



Adopted resolution

Combating Right-wing Extremism throughout Europe

Fifty years ago, the Rome Treaties formed milestones on the way to European integration. Even then, the aim was not just to achieve a common economic perspective but to find long-term solutions to the terrors of war, totalitarianism, fascism, racism and anti-Semitism and anti-Roms, to draw the lessons from the disaster which the Nazi tyranny had brought to large areas of Europe. Reconciliation between the peoples of Europe, peaceful development on the basis of indivisible and universal human rights, genuine democracy and pluralism: these were and are a part of the vision underlying our shared Europe. It is very important to remember the historical starting point, for in many countries of the EU we are seeing a trend for hate-based extreme rightwing attitudes to become "normalised". In some regions these views are already an established part of popular and youth culture, and are increasingly also finding acceptance in the "social centre", among people with good education and social security. Right-wing networks and media are waging an offensive campaign for "hearts and minds" and are stirring up hatred against ethnic and religious minorities, while the number of right-wing crimes and acts of violence is on the rise.

Today, extreme-right is not only within organized parties, it is also increasing in other forms such as sports hooligans, musical movements and their surroundings..."

The organised extreme right is also having some success in elections. In Germany, having gained seats in a number of state parliaments, extreme right-wingers are now seeking to enter the national parliament, the Bundestag. In France, Le Pen is trying to stir up anti-European populism with his National Front party. In Austria, Italy, Belgium, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania, as well as in other countries, the extreme right are finding willing ears among the electorate. In the European Parliament, populists and extreme nationalists have just formed their own political grouping.

We cannot simply stand aside while such things go on. They undermine the foundations of common European values. They hark back to a dark past of hardship, violence and destruction, which is precisely what Europe, acting as a community, is supposed to have overcome. There is therefore an urgent need to combat, systematically and on a long-term basis, right-wing extremism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism, sexism, homophobia and all other forms of discrimination throughout Europe.

I. Towards a democracy offensive and an active civil society

The European Greens want to see a multi-coloured Europe of diversity, one which develops out of civil society. This is particularly true in the fight against right-wing extremism. Governance cannot be imposed on Europe from above; it has to be earned especially against the background of scepticism about the European Union – in full awareness that right-wing extremism, racism, anti-Semitism, sexism, homophobia and all other forms of discrimination are not just any beliefs, but attitudes which display contempt for humanity. We need a strong European civil society which self-confidently defends democracy and human rights as its fundamental values. We must support existing networks to combat racism and xenophobia. We need a wide range of activities on the ground, in pressure groups, cultural organisations, schools, universities, in local authorities and regions, at supra-regional

and cross-border level. That is one of the reasons why the Commission's campaign "For Diversity – Against Discrimination" must continue and improve.

2. Towards a common European culture of remembrance

The extreme right in Europe is currently working on revising history. They deny and relativise the crimes of Fascism and National Socialism and want to erase them from historical memory. To counteract these efforts we need a living European culture of remembrance. Doing all we can to prevent Auschwitz, National Socialism, Fascism and war from ever happening again: this aspiration must form part of the common European consciousness, in a Europe which is committed to the traditions of humanism, the Enlightenment, democracy and human rights, freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

As fewer and fewer eye-witnesses remain who can tell us of the terrors of the concentration camps and the war, it is becoming all the more important to strengthen the common European culture of remembrance. There is a need for new forms of communication which can combine in a new way the acquisition of historical knowledge and emotional education with an understanding of the fate of the victims. We therefore feel there is a need to set up remembrance culture projects across national and generational borders. Good examples are the Youth Meeting Centres.

Politics and political culture have their part to play as well. Populist resentments against minorities are being stirred up until they even find their way into democratic parties. This in turn contributes to the dissemination of hate-based attitudes among the 'social centre'. In this area there must be clear boundaries for all democrats, and no room for ambiguities.

3. Sending a clear political signal against rightwing extremism and for equal rights

European Greens point up the historical lessons to be learnt from the crimes of National Socialism by standing up for equal rights, for the protection of minorities and for the human rights of refugees by defending universal and European standards towards refugees, as based in the Geneva Convention on the Rights of Refugees.

The European Greens will monitor the implementation of the European Parliament's 2006 resolution on the increase in racist and homophobic violence in Europe, with its calls for action from the Commission and the Member States.

Equality of opportunity between the sexes must be promoted: equal pay for equal work has still not become a reality. European Greens demand a stop to lip-services being paid to women's rights and gender equality: Serious measures have to be taken to tackle the main problems of the pay gap and career impediments for women, and serious measures by governments and business are needed in order for men, especially fathers, to be able and willing to take their part in child care and domestic work.

One important aspect is a European anti-discrimination policy, which was called for by the European Parliament as long ago as 1994 and targets in particular the extreme Right's discriminatory ideologies of inequality. The European Greens want a all-inclusive anti-discrimination policy, not only in the sector of employment but also in the service sector and the sector of free time activities.

This includes equal rights for LGBT and also fighting against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression. It is absolutely unacceptable that the right of lesbians, gays and trans-people to demonstrate and express their opinions is being curtailed in some Member States of the EU and that they are being handed over to bands of extreme rightwing thugs. Historical experience teaches us that Europe has an obligation to adopt a liberal policy towards refugees, according to international and European Human Rights Standards. Many people were only able to survive the terror of Fascism and National Socialism by fleeing and living in exile. Europe must not now be turned into a fortress which is less and less accessible to refugees.

The debates on EU enlargement should be carried out in such a way that they do not provide space for populism and hate-based demagoguery. The complex process of reform in which Turkey is currently engaged must be assisted by the EU in a constructive and critical manner. As European Greens we work against anti-Turkish resentment, which just plays into the hands of the right wing extremists and fundamentalists. We demand that cooperation among EU-Member States in the fight against right wing extremism and xenophobia is improved. For this reason we are particularly in favour of the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) having been made into the European Agency for Fundamental Rights - even though for European Greens this Agency should have more rights and a more precise mandate.

European Greens demand common and joint European action against ethnically slanderous content on the Internet, against Holocaust denial and the dissemination of propaganda material glorifying extreme right-wing ideas.

However, we also warn against harbouring too many illusions. Hate-based attitudes cannot simply be prohibited. We need clear political statements and actions against right wing extremist and xenophobic groupings and parties. For European Greens there is no space for political co-operation and deal with the extreme right, and we neither accept nor tolerate their extremist positions and ideologies. European Greens make it clear that there is a definite border between right-wing extremist, xenophobic, anti-Semitic, sexist and homophobic policies and the democratic, open-minded, global and European policies we defend.