

2014 EFA  
MANIFESTO

ELECTIONS  
EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT  
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## It's time for self-determination for all the peoples of Europe

### Welcome to the European Free Alliance European election Manifesto for 2014.

We live in historic times. Across Europe ancient nations, regions, and peoples, currently under the jurisdiction of various states, are increasingly calling for either enhanced autonomy or outright independence, and all the benefits that go with bringing decision-making power back home.

Scotland and Catalonia, because of the success of their pro-independence parties and most importantly the over-

whelming support of their people, now have the opportunity to decide on their future and whether they want to become free, independent states.

In May many of our EFA parties are looking forward to success in the European Parliament elections.

The European Free Alliance is best described as a broad alliance as it gathers a diverse range of parties from across Europe each with their own unique approach on how to better the prospects for their people.

Our manifesto very much reflects this diversity, and while respecting our differences, works to build on the overarching values and aspirations that we share in common. Therefore, the manifesto focuses on these shared values of our member parties with seven general policy proposals:

1. The right to self-determination, the internal enlargement, and EU recognition of this process;
2. Improving democracy and transparency in the EU;
3. Overcoming the euro crisis;
4. The development of sustainable energy sources;
5. Developing sustainable agriculture and reforming the Common Agriculture Policy;

6. Developing sustainable fisheries and aquaculture;
7. Facing the challenges to our languages and cultures and working towards linguistic equality.

It is an honour to be your EFA president at such a momentous time for all of our parties. I warmly commend this EFA Manifesto to you as we launch our campaigns for the 2014 European elections, and wish you all good luck and great success in the elections. The time has come for self-determination for a true Europe of the peoples, the time has come to make this aspiration a reality.

Veel geluk,  
Eric Defoort - President of EFA

# 1 Internal enlargement

Open doors to new states of old nations: the EU must be committed to the recognition of new member states arising from **self-determination** and democratic processes within current member states (which we refer to as the internal enlargement).

In the same way, the EU must ensure the continuity of European citizenship to citizens of these new states. **Democracy** is a fundamental principle of the EU: it would

be inconceivable that the EU would block access to new states that have reached their statehood through flawless democratic processes.

The nations at sub-state level and / or regions with legislative powers must have a role of their own in European decision-making through a strengthened presence in an **"Assembly of regions and peoples"** replacing the toothless Committee of the Regions.

# 2 Improving the democratic quality of the European institutions

The Lisbon Treaty was concluded after a protracted process. Hopes that it would lead to more democracy and accountability were not fully realized. Following enlargement and the worst financial crisis that the euro has faced, the EU needs to set new and ambitious targets in order to be a key player in the international arena, a leader in the drive towards a sustainable economy, a model of democracy, **social justice and cohesion**.

The legislative capacity of the European Parliament must be further increased, giving it true powers of legislative initiative and of amending the treaties alongside the competent parliaments within the member states.

Sub-state constituencies for the European elections should be created in the member states that have not yet done so.

The legislative capacity of the Council has to become transparent. All legislative deliberations and relevant documents must be freely available to Europeans in the same manner as the documents of the European Parliament. The position of each member state should be made public.

The President of the European Commission should be democratically elected. In member states with a devolved structure, all governments of their constituent nations will be required to be part of the process of proposing a candidate commissioner.

The international vocation of the EU as a player which acts on the basis of the values of democracy, peace, solidarity and respect for diversity has to be clarified and strengthened.

### 3 Overcoming the Euro-crisis

The current crisis has highlighted how in recent decades several governments spent in an irresponsible way without stimulating economic growth and guaranteeing **social cohesion**. In the first instance it is up to the member states to take the necessary steps, but we also need to formulate a European framework in order to avoid repetition of similar crisis-prone policies in the future.

The member states have to make public finances and the broader socio-economic context healthy by: [1] budget consolidation and reduction of public deficits, [2] structural reforms and [3] investing in smart, **sustainable and inclusive growth**. More fiscal discipline is also necessary because of new challenges concerning demography, the labour market, social security and pensions. Fiscal and budgetary discipline is an essential condition to get access to the European Stability Mechanism. **Solidarity** can only be provided in combination with more responsibility from all governments.

In addition Europe has a task. Solid mechanisms at the EU level will enable decision-makers to regain the confidence

of the [financial] markets. The measures taken to improve the economic governance of the EU [six-pack, two-pack, fiscal compact] should be applied effectively. EFA believes that the European Central Bank (ECB) should fully play its role.

