

Opposing Trump's policies and fighting the far-right: building the alternative by deepening democracy in the EU

The election of Donald Trump as 45th US President last 8th November 2016 represents, primarily, a threat to democracy, freedom and the rights of American citizens and is a result, which is likely to cause major turbulences on a worldwide scale. The first months of his mandate already proved an agenda that restricts civil liberties, dismantles social rights and distributive policies, and criminalises minorities, while also representing a real threat to the division of powers.

In international relations we can expect the U.S. to disengage from multilateral bodies, such as UN, and to undo its international commitments to Human Rights, climate protection, security, developmental cooperation, women's rights (Gag Rule) monetary and financial stability. The introduction of protectionist barriers increases the likelihood for political tensions and trade conflicts, including with China.

In the EU as in the US, inequality is rising as a result of neoliberal policies led by many governments across the world since the 70s and societies are deeply divided. Furthermore, over these last years, the financial crisis threatened many social, democratic and economic achievements, fuelling the fear of globalisation and laying bare the EU's and its member states' inability to offer viable and cohesive solutions. This helped populist parties and far right movements to gain ground and reach power in the US and in some EU member states using a nationalistic and xenophobic rhetoric.

These forces that sometimes work as an international authoritarian network have in common their will of dismantling the EU, which also appears to fit well in Trump's agenda.

The outcome of the Brexit Referendum and Trump's election should serve as wake-up calls. As a pro-European force, we, Greens, need to fight for the European project, and we need to do this with all the energy and intelligence we have.

The business as usual approach will not help to overcome the growing cleavages in society. In order to unite societies again, it becomes more urgent than ever to offer a hopeful future perspective at the European level. We need to tackle the democratic shortcomings that we have in Europe, which have played a crucial role in the increased disaffection towards the common project and led many towards embracing national retreat postulates. Moreover, confronted with an opponent who represents a real threat to democracy within global governance, the only effective answer to such short-circuiting attempts at a European scale is to offer more democracy.

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The 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome provides a unique occasion to reflect as well as to remind ourselves of the values and the founding objectives upon which the Union is grounded, which appear to have been partially left behind in the past years, and particularly in the so-called refugee crisis: unity in diversity, empathising and providing welfare to those who are in need and suffer, in order to not let anyone be left behind.

We take a clear stance: In front of measures fostering xenophobia and discrimination on religious grounds, we must foster open, intercultural societies of dialogue, tolerance and inclusion, also as the most effective way to tackle the roots of radicalisation leading to terrorism. And in front of climate negationism, we must step up our efforts and play again a leading role in order to achieve the required binding targets and effective related measures to prevent global warming. Also, thanks to the Global Greens network, we will keep building an even stronger solidarity alliance of resistance to the far-right in all five continents.

As such, we reaffirm our commitment to:

1. Seek cooperation with forces in the US that oppose Trump and support climate policy and the environmental transformation of our economies. We will focus on this core green responsibility in international cooperation in order to make Europe a leader and standard-bearer in the green transformation;
2. Foster transnational cooperation and exchange of experience around the necessary fight to defend democracy against the emerging international far right. Strengthening European democracy, particularly on the transnational level; unmasking far-right leaders in Europe who portray themselves as anti-establishment and are usually nothing but clear exponents of the establishment itself, and helping others to fight against shrinking space for civic and democratic engagement;
3. Continue our fight against unjust trade and investment relationships; we oppose Trumpian policies of protectionism plus nationalism, as well as so-called free-trade policies which favour only the economically powerful; we will fight for free and fair trade and international exchange in a multi-lateral approach guided by the goal of global justice;
4. We clearly reject hate propaganda, which always met and will always meet with our strong opposition. We oppose policies that ignore our responsibilities towards refugees and asylum-seekers and we advocate a migration policy that creates a credible alternative to Fortress Europe; we insist on a consistent anti-authoritarian policy in Europe and beyond;
5. Cooperate with partners in the US and internationally to create resilient alternatives to the social divisions and injustice plaguing our societies. This is done by relating our actions to the root causes of the insecurity and injustice, and by addressing the victims of this situation with true solutions. Socioeconomic security, equality, decent employment and public services are the best ways to rebuild the social cohesion, experience of inclusion and wellbeing within the society. They reduce the frustration

and aggression arising from the injustice and sense of meaninglessness caused by the current policies that cut the public services and benefits of the citizens, accumulate wealth, employment and security for a more and more limited group of people, casting more and more Europeans into the outskirts of our societies. To succeed we must struggle to maintain the financial sustainability of our equality securing public services, by new green jobs, preventing tax-dodging, fighting corruption and by not using public money for purposes that only create a false sense of security without improving our wellbeing.

6. Continue to fight for progressive, cosmopolitan and open-society values in order to defeat the cultural backlash based on bigotry, supremacism, "my nation first", isolationism and patriarchy.
7. Confront the simplification of analysis, "alternative facts" and a post-truth approach of the far-right populism. Unveiling their inconsistencies by bringing the debate back to the domain of concrete public policies confronting them not only with facts but also with a narrative that creates a wider and inclusive "we" to overcome the exclusion that creates their "we against others approach".
8. Work further to be able to propose a political alternative to the misuse of the national identities and to confront populist positions based on segregation and alienation of 'others' who are used as scapegoats; to work thoroughly in order to prevent a split taking place in Europe, it being an existential risk as we could envisage in some of the passages of the economic crisis.
9. Build a truly functioning, inclusive and transparent democracy at European level, capable of guaranteeing the common good, to tackle economic imbalances and social injustices, to protect fundamental rights and freedoms, to fight the severe social crisis in some EU member states and to ensure environmental protection within and beyond its borders.
10. Continue our work in local and regional governments with pioneering projects of hosting and inclusion of refugees, migrants and asylum seekers; creating more inclusive, participative and greener cities, with all the necessary social services for all; and also with our presence in national parliaments and governments, pushing for the much needed clean energy transition, for instance in Germany, or even recently being at the forefront of the climate deal in Sweden.

We have proven that we not only have good proposals, but also that we are ready to take the highest responsibilities, just as Alexander van der Bellen did in the Presidential election in Austria, where he was the one who managed to stop the far-right threat or the big increase of green seats in the Dutch Parliament that contributed to stopping Wilders.

So, we claim with pride and conviction that our project is the best antidote to Trumpism and far-right across Europe and the globe!