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**The European Federation of
Green Parties Common
Manifesto**

Disclosing Distinctive Views of European
Integration
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Cédric van de Walle

e-mail : cvdwalle@ulb.ac.be

Cevipol

39 av. F.D Roosevelt

1050 Bruxelles

<http://www.ulb.ac.be/soco/cevipol>

Université Libre de Bruxelles

1. INTRODUCTION

Like the previous European elections, these 1999 European elections have been a key moment in green parties' history. They have an ambivalent effect on transnational co-operation between green parties at the European level. Impetus to the aggregation of various social movements (anti-nuclear, environmental, feminist...) at the national and transnational levels, the European elections are opportunities to win parliamentary seats (especially for opposition parties) and financial means, to campaign on transnational issues and to raise their profile in the domestic political arena. However, European elections are also a factor of division because they show mixed fortunes of green parties in European member countries, redistribute the influence of some of them at the European Union (EU) level, and show the lack of a common stand on EU integration.

The 1999 elections are providing the opportunity to assess the European Federation of Green Parties' (EFGP) role during the European campaign. The hypothesis is that like each previous European election, the 1999 campaign provides an impetus for the development of the inter-party co-operation between parties of the same political family. However, one of the remaining constraints encountered by the EFGP to deepen its integration is the lack of a common European project among its member parties. In this context, the adoption, and moreover the working-out of a common manifesto is an attempt to reconcile, or less ambitiously to smooth out, differing national attitudes regarding European integration. The elaboration process of the common manifesto provides opportunities to strengthen linkages between member parties, to force to compromise, to legitimise the EFGP role at the European level towards green parties and allow member parties to speak of a common green vision on European issues.

To develop this hypothesis, the article will first present a brief historical outline of the transnational co-operation between green parties, focusing on differences among member parties of the EFGP, especially on European integration issues by analysing past and current proposals through green parties' EU manifestos. Second, it will analyse the role of the EFGP in the working-out of the last common manifesto. Using the theoretical framework proposed by S. HIX and C. LORD [1997] to explain the role of 'political parties at the European level', it will show how the EFGP has tried to forge a common European statement by describing the proceedings chosen and by analysing its content. Finally, it will conclude on the functions of the EFGP, stressing the fact that

its role is no more restricted to the co-ordination of a common manifesto. Indeed, new governmental responsibilities (Finland, Italy, France, Germany, Belgium and the Swedish Greens supporting a minority government) are providing new opportunities for its co-ordinating role at other European levels (between green ministers in the Council of Ministers...), as for the other 'European political parties'.

2. THE TRANSNATIONAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN GREEN PARTIES

The European Parliament (EP) elections : the choice of the parliamentary route and stimuli for green parties' co-operation

Since the first EP direct elections in 1979, green parties and alternative lists have been trying to unite their forces. It provides a stimulus for the new social movements (feminist, anti-nuclear, environmental groups) to embrace the parliamentary path. Green parties and lists fielded in Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg and the United Kingdom are loose and informal collections of green movements and organisation who decide to publicise the movements' demands and educate the public through the European electoral campaign [Bomberg, 1998: 84]. Their programmatical basis is the manifesto published by an organisation called ECOROPA founded by French, German and Swiss environmental and antinuclear activists. With partly encouraging electoral results¹ but no seats, these organisation put out a Platform of Ecopolitical Action for a Peaceful Change of Europe in Strasbourg (July 1979) [DIETZ, 1999: 35]. After one year of co-operation, delegates to this network decide to establish a permanent organisation : the Coordination of European Green and Radical parties². But due to new membership of Swedish, Austrian, Irish and French Greens and to disagreement between radical-leftist Greens (German Greens) and purist Greens (French Greens) no common statement is elaborated and the organisation is dissolved by the end of 1982.

In 1983, a new transnational organisation is established by green parties only : the European Green Coordination, but the conflicts between 'leftist'-greens (Netherlands and Germany) and the 'purist'-greens express themselves after the adoption of the *Joint Declaration of the European Green Parties* in Brussels (January 1984). This common electoral platform calls for a replacement of nation-states by regions, civilian based non-violent defence, disarmament and sustainable economy. But this statement is unsatisfactory to the German and Dutch members because it insufficiently covers concerns of social equality and

justice. So a new Declaration, the *Paris Declaration*, is adopted in April 1984. It '[...] includes left-libertarian elements, but is too vague to serve as an effective guide to common action.' [Bomberg, 1998 : 74].

