

## **Response to Ofcom consultation on 'major parties':**

<http://media.ofcom.org.uk/news/2015/major-parties-consultation/>

### **Why the Green Party is a major party?**

1. Because it is now ahead of the Liberal Democrats in most of the polling, in spite of many of these polls not prompting Green Party. In other words people have to state that they would vote for another party and then at a second stage state the Green Party. Given this methodological barrier, it is clear that our polling level of 7% represents a strong commitment by a significant proportion of the electorate.

2. Our support is automatically undervalued by polls which ask people how they would vote in a general election based on a voting system which makes it extremely difficult for us to gain seats. Given the impact of tactical voting on postage decisions when it comes to a general election, our 7% average voter support at present suggests a much higher level of latent support.

3. Our support is much higher amongst certain groups, particularly the young. A recent YouGov poll found support amongst 18-24 year olds to match Labour at 29% [1] While we would not suggest making a particular concession to young voters, it is important to note that their commitment to representative democracy is less strong than that of older groups and it would be reprehensible if Ofcom were to undermine their commitment further by excluding the party they choose to support from the majority of media coverage.

4. Our membership base is now larger than that of the Liberal Democrats and UKIP, both of which Ofcom has decided to designate as major parties [2].

5. In the most recent national election, the European election of 2014, we received more votes than the Liberal Democrats, which Ofcom has decided to designate as a major party. One of Ofcom's criteria is momentum and movement of support. Given that we achieved one additional MEP while the Liberal Democrats lost 11 of the 12, it is clear that the momentum in terms of actual polling is with the Green Party.

6. We are a party that is part of a global movement of green parties and hence our significance should not be based entirely on our support in one country. As a Green MEP I sit in a small but significant group of MEPs in the European Parliament. It would be considered absurd in any other European country to exclude the Green Party from media coverage.

7. The Green Party represents a political position not represented by any of the other parties, namely: political ecologism. Many of the insights from this political ideology have been adopted by what Ofcom considers to be the major parties over the years. However, our impact on the political debate is significant and this should be reflected in our designation as a major party.