Austerity measures have to be complemented by investments in future orientated policies and by other stimulating measures, in the countries hardest hit by the current crisis. On that healthy basis, Europe will have to re-launch an economic recovery policy based on European high added value investments.

EFA supports fiscal harmonization throughout the different Member States and regions, respecting the fiscal diversity and the **subsidiarity principle** (the rate should be decided by the nation concerned within an EU-wide framework as is the case for the VAT). In order to improve the efficiency and social justice of the current tax system, EFA wants to modify the tax burden imposed on our citizens.

The EU budget has to be managed better [smart fiscal consolidation, better spending and focus on areas where

the EU can mean an added value] and a stricter control on all EU agencies, avoiding overlaps and duplications, should be installed.

A European Rating Agency should be set up to control in a transparent way interest on debt and risk premiums.

EFA welcomes the recent EU legislation on bonuses paid to bankers.

The European Commission should be allowed, alongside national and regional authorities, to create efficient tools to tackle fraud and to fight against tax havens and tax evasion outside the EU.

The reformed European Structural and Investment Funds should be conditioned to:

- recover competitiveness,
- boost public investments in R&D&I,
- encourage productive investments,
- enhance energy savings,
- improve job training,
- fight against social exclusion,
- Territorial cooperation, including the emerging macro-regional strategies

EFA rejects the introduction of macro-

economic conditionality in the cohesion policy. A [regional] government should not be punished for the mistakes of another government.

EFA recognizes the vital importance played by small and medium sized enterprises (SME). EU policies should foster the competitiveness of SME's.

The current international financial and economic crisis has an important negative effect on the labour market and employment situation in the EU. In this context our main focus should remain on the EU targets to realize an overall employment rate of 75% in 2020. As a priority the low employment rates for groups at risk such as young people, the elderly and the population with a migrant background should be tackled.

With youth unemployment at an all-time high in the EU, it is essential that the policies of all levels of government empower our future generations, inter alia through quality education, skills development and the validation of informal education, and develop an inter-generational dialogue. In this context priority should be given to

realize the EU target to reduce the school drop-out rates below 10% in 2020.

EFA strongly supports the Youth Guarantee Scheme with the aim to ensure that all young people under the age of 25 years receive a good quality offer of employment, continued education, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within a period of 4 months

of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education.

Imported goods should be classified according to ecological and social standards in the country of origin and should be labeled accordingly. This measure would contribute to spread European standards in the world.

## 4 European Energy policy

EFA is committed to an energy strategy which maximises **energy efficiency**, prioritises the development of **renewable energy**, makes the European gas and electricity markets more transparent and provides for active supervision in order to protect consumers sufficiently.

The debate on energy should focus on energy demand, as well as energy supply and production. Energy consumption should be reduced through a more rational and efficient use of energy. Energy efficiency should be the priority since the cheapest and greenest kWh is the kWh that is not consumed and therefore does not need to be produced. Improving energy efficiency means less energy production installations are needed to cover the energy demand. Accordingly energy conservation through energy efficiency measures leads to financial savings and less carbon emissions. Therefore, EFA believes that there should be more focus on energy efficiency measures, both for the benefit of the environment and the consumer. EFA supports an energy savings target.

EFA believes in ensuring a **diversity of en-**

**ergy sources** in order to avoid becoming dependent on other regions or territories. Distributed generation, where energy is produced by many small sources, is a good model for some regions and nations and should be promoted where appropriate. The European electricity network should be renovated and turned into a super-smart grid that can deal with big fluctuations in green energy production [offshore wind energy in the North Sea, the Mediterranean solar energy ring, hydropower in Scandinavia] as well as with decentralized energy production, e.g. solar panels on private homes.

We believe that European funding should be specifically allocated for investment in renewable energy development and energy efficiency measures, whilst preserving the autonomy of the nations and regions to decide on their energy mix and recognizing that in order to ensure payable energy, a realistic energy mix focuses on renewable energy sources without excluding certain energy sources as long as alternatives are not yet available. As well as the benefits to the environment, such investment will create sustainable jobs and encourage economic growth. A long

Solidarity

Social justice and cohesion

Diversity

Assembly of Regions and Peoples

Human Rights

Tackling tax fraud

Self-determination

Internal enlargement

Renewable Energy

Local supply of food

Subsidiarity

Energy efficiency

Energy sovereignty

Autonomy

Reduction of public deficits

Independence

Democracy

Transparent Energy markets

Self-Government

Diversity of energy sources

Reduction of public deficits

Energy efficiency

Local supply of food

Energy sovereignty

Subsidiarity

Sustainable growth

Linguistic equality

Transparency

term plan is needed, with investment in skills and infrastructure projects, without leading to unrealistic costs, which would make Europe a world leader in the sector.

