

Are the Green Parties still *different?*

Comparison of the governmental participation
of the green parties

The case of England, France and Sweden

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Most Western European countries faced in the late 1970's and early 1980's the emergence of new partisan bodies aiming to disturb the traditional party system and political balance of power. The formation of new partisan organisations was the translation of new political wishes. Thus we saw various environmental and post-materialist movements gathering in what we know as green parties. They have been identified as representing a distinctive new challenge to the longstanding political parties as well as the party systems within which they function.

But how long after its founding can a political party still be called "new party"? Has newness more to deal with an age counted in years or with original political practices, claims and evolutions? Thus the parties had adopted in their early years a stance as "anti-party" parties attacking the continued relevance of the traditional "Left-Right" parameters of political debate. But this line has mainly been removed by green parties in Europe. About ten years after the time of their births, European Green parties slowly began to break the threshold of national parliamentary representation. After some successes in local elections, in the early 1980's, green parties have entered national parliaments, in the late 1980's or early 1990's, and sometimes even managed to be part of governments, in the late 1990's. So we can note that in various cases the ecologists have moved from a situation of "marginality" and a posture of "isolation" on the political scene to a deep institutionalisation within the system.

The comparative method we will use in this article will underline the diverse varieties of situations that are facing the parties of our study, depending on their national representative and electoral system. Two out of the three have experienced, in different ways, "being on charge". In France it took a long while to *les Verts*, founded in 1984, to gain national representation. But, let's note that 1997, the year of their first entrance into Parliament, is also the start of their governmental experience, in a large coalition of parties from the Left. At the moment, 2004, *les Verts* have seats in every level of power. In the United-Kingdom, because of partisan situation and electoral law, the *Green Party* has more than anywhere else been, at the national level, out of representative bodies or much too light to be efficient. In Sweden, *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* has been electorally successful enough to first win MPs in the 1988 Swedish Parliament's election. Since that date the party has always been in Parliament, if we except the 1991-94 period, and from 1998 has been "supporting without participating" the social-democrat cabinet.

Thus for these three parties, members of the same “europarty¹” and parliamentary group in the European Parliament, situations are very singular one from the other. We will compare the evolutions of strategies of these three parties, and then look at the impact of each evolution on the organisations. Finally we shall try to question the impact of attitudes towards governmental participation for the European Greens, as a political family and try to describe what are the perspectives for the ecologists.

Theoretical explanation of Green parties behaviour towards other parties

The green parties are usually analysed as “*new parties*”. They challenge the traditional political parties as well as the party system they are functioning in. Presenting original issue as well as challenging political activism tradition, denouncing the underdemocratic nature of traditional party structures have been the various ways the ecological parties entered the political arena. This “new politics” concerns have contributed to the identification of the Greens as parties seeking a radical alternative approach to political participation and decision making. These partisan organisations have always target since their creations ‘**to be in politics differently**’ and did not want to be placed within the traditional Left-Right dichotomy².

This alternative position appears to be important when questioning the governmental participation of green parties. Being out of the principal way to define political parties implies questions when looking at the Greens’ possibilities to work with other political parties. Right from the start we can underline differences, that will lead to various trajectories or developments. Using terms as ‘trajectory’, ‘path’, ‘development’ or ‘transformation’ implies an historical dimension

Creation of political parties is a rare phenomena. The very first green party in Europe was founded in Great-Britain in 1973 with the name of ‘*People*’. Unlike what happened in other European countries, the British *Green Party* is not the political repercussion or gestation of ecological and alternative movements. It represents the *ad hoc* creation of a political organisation in a country where political parties are still seen as legitimate bodies.

¹ The European Federation of Green Parties (EFGP) which turned into a real ‘Euro Greens’ party last February.

² Müller-Rommel, F., ed, *New Politics in Western Europe: the Rise and success of Green Parties and Alternative Lists*, London: Westview Press, 1989, p.217: ‘*New Politics parties introduce a programmatic and ideological thinking which is less consistent with the traditional ideological framework of the left-Right dimensions; they advocate a set of alternative values that differ from those of the established larger parties.*’.

Miljöpartiet de Gröna was founded back in 1981. The immediate cause was the outcome of the referendum on nuclear power Sweden had in 1980. The alternative most negative to nuclear got almost 40% of the votes. In the fall of 1981 the leaders of this movement went ahead and established a new party. As the name *Miljöpartiet*³ indicates, the party they formed is not only an anti-nuclear party. It has a much broader scope, both when it comes to ideology and which issues the party is developing. Its original *raison d'être* in Swedish politics is to push for tougher measures on all kinds of environmental issues. In France, *les Verts* were born in 1984. It was the result of long debates in the environmental and post-materialist movement, which expressed misgivings and reservations about the traditional partisan arena. The party *Les Verts* was created as a response to a political world deeply criticised. The wish to 'Be in politics differently', its main slogan, wanted to illustrate its autonomy and its singularity. In its early years the party ideology could be summarised with the sentence of its former leader A. Waechter: 'ecology is not marriageable'.