The first 11 seats won in the 1984 EP elections³ will not facilitate co-ordination of their activities. Indeed, the German Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) are willing to create a 'rainbow group' in the EP comprising radicals and regionalist parties : the GRAEL (Green Alternative European Link). The transnational co-operation is then restrained by the dilution of green MEPs in a broader left-libertarian group. Nevertheless, the links between green parties will develop externally to the EP inside the European Coordination of Green Parties. Its statutes, adopted in November 1985, are calling for a 'Europe of the Regions' and criticise the make-up of the European Community. One key aspect determines the originality of this structure compared to the transnational organisations set up at the European level by other political families. It is not restricted to parties from EU member states. Its official seat is in Vienna (not Brussels) and EU is almost absent from official statements.

From 1984 to 1989, the Coordination only has a poor activity, undermined by the internal conflicts (between 'Greens-Red' and 'Greens-Green') concerning the political positions and the political strategy of its members (e.g. widening of the group, loose co-ordination) [Bowler and Farrell, 1992: 135]. Its first public statement is published after 5 years in 1989, reaffirming the undemocratic nature of the European institutions, but forgetting the definition of an alternative project for Europe.

The electoral success for the Greens at the 1989 EP elections⁴ provides an opportunity to turn a common vision of Europe into concrete action. A more coherent Green Group (GGEP) is established in the EP under the impulse of the French and Italian MEPs. They decide to affirm a common green identity and to develop a green European policy. As E. Bomberg states, 'All could agree on the faults of the EU in its current construction. Similar to the critique expressed by several national green parties, the GGEP argued that 'the EC is not Europe. Intended as a pole of the world economy, the EC is absolutely not the vehicle for the alternative model of development sought by all Greens. Yet a positive alternative vision – as opposed to a shared critique - failed to emerge due to national and ideological differences among green parties' [Bomberg, 1998: 75-6]. The Green Group attempts to put the Europe of the Region at the forefront, especially when it chooses 'regions' as the priority theme for 1991. But, a few months later, the debate about the Maastricht Treaty outlines contradictions among members. Even though all Greens criticise the fact that environmental policy does not become one

of the common policy, that the Treaty violates grassroots democracy and that the CFSP is limited to the military dimension, they cannot agree on the EU's role in formulating a common foreign policies and they hesitate whether to support the Treaty or not.

However, developments of the transnational co-operation outside the EP are more interesting during this period. With the establishment of a more coherent political group in the EP, the Co-ordination will benefit from far greater resources : they open an information office, and its annual working budget raises to 25000 Euros. The 1989 electoral success will also increase the financial means of the EU member parties (allocation of a specific budget for European co-operation becomes possible).

The speeding up of the European integration process and the European Federation of Green Parties' birth

While during the first period the evolution of the ECGP is especially determined by the divergences of its components and the electoral results during European elections, a second period is mainly determined by the European integration process. Next to the new opportunities to develop a broader membership policy created by the upheaval in Eastern Europe, the deepening of the European integration provides a new impetus to strengthen the transnational co-operation.

Previously, the Single European Act had already widened the EP's competence⁵ and had reinforced the role of the party groups in the EP⁶. But the negotiations and the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty have an undeniable effect on the evolution of the various transnational formations (European People Party, Party of European Socialists, European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party), and this for several reasons. The growth of the prerogatives of the EP, the politicisation of the European construction and the formal recognition of the federations' role (art. 138A introduced by the Treaty on European Union⁷) supported the widening of the ECGP as well as an integration of its organisation⁸. Even if, at that time, the Coordination shows an apparent unity between its 22 members⁹ (through several declarations on international issues such as the upheavals in Eastern Europe, Europe's 'common house', the CSCE, the Gulf war...) and accepts new members, it remains an embryonic structure profiting from only two staff members [Bennhamias, J.L., Roche, A., 1992: 98] devised on a concrete European project. These developments made say to S. Bowler and D.M. Farrell [1992 : 136] that, '[...] the Coordination has now reached an important turning point. Its consensual decision-making structure is seen by many as a significant constraint.'

Under the influence of its new environment and because of the inadequacy between its structures and its increasing number of members, more than to realise a common European project, the ECGP adopts new statutes. On 20 June 1993, 23 green parties gather at the Helsinki congress to redefine the statutes of the ECGP with a real federal structure '[...] build on ecological, democratic, social and pacifist principles [EFGP, 1993a : 1].'

