

Manifesto 2004

European and Local Elections



An underwater scene with a blue color palette. The top half shows the water surface with ripples and bubbles. The bottom half shows a school of fish swimming in the water.

YOU DECIDE!

**Green Politics
– Clean Politics**



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GREEN
PARTY
Comhaontas Glas



Introduction

This manifesto sets out to re-build confidence and hope in politics. It outlines a better future, not just for Ireland or the EU, but for the global community as well. It's time for real change. Green politics offers that change. It is the politics Ireland has to take up on June 11th for the sake of our children's future and for generations to come.

'Think Globally, Act Locally' is the motto that launched the Green Movement. The need to see the bigger picture – that vision of a better world and how it might be achieved – along with the belief that each and everyone of us can contribute to creating such a world, informs all the policies and actions of the Green Party.

It is therefore no accident that this Green Party Manifesto for the 2004 Elections encompasses our policy positions for both the European and Local Elections: it is a 21st century vision for Bantry and Brussels... for Donegal and Dublin. It is, in fact, based on the framework of the European Federation of Green Parties' Manifesto, demonstrating that the Green Party /Comhaontas Glas is part of a much broader green movement. Not only are we members of the recently launched European Greens that crosses the countries of Europe and works to great effect in the European Union, but we are also part of a larger movement for green politics that extends across the globe.

What our Green MEPS do in the European Parliament is inextricably linked with the work of our TDs in Dáil Eireann and with our councillors at local level. Actions taken in Brussels touch every Irish city, town and village, impacting on our fishing and agriculture communities, on employment, and on how we provide housing, waste, environmental and transport services for our people.

Likewise, decisions in the Dáil and on local councils can impact directly on European and global issues. For example, in one area alone – agriculture – the encouragement of local farmer's markets, organics and energy crops, the maintenance of local abattoirs, the creation of GMO-Free zones, all have knock-on effects in terms of food and animal exports, food quality, energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

'Think Gl

The Green Party warmly welcomes the addition of ten new EU States and looks forward to new Green MEPs from these countries joining us in the European Parliament., where we already have 45 Green MEPs from twelve countries in the Green group. There is also a new EU Constitution under consideration which will influence the future course of the EU's development. Issues involving the EU's economic and environmental health, the safety and quality of our food, energy and transport systems, justice and immigration policy, the 'war on terrorism', Social Europe, globalisation, the EU's military dimension - will all have to be considered by our elected MEPs.

The results from the Local Elections must produce councillors who will address our housing and planning crisis, find ways to build healthy and sustainable communities for our people, resolve our waste and transport problems, clean up our environment, and create safe play areas and 'safe routes' to school for our children.

Our European and Local Government candidates come from all walks of life and are embedded in their local communities. Their goal at both EU and local level will be to bring social and economic gains to all levels of society and to tackle the environmental degradation that the existing political system has disregarded and which threatens us all.

The core issue of these elections is democracy and accountability. The Green Party believes that decision-making should be taken at the lowest effective level, as close as possible to the people affected by those decisions.

There is a need for the European Parliament – as the most democratically accountable and open body in the EU – to be strengthened within the EU.

'Globally, Act Locally'

There is a need for the EU to make a significant policy shift in its economic policies, away from corporate driven globalisation towards more localised production and democratic controls: issues such as social justice and environmental protection go hand in hand and must not take second place to the single pursuit of economic competitiveness.

The EU must also take subsidiarity more seriously and devolve more power back to States and regions. Local authorities must be given more powers, with true de-centralisation of decision-making out of Dublin, not a mere moving of offices around the State.

There is also another focus for our concerns about democracy and accountability in these elections: the Fianna Fáil/PD Government. We now have perhaps the most arrogant Government in the State's history. This Government's anti-democratic tendencies are breathtaking. It has single-mindedly attempted to remove the people from politics, whether it be by:

- > Curtailing freedom of information;
- > Manipulating the planning process and shielding it from public objections;
- > Limiting accountability and stifling debate in the Dáil;
- > Amending the Constitution without proper consultation or preparation;
- > Re-running referendums until it gets the answer it wants;
- > Supporting and providing facilities for an illegal war on Iraq despite widespread public opposition;
- > Spending scarce resources - without authorisation - on housing Punchestown horses rather than homeless people.
- > Attempting to undermine the democratic process itself by unilaterally introducing an unsafe and unaccountable electronic voting system.