This brief look illustrates the difficulties for these new parties to create any links with longstanding political parties. This would have involved a connection with a political system that one of the aim of the parties was to criticise. Most of the early members of the three parties studied were in favour of maintaining an autonomous stance and turning down the possibilities to enter into any form of negotiation, compromise or coalition. This was part of the construction of the partisan identity, where criticising the established political systems as well as being seen as 'different' were favoured. With the 'autonomous' strategy the *Green Party*, *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* as well as *Les Verts* gained some electoral successes during the 1980's and 1990's, mainly in local elections or European ones. But once there were Green activists elected in various assemblies the work relationship they had to built with other parties, attitudes towards alliances in general or on specific issues, had to evolve. Very often local experiences were identified by national leaders as a possibility to test what would 'alliances' really mean.

³ the Environmental Party

I-Evolution of strategy within the parties?

From the autonomous stances adopted in the early years of the political implication to the participation of certain Green parties at coalition governments there has been deep and sometimes distressing reshape of some parties policies. That is the case of the French *Les Verts*, and also to a certain extent of the Swedish *Miljöpartiet de Grona*.

But this evolution does not concern all the European Green family. The British reality is quite different. For various reasons, the *Green Party* is still concentrating itself on the 'being in politics differently' stance.

A. A first logical political choice: Autonomy

The late 1970's and early 1980's were a time of questioning the validity of representative democracy. Traditional political parties were facing crisis of confidence. The Greens' autonomy policy reflected the disillusionment with established party politics. It explains the parties' commitments to a position of separation from the usual Left-Right dimension. Leaders illustrated this point of view by repeating their distinctive 'neither Left, nor Right'. However when we precisely look at *who* were the activists and leaders in the Green parties and *where* the ideologically came from, mainly from the far Left or Left spectrum, we can discuss and question their 'neutrality' on the traditional Left-Right dichotomy. They had been part of various mobilisations, new social movements contesting militarism or nuclear power, extolling feminism or environmental respect. If the British *Green Party* used the old British environmental movement, more than any other group, as a springboard; the French and Swedish parties, in which the 'neither Left, nor Right' was also initially valid, were formed by the gathering of on one hand various environmental movements and on the other hand various political activists coming from the libertarian and postmaterialist worlds. Thus we can talk about people originally mainly coming from the Left, denouncing political systems and traditions; presenting themselves and their partisan organisation as 'new' and indescribable with the pattern of traditional analysis. The aim was,

and in many ways still is, to present a real alternative to the electorate. What the Green activists describe as ‘new concerns’ or ‘new issues’ are presented as well as original and different political practices and habits.

In the early years many internal debates were discussing this stance. Significantly the A. Waechter’s trend, symbolised by the famous text ‘l’écologie n’est pas à marier⁴’ won internal electoral competition in *Les Verts*’ general assembly in 1986, whereas everyone had foreseen the victory of the leaders, Y.Cochet and D.Voynet, promoting the strategy of alliance with the Socialist Party. After many electoral disappointment, the green activists in France were led by a reflex of pride, by desire of withdrawing to identifiable values. Moreover the return to a situation of environmental preoccupation (Tchernobyl...) helped Green parties to gain some electoral successes all around Europe. *Les Verts*, for instance, won 11% at the 1989 European Election and appeared widely on the political scene. For the Green activists it was hard not to link this success and the Waechter’s trend. For those who were still defending an alliance strategy with other parties of the Left, the reconquest of the party would be very long and progressive. In Sweden the party literature was also emphasising the autonomy stance: ‘Since its formation in 1982, *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* has insisted bloc politics is no longer applicable in Sweden. The new political issues of achieving a sustainable society, demand other and more comprehensive solutions than the traditional ones of more growth and changed distribution of wealth.⁵’. The context of deep environmental concern appears to justify the autonomy and legitimises this strategy.

The British situation is much more clear. The electoral context only gives room to two opposite blocs. The British situation is the an historical example of bipartisanism. The nature and the sedimentation of cleavages restrict the possibilities of integration of certain issues within the political agenda. The uninominal, on a majority basis and in one round, electoral system is the worst electoral law for a ‘*new party*’ trying to emerge. It makes tactical votes very used. The development of ‘a new political issue’ depends on its capacity to fall in the framework of a pre-existing area. The Labour’s hegemony on the British Left have pushed green issues away on the sidelines of the domestic political life. In this context, where alliances are very rare, the *Green Party* has been facing a difficult electoral situation, how can a partisan organisation convince people to vote for it when its impact shall for sure stay very light? Unable to form alliance with the Labour Party, or to influence policies, without resources to distribute to its activists, the party has been confined on the edge of the partisan

⁴ which we could translate by ‘ecology is not marriageable’.

⁵ *Miljöpartiet de Gröna*, 1989.

system. This isolation has favoured the development of 'a radical sub-culture'. The reforming enthusiasm has evolved to the elaboration of an utopian manifesto of an hypothetical first green government. The consensus, analysed as the best way to decide, governs the party.