Although the statutes reorganise the distribution of seats and the voting proceedings according to a principle of restricted proportionality, it reflects more a pragmatic attempt to increase the transnational co-operation than the will to elaborate a coherent vision of Europe. Illustrating this point, the Guiding Principles of the EFGP (a kind of political common program), adopted at the same time, present a comprehensive and more detailed set of proposals in various domains : ecocodevelopment, European economy, policies for a greening of the economy, common security, citizenship and democratic rights. But like earlier common statements, it lacks a common vision on Europe [EFGP, 1993b]. The EU is not mentioned anywhere and there is almost nothing on the 'Europe of the Regions' project. There are only two sentences related to the initial 'Europe of the Regions' project : 'The European Greens advocate the development of more self-reliant national, regional and local economies, in a perspective of Europe of the Regions', and elsewhere : 'In order to extend the influence of people over decisions which control their lives, appropriate levels of power must be decentralised from the nation states to communities, districts and regions' [EFGP, 1993b : 6, 21].

Moreover, there are internal disputes on the purpose of that document, whether it must be used to bind the member parties and the incoming MEPs or not. Finally, it serves as basis for the Greens' EP election platform but does not bind member parties nor green MEPs. E. Bomberg [1998 : 78-9] attributes this failure to the diverse identities of member parties, to the continual strategic disputes between radical and reformist strategies of green parties, to the Green's ambivalence towards Europe : 'Europe is an uncomfortable halfway house, neither international nor local and for that reason uninteresting', and to the fact that '[...] for many Greens the notion of 'Europe' immediately conjures up the EU. It appears that for some green members their refutation of the EU carries over to a more general refutation of (or a least ambivalence towards) European policy in general. As a consequence, the green's European policy (and their policy towards the EU in particular) has suffered from a history of neglect on both the national and European levels.'

S. Hix and C. Lord [1997 : 26] add other factors constraining the adoption of a common position on Europe among parties from the same political family. Firstly, national political parties remain

the key actors in the shaping of European policy and secondly, the European federations prefer to compete on the left-right dimension more than on the Integration-Sovereignty cleavage¹⁰ because the latter undermines the cohesion of the main party family¹¹.

The EFGP's first attempts to elaborate a collective European policy

The establishment of the EFGP expresses a fundamental change in the views of the Greens because it formalises the acceptance to change the EU from within (one of the Federation's goals is to 'devote itself to an open, active, constructive and critical approach to the ongoing integration processes in Europe towards a world wide co-operation' [EFGP, 1993a : 2]). This decision implies a pacification of the long-standing strategic struggle between reformist and radical members privileging the pragmatic, parliamentary work. This major consensus fixed within the EFGP statutes, allows it to dedicate more time to the building of a common European policy. Between 1994 and 1999, EFGP activities increase due to this new consensus and above all because of the increased relevance of green parties gaining several ministries in five EU countries (and increase consequently their organisational and financial resources). New activities like meetings of Green ministers are supported by the EFGP and the GGEP.

During the 1994 EP campaign, its activities are not limited to the adoption of a common manifesto. More interesting is the agreement established one month after the elections with the green parliamentary group [EFGP, 1994b]. The electoral success of various green lists allows a re-establishment of the GGEP. As decided previously by the EFGP and the GGEP, the Group is re-established¹² and a co-operation agreement is set up one month after the elections¹³. This co-operation is based on the political platform established in partnership in March 1994¹⁴. It defines the objectives of the co-operation in conformity with the Guiding Principles as well as the modalities of the group formation, and expresses the will to strengthen the co-operation between the member parties of the EFGP and the GGEP. The latter aims to reinforce the federation, its information office and the green East-West Dialogue (a regional network initiated by the EFGP). Beside, The European Greens (as the green parties coming from EU countries within the EFGP are called) insist on the importance of regular conferences on political topics between European and national deputies and other representatives of the green parties in Europe. Moreover, it is expected the GGEP discusses its policy with the European federation and the EU Greens. Thus, it is

proposed that during the Federation's Council meetings, for example, the GGEP will present an evaluation of its activities and the state of the co-operation. It also determines the specific fields of this collaboration : discussion about the 1996 Intergovernmental Conference (IGC), implementation of article 138A introduced by the Maastricht Treaty, establishment of a common policy concerning the structural support to green organisations in Central and Eastern Europe, preparation of the 1999 election by giving special attention to member parties (especially from the South) not represented in the GGEP [EFGP, 1994b : 1].

