

## **TOWARDS 2019: Let us move Europe!**

The challenges that are confronting our societies and our political systems today are extraordinarily complex and difficult. The last decades were marked by the peace, freedom, democracy the process of European unification had brought to the people in Europe. We gained many liberties in our daily lives: the European integration gave us the possibility to travel without borders, live and work where we want. Important steps towards greener economy and society have been taken and are underway; the transformation of our energy systems towards renewables and out of fossils and nuclear is a possible and realistic perspective. Green parties throughout Europe have contributed immensely to this progress. But we are in the middle of a fourfold revolution.

The changes that disruptive technological developments are effecting are profound and it is still not possible to fully envision their scope. A major and fundamental re-shuffle of international economic and political power relations is under way and it undermines the established international order with contradictory effects. Climate change, which the international community pledged at the Paris conference 2015 to reign in, is already an uncontestable reality, which everybody can observe by paying attention to the increase of extreme and deadly weather situations. Our democratic political systems are under attack from an international wave of authoritarianism, from nativist, racist, xenophobic and other extreme right movements trying to feed off popular dissatisfaction and rebellion against injustices and threats inherent in the present type of globalization.

European Greens have always stood for a politics of progressive change. That means our convictions have placed us clearly on the side of change in favour of environmental and social responsibility, on freedom and democracy and of openness to the world. In the last European elections our slogan was: "Change Europe, vote Green". Today there is also a widespread scramble for security, for safety, for protection against being exposed to the dangerous winds that are blowing. Under the present circumstances in many cases people fear change as much as they strive for it, therefore in the present societal and political climate our politics of change and hope must also address the security issue. We need to advance economic balance and social justice as alternatives to fear-mongering right-wing politics, to restore the confidence and trust of the people on the outskirts of our societies. We cannot afford to leave the less well off feeling unappreciated and unattended for. A Green change towards a socially and ecologically sustainable world is essential for a secure society. We can and will do that because Green policies advocate a kind of change that implies more protection. The changes we advocate defy the illusion that security can be achieved by returning to the social, economic and political order of the more or less



distant past. Quite to the contrary, if we do not change what has to be changed there will be no chance of holding on to what has to be defended: solidarity, freedom, justice, democracy, rule of law, environmental responsibility.

Our battles for a better future will be more successful the better we coordinate them as a European Green family and the more we find successful ways of building alliances with others that share our values and that we can team up with to fight for our goals. We strive for a strengthened and united Europe and as European Green family we are among the driving forces in the current debate about the future of the European Union. Our vision of Europe is the vision of a Europe that respects diversity, protects its citizens, empowers them, fosters self-determination and guarantees to work tirelessly towards the environmental transformations that we owe to the next generations and to the whole world.

In the pursuit of this vision we will strengthen our cooperation and focus on the big issues that Europe has to get right. The first and most important being the fight against climate change, for biodiversity and for a fundamental green economic transformation; the fight for a better economic balance within Europe and within our societies, for economic opportunities and social justice, against austerity and against lobbyist control; the fight against tax evasion; the fight for democracy at all levels including the European one, and for upholding the rule of law, for the protection of minorities under threat and for equal opportunity; the fight for more equality between all gender and sexual identities; the fight to enhance foreign and domestic security while strongly opposing selfish defense corporation interests and reliably defending civil rights at home as well as our shared values of sustainability, peace and international justice globally; and, not least, the fight to empower all ages and notably young people to shape their future.

To play an effective role in all these dimensions of European reality European Greens must address existing divisions between East and West, North and South, the growing social divide that is in danger of being entrenched through unaddressed negative consequences of globalisation and the digital revolution. We have to deal with cultural, religious, gender and ethnic divisions. While status quo politics ignores or downplays the divisions and while authoritarian populists try to exploit them for their own ends, Greens combine a reliable defense of progressive achievements in our societies and in the EU with a keen criticism of injustices and divisions and a realistic attitude of providing new solutions on the basis of our ideals. We pursue a policy of inclusion that seeks to grant everybody the social guarantees, the respect and the participatory opportunities to raise their voices and be heard, which we owe to each other as citizens of our home country, of Europe and of the world.



We need to develop our continent in relation to the global community. As the United States is retreating from its global position, we must be the driving force for fair trade, global social justice, and the fight against climate change in all international organisations and agreements.

We need to tackle the root causes of forced migration such as climate change, poverty, and hopelessness, while providing refugees safe haven from discrimination, racism and violence. Drastic measures are needed to empower our neighbouring societies with economic, educational, and social collaboration to prevent further societal collapse.

Green politics is not built on unconnected silo policies, but on a comprehensive approach that is defining the Green family as movement-oriented, supporting diverse, progressive movements whether on the streets or inside institutions, whether in defense of groups put under threat or in cooperation with economic actors that are willing to join us in this formidable challenge and opportunity that is this green transformation; as dialogue-oriented willing to listen to citizens and to answer to their concerns without being selective and without ignoring voices that do not necessarily share all our values yet; as willing to offer an orientation for the renewal of our societies guided by a sense of responsibility and led by a strong will to join forces with those that would share our commitment in favour of transformation along the sustainable development goals that we all have subscribed to.

European Greens are not as strong presently as we have been in the past. We need to strengthen our voice and presence especially considering that our priorities and proposals are more and more recognised in our societies and necessary to answer the challenges we face. One of our answers in this situation is to learn from each other, to learn from each other's successes and from each other's failures. Of particular relevancy is every effort to share practical experience from specific work on the ground, in our municipalities, in our regions because in the end all green politics is also local, and if we can convince our neighbours, we can convince the wider population. A second approach is to open up for new thinking, new partnerships, new people and new ways of doing politics. Without a continuous opening-up, green parties can be endangered of looking stale and exhausted. Thirdly, we have to identify the areas and issues where we need new discussions: the digital revolution, to mention just one example, is radically transforming all aspects of our reality. How can we avoid that it sweeps away in the process all the social protections, all the divisions of power, all the limits to corporate over-bearing, all the individual freedoms and democratic guarantees? How can we develop and strengthen new forms of solidarity? How do we strengthen and deepen the European Monetary Union? How do we re-visit trade in our day and age preventing globalisation from continuing to tilt social and political orders to the interest of the 0,1%? How do we successfully fight corruption to defend



democracy? How can we transform our engagement with the refugee movement into a practically consequential engagement for fairness in international relations? How can we play a role as Europeans in world-wide efforts to push back against emerging new power antagonisms and to defend a rules-based multilateral international order?

Our Green goal for the European elections 2019 is to elect more MEPs from more countries. We want to demonstrate that Green politics has grown roots in all the corners of Europe. In this context, we are also willing to team up with partners for alliance-based candidacies wherever that is promising and possible. In this way we can strive to be successful even in countries where Greens alone might be too weak for electoral victories yet. European Greens feel a high level of responsibility for the future of our citizens, our countries, the European Union and the international community. We will cooperate in the best way possible EU-wide to turn this engagement into a success in the 2019 elections. We must be able to communicate our Green solutions to all people living in Europe, earn their trust, and convince them to vote for a Green change.