In the early 1980's, there was little interest from the established parties. In Sweden for instance the social-democrats, the SAP, did 'green up' their positions and manifesto as an answer to the emergence of *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* and penetration of ecological issues within the population. To a certain extent the situation was the same in England and France. The issue of alliances and coalitions became an influential factor only when the parties started to gain significant levels of representation at both national and local levels.

Green parties and other parties, mainly social-democrat ones, firstly faced the prospect of working together at local levels. The Swedish city of Gothenburg and some French regions, like the Nord-Pas-De-Calais, were parties experiences highlighting some important aspects of the parties changing strategy towards relationships with other parties.

B. Local experiences impose strategic debates at national level

With the European elections, their distinctive electoral system and their secondary importance, the Green parties faced their first positive electoral results at local ballots. Be it the *Green Party* in metropolitan boroughs or districts elections, *Les Verts* in 'régionales' ballots or *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* at municipal level, the green parties mainly discovered the position of elected representatives on local spheres. The reality of the work in assemblies have made the green activists elected realise the various opportunities that they could seize.

In England the *Green Party*, even with seats in Principal Authorities, faced isolation and problems to create specific coalitions on certain issues. The conservative bloc as well as the Labour's representation did not give attention to their propositions.

In France, the 1992⁶ regional ballot saw *Verts'* activists becoming elected representatives, which was quite new. It established situations in which *Les Verts* voted on many issues with the Socialist and Communist Parties. Thus in regional assemblies *Les Verts*

appeared to be part of the Left, even if official political contacts were rare and specific. Looking at the background of the activists who had been elected, looking at their internal position on the alignment debate, there is no surprise about it. The activists in favour of alliances with the Left took the opportunity to demonstrate to the Waechter's supporters the ineffectiveness of non-alignment. The autonomy appeared to be too ideological to resist to the parliaments' life. There is a local case that has to be underlined: the Nord-Pas-De-Calais. With less than 7% of expressed votes the party gained the Presidency of the region for Marie-Christine Blandin. In this historical socialist constituency, the *Verts'* candidate for the presidency, after long political tangle (the two blocs, Left and Right, could not manage to settle the voting in the assembly), received the socialist votes. What was at that time an original coalition was formed. Working together with such a traditional political party, as the PS is, was something new for *Les Verts*, even more not in a position of submission. *Les Verts* even managed to develop certain of their policies with great success. The party's experiences in Le-Nord-Pas-De-Calais provide an interesting example of the significance of the changing attitudes among the Greens towards relationships with other political parties. The experience have also had significant long-term implications for the Socialists' perception of *Les Verts* as a possible future coalition partner.

In 1992, and in the months that followed the regional election the party's stance still was 'neither Left nor Right'. Things were about to evolve. By successfully taking a role within various assemblies, in various contexts, *Les Verts* have begun to be regarded as serious political partner rather than merely a 'single issue' environmental lobby.

In Sweden the experiences of local activists in local contexts have been identified as significant factors in the party's developing strategy towards its political environment. But the Swedish case is different from the French or British ones. Just after the 1985 elections *Miljöpartiet de Grona* faced the possibility to work with established parties. The ecologists were offered a coalition role within the city of Gothenburg. The strategic debates began within the party. The negotiations only managed to produce a weak 'limited toleration agreement' with the Social-Democratic Party, SAP. This first initiation into coalition context only provided *Miljöpartiet de Grona* with little influence and moreover no real policy gains. More harmful to the party it was linked with unpopular policy decisions.

Despite this experience the *Miljöpartiet de Grona* broke the national threshold in the next national election in 1988. With only twenty deputies the party's position remained relatively weak. Indeed the election result meant that neither Left nor Right needed to built

⁶ Let's note that at that time no *Verts'* activist had ever been elected in National Parliament

direct relationship with *Miljöpartiet de Grona*⁷. Without any hinge position the ecologists faced a difficult situation. The green deputies did not represent a critical swing group between the two major blocs. As in other countries, the traditional parties were not really trying to find areas for any possible agreement. The perspective of coalition did not interest the established parties as much as removing *Miljöpartiet de Grona* from Parliament or regaining its votes.

The same realities were faced by *Les Verts* in their first parliamentary experiences, at regional level. One former green activists reminding this period proposed: ‘*the Socialists were only interested in testing us, they wanted to prove that we were unfit to be in politics, its cultural to them not to consider other political parties especially if there are challenging them on their Left[...], and at the next ballot they took some of our propositions in their manifesto*’.

The Swedish political evolution during this term gave the opportunity to *Miljöpartiet de Grona* to gain a more important national role. After changes to the government’s economic policy, the Social Democrats did not have sufficient support in the Riksdag; so they were forced to try to gain green deputies’ support. If this could have been analysed as an important political opportunity for *Miljöpartiet de Grona*, it causes deep argument within the party. Those in favour of an agreement used the same arguments in Sweden in 1990 as those in France from 1986 to 1993 and Great-Britain until 1993. They tried to convince the rest of the party by explaining that a coalition work would display the electorate that the Greens could be an influential political force. They also predicted a reinforcement of the green political legitimacy.