To carry out these objectives, various methods are envisaged such as the consultation of the GGEP and the Committee of the Federation Offices before each end of Union presidency, co-ordination of diaries and actions, reciprocal invitations of the Council of the Federation and the GGEP, and the financial support of the GGEP (an office with two full-time staff) for the secretariat of the federation. In addition, the statutes of the EFGP establish that the EFGP is represented in the EP only by the GGEP. So before admitting a new deputy not coming from a member party of the EFGP, the Group must consult the EFGP's Committee and the Council which will submit a report.

With the set up of the institutional co-operation process and the new financial means available¹⁵, other activities are set up by the Federation. In December 1994, during the Essen summit, the EFGP is confronted with another actor of the EU's decision-making process : the European Council. Like the Party Leaders' Meeting of other European federations of political parties, the Committee of Federation issued for the first time a statement pleading for a reform of the EU in the interest of democracy and peace, environmental protection and reduction of unemployment [Hix, S., Lord, C., 1997 : 193-4].

In 1995, the Federation prepares a 'green' response to the IGC process and on the reinforcement of the links with the Mediterranean and the Eastern and Central European countries. It also supports small green parties, develops contacts with the African Federation of green parties and improves its communication strategy.

In 1996, member parties adopt a common political statement on the IGC [EFGP, 1996] requesting democratisation, reforms and a widening of the EU, ecological and social reforms for a sustainable development, a Common Foreign and Security Policy for peace and the same civil rights for all EU residents. Moreover, it intensifies its network of relations with Eastern and Mediterranean European countries, and initiates contacts between the green parties of the countries bordering on the Baltic sea¹⁶. 1996 is also marked by the first congress of the

Federation. More than 250 delegates, party leaders and representatives of the member parties gathered in Vienna. Several resolutions are adopted: one on eco-taxes at the national and European levels, another condemning the results of the IGC in Florence... But more importantly, they started the process of program building for the 1999 elections.

In 1997, the fifth Council is held in Berlin. It initiates new developments, in particular structural ones: adoption of precise rules concerning the members statute [EFGP, 1997a], proposals 'to save the environment and create jobs' [EFGP, 1997b], and the basis of a new strategy. Intentions to control the European integration process (Amsterdam Summit, EMU) are reaffirmed. Objectives of regional co-operation are maintained and it decides to improve the capacity of the Federation: 'it is necessary to decentralise work and develop structures' [EFGP, 1997c]. Finally, at the margin of the European Council meeting in Luxembourg, European Greens hold a Summit on employment on 8 November 1997. A list of resolutions is passed.

During 1998 and 1999, regional networking activities are extended (bringing together Mediterranean, East-West, North Sea, Baltic green parties), thematic working groups are also established (on the EFGP manifesto and the European Security policy), several political declarations are adopted during the annual Councils on varying topics such as enlargement, Economic and Monetary Union, Agenda 2000, Multilateral Agreement on Investments, Kosovo and the situation in the Balkans and Genetically Modified Organisms. These activities lie within the scope of EFGP's habitual tasks. New tasks also appear with the need to co-ordinate Green Ministers' views and activities. In Aarhus for example, alongside the meeting of EU Environment Ministers, the EFGP meets the French and Finnish Green Ministers. They agree on the organisation of a meeting with Green Ministers to co-ordinate their strategies on the eve of the International Climate Change summit in Buenos Aires (November 1998). The London Council in the same period adopts a statement stressing the importance of information exchanges at every level (national and European parliamentarians, Ministers,...) within the Federation to avoid an ambivalent green discourse. Since 1998, the Secretary General of the EFGP frequently stresses the need for more financial and staff resources to meet new demands related to the governmental situation of some party members¹⁷. The London Council agrees to increase membership fees to fund the expanded activities. In December 1998, 'representatives of the EU Green parties now participating in government (of Germany, France, Finland, Italy) as well as of Sweden and Austria meet in Strasbourg for the first time following the 1998 elections in Germany. The need to co-ordinate Green

policy-making at the governmental level, to plan together for the coming EU presidencies and to develop links between the Green parliamentary groups were unanimously endorsed' [EFGP, 1999]. The Third EFGP Congress in February 1999 is another main activity of the Federation. It gathers more than 1000 participants in Paris, makes official the fact that they have now left their role of opposition party to become a government party, and launches the European campaign (especially the French Greens who benefit from the international media coverage).