While Fianna Fáil and the PDs have been fiddling with the public finances – the people of Ireland have had to suffer deteriorating public services, inadequate public transport, a sick health service, a growing gap between this country's rich and poor, increased child poverty, growing homelessness and skyrocketing house prices, environmental decline, lack of assistance for the most vulnerable in society - in short, a general deterioration in Quality of Life. A vote for the Greens on the 11th of June is a vote for positive changes which will improve our quality of life.

1 Safeguarding The Environment

Environmental protection is an obvious policy area for action at EU level, as pollution does not respect national boundaries. 80% of our environmental legislation comes from the EU. The European Parliament can make a real difference to our environment – and has, thanks to Green Party inputs. It shares decision-making powers with the Council of Ministers in the environmental area and has an important ‘oversight’ role with the Commission and the Council on environmental law implementation. At a local level, Green Party councillors have a crucial role in enforcing these laws.

At EU level ★★★★★★

Our Green MEPs have shown environmental leadership, making important improvements to EU legislation in areas such as water policy, climate change, air quality, animal welfare, GMOs, waste management and access to environmental information, amongst others. Achievements have included, for example, the strengthening of the Water Framework Directive, promoting air quality legislation, and the establishment in the Electronic Waste Directive of ‘producer responsibility’ for the ‘end of life’ treatment of electrical and electronic equipment, thus encouraging the producers of such equipment to move towards eco-design.

Green MEPs will continue to:

Push for the introduction of an EU instrument banning the use of phosphates and all phosphate detergents

Ensure Ireland’s full compliance with the EU Air Quality Directive and Press the EU Commission to legislate against car emissions that are responsible for growing health problems, including alarming rises in asthma levels.

Ensure the availability of EU funding for further research and development of ‘green’ cars, powered by biofuels, electric batteries, solar panels or hydrogen fuel cells, thereby reducing damaging emissions.

Push the EU to follow the example set by New Zealand, Western Australia, California, Toronto and elsewhere to

establish a Zero Waste economy within a twenty-year period based on best practice around the world.

In Local Authorities

Green Party councillors have been proactive champions of the environment and have been acting in close contact with our Green MEPs to better environmental conditions locally. For example; cooperation between Green Party councillor and Euro-candidate Mary White and Nuala Ahern MEP facilitated a petition to the European Parliament’s Petitions Committee on the poor water quality in Co Kilkenny. This resulted in a full hearing by the EU in Kilkenny and a call by the Parliament to the Commission to require Ireland to comply with EU water directives.

Green Councillors will continue to:

Ensure waste prevention and minimisation objectives are prioritised within all County Waste Management Plans.

Promote first class recycling facilities and oppose the building of municipal waste incinerators.

Support Catchment-Based management plans and River Basin Management Systems to protect our precious water supplies and fisheries.

Campaign for the introduction of new laws to control the spreading of slurry, the use of REPS funding to provide incentives for further reductions in the use of chemical fertilisers and the introduction of harsher penalties for failure to respect buffer zones between slurry spreading and water sources.

Support the provision of financial assistance to farmers to comply with the requirements of the Nitrates Directive.

Shift in Energy Policy Climate Change

Climate change, arising from the burning of fossil fuels such as oil, coal and gas, presents a key challenge to global sustainable development. While the EU has taken the lead amongst industrialised nations in pushing for commitments and targets under the Kyoto protocol, scientists are now telling us we need to reduce our emissions by some 60 – 80% . Ireland is committed to limiting its greenhouse gas emissions to 13 per cent above 1990 levels, by the year 2012. Alarmingly, however, Ireland's levels are now over twice that target and are continuing to rise.

Irish society needs to shift to clean renewable energy sources (offshore windfarms, biomass, biofuels, wave and solar power) and must promote much greater levels of energy efficiency and energy conservation.

At EU level ★★★★★

Our Green Party MEPs have contributed to the adoption of the first emissions trading scheme to curb greenhouse gases. They have campaigned against BNFL nuclear transports and campaigned relentlessly to have Sellafield decommissioned.

Green MEPs will continue to:

Lobby to have the Euratom Treaty reviewed and phased out.