In the three studied parties this issue exacerbated tensions within the parties. However the case of the *Green Party* is different from the others. Emerging in a society where political parties are bodies much more legitimate than on other scenes, the anti-party contestation emerged latter than in France and Sweden. We can estimate than the way the established parties, mainly the Labour, looked at their formation has led the party to ‘prefer the demonstration to the election’.

In France and Sweden the question of coalition created deep division within the parties. What has to be underlined is *who* was in favour of working with the Social-Democrats and *who* was still defending the autonomy. It is striking to note that an important number of activists that had been elected, some in regional parliaments in France or in the Riksdag in Sweden, were strongly wishing some form of agreement; whereas grassroots militants were mainly opposed to any coalition. So we can see that there was; in formations that have always

⁷ On the one hand the Social Democrats continued to rely on the Left Party as a coalition partner, on the other hand the three conservative parties did not evolve from their stance as a unified opposition.

been presenting internal democracy as the base of the partisan organisation, that have from their births been very mistrustful towards partisan elites or leaderships⁸; division between the partisan elected elites and the grassroots members. This was the very first direct impact of partisan institutionalisation. The political professionalisation of activists that had discovered the reality of work within assemblies or parliaments is a key point in this debate. In France as well as in Sweden their aim was to convince the rest of the parties that if autonomy indubitably gives an ideological comfort, it is not efficient. They developed arguments saying that the further *Les Verts* or *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* stand from a coalition, the less power they may have.

In the 1990 Swedish coalition debate, the two groups within *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* did not manage to agree and so the talks collapsed. *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* refused the alliance with the Social Democrats. This was badly perceived by the Social Democrats and had significant mid-term implications for the SAP's perception of *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* as a possible coalition partner. The SAP decided to pass alternative economic measures with the support of its traditional allies, the Left Party. That was meaning that *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* was again left outside the two parliamentary dominant blocs.

In France after the 1986 internal ballot that saw the surprising victory of the 'neither Left, nor Right' stance. In November 1987, Y. Cochet and D. Anger presented a motion aiming to defend an agreement with the Left. They symbolically named it '*Let's enter in politics*', it was planning that the green votes in 1988 would be transferred to the Socialist Party after the first round of election. The Socialists had given *Les Verts* the formal assurance that then they would take part in government. In 1989, the same group presented a motion named '*in favour of a policy able to associate the radicalism of ours choices to the realism and the measure in our approach*'. The balance of power within the party had been evolving slowly: there was 64% of activists votes in favour of autonomy and 14% in favour of an agreement with the PS in 1987. In 1990 it was 49.5% Vs 30%.

More and more it was becoming difficult to portray effectively, to both the electorate and the media, the rationale behind its commitments to a 'neither Left, nor Right' stance within the French and Swedish party systems. The various internal debates and strategies of these parties were placing more and more *Les Verts* and *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* along these dimension even if officially the parties still favoured the autonomy. If the question of

⁸ Green parties have been having *spokeswoman* and *spokesman*, instead of leader or president. Collegial and mixed administration instead of charismatic leadership.

alliances with the Social-Democrats or the Socialist Party was still taboo, *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* made clear statement, during the 1991 election campaign, that it would not support any government that would be led by Conservative Party leader Carl Bildt. M. Bennulf develops this episode⁹ explaining that activists argued that the party had not changed its strategy but that the position had never before made 'so publicly clear'. But how did the electorate react to this change, or not, in policy? The 1991 election was a deep disappointment for *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* and the perception of a move to the Left was identified as the most significant factor in this failure. M. Bennulf suggested that the party lost support from Green voters on the centre right, but were not able to gain any new voters within either of the others parties of the Swedish Left.

All over Europe green activists in favour of autonomy used the Swedish experience to develop the idea of the 'volatility of green support'. To them it is very important to try to maintain a centrist stance. The 'neither Left nor Right' stance was seen as the only way to create an independent green electorate.

C. Political evolutions within the parties

What, for a brief period in the 1970's, could be characterised as an alternative political force, with activists envisioning an utopian ecological society, began to seep into the established societal institutions. The beginning of the 1990's were used as time of deep introspection. An intense internal reassessment was led in the three studied partisan organisations. Electoral disappointment (loss of national parliamentary representation in 1991 in Sweden, electoral disaster for bye-elections in June 1993 for the *Green Party*, loss of European parliamentary representation for *Les Verts* in 1994...), financial difficulties imposed evolutions within the parties.

If some electoral results in the late 1980's could make the activists hope green parties were about to become an autonomous national political actor; they rapidly realised that some electoral breakthrough were insufficient to develop a role of possible political alternative. There were various factions, represented in the three studied parties, wishing to impose through this reflection a deep partisan restructuration. The debates concerned the political tactic as well as organisational matters.