Since the set up of the EFGP, the softening of the strategic debate among members and the governmental participation allow further development¹⁸. For six years, the Federation has continued to develop regional networking, to produce common statements on EU concerns and to its implementation within the EU political system to move from a limited electoral activity to an extended role in EU institutions: collaboration with the Green Group in the EP, meetings before the European Councils to establish a common stand, co-ordination between the EP group and national parties. Despite efforts to create a consensus among member parties through the adoption of a set of common statements (especially on enlargement, the EU economic policy and regional networking) contradictory visions on European integration and the lack of a institutional concept for the Europe of the Regions still prevail.

3. THE EFGP'S ROLE IN THE WORKING-OUT OF THE COMMON ELECTORAL MANIFESTO FOR THE 1999 EP ELECTIONS

During the first stage of their political life, the European federations of political parties concentrate a huge part of their resources on the working-out of common statements and electoral platforms. As noted above, the elaboration of a common manifesto is no more the sole activity of the transnational party organisation set up at the EU level. But I argue that this activity remains fundamental for the EFGP because it obliges its member parties to meet, debate their ideas and elaborate a consensus on European policies. Using the theoretical framework of analysis proposed by S. Hix and C. Lord [1997: 68-76], the article will outline the work of the Federation in the making of European party policy (and assess to what extent it fits into this model) and explain why the European manifesto is still expressing the lowest common denominator among member parties.

Theoretical framework for the making of party policy on Europe

The party federations are a kind of umbrella organisation bringing together national party delegates (MPs, party leaders, cabinet members...) and European officials of the same political family (member of the parliamentary group, Commissioners, experts). Even if each organisation is acting independently in the day-to-day politics, in the adoption of medium and long-term EU policies (such as Economic and Monetary Union, Common Foreign and Security Policy, enlargement of the EU...) the federation plays an increasing co-ordinating role. The working-out of party policy on European issues is the following : national party and EP group delegates meet each other in a Party Federation working group where a common statement will finally be adopted. Each one will transmit the statement to its Executive body (respectively the national party executives, the EP group Bureau and the Party federation executive committee). The national and EP group leaders (and sometimes the European federations leaders) will then try to make correspond policy adoption and legislative behaviour.

Several reasons are pushing national parties to proceed in that way. First of all, it provides credibility to the national party on European questions by reminding the voters and the media that its policies are the same as those of the rest of the political family. Secondly, having a discussion about EU policies with their EP group and other parties, the national party can improve the quality, consistency and coherence regarding medium and long-term EU policies. But more fundamentally, S. Hix and C. Lord remind us that one of the main purposes of a partisan organisation is to establish a common policy framework that allows politicians to create a 'common identity' in the electorate. This political identity significantly reduces the amount of work needed to develop policy ideas and to present them to the voters. For the same reason, the national member parties and the EP groups from the same party families begin to use the framework of the party federations to develop common policies [1997: 67-68].

Does the working-out of the common manifesto correspond to this model ? Analysing the proceedings

Before any attempts to fit the working-out of the manifesto into this model, we need to point out that there is an important difference between the structure of the three main European federations and the EFGP's structure. The statutes of the EFGP do not establish a Party Leaders' Meeting¹⁹. Such an organ had less significance in the past (and contradicts the grassroots

democracy principle), but with the recent governmental participation of the Finnish, the Italian, the French, the German and the Belgian green parties its formal establishment is likely to happen²⁰. As a result of its absence, the Committee of the Federation is taking an increasing role (and consequently its secretary general) but it is not entitled to make binding decisions for the member parties. Thus the co-ordination of EU policies becomes problematic because connections between policy adoption and the legislative behaviour are almost non-existent at the EFGP level. Even if this framework is an ideal type, the PES, EPP and ELDR are able to influence (to a limited degree) the legislative behaviour of their parliamentary groups. Secondly, it does not encourage the development of regular and formalised contacts among Green politicians at the highest political level.