We believe that the EU should commit itself to an ambitious annual carbon emissions reduction target and overhauling our energy policy is essential to achieve this aim.

The **development of renewable energy** will create jobs and boost the economy as well as being a way of reducing carbon emissions. Promoting more use of renewables must, next to maximizing energy efficiency, be one of the cornerstones of the EU's energy policy. The possibility of micro-generation, tidal lagoons, small scale hydro electric schemes, sea bed turbines and other sustainable power generation schemes should be explored. Given that many European nations enjoy an abundance of coastline, a strong emphasis should be placed on tidal energy, which is also a technology at a commercially advanced state.

Planning policy should be the remit of

regional governments. Local authorities should be involved in planning procedures for new constructions, so that no one community should have to take a disproportionate burden of providing energy for the wider community. Renewable energy projects should bring maximum benefits to the local community, in the form of benefits such as lower energy prices.

Ambitious targets for renewable energy production should be set. An increase in production can be achieved through streamlining the consent process, simplifying planning advice, promoting community engagement and promoting community benefit. Funding for renewable energy should be coordinated with other EU funding instruments; in particular the rural development fund as farmers have a vital role in managing resources such as land and water, and structural funds which aim to develop the economies of our poorest regions.

The use of fossil fuels should be reduced with a view to an eventual end to their production in favour of more sustainable sources. While we are still dependent on their use, local supplies should be

favoured over imports. Efficient Emissions Performance Standards should be applied on all new power stations. EFA supports research into carbon capture and storage technology but remains cautious about the viability of the technique.

EFA is concerned by the practice of extracting coal-bed methane and shale gas by hydraulic fracturing or 'fracking' due to the negative impact on the environment, particularly on underground water courses.

EFA has long called for the phasing out of nuclear energy at a European level. The Fukushima incident was another reminder of the potential dangers of nuclear power. EFA notes that Germany has announced that its nuclear power plants will be phased out by 2022. Switzerland has committed to phasing out nuclear power by 2034 and Italy voted against nuclear power in a referendum in 2011. Even though the share of renewable energy will rise in the future, certain regions cannot allow yet the exclusion of nuclear energy from their energy mix and have to diminish their dependence on nuclear energy in a rational and realistic way. In any case, in

order to prevent a production shortage, large investments in the electricity market will be needed.

Whichever way energy is produced, it is vital that the strictest safety measures are guaranteed in every sector, from the production level to waste management. Guaranteed minimum standards should be set at EU level.

EFA wants to promote research and development in the energy domain as a whole. Renewable energy technologies are not the sole areas of importance for the future; we must also invest in, amongst other things, research on new energy efficiency technologies, energy storage and nuclear waste.

In the past, EFA has pointed out the lack of democratic control and transparency in the energy sector. EFA has concerns regarding undemocratic oil cartels, fossil energy oligopolies, nuclear monopolies, or an alternative energy sector ruled by multinational corporations. Governments should cooperate in encouraging large energy companies to reinvest their profits in improving services or cutting



costs for the consumer.

In the 2011 EFA General Assembly, a motion on **energy sovereignty** was adopted. It addresses the oligopolies and

monopolies in the energy market. EFA believes that our ambitions to establish political control of our countries and regions should be mirrored with control of our energy sources.

## 5 Agriculture and CAP Reform

A safe and secure supply of food is absolutely critical for the well-being of Europe's 500 million citizens. Moreover, the viability, prosperity and sustainability of European agriculture underpins the economic prospects of 12 million farm holdings and many more associated food chain and rural enterprises; plays a major role in managing landscapes, protecting the environment and fragile ecosystems; and forms an essential part of the social and cultural heritage of the European regions. With an increasingly industrialised food chain, and ongoing revelations about fraud in food labelling and the spread of plant and animal diseases, the case for securing a safe, healthy, seasonal and **local supply of food** is more relevant than ever. So is the need for an effective reform of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy.