⁹ Bennulf, M. 1995. 'Sweden: The Rise and Fall of *Miljöpartiet de Gröna*', in Rootes, C.&Richardson, D. eds, *The Green Challenge: The Development of Green Parties in Europe.*, London: Routledge.

The research of political credibility was in the centre of the preoccupation. Becoming an influential political actor, gaining an influential hinge position, were the main goals. Having experienced parliamentary work, the green militants were more aware of political reality and its various ways to impact policies making. The caricature made by traditional parties of green parties as ineffective parties had been analysed as one the main. Presented as focusing on obstruction rather than alternative policy proposals, *Miljöpartiet de Gröna*, the *Green Party* and *Les Verts* had wanted to present their respective local experiences as example of their political capacities and realism. Aiming to gain political credit the green parties have tried to demonstrate the reality of their collaboration with other parties. More and more *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* and *Les Verts* have been seeking to use their respective track records, in the Riksdag or in French regional assemblies and also at the European Parliament, as a demonstration of their political capacities. This process continued throughout the early 1990's with *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* representatives active in executive powers at local level, working with established parties of both Left and Right. The parties' institutionalisation, mainly the French and the Swedish one, we will come back on the British case latter, has been part of an approach targeting to present the parties as fully operational.

We can talk about a shift from opposition to construction, from denunciation to proposition.

In France, internal evolution have been parallel to electoral difficulties. The Waechter's stance, in favour of autonomy, appeared more and more as an insuperable obstacle to political impact, to the possibility of developing some green policies. The various electoral laws, and the room left to opposition or forces 'out of the blocs' in the French system, make it very difficult for *new parties* to gain elected activists. The weakness of *Les Verts*' electoral scores, especially at national ballots, influenced the move of partisan votes towards the Y. Cochet, D. Voynet and J-L. Bennahmias' position in favour of an alliance with forces of the Left. This faction became the majority of the party at the 1993 general assembly in Lille. From that moment the evolution of the French ecologist party has been 'inclining to the Left'. The 1994 European Election, for which the list proposed by *Les Verts* was slowly taking into account the recent evolution, were not as good as expected. The party lost its parliamentary representation in the EP, and so its influence within the European green family. But the main covered by the media and symbolical fact was Antoine Waechter own decision to resign from *Les Verts*. This resignation did enable the 1993 majority to establish its authority on the party.

The 1995 presidential campaign and the poor results obtained by D. Voynet¹⁰ must also be analysed in the light of the new perception of *Les Verts* as members of the Left bloc. Tactical votes, in favour of the Socialist candidate L. Jospin were probably numerous and caused the Voynet's candidature poor results. After this new electoral disappointment, the party, more unified than it used to be, realised that the next national election, planned in 1998, would be decisive for the movement. It had to deal with *Les Verts*' political survival. The party general assembly gave in 1995 the opportunity to the leaders to negotiate with political parties of the Left¹¹. To certain activists '*Les Verts* were crossing the Rubicon'¹².

So that in autumn 1996 green activists were seeking to find an agreement with political partners. If talks in order to create a partnership were concurrently undertaken with the Communist Party, some small organisations from the far Left and the Socialist Party, some hesitations within *Les Verts* can be underlined. If everyone agreed about the necessity of an agreement, the nature of this one created debates: is it an efficient electoral alliance, a governmental coalition project or a simple research of ideological agreements? The majority basis used for French national elections 'imposed' the research of an electoral alliance with the only possible partner, the Socialists. To gain national parliamentary representation *Les Verts* have to have a more powerful partner, and reserved circumscriptions. *Les Verts* developed the talks with the Socialists and important symbol of their evolution, and to a certain extent of their 'professionalisation', they hired a political marketing agency to help them. The final agreement between *Les Verts* and *Le Parti Socialiste* was signed on the 28th of January 1997. It was ratified and confirmed by a difficult vote (61% in favour when a majority of 60% was needed) by the Conseil National Interrégional (the CNIR, *Les Verts*'s parliament). The haste caused by President Chirac's decision to dissolve the 'Assemblée Nationale' did not let much time to *les Verts*' activists to regret the coalition. Even if *Verts*' results were not extremely high where they had candidates, 1997 election were a deep success for the party and its direction. The had 8 members elected and D.Voynet entered the government with "the town and country planning" added to the Environment portfolio. The *Verts*' success was so far mainly political and tactical.

¹⁰ 3.35% of expressed votes whereas Waechter had gained 3.83% in the 1988 election.

¹¹ The text adopted was saying: 'il s'agit d'engager avec les forces de gauche une réflexion sur les conditions d'alliances politiques, y compris électorales en vue des échéances de 1998 afin de permettre aux *Verts* de juger de leur acceptabilité lors d'une AG extraordinaire'.

¹² Interview with a *Verts*' militant, 8th October 2000.