This important clarification made, does this model correspond to the proceedings chosen by the EFGP ? Permanent or ad hoc working groups on European policy are established in almost every green party. Their activities are more or less extended, but for the European elections they have all adopted a European manifesto. We can distinguish three groups of manifestos depending on their comprehensiveness. The first group presents concrete proposals, covers almost every European policy, expresses a clear position towards European integration and a concrete project (federalism, confederalism, withdrawal...). This is the case for the following green parties : the Belgian Agalev and Ecolo, the French Les Verts , the German Bündnis90/Die Grünen , the Irish Comhaontas Glas, the Dutch Groenlinks, the Swedish Miljöpartiet de Gröna and Green Party from England and Wales. A second group presents a less comprehensive manifesto: a few concrete proposals, covering the broadest EU policies, and expressing a more or less clear position towards European integration and sometimes a clear project. This is the case with the Austrian Die Grünen, the Finnish Vihreä Liitto, the Luxemburger Dei Gréng, the Italian Federazione dei Verdi, and the Scottish Green Party. A third group presents a brief manifesto: it is hardly developed, with few concrete proposals, covering some European policies and being ambivalent towards European integration. This is the case with the Danish, the Portuguese and the Spanish green manifestos. The Dutch Groenen, the Danish and Greek Greens do not compete in the 1999 EP elections because of material constraints and internal conflicts.

The EP Group working group is set up but, unlike the previous proceeding chosen to establish the common manifesto, the GGEP delegates the co-ordinating work to the Federation. They take part in the process via their secretary general. In the month before the London Council they held several rounds of discussions and proposed amendments.

The Committee of the Federation decides to give the leading role to the EFGP's spokesperson. He proposes to the Council in March 1998 to establish a limited working group covering the political spectrum of the Federation (one German, one French, one Belgian (Ecolo), one Austrian, one English and a Swedish delegate in the last meetings). He tries to choose them from among people who also worked on the EU election manifestos of their national parties. The spokesperson makes a first draft in December 1997; the text will be discussed during three meetings and several rounds of e-mail discussions. In November 1998, the London EFGP's Council receives more than 100 amendments and some of them could be taken into account. The final vote was unanimity (a 2/3 majority was needed) but Greens from England and Wales, Norway and Denmark had some reservations (especially the extension of majority votes).

Does the Green Group make a political statement after the adoption of the manifesto ? Does it accept it ? Does it use it as a programmatic platform during the negotiations for the establishment of the new EP political group with the European Free Alliance ? Paul Lannoye, president of the third GGEP, affirmed that the EFGP manifesto has very little impact on the general work of the GGEP.

The member parties intervene through their delegates in the Council. Some of the member parties completed their national platform or briefly evoked the EFGP position (French, Dutch, Belgian, German, Finnish...), others, like the Spanish, the Italian, the Irish, the Scottish and the English and Welsh Greens used the EFGP manifesto as a basis of their own manifesto. To illustrate the process, the article will focus on the Belgian french-speaking green party (Ecolo). It established a permanent working group on European affairs 4 years ago. It was led by a former MEP. This working group has few contacts with the EFGP in general, even if Ecolo has a representative to the EFGP Committee. However, its members consult (occasionally) the GGEP when they need specific information on topical or technical matters like the Common Agricultural Policy, structural funds... It seems that the party organs does not enrol real specialists in European affairs (except in the ministers cabinet), but uses the expertise of the GGEP. During the working-out of their European manifesto, the Ecolo working group had little contact with the EFGP. It was mainly elaborated during the *Etats Généraux de l'écologie politique*, a project to open the party to civil society and doing so enrich their electoral programme. There were discussions around the Treaty of Amsterdam and an alternative project for the EU. It lead to the adoption of a political statement on Europe, based on the EU chapter in their manifesto. With one delegate in the EFGP manifesto working group, there was probably an exchange

of views, but as we have seen it seems that the Ecolo manifesto on Europe was mainly the result of a national process.

Which implications for the member parties ? Analysing the content

The common manifesto is sufficiently vague to be adopted by all member parties as a political statement. It does not change the political stance of EU member parties towards European integration, but it was not the purpose. The aim of this working-out was, as stated by the EFGP spokesperson, to present 'a common view on the future of green politics in Europe'. Moreover, for him, 'the process of the working group was even more important than the result'. This was not an easy goal with the Swedish members defending a withdrawal of the EU, the sceptical views of the Danish, the English and the Austrian Greens and the federalist approaches of the French, the German, the Belgian, the Italians and the Dutch Greens. Moreover, among them concrete proposals on the EU shape are diverging, ranging from the more integrated federalist position of the French to the confederalist one of the English and Welsh Greens.