Insist on an increase in the use of clean renewable energy sources to 25% of overall energy consumption within the EU by 2020.

Campaign for a long-term, ecologically sound, fair and equitable Climate Change Stability Pact.

Push for the integration of environmental concerns, in particular energy consumption, into the transport sector and for the inclusion of all stakeholders, including environmental NGOs, in the development of EU transport policy.

In Local Authorities

Green Party councillors have succeeded in encouraging some local authorities to conduct energy audits and to switch over to green electricity and have lobbied for greater energy conservation in new buildings.

Green Councillors will continue to:

Ensure that local government plays its part in fully implementing Ireland's National Climate Change Strategy,

Encourage alternative energy projects through County Development Plans and the planning process

Continue to campaign against nuclear power, particularly Sellafield and to be actively involved in the Nuclear Free Local Authorities initiative,

Support alternatives to car use and improve conditions for cyclists, pedestrians and bus passengers

Implement 'Safe Routes to Schools' schemes for all our schools and colleges to encourage students to walk and cycle.

Ensure that all council buildings are energy efficient, that all planning permissions ensure energy efficiency and introduce an energy rating standard for new homes.

Safe Food – From **Field to Fork**

Intensive agricultural practices have led to EU- wide food scares and a call for better food safety standards in order to protect consumers. Meanwhile a new threat to the agriculture and wildlife is imminent though the proposed introduction of GM crops. The Green Party is concerned about the potentially irreversible effects that GM crops may have on the natural environment.

Current agricultural policies have also let the farming community down. We want to see Ireland's farmers and producers establishing world-class products and becoming market leaders by excelling in wholesome production techniques, reducing chemical and energy inputs and rejecting GMOs throughout the island.

At **EU level** ★★★★★★

Our Green Party MEPs have been very proactive in promoting food safety measures and have been key players in adopting EU legislation regarding the authorisation, traceability and labelling of GMOs and GM products. We have pushed for the internet 'rapid alert system' warning about food risks connected with residues in food; helped achieve a ban on feeding meat and bone meals to animals; and contributed to the decision to abolish the only four remaining antibiotics still authorised in animal feed.

Green **MEPs** will continue to:

Campaign for the overall levels of EU funding for rural development to be increased by at least 20%

Ensure that all GM products are labelled and that member states can take appropriate measures to prevent the unintended presence of GMOs in conventional and organic products.

Campaign to have 10% of the EU agricultural land area farmed organically by 2010.

Lobby to have food safety regulations adapted to foster and support high quality regional and local food enterprises.

Lobby for the introduction of an EU instrument to reduce the overall use of pesticides.

Promote a development budget for agri-environmental schemes, in order to establish practices that protect and improve biodiversity, habitats, landscape and animal welfare and reward farmers for adopting them.

Ensure animal welfare and the phase out of live animal exports: the Greens are the only political force with an animal rights philosophy at its core.

In **Local Authorities**

Green Party councillors will continue to:

Encourage measures that shorten the food chain, e.g. farmers markets, food co-ops, shorter distribution runs and local abattoirs.

Support new opportunities for landowners including locally agreed wind farms, agri- and eco-tourism; the growing of bio-fuel and energy crops and broadleaf forestry.

Conservation

The Green Party will continue to promote the protection of biodiversity, fisheries, landscapes, and our built heritage. Ireland is currently in breach of a number of the Wild Birds and Habitats Directives and has the second smallest network of Special Protected Areas (SPAs) in the EU. The Greens will continue their high profile support for conservation of fish stocks. (Patricia McKenna MEP, is Green spokesperson on Fisheries in the European Parliament). The Greens have also made great progress in the Parliament on farm animal welfare, vivisection, cosmetic testing, the hunting and shooting of migratory birds and the conservation of habitats.

There is also a need for strong action to protect Ireland's valuable stock of built heritage, which is becoming increasingly vulnerable to development pressures.

Green MEPs will continue to:

Ensure the proper implementation and enforcement of the Birds and Habitats Directives.

Ensure the monitoring of Structural Funds so that they are not used to damage important sites for nature conservation.

Ensure the effective integration of nature conservation objectives into all relevant policy areas, in particular transport, fisheries, agriculture and regional development.

Support reforms of the Common Fisheries Policy and follow through on successes in curbing Supertrawlers.