The British situation is totally different from the French or the Swedish ones. From its birth, 1974¹³, the party had tried logically and traditionally to compete with established partisan organisations through elections. Its perseverance to believe that entering the House of Commons would be the best way to defend ecological concern ended in 1993 with a strategic reversal. With a succession of electoral setbacks, a deep mediatic handicap and electoral system that makes the emergence of a new party very difficult the *Green Party* had to question itself. Strategic choices had to be done as wrote F. Faucher¹⁴ naming part of one of her article '*the Election or the Demonstration*'. The difficulties of the party to impose itself on the political stage was determinant in the strategic debates. Activists had the impression that the *Green Party* had done everything it could to be perceived as a possible and credible political alternative. The English partisan context makes a coalition very difficult to imagine. No one of the two main parties would need any help from other political parties. A 'new party' always have to deal with great difficulties to become relevant in a political system in which a majoritarian position is always necessary.

The *Green Party* began at that period to think and look towards other forms of actions. Within the internal debate a text called 'Strategy-What next?'¹⁵, developed the position that the expression of a pure green identity should be the priority of the party. The text was a sort of list of problems that the party was facing and could not solve. The electoral laws: 'an unfair electoral system'; the mediatic sphere: 'media that ignore us or distort our image'; the established parties: 'it is their interest to keep us out'; the electorate is described as 'conditioned by envy and consumerism'; even the environmental lobby appears to be an obstacle the *Green Party*'s development: 'it refuses to identify itself with us'. Thus the *Green Party* took a turn to the protest movement. Governmental participation had always been hoped but also considered as very difficult to realise; the *Green Party* was aiming to be present in the parliamentary life, very legitimate in British society. But facing systemic obstacles preventing the emergence of a new party, the *Green Party* appealed to what it called '*a long and respectable tradition of NVDA*¹⁶ *in our country*'. The party's literature put forward the tradition of the *Free Englishman* to legitimate NVDA and the natural right of rebellion and association.

¹³ The party *People* was formed in 1974, it changed its name into the *Ecology Party* in 1975 and once again in 1985 into the *Green Party*.

¹⁴ F. Faucher, "L'impossible développement des Verts britanniques", in P. Delwit and J-M. De Waele, "*Les Partis verts en Europe*", Edition Complexe, Bruxelles, p.210.

¹⁵ quoted, *Ibid*, p. 212-213.

¹⁶ Non Violent Direct Action

So if there are local cases in which green parties are not afraid to work with conservative, national realities clearly point out the, ideologically logical, registration of European political ecology within the ‘camp of the Left’.

Thus, strategic and ideological issues surrounding potential relationship with other political parties provided the focal point for deep debate and often caused in the 1990’s internal factionalism within the green parties.

II-What has it meant for Green Parties to be part, or not, of executives?

Considering the ways to be more politically effective, Green Parties have had to try to be present within executives. Since no Green movement is able to govern on its own, they have had to consider building coalitions, or not. As we developed earlier various situations have been experienced.

There is a number of interrogations that have been raised by these experiences. They have deep implications for the way in which we view and analyse evolution, change and development within the ‘new parties’ that are the Green Parties. If we analysed, through an historical perspective, the evolution of the *Green Party*, *Les Verts* and *Miljöpartei de Gröna*, we shall now question and compare the internal impacts of these various changes. How the balances of power within the parties have been influenced by the issue of alliance and governmental participation. How has the identity matter, so meaningful in the ecological area, assimilated the presence in Parliaments and moreover in Governments? The question of evolution towards governmental participation and relationship towards traditional parties has to be analysed from the internal point of view as well as from a more external posture.

A. What internal management of partisan evolutions?

The very first way to analyse internal impacts of debates around governmental participation, and in a larger point of view about the institutionalisation of the '*new parties*' studied is the number of activists registered in the parties. The newness of the ecologist partisan organisations allows us to a complete analyse of the variation of the activists' numbers.

The number of activists in the first years is quite similar in the three cases studied, but evolutions of these numbers are as different as the development of the three partisan organisations.

If the website of the *Green Party* evokes the 70 members who created *People* in 1974, it is more significant to underline the fluctuation of activists' number in the early 1980's: they were 5 000 in 1979 but only 3 000 three years latter in 1982 (consequences of the leadership difficulties, with the resignation of Paul Enkins, and the restored popularity of Mrs Thatcher because of the Falklands War); from 1987-89 membership grew, media interest increased and the party was running smoothly, wishing to focus on the electoral route to Westminster. The party's expectations were high for the European Elections. To everyone's amazement the Green vote count was 2 292 695, 14.9% of the vote. The *UK Greens* won the largest percentage vote achieved by any Green party, but whilst Greens from countries all across the European Union were elected, the lack of proportional representation denied Britain any Green MEPs.