Even if they could partly agree on the adoption of a European Constitution endowed with a European Charter guaranteeing civilian rights and environmental and social standards, on a European citizenship for every resident in the EU, on an extension of the co-legislative role of the EP and its control of the Commission, on the replacement of Schengen and Europol, on the necessity of institutional reforms in parallel to the enlargement process, on the working time reduction, on a European Pact for jobs and sustainable development, on a European CO² tax and a Tobin tax on speculation, they forget some important European issues in their common manifesto. There is nothing about the 'Europe of the Regions' project, on the single currency or the European Monetary Union, on the European Central Bank, on the European budget. Nothing on migrations policies. They cannot agree on a common view of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, nor on working time reduction in practical terms, common taxation policies, nor enlargement to Mediterranean countries.

In fact they leave out any controversial issue because the delegates were not entitled by their national parties to engage them.

**4. THE WORKING-OUT OF THE COMMON MANIFESTO :
PRIORITIZING THE PROCESS MORE THAN THE CONTENT**

The common manifesto is a compromise between member parties on the lowest common denominator of ideas they share. Issues like majority voting, EMU, single currency, European Central Bank, migrations policies, Common Foreign and Security Policy and a real institutional project for Europe ('Europe of the Regions' or something else) are missing because national identities and opinions prevailed. It discloses the member parties' heterogeneity on various European issues.

Nevertheless, the working-out of a European manifesto has not the purpose to forge a common vision on Europe. It has another explicit purpose related to the evolution of the EFGP in the European political system. The EFGP manifesto must present a coherent image of European Greens to the electorate (even if the proposed project is incomplete on several issues). This process provides also a place where national parties can meet and exchange information, learning from each others' experiences and enhancing their own electoral platform (such as the British Greens on working time reduction). It is moreover a way for the EFGP to show its utility, to act as an effective organisation and doing so to legitimise its role at the European Union level, seen by many Greens as a centralised and undemocratic structure. As we have seen previously, the 'electoral' function of the EFGP is related to its genesis. EP direct elections were one of the main impulses of the European party federation's set up.

However, today, with the recent governmental participations, the EFGP's developments are increasingly related to its co-ordinating function between officials from the national and supranational levels. The elaboration of a common manifesto must be analysed in this context. If the Federation wants to be a part of the European political system, it will provide member parties with an access to European affairs, a place to meet and exchange experiences, to negotiate at a supranational level between party leaders, executive officials and deputies. Recent meetings of green Ministers in Aarhus, Strasbourg and Paris reveal that the co-ordination of their political positions on European issues becomes a necessity. In this respect, the set up of a *Party Leaders' Meeting* like the other European Federations is likely to happen but it will be a difficult task because of the weak interest of national parties in the EFGP and because of the 'undemocratic' structure it is likely to become with regard to grass-roots principles of decentralisation, transparency, control of office and mandate holders by rank and file.

NOTES

¹ Belgian Ecolo : 5.1 %, Agalev : 2.3 %; German SPV-die Grünen : 3.2 %; French Europe Ecologie : 4.4 %; Luxemburger AL-WI : 1 %; UK Ecology Party : 3.7 %.

² Members are Die Grünen (Germany), Agalev and Ecolo (Belgium), MEP (France), Politieke Partij Radikale (The Netherlands) and Partito Radicale (Italy). [Bomberg, 1998: 72].

³ Belgian Ecolo and Agalev : each one seat ; German : 7 seats ; Dutch GPA : 2 seats.

⁴ 1 seat for the Belgian Agalev, 2 for the Belgian Ecolo, 8 for the German Die Grünen, 8 for the French Les Verts, 5 for the Italian (3 Verdi Europe, 2 Arcobaleno), 2 for the Dutch Groenlinks, 1 for the Portugese and 1 for the Spanish Greens both in coalition with left-wing parties.

⁵ Its initiative and impulse role in the European decisional process has been recognised in the Single European Act in 1987.

⁶ 'Originally, political groups only disposed from management resources and administrative expenses [...]. In 1974, funds were added for political activities [...]. Since EP direct elections in 1979, political groups in the European Parliament also received funds to information actions.' [Silvestro, 1989: 310].