The constituent parties of the European Free Alliance reflect the significant diversity of Europe's varied agricultural landscapes. The issues and challenges facing a livestock farmer in the Highlands of Scotland are different from an olive terrace in Greece, or a large arable farm in Germany. Different policy strategies will

therefore have to be adopted to suit the needs of these different types of farming and different rural economic situations. A "one size fits all" CAP is not in keeping with the principle of respect for diversity which is at the heart of EFA. Nevertheless, EFA parties do share some basic fundamental interests in agricultural policy, and call for the following interests to be central in the discussions on the future of the CAP:

- The retention of the Single Farm Payment with an adequate budget: Farmers in EFA countries and regions face the economic challenges of a volatile market, high input costs, marginal land and distance to markets. The Single Farm Payment provides an essential bulwark for farm finances, and must be adequately financed from the EU budget: it creates a level playing field between farmers in different parts of Europe.
- The strengthening of support for Less Favoured Areas: Many EFA parties, such as in Bavaria and Galicia are situated in less productive agricultural areas which face significant natural handicaps,

and are classified as “Less Favoured”. Pillar II of the CAP provides financial support to help farmers overcome these handicaps. These payments help prevent farm bankruptcies and land abandonment, and to maintain food production.

- The devolution of power over CAP decision making: Under CAP rules, Member States are empowered to make decisions over the implementation of the CAP schemes in their territories, such as how much money to transfer from Pillar I to Pillar II, or whether to apply the “small farmers scheme”. These decisions must be made at as local a level of decision making as possible, particularly in Member States where agriculture is devolved to lower levels of government, so that EFA

countries and regions can tailor the implementation of CAP to their own needs.

- Greening: The EFA parties face vastly different ecological and environmental challenges in their areas: while flooding is a major environmental problem in northern Europe, the Mediterranean zone faces the challenge of drought. The Commission’s proposal to “green” the CAP through three mandatory and standard measures has been criticised for not reflecting the reality of this diversity. EFA calls for a more regionally flexible approach to greening which allows our countries and regions to tackle the specific problems they face, while ensuring overall equivalent environmental action across Europe, including safeguarding biodiversity.

## 6 Fisheries and Aquaculture

EFA’s founding principle of respect for diversity across Europe covers many aspects of our citizens’ culture – be it linguistic rights, national institutions or cultural heritage.

And in Europe’s coastal regions, livelihoods dependent on the sea form an integral part of each area’s heritage and traditions. Generations of fishermen have put to sea to catch fish in the waters around them, and those harvests provide numerous jobs for people onshore. Aquaculture too is playing an increasingly important role in supplying Europe’s food needs – and in sustaining often fragile economies.

Europe’s coastal traditions show as much diversity as any other part of our varied cultures. The issues affecting fishermen in Orkney or Shetland differ hugely from those concerning Corsica or Sardinia. Likewise, the development of aquaculture has shown huge variation across different seas and climate zones.

Nonetheless, what binds these interests together is the deep link between coastal communities and their dependence on the sea: each fishing town or village has a his-

toric and traditional maritime role which deserves protection.

This protection has not been found in the EU Common Fisheries Policy as it has existed for the last three decades.

An over-centralised one-size-fits-all approach has ignored the needs of individual areas, failed to conserve fish stocks and led to a decline in the fishing industry – and therefore threatened coastal Europe’s cultural traditions.

EFA believes that these traditions and historic rights deserve to be protected, and therefore supports the following key points in fisheries policy:

- Europe’s diverse fishing industries are a vital part of our shared cultural heritage – and the rights and interests of all our coastal communities must be protected.
- Management decision making on fisheries must be decentralised, with real power being returned to the fishing nations and regions. Problems are best solved by decisions being taken at a level appropriate to each fishery with region-

al cooperation encouraged where shared interests are apparent.

- The onshore industry must be given adequate protection with both men and women being supported in their vital roles.
- **Sustainable fishery and aquaculture** should be allowed to develop in a manner most appropriate to each region.

## 7 Challenges for cultures and languages

**Respect for cultural and linguistic diversity** is a key element in safeguarding and enhancing Europe's cultural heritage.

EFA considers that all the European languages in their written and oral forms are equal in value and dignity and are an integral part of European culture and civilization, contributing to the enrichment of humankind. The EU must support the policies of the concerned communities to reappropriate their languages.

EFA believes that European languages and cultures are like biodiversity, a living heritage necessary for the sustainable development of our societies. They must be protected from any risk of extinction.

We must prevent our national languages from being reduced to a secondary role of "low" vernacular languages for daily life, while English, promoted by the economic globalisation, becomes the "high" uniform language of important discourses, education, science, economic life, etc. Because its drive is global and essentially economic [as opposed to being political or cultural],

the unifying English language is not an identification instrument for Europe, while our national languages become local ones and lose their European scope. EU policies must contribute to reverse this negative trend.

