



Partia Zieloni – Polska (The Green Party, Poland)

The emergence of the **Polish Green Party**, which was linked both ideologically and politically to green parties already existing in Europe (and around the world), has its historical roots in the pro-European campaign before the EU accession referendum in Poland.

The Greens Referendum Group or 'Grupa Referendalna Zieloni', which was active in 2003 and coordinated the EU pre-accession campaign, decided to continue working on a green political agenda. In June 2003, groups of activists from non-governmental organizations operating all over Poland came to Morawa in Lower Silesia to decide on the future of this initiative. They decided to hold a founding congress and establish a new political party bearing the name Zieloni 2004 ('Greens 2004'), thus referring to Poland's accession to the EU in 2004 and the expected date of the party's registration, as well as clearly distinguishing themselves from the previously recorded political parties by using the word "greens" in their names.

The founding convention took place in September 2003. The final version of the Green Manifesto was agreed on by the activists following discussions that took months. By signing the Manifesto, they gave their consent to the goals and mission assumptions, and expressed their wish to join the ranks of the founding members. The founding convention was attended by people from different progressive backgrounds, mostly working for NGOs, i.e. environmental activists, members of feminist organizations, human rights organizations, LGBT communities, ecologists, animal rights defenders and many others. At the congress, the first governing bodies of the Party were elected, maintaining a 50% gender parity at all levels of the organisation. The first chairpeople of the Party were Magdalena Mosiewicz and Jacek Bożek. The Party's statute was adopted and the program principles were approved. The application for registration of the Party under the name of Zieloni 2004 was filed shortly after the founding congress, but the court registration process took until February 2004. This name was functioning until 2013, when at the Party congress the name was eventually changed to the Greens Party ('Partia Zieloni'), retaining the right to use the historic name "Zieloni 2004".

Since the establishment of the Party, the Greens have run in parliamentary and local elections, forming their own committees, standing on their own party lists or on the lists of other parties, as well as in coalitions. The first elections in which the Greens participated was the European Parliament 2004 vote under the slogan "To the Union for change". The next EP elections, i.e. the 2009 vote, in a coalition with other parties, as well as the 2014 independent attempt to collect over 100,000 signatures required to register a national committee were unsuccessful. Thus the registration of the green national committee in the elections to regional councils (sejmiki wojewódzkie) in 2018 was a huge step forward as it was the first time that the Greens came to be known in all-national politics and it paved the way for the Greens to join new prodemocratic alliances: In the last European elections of 2019, the Greens put their candidates on a broad coalition list - to no avail at that time. All these many efforts, however, came to fruition later on.

The Greens participated in the elections to the lower chamber of the parliament (Sejm), as part of a coalition or on lists of other parties, in 2005, 2011 (on social democrats' lists) and 2015 – in a coalition

with other left-wing parties. In the 2007 parliamentary elections, the Greens appointed a candidate to the higher chamber of the Polish parliament (Senat) that was unsuccessful. In the last parliamentary elections of 2019, the Greens took part in the Civic Coalition and for the first time in Polish history won three MP seats for Małgorzata Tracz, Tomasz Aniśko, and Urszula Zielińska in the districts of Wrocław, Lubuskie, and Warsaw respectively. Importantly, Małgorzata Tracz has become vice-chairwoman of the Civic Coalition's Parliamentary Club.

The Greens participated in the local elections for the first time in 2006. In the following election years, the Greens were involved in talks among parties from the left side of the political spectrum on coalitions and election agreements. In 2010, the Greens won seats for the first time: three in voivodship assemblies and three in city councils. Importantly, the number of Green councilmen and councilwomen has been constantly on the rise.

Ecological, feminist, human rights and freedom movements have been operating in Poland since the 1980s. And it was the activists of those movements, supported by other civic, human rights and equality movements, that developed the political program, which became the most progressive political document of the time. The Polish Greens were the first to create a strong and powerful voice in defence of the environment and for sustainable development.

In 2011, the Polish Greens presented the idea of a Green New Deal for Poland. It was the Polish part of a broad European campaign in response to the financial crisis of 2009, climate crisis, a proposal of a deep economic and energy transformation as well as a new social order.

Program

Similarly to parties all over the world, the Greens' views are based on four pillars: ecology, social justice and human rights, bottom-up democracy, and pacifism. Postulates formulated by the Greens throughout history include::

- ambitious climate and decarbonisation policy;
- introducing sustainable economic, social, and ecological development;
- proposing an energy model based on energy efficiency and prosumer renewable energy;
- raising social justice and eliminating inequalities;
- maintaining the separation of churches and religious associations from the state;
- supporting legal abortion;
- introducing registered partnerships (for homosexual and heterosexual people) and marriage for all;
- supporting drug policy based on education and prevention, decriminalization;
- maintaining state education and health services;
- withdrawing Polish troops from Afghanistan;
- introducing an urban policy, that is based on public services, active housing policy, development of accessible public transport, support for universal and accessible education, health and culture, respect for greenery and ecosystems;
- supporting the sustainable development of rural areas, organic farming, and complete elimination of GMOs.