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The Crisis and Beyond

Green MEPs meet national counterparts

Green MEPs met with their national parliament counterparts on Tuesday for a frank discussion on the Green way out of the crisis. With representatives from 13 different countries, both with and without Green MEPs and with members in Government and in opposition, the great variety in the nature of national debates on the future of the EU was clear. The members spent the morning discussing Green proposals for the future economic architecture of the European Union and ways to create full democratic legitimacy. The afternoon was spent discussing future further integration, what changes would be best and whether treaty changes would be required or desirable.

The morning session began with a briefing on the state of play of the debate on the Union's economic policy at the EU level, followed by briefings on the debates taking place in each member state and the role of the Greens there. Issues such as financial regulation, the EU budget and own resources, solidarity and social justice, and democratic legitimacy cause the same concern for Greens across Europe, but there is great variety in the approaches taken on some these issues by Greens in each state. This sharing of experience, methods and ideas was combined with frank discussions on how Greens have supported each other, and what they could do better, at different levels across Europe.

The political structures of the Union are also in need of reform. Whether solving the crisis will require new competences at the EU-level and changes to the existing treaties was discussed in the afternoon. For the Greens, it is essential that this is done in a democratic manner, and not by the intergovernmental approach that has dominated thus far in the crisis. Citizens do not feel involved in EU decision making and there is currently no discourse on how to get out of the crisis together that citizens can share or can widely participate in. A number of suggestions were discussed, from a new convention to directly elected Commissioners, and again the wide range of national experiences and debates proved invaluable.

The Greens will continue to work closely with their sister groups and parties across Europe and to make sure that the Green solutions to the crisis are heard.

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