EFA considers that **linguistic diversity** stimulates creativity, innovation and the promotion of local cultural heritage, thus contributing to economic development. Cultural and artistic creation, cultural heritage, gastronomy, arts & crafts have a job creation potential, help foster identity, cannot be relocated and are also basic elements for a sustainable tourism. The language industry, i.e. designing, producing and marketing products and services related to languages, is one which has great potential.

EFA considers that the EU must ensure the preservation of the linguistic and cultural heritage of Europe and in particular of all its languages, and must therefore, while respecting the principle of subsidiarity, contribute to the promotion and development of this invaluable cultural heritage.

Languages with co-official status must be recognised at EU level.

Although the budget allocated to European regional or minority languages has been greatly reduced, EFA believes that the new Commission programmes for 2014-2020 Erasmus for all, Creative Europe and Europe for Citizens must support NGOs

and organisations, initiatives and activities, which work to develop and promote endangered languages. One of the most important issues for EFA is changing the eligibility criteria for community language programmes in order to allow all language groups to apply for these funding opportunities.

# What is EFA?



The **European Free Alliance (EFA)** promotes the right to **self-determination** and supports the aspirations which EFA member parties have for their countries, including **independence**, greater **autonomy** and **linguistic and cultural recognition**.

EFA assembles political parties involved in the quest for enhanced self-government for our **stateless nations**.

EFA aims for European unity in diversity, creating a European Union of free Peoples based on the **principle of subsidiarity**, in **solidarity** with each other and other peoples of the world. EFA promotes a European cooperation based on the **diversity of nations, regions, peoples, cultures and languages**.

EFA promotes the process of **internal enlargement** within the European institutions and elsewhere as the mechanism by which nations who gain the statute of a State remain as an EU member state.

EFA does actively support the ongoing democratic self-determination processes across the EU.

EFA argues that stateless nations have the right of **self-government** and of participation in the world and in the European Union on equal terms with other nationalities, some of which are the possessors of statehood, others not.

EFA rejects the two extreme solutions that are presented in the current debate on the future of the European Union paving a way out of the crisis: the centralised and unitarian model or the retreat into the nation state.

EFA advocates the bottom-up approach of a European Union of free peoples based on the **principle of subsidiarity** who co-operate where necessary in the policy areas where a European added value offers a better policy outcome.

EFA shares the democratic values that underpin membership in the European Union: human rights, respect for democracy and its foundations, gender equality, rejection of racism and xenophobia. It represents a vision of Europe that promotes a more just and more democratic world, including by building solidarity with the peoples struggling for self-determination.

[www.e-f-a.org](http://www.e-f-a.org)

<http://vimeo.com/europeanfreealliance/what-is-efa>

<http://vimeo.com/europeanfreealliance/self-determination>



# EFA stands for another Europe

## Member Parties

### FULL MEMBERS

Alands Framtid | Autonomie - Liberté  
- Participation - Écologie [ALPE] |  
Bayernpartei | Bloque Nacionalista  
Galego [BNG] | Chunta Aragonesista  
[Cha] | Die Friesen | Eusko Alkartasuna  
[EA] | Enotna Lista [EL] | Esquerra  
Republicana de Catalunya [ERC] |  
Fryske Nasjonale Partij [FNP] | Lista  
Za Rijeku | Liga Veneta Repubblica  
[LVR] | Magyar Kereszténydemokrata  
Szövetség | Mebyon Kernow [MK] |  
Moravané | Mouvement Région Savoie  
[MRS] | Nieuw-Vlaamse Alliantie [N-VA]  
| Omo Ilinden Pirin [Omo] | Partido  
Andalucista [PA] | Partit Occitan [PÒc] |  
Plaid Cymru | Partitu di a Nazione Corsa  
[PNC] | Partito Sardo d'Azione [PSd'Az] |  
Federació PSM-Entesa Nacionlista [PSM-  
Entesa] | Rainbow | Ruch Autonomii  
Slaska [RAS] | Slovenska Skupnost  
[SSK] | Scottish National Party [SNP]  
| Südschleswigschen Wählerverbands  
[SSW] | Schleswig Partei [SP] | Süd-  
Tiroler Freiheit | Union Démocratique  
Bretonne [UDB] | Unitat Catalana [UC] |  
Unser Land

### OBSERVER MEMBERS

Aralar | Bloc Nacionalista Valencia  
[BLOC] | For Human Rights in United  
Latvia [FHRUL / PCTVL] | Lausitzer  
Allianz [LA] | Nueva Canarias [NC]



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Europe of  
the Peoples*