

European Green Party/EFGP_{aisbl}
2nd Congress
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Individual supportership

Beyond a Party of Parties - how individual participation can turn the EGP into a real transnational movement, strengthening both member parties and EGP.

Panel debate - with Bartek Lech (Zieloni 2004/Polish Young Greens), Jean Lambert (MEP, Green Party of England and Wales), Juan Behrendt (Secretary General EGP), Christophe Rossignol (Les Verts).

Two and a half years ago the Federation of European Green Parties was transformed into the European Green Party. Was this just an elections stunt, or the start of a transformation towards a real transnational party, with common positions, internalised through cross border debate, and brought to the European citizens through common actions and campaigns?

The EGP has chosen the latter. The parties have taken a common position on the EU constitution and are about to take one on the Green Future of Europe. They have launched common campaigns for the EU-elections and against climate change. This took considerable effort and often courage, because a common course risks clashes between individual parties and ruptures with party cultures.

But with only two and a half years to go till the next elections for the European Parliament, we think it is time for a breakthrough. Only if the European project gets beyond party boards and all European greens are made part of it, it will have a real success. Only if European policies become part of everyday political life and are discussed just as any other decision, grassroots greens will go for them. And only then the EGP can properly play its European trump.

This requires far more than the *individual supportership* the way it has been implemented now - by some 4 to 6 parties, mostly on a very marginal scale. What is needed is a substantial move towards democracy, the way it is practised by the European Parliament - as opposed to the Council of government leaders. Surely there are complications, like a balance between big and small parties or protection against political enemies. But they can be overcome: once there is a will, there is a way. But in this debate we concentrate on how the move can be made:

How do we get those thousands of greens implicated - *what is in it for them?*

How can the EGP make maximal use of their creativity and energy?

And how can this supra-national democracy strengthen the national parties instead of weakening them?

The discussion is organised by the Heerlen Group - 'bringing Europe to the Europeans, starting with the grassroots greens' and consisting of over 10 nationalities. See also www.greenyourope.net

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