⁷ Article 138 A of the EC Treaty (actual article 191) states that 'Political parties at the European level are important as a factor for integration within the Union. They contribute to forming a European awareness and to expressing the political will of the citizens of the Union.'

⁸ Further comments on these deciding factors can be found in Pridham and Pridham [1979]; Gaffney [1995]; Ladrech [1995]; Hix [1993, 1995]; Bardi [1994, 1996].

⁹ In 1992, it gathered 26 parties from 22 country : 'Are members for Belgium Agalev and Ecolo; for Denmark : De Gronnen ; for Germany : Die Grünen ; for Greece : Ommospondia ekologikon ke enallaktikon organosean ; for Spain : Los verdes ; for France : Les Verts ; for Ireland : Comhaontas Glas ; for Italy : Federazione delle liste verdi ; for Luxembourg : Dei Greng alternative partei and Greng Lëscht Ekologesch Initiativ ; for the Netherlands : De Groenen and Groen Links ; for Portugal : Os Verdes and Movimento democratico Portugues/cultura desenvolvimento ecologica and for the United Kingdom : the Green Party. The European Greens also count member parties in EFTA countries : the Swiss ecologist party ; Miljöpartiet de Gronne in Norway ; Miljöpartiet de Grona in Sweden and Vihreäliito in Finland. Parties of Malta, Bulgaria, Estonia, Georgia and Slovenia are also members of the European Greens.' [Sterck, 1992: 29].

¹⁰ For an analysis of the parliamentary groups behaviour in the EP, see De Waele [1999].

¹¹ 'In other words, after a century of relatively stable democratic state structures in Europe, the main *familles spirituelles* represent ideologies about who gets what under a particular institutional structure. However political interests about the question of European integration are more determined by national and cultural factors than by party affiliation. Consequently, whereas parties in different European states from the same party family tend to have similar views about the role of the state (the left-right question), they are likely to have different views as regards European integration.' [Hix and Lord, 1997: 26].

¹² Composed at the beginning of 22 members, it will grow in size with 3 new deputies coming from the membership of Austria, Finland and Sweden. Then, after the European elections in Sweden, 3 new deputies will join the GGEP again. In 1995 also, the Luxemburger deputy will join the European Radical Alliance, and a French independent ecologist just joined the Group in 1998.

¹³ The green lists encountered 'various fortunes'. The green parties behaved well in Germany (from 8 to 12 deputies), in Italy (from 3 to 4 deputies), in Ireland (2 new deputies) and in Luxembourg (1 new deputy). The Belgian,

Dutch and Portuguese Greens lost each one MEP, but more cutting is the French defeat (loss of their nine MEPs). For a detailed analysis of green parties results, see Carter [1994: 459-517].

¹⁴ In March 1994, sixteen parties from EU countries, all members of the EFGP, agreed on a protocol for the re-establishment of the GGEP [EFGP, 1994a].

¹⁵ The 1998 budget amounts to +/- 116000 Euros.

¹⁶ The Visby charter adopted by the Federation stresses the green ambition for the region.

¹⁷ For more details, refer to Update, the newsletter of the Federation on <http://www.europeangreens.org>.

¹⁸ The governmental participations are also deepening the heterogeneity between member parties of the EFGP as we show in van de Walle, C. [1999].

¹⁹ Institutionalised in the PES, EPP and ELDR statutes as the supreme decision-making organ, it gathers twice a year (before a European Council) national party leaders, prime ministers, presidents and vice-presidents of the Federation, the leader of the EP group and the members of the Commission. It approves the common statements before the federation Congress, tries to monitor the behaviour of party officials holding executive offices at the European level (very hypothetical), and it co-ordinates the development of party policy in EU politics [Hix and Lord, 1997: 65-66].

²⁰ 'An informal conference of the national party leaders, the speakers of the respective green groups in the national parliaments and the Green environmental ministers of Italy, Finland, Georgia, and some of the German states (Länder) along with the Council meeting of the EFGP in Berlin in May 1997 has been the only meeting of such a kind up to now.' [Dietz, 1999: 38]. 'In December 1998 the Green Group in the European Parliament and the EFGP organised a meeting of Green EU-parties being part of national governments in Strasbourg and together with the EFGP Congress in Paris an informal meeting of EU party representatives will be held to discuss possible ways of co-operation for the European elections.' [Dietz, 1999: 47].

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