Over the next year membership rose to almost 19 000!! But the party was not prepared for such rapid expansion. It lacked the resources, infrastructure and organisational skills to cope with either the internal or external demands of a partisan organisation. With still no voice in Parliament, strategic debates (between 'election or demonstration') continuing to create deep tensions within the party, *Green Party* membership was falling rapidly right from 1991. Membership finally stopped falling in 1995¹⁷, two years after the party's decision to concentrate itself on local matters instead of national competition, having dropped to less than 3 500. The 1989-90 expectations of the possibility of a party disturbing the bi-partisan system had not last for long. The majority of new members were hoping to be in politics in a traditional way, aiming to compete the Tories and the Labour. Non-electoral popular campaigning including support for NVDA did not motivate former activists to continue. In the beginning of 2004, the *Green Party* had around 5 000 activists, defending a national

electoral approach based on ‘*Westminster through the Town Halls*’ coupled with a fresh commitment to ecological movement coalition building as ‘*a pre-condition for political success*’¹⁸. The British Eco-movement is still one of the most active and successful environmentalist movement in Europe. So actions and mobilisations seem to be more sizeable through community life than through partisan organisations¹⁹.

There were around 2 000 members of *Miljöpartiet de Gröna*²⁰ in 1981 and this number had been very slowly increasing until the end of the 1980’s and the first entry of the party into Parliament, after local experiences. There were 8 000 activists in 1990. Since the party had maintained, from its birth, a centrist stance, it avoided deep internal dispute and was presenting itself as independent from the two traditional competing blocks. But the failure of the party to maintain its national representation within the Riksdag in 1991 disappointed some activists that ended their political implication, doubting the possible relevant aspect of an ‘new party’ within the frozen Swedish partisan system. So that there were 6 500 members in 1992. 1994 was the year of the return of green activists in Parliament, and also a period of European debate in Sweden (issue on which *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* has a position totally different from the main traditional parties, since it is opposed to the Swedish membership within the European Union). The impact on the green membership was not clear since in 1995 there were 6 000 members in the party. The decrease was so light that we can imagine that resignations had been balanced by new arrivals, people mainly coming from the Left area. Since 1998, *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* has been supporting, without participating the Social Democratic cabinet. This position has institutionalised the party and raised its political credibility. The number of activists has been since stabilised around 7 000. When we look at the other parties activists’ numbers we can say that in term of membership the partisan evolution has been successful.

In France, where partisan membership has always been lower than in most European countries, the membership development of *Les Verts* seems to copy exactly the tactical evolution of the party. If there were only 1 500 activists gathering in 1984 to create the party, the period of A. Waechter’s ‘neither Left, nor Right’, saw membership raising to 5 500 members. The difficulties of the first years of Voynet’s leadership saw some purely environmentalist activists leave the party. In 1998, when *Les Verts* entered Jospin’s

¹⁷ In comparison there were still 270 000 direct membership, and 4 500 000 indirect, within the *Labour* in 1995.

¹⁸ see www.greenparty.org.uk.

¹⁹ see J. Mc Cormick, *British Politics and the Environment*, London, Earthscan Publications, 1991. Let’s note for instance that the *Royal Society for the Protection of Birds* had more than 1 000 000 members in 1997

government there were only 3 500 activists left. Governmental participation, new political visibility and credibility, attracted new members. The 1999 European campaign, clearly stamped within the Left block, led by D. Cohn-Bendit continued to bring new members within *Les Verts*. It made the party reach the number of 10 000 members. The 2002 conservative victory and its conditions (with a score of the extreme Right more important than ever, leaving the Left coalition out of the second presidential round; and a large popular movement of protest) saw the number of activists increase in the weeks following the 21st April earthquake'. But this bust of mobilisation did not last long and only one year latter, internal disputes had caused many resignation within *Les Verts*, and the number of activists is now again around 7 000-7 500.

These numbers illustrate internal conflicts and balances of power within the parties. Green parties' institutionalisation impose to manage internal divisions. Aiming to be identified as active, effective and relevant political forces, new parties are adapting themselves to their political systems.

Once again realities vary from a national political scene to another. The British situation seems to be clear: electoral successes in the early 1990's created hope that a third political force could emerge in the system. But facing political realities and the difficulty to disturb the bipartisan tradition, hope did not last for long and internal debates ended in 1993-94 by the tactical move towards a more local and environmentalist stance. Executive participation is analysed from a local point of view, which allow political organisations to be more concrete and down-to-earth minded when considering alliances; whereas working with others political parties at a national level implies more ideological questions. The French context has been different, since institutionalisation of the party and the emergence of party's leaders' professionalism helped *Les Verts* to be more identified as mature and effective political actors. Activists that were wishing from the early 1980's to create 'a *different* political party', feared the evolution of the organisation. The purely environmentalist groups largely resigned; some to join A. Waechter in his *Mouvement Ecologiste Indépendant, MEI*; some to stop political implication and to become involved within the associative world; political alliances were analysed as a renunciation and activists were scared of becoming 'an

²⁰ In comparison we can note that there were 1 160 000 members within the SAP in 1980, 1 034 000 in 1990, and only 26 000 in 1995 after a membership reform.