Green Councillors will continue to:

Integrate conservation issues into all relevant policy areas. Encourage tree protection and promotion.

Promote proper coastal zone management.

Lobby for the strengthening of the Heritage protection provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Push for the amending of planning legislation to provide for the mandatory listing of public rights of way by local authorities, and ensure their listing and protection within Development Plans.

Environmental Enforcement

Irish implementation of EU environmental legislation is one of the worst in Europe. The highest number of environmental complaints to the European Commission come from Irish citizens. The complaints against Ireland cover many issues including failure to control illegal waste activities, decline in water quality, heritage sites under attack from development and lack of or poor Environmental Impact Assessments. While the Environmental Protection Agency acts as the ultimate environmental management body in Ireland, the enforcement of most environmental legislation rests with local authorities.

At EU level ★★★★★

Green Party MEPs have been very active in Europe at pushing for much greater enforcement of environmental legislation. We have raised complaints in the Parliament and to the Commission about Ireland's poor water quality, illegal dumping in Wicklow, and the poor environmental planning behind proposed incinerators at Poolbeg and Ringaskiddy.

Green MEPs will continue to:

Promote strengthened EU environmental enforcement legislation.

Push for the Parliament to regularly consult environmental citizen's organisations that act as watchdogs of the EU's policies and practices.

Lobby for NGOs to have access to judicial review of EU institution decisions in order to defend citizen's interests.

Actively promote the citizen's petitions process to progress environmental enforcement.

Green Councillors will continue to:

Lobby for the recently established Office for Environmental Enforcement (OEE) to develop a regional enforcement network as a matter of priority.

Campaign for the proper implementation of the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive in Ireland.

Ensure proper enforcement of local planning laws.

Work toward meaningful public participation in all environmental decision-making.

2 Greening The Social Dimension

The Greens believe in strong communities and liveable cities. A focus of Green politics is social inclusion and efficient basic public services for all. Green social and employment policies include active efforts to further the interests of women and also to facilitate a good work and family life balance. Greens also believe that people with disabilities have the right to live a normal life where barriers to work and to facilities must be removed.

However, Ireland is one of the most unequal societies in the developed world. In terms of Gross Domestic Product per capita, Ireland sits near the top of the international league. However, we come second worst out of 17 northern industrial countries, just behind the United States, in the United Nations Development Programme's Human Poverty Index – a measure of poverty which takes into account life expectancy, health, education, standard of living and social exclusion.

The Green Party – working in the European Parliament and in local authorities up and down the country – is committed to what the German Green Party's Joschka Fischer, has described as “A new politics of generosity”. We face long-term challenges in terms of:

- > Providing an infrastructure of caring;
- > Providing for an aging population;
- > Reversing the growing inequality in society;
- > Providing access to a whole range of public services & infrastructure that doesn't exist at present.

Housing and Access to accommodation

Our housing crisis is now evident in three ways: unaffordable private housing, exorbitant private rents and a shortage of public housing. House prices and private rents have risen beyond the reach of many while the state has provided too few houses for those who can neither buy nor rent. Government policy over several decades has encouraged a view of housing as a good to be allocated by the market, ultimately as a means of speculation and wealth creation rather than as a shelter and a home. New house prices have increased over three

times faster than house building costs and six times faster than the consumer price index since 1994. There is evidence of a monopoly-type situation, where super-normal profits are being made by developers and landowners.

Health

As we emerge from a period of unprecedented prosperity in this country, our health services have never looked as under-resourced, or as vulnerable. In contrast with the centralisation of health services proposed within the Hanly report, we support accountable and efficient health services at local, regional and national levels. We favour the Department of Health remaining as a 'Health Executive' and, at a local level, we wish to see leaner and restructured health boards with formal representation for patient/consumer groups. The Greens

“A new politics of generosity”

will introduce 24 hour, 'one-stop shop' community health clinics staffed by multi-disciplinary teams which will significantly alleviate the current pressures on Accident and Emergency departments of acute hospitals. We favour an integrated model of health care that incorporates preventative and complementary medicine into traditional healthcare structures.

