one seat in the Water board Amstel, Gooi and Vecht for De Groenen.



	<p>topics, but not followed up by the party in any way (policy papers, working groups, etc.).</p> <p>Party reports (activity and budget-wise) show that nearly all the activities are internal – congresses and the newsletter, or participation in EGP activities (overview financial reports 2011-2016 in annex 8).</p> <p>Digital:</p> <p>De Groenen does have a digital presence, but activity is very infrequent and there are few followers, bearing in mind that it is a national party which aims to reach more than 17 million people.</p> <p>The digital channels are mainly used to share news on Green topics, rather than to promote the party’s programme, activities or perspectives on relevant issues on the Dutch political scene.</p> <p>Website: www.degroenen.nl</p> <p>- Facebook (1): https://www.facebook.com/DeGroenenNederland</p> <p>- Twitter: https://twitter.com/DeGroenen</p> <p>- Facebook (2): https://www.facebook.com/groups/partijdegroenen/</p>	<p>Co-operation with the Dutch Pirate party</p> <p>De Groenen didn’t have a coalition with the Pirate party for the European elections of May 2014. We had separate lists (<i>Annex 20 - 20140530 PV csb vaststelling uitslag EP2014</i>).</p> <p>For the Provincial and Water board elections of March 2015 De Groenen and the Pirate party agreed to not compete against each other in North-Holland and to allow two candidates of the other party on their list. It was agreed that the Pirate party would campaign for the province and De Groenen for the Water board. This resulted in a seat in the Water board for De Groenen with nr.3 on the list, Matthijs Pontier from the Pirate party acting as a non-voting member. This co-operation is still functioning as today. See the blog of Matthijs at https://amsterdam.piratenpartij.nl/verslag-uit-het-waterschap/</p>
<p>5. endorse the Green Charter of the European Green Party and the Global Greens Charter;</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
<p>6. accept the Statutes and Rule Book of the European Green Party;</p>	<p>Yes However:</p>	<p>De Groenen took the EGP to court because the committee refused to reimburse the travel costs of our delegates to the councils in Zagreb and Lyon</p>



	<p>De Groenen took the European Green Party to court over its disapproval of the EGP Rule Book directive on the participation fee; following its amendments being voted down at the EGP Council in Lyon, November 2015. This initiative was conducted exclusively by the party chair without prior or later consultation with the rest of the board.</p>	<p>and refused to invoke the conciliation panel which De Groenen proposed</p> <p>The party chair was mandated unanimously by the board to start this procedure (see page 3 of <i>Annex 21 - 20170207 De Groenen vs. EGP</i>)</p>
<p>7. apply gender balance principles in their party structures;</p>	<p>According to De Groenen's leadership, they have experienced major problems of finding women representatives for EGP events, in efforts to fulfil EGP Rule Book requirements.</p> <p>The current leadership of both factions shows one board comprising Otto ter Haar and Rijndert Doting – and the other made up of Jozef van Kessel, Jolanda Verburg and Ronald Schönberger, including just one female representative.</p> <p>As the majority of statutory body positions are held by men, the official explanation provided is that rules are not applicable since there are too few members.</p>	<p>See <i>Annex 15 - 20171105 De Groenen history of gender balance</i> for an overview of results of De Groenen in reaching gender balance since 2012.</p>
<p>8. regularly attend European Green Party Council meetings;</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>Note 1: Due to the internal crisis, De Groenen's voting rights were suspended for the EGP Congress (4 votes), the Global Greens Congress (1 vote) and at the EGP Council session (1 vote), Liverpool, 30 March-2 April 2017 (<i>see email exchanges in annex 7</i>).</p> <p>Note 2: Financial records, published in the party newsletter <i>Gras</i>, show that more than 50% of the annual budget is (over the last six years) has been devoted to participation in EGP activities (<i>annex 8</i>).</p>	<p>See <i>Annex 15 - 20171105 De Groenen history of gender balance</i>.</p>



9. participate in the political discussion and decisions of the European Green Party;	Yes	
10. send their yearly accounts and election results to the European Green Party if not publicly accessible on their party website;	<p>EGP maintains regular communication with its member parties, including De Groenen.</p> <p>The yearly accounts are published in the party's newsletter <i>Gras</i>. However, as mentioned above, over the last year these have been subject to disagreements within De Groenen's leadership.</p>	We offer any delegate with voting rights at the council in Karlstad to check our accounts under condition of confidentiality because it contains personal information like account numbers of our members. All receipts have been digitalised.
11. conduct their financial organisation in a transparent and accountable manner;	<p>The party publishes its annual budget in the <i>Gras</i> newsletter. These records are publically accessible on the De Groenen website (<i>see overview financial reports in annex 8</i>).</p> <p>Records show no income from the state and income based on membership fees and individual donations (reportedly from the chair and board members themselves) to sustain the party's existential costs).</p> <p>At the moment, the 'outgoing money' from De Groenen's accounts with Triodos bank are blocked on request of Otto ter Haar, due to the unresolved authorisation issue.</p> <p>The party's tax-benefit status ANBI was withdrawn by the Dutch tax authorities on 10 July 2017, as the result of two violations (<i>annex 9</i>):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. At least 90% of the institution's efforts must be focused on the general good. 2. A director or person determining the policy may not treat the institution's assets as personal assets. 	De Groenen objected August 19 th against the withdrawal of the ANBI status. The Dutch tax office has informed the board by phone November 2 nd that the ANBI status will be restored (<i>Annex 22 - 20171103 Belastingdienst over ANBI De Groenen</i>).



	<p>Meanwhile, the party's expenditures are financed continuously through private accounts belonging to the leadership of both factions.</p> <p>Disagreements reported to the EGP concerning financial management focused on a lack of transparency and consultations within the board as regards the decision-making process.</p>	
12. pay their designated fee as Full Members in a timely manner;	<p>Yes</p> <p>Note: the 2017 membership fee of 1150€ is partially paid via travel reimbursement for the Liverpool Congress; 767.14€ remains to be paid to date.</p>	The full membership fee for 2017 has been November 2 nd (<i>Annex 23 - 20171103 Payment membership fee De Groenen 2017</i>).
13. not be under any legal or other restraint on their activities;	<p>Due to the internal conflict, De Groenen currently operates parallel structures. Both boards held congresses in 2017, which fulfilled the party's internal rules of procedures, and can thus be considered credible.</p> <p>However, the relevant first-level authority – the Chamber of Commerce – rejected the claims and registrations from both sides from early 2017, thereby resetting De Groenen's official legal representation to its 2016 status.</p> <p>Consequently, the party's legal representation does not match the reality in which its two factions operate.</p>	This has been solved (<i>Annex 5 - 20170927 Uittreksel handelsregister De Groenen</i>)
14. report every two years to the European Green Party on party and policy developments as detailed in Article 4 below.	Done	