Transport

Ireland is becoming the most car dependent country in the world. The Green Party's policy on transport contains a comprehensive package of measures aimed at shifting Ireland's transport focus from unsustainable road building to the provision of quality public transport and cycling facilities. Our policy is aimed at: reducing traffic deaths and injuries; improving accessibility; reducing our national fuel bill, reducing pollution and carbon dioxide emissions, and improving the quality of life in our streets, towns, and rural areas.

Green jobs for the future

The economic growth and jobs of the future will come from the new clean technologies which will also solve some of our environmental problems. The Green Party wants to help develop a thriving enterprise culture. To achieve this we would lower labour taxes and instead, raise the revenue from environmental taxes, such as the proposed carbon tax, which will also help clean up our act.

Green spaces and play areas

In the consultation leading to the development of a National Play Strategy for Ireland, over 2000 children wrote to the Minister for Children, identifying play and recreation as a major quality of life issue for them. Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises "the right of the child to engage in play and recreational activities." Yet, many children live in communities with minimum or no play and recreational facilities.

Anti Social Behaviour

Ireland incarcerates the highest proportion of 18-25 year old offenders in Europe. The Green Party will press for a radical overhaul of our youth justice system and press for a comprehensive range of measures to address anti-social behaviour. Our educational system, the planning of our housing estates, support for community and family structures, tackling social disadvantage, even the

materialistic ethos of the Celtic Tiger must be addressed as part of any considered response to this deterioration in our communities.

Life long Education and The Arts

The link between education and life chances has long been recognised but as we move to a knowledge-based economy this link becomes even more important. Our society and economy will pay dearly for any failure to combat educational disadvantage. We believe that attempts to mitigate educational disadvantage need to begin even before a child starts school. For the Green Party accessibility to the Arts is an essential part of education and a meaningful life.

Social cohesion and inclusion

The Green Party believes that Ireland can only benefit from a true gender balance in all aspects of life. We also believe that equality must mean increasing life choices for all citizens, enabling women and men to pursue lives characterised by fulfilment and a healthy balance between work and other life choices, including family life.

Older Citizens

If we are to cherish our senior citizens we must spend more money on services (not just health services) to the elderly, without cutting back on money for individuals and institutions. For example, introducing real public transport options for people in rural areas, particularly the elderly, and giving significantly more money to carers, and easing the criteria for eligibility.

At EU level ★★★★★

The Greens have highlighted the need for strong EU social policies to be guaranteed in the new EU Constitution; insisted that full employment, environmental criteria, and quality jobs be added, alongside competitiveness, as EU goals for achievement by 2010. We have campaigned to ensure that women's

rights and equality issues are fully integrated into the Parliament's work and have issued a major report showing how transport policies, which promote walking and cycling, can also bring major benefits in health policy.

Green MEPs will continue to:

Monitor and promote the above policy areas and:

Highlight new environmentally friendly technologies as the way forward for the EU Member States economic development;

Ensure the EU institutions take environmental and social criteria into account when making public procurement decisions;

Promote ecological and social auditing of the EU budget.

In Local Authorities

Green Councillors will continue to :

Amend Development Plans to protect public open/green spaces and ensure we have at least as many playgrounds as golf courses

Ensure development plans and planning permissions use best practice in terms of promoting sustainable, properly facilitated developments, including the designation of lands alongside new housing developments for primary and post primary schools

Resist the privatisation of public amenities

Secure new school facilities which should be designed to have multiple uses for the community

Campaign to reverse the decline in the provision of social housing

Promote a series of reforms in the provision of land for housing, including a reformed development levy mechanism to recoup a fair share of the value added to urban and rural land that is zoned for development, and ensuring local authorities can compulsorily purchase development land prior to rezoning at agricultural or existing use value plus 25%.

Promote a proper National Spatial Strategy, and help to maintain and increase population numbers in rural areas through the creation of new villages or village clusters as a means of actively preventing further dispersal of settlement

Bring the Barcelona Declaration home, to ensure that local councils protect the rights of people with disabilities

Provide first class 'one stop shop' local community health centres to take the pressure off A&E departments in major hospitals. These will provide 24 hour cover and be staffed by multi-disciplinary teams

Call for priority spending on new public transport provision including:

- > A metro system for Dublin (Sandyford to Swords);
- > A rail inter-connector for Dublin, linking the rail terminals at Spencer Docks and Heuston Station;
- > A rail link to Shannon;
- > Western Rail Corridor (initially from Ennis and Tuam to Galway);
- > A suburban rail network for Cork serving Middleton and Youghal etc;
- > Connecting the two existing Luas Lines in Dublin and starting to build more;
- > Enhanced support for urban and rural bus services.



YOU DECIDE!

**Your vote for
GM-free foods**

3 Developing Democracy

The Greens believe in the European community, not in a European Superstate. We want a Europe where decisions are made by elected parliamentarians and not behind closed doors. We don't want decisions being made which go completely against the will of the people, e.g. the introduction of GM crops. We want a social Europe, which protects workers, public services and minorities. We want a commonsense Europe that works for the interests of all.

Our Green MEPs have already made contributions to safeguarding human rights and increasing accountability and transparency in the EU. Their interventions have ensured – and will continue to ensure that:

- > **The public can directly influence EU decisions.** The Green Party have strongly supported and assisted citizens' petitions and complaints to the EU, particularly on Ireland's failure to comply with EU environmental directives.
- > **EU institutions and EU decision-making are more accountable to the people.** For example, the Greens have led the political demands for more democratic scrutiny, by both the EU and national parliaments, of EU cooperation on policing and justice issues.
- > **Expanded protection is given to immigrants and refugees, and human rights and anti-discrimination positions are strongly upheld.** Because of the Greens, immigrants who have resided more than five years in the EU now have the same rights and freedoms as citizens of the Union. Green MEPs continue to monitor the EU's observance of international human rights agreements, particularly in terms of asylum seekers.
- > **Stronger personal data protection and stronger controls on surveillance systems are needed.** The Greens will monitor the implementation of the Declaration on Combating Terrorism passed at the 2004 EU March summit, under the Irish Presidency, to ensure that the major surveillance systems put in place do not jeopardise basic democratic freedoms such as freedom of movement and expression and the right to privacy.

Green MEPs will also continue to highlight the need to redress the EU's democratic deficit. The provision in the new draft Constitution for more shared co-decision powers between the European Parliament and the Council is welcome. However, overall the Constitution has failed to redress the democratic deficit. The Greens will also continue to push for any eventual Constitution to be put for approval before the people in the member states via a Europe-wide referendum on the same day.

Local Government

Ireland is one of the most centralised democratic states in Europe. Not only do local authorities need more power, but so do our people, via better accountability and more involvement.

To strengthen and democratise local government, the Greens will act at both national and local level to:

Introduce directly elected mayors.

Dismantle Local Government legislation removing powers from local councillors and transfer back decision-making powers from city/county managers to elected public representatives.

Introduce Local Government Ombudsman/Local Public Accounts Committees to stop the planning scandals of recent years.

Lower the voting age to 16 for local government elections.

Ensure that local authorities fully develop partnerships with local community groups.

Increase funding/ support and provision of facilities to the Strategic Policy Committees.

Ensure environmental representation and increased community/voluntary inputs to County Development Boards.

Introduce a Local Sustainability Bill to empower local communities.

Increase public involvement/consultation in local decision-making by changing the timing and structure of council meetings and arranging for the holding of meetings in local community venues.

Continue to use new Information and Communications technologies to develop and run web-based petitions on council issues.

Promote 'Local Democracy Week', with 'travelling town halls' to local communities, Council meetings held in local schools, and encouragement of young people's involvement in the political process.



YOU DECIDE!
**The Greens won't
let you down**

An Rogha Cheart
www.greenparty.ie

**GREEN
PARTY**
Comhaontas Glas

4 Strengthening Peace

At EU level ★★★★★

The greatest achievement of the EU has been the creation of structures for the development of peaceful, mutually beneficial relations between states. Out of a bitter and deadly legacy of two world wars and, most recently, a Cold War, former enemies have come together as partners. The accession of ten new member states is a major achievement in reconciliation and in healing a divided Continent.

The Green Party is therefore very concerned at the EU's current militarisation. The concentration on military approaches to security issues as represented by the development of a Rapid Reaction Force, EU military command structures, and an armaments agency, are to be regretted and opposed. The proposed EU Constitution continues this trend and moves the EU closer to a military alliance, complete with 'solidarity' and mutual defence clauses.

Ireland's long-standing neutrality policy and UN peacekeeping role has been steadily eroded, not just by military developments in the EU but by the Irish Government's provision of Shannon Airport to the United States' illegal war against Iraq. These are developments the Green Party will continue to oppose, while working for the strengthening of the United Nations.

Green MEPs have been active peacemakers in the European Parliament. It was the Greens who first proposed an International War Crime Tribunal for former Yugoslavia, a concept later used to establish the International Criminal Court (ICC).

The Greens were the first, in 2000, to ask for a war crime tribunal to judge Saddam Hussein's regime.

The Greens have also been active on global conflict issues – Chechnya, the Middle East, Tibet, Indonesia and Africa – and have ensured proper engagement of the EU with the UN Commission on Human Rights.

The Greens continue to work for nuclear disarmament and arms control, and, in relation to depleted uranium and cluster bombs, have convinced the European

Parliament to adopt a resolution calling for a moratorium on these weapons.

In terms of the Iraq war, due in part to Green amendments, the European Parliament adopted a clear position against the war on January 30, 2003, expressing its opposition to any unilateral military action and pre-emptive strikes.

Another Green initiative resulted in most of the European Parliament signing a petition against the Iraq war. Following this initiative, an EP delegation which included Patricia McKenna MEP, travelled to Baghdad and Washington to present the petition to UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan.

Green MEPs will:

Fully support an EU 'peace strengthening' role that is centred on mediation, diplomacy and early conflict resolution, cultural appreciation, fair trade and fair control of energy resources.

Support the establishment of a civilian EU Peace Corps, working in close liaison with the UN.

Promote the role of neutrals within the EU and oppose EU militarisation.

Support the strengthening of the EU's Code of Conduct for arms exports, due for review the end of 2004.

Lobby for the retention and increased funding to EU programmes aimed at peace and reconciliation.

In Local Authorities

Public representatives at local level can also strengthen the peace process, whether it be by promoting cross-border cooperation, the twinning of cities, the establishment of nuclear-free-zones, or public awareness campaigns/cultural activities.

5 Promoting Grassroots Globalisation

The Greens insist that ecological and social criteria must be taken into account in world trade talks. The trade policies adopted by the European Union have often had negative consequences for the poorest countries in the world. The worldwide protests against these sort of policies are part of the global movement which is saying that there is a better way for us to use and share the planet's resources.

The Greens are also deeply concerned by the over-reliance on market forces. This is evident in the EU's competition policy, its monetary policy, and in the fiscal discipline that goes with the Stability and Growth Pact as large business institutions continue to dictate policy. Far from protecting the European Social Model from the worst forms of globalisation, the EU is undermining this through economic deregulation; and the narrowing and reduction of the tax base, resulting in poor public services.

Boston versus Berlin?

As Europeans we have a relatively healthy trust in the organisational and steering capacities of state enterprise, while not ruling out the potential of private enterprise to provide other services and goods. We maintain a preference for the welfare state's guarantees of social security and social inclusion. We can seek to defend, develop and indeed globalise our distinctive European model of governance or we can surrender to the disciplines of a globalisation that thrives on competition and threatens to reduce all decisions on people and the planet to the anonymous calculus of the market place.

Green MEPs will continue to:

Protect Public services – we are challenging the corporate drive to privatise services, including education, health and water supplies.

Reform our trade policies to make sure we are not destroying the farming communities and fledgling industries in the poorest countries in the world.

Resist the patenting of life - Rules must be re-written to prohibit patents and monopoly control on all life forms.

Ensure that within its five interrelated components - environmental protection, social justice, employment, economy and culture, sustainability must be the leading principle of multilateral political negotiations and decisions.

Promote diversity – As well as biodiversity, cultural and linguistic diversity must be preserved, e.g. promotion of public service broadcasting

Promote the transfer of trade dispute settlements, including the dispute mechanism at the WTO, to an independent or UN-supervised body, where complaints can be filed by concerned citizens and communities.

Ensure that trade negotiations do not result in a new colonisation of Africa and South America.

In Local Authorities

Our Councillors will continue to support such initiatives as local markets and Fair Trade policies in local councils; will work with local fishing communities and the EU to protect fish stocks, jobs and fishing ports and will block the privatisation of council-run amenities; and promote the social economy



YOU DECIDE!

***Your vote for
a green future***





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