environmental alibi for the socialists'²¹. But these groups have not been the only ones to resign from *Les Verts*. Libertarian and very left-wing factions also faced numerous resignation. The reasons were evident: the lack of trust towards *PS*. Aiming to be in politics differently these activists were feeling betrayed. A more important media coverage and also the image of political effectiveness resulting from ministerial portfolio helped *Les Verts* to recruit militants, some disappointed from *PCF* or *PS*, some new entered in politics. But the reaction of the party after 2002 electoral defeat (*Les Verts* did not have weaker results as they had have before or were expecting, but the party was washed away because of the socialists' defeat) was a rapid withdrawal into itself. A new team won the internal election for leadership on a more autonomous stance. It is not difficult to imagine that an electoral victory of the Left coalition, 'gauche plurielle', in the Presidential and then to the legislature elections would have seen a more important green presence within the cabinet²², and then for sure the internal debates on the 1997-2002 government's track record would have been totally different. Still groggy because of the Left electoral disaster the balance of power within the party changed, according a great importance to the coalition issue. G. Lemaire's stance coming into partisan leadership, defending more autonomy towards the socialists and more leftist requirement, appears to be an impact of the electoral 2002 defeat, a tactical move, more than a programmatical or ideological evolution. On this point, the preparation of 2004 regional elections, gives us numerous informations about the impact of coalitions issues on *Les Verts*. Local internal ballots were hold in order to decide whether to present autonomous lists or participate on coalition lists with former partners of 'gauche plurielle'. An important majority of local groups decided to present autonomous green lists, and so being in accordance with the position defended by their new direction. But getting closer to the elections there have been local groups which changed their stance and organised in the end of 2003 a second ballot, in order to be legitimate to built a coalition list even for the first round of elections. Mark of professionalism and fear not to have any elected activists with autonomous lists²³, this evolution is at the moment being creating important internal talks. The Lemaire's direction appears to be disavowed on this particular electoral coalition issue by an important minority of the party. But there is no room in this debate to discuss the opportunity to govern

²¹ interview, 12 march 2001 with a former *Les Verts* activists who entered the party in 1989 and resigned after two years of green presence in government, in 1999, denouncing the lack of consideration of *Les Verts*' preoccupations within the governmental action.

²² During the 2002 Presidential campaign, the Green candidate N. Mamère clearly wished L. Jospin, the Socialist candidate, in the second round; foreseeing the construction of a new 'gauche plurielle' government with a least 3 or 4 Green ministers.

²³ New electoral rules make regional elections more difficult for *new parties*.

with traditional parties, the question is just electoral. The political realism of the party translates a professional and institutional evolution of *Les Verts*.

In Sweden *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* has learned the value of utilising the few opportunities that present to itself. It has learned and implemented the importance of developing and raising its political credibility through active decision making and executive participations. The Swedish Greens have avoided internal disputes and splits sparked by similar talks in other European New parties. *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* has been successful in not aligning itself with parties of the Left block. Even when supporting the Social-Democratic cabinet, it has maintained a sort of centrist stance that gives the party the opportunity to develop a niche between the two traditional blocks. Unlike in France, the party has been able to gain national parliamentary representation without relying on an alliance. *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* wants to politically position itself as an actor free to decide whatever it supports or does not. Thus, unlike in Finland, France, Italy or Germany, the party has not yet sought full governmental representation. The party avoids to be linked with unpopular or ‘non-green’ policy decisions. This is undoubtedly a key pressure facing French Greens in recent times. The party has not have to face the debate of aligning itself fully with the Left block, even if on specific issues *Miljöpartiet de Gröna*’s propositions seem to be more Left-wing than other green parties stamped as Left parties²⁴. This would for sure cause deep and significant debate within the organisation. But this could also be a weakness, since to exert more influence on the government a clearer statement would help. We can underline the consensual nature of Nordic political decision making; and analyse it as a factor in building Swedish Greens’ approach to internal discords.

B. Perception of the parties

Through the coalition issue and even more through the question of entering a coalition government appears the debate about identity. Translating new political concerns and ways to be in politics into European political systems, post-materialist Green Parties have a deep demand on the identity matter. They see themselves as ‘new’ as ‘different’ in their respective party systems. For long they have presented themselves as ‘outsiders’, but now that in some cases they are part of executive power, how can the Green Parties manage to be at the same time ‘outsiders’ and ‘insiders’?

²⁴ *Miljöpartiet de Gröna*’s European position can illustrate this point.

As we already explained electoral frustrations have encouraged the British *Green Party* to look for other ways of action and other ways to express its identity. Activists have tried to built their party as a miniature spitting image of the society they dream of. In doing so they are certainly respecting the green identity but they are far away from electoral success, main goal of organisations called political parties...

Les Verts as well as *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* have been looking for being identified as relevant, effective and active political actors. They believe that keeping their identity pure does not mean being unfit to govern. Thus to make it sure numerous '*Reports on government co-operation*' have been developed in France²⁵ and Sweden. The large lack of trust towards social-democrats or socialists allies existing in the Green Parties, especially for grassroots militants; mixed with the fear of a certain identity renunciation; has caused this new partisan procedure²⁶. Evaluating coalition realisations and comparing them to what green manifestos and coalition agreements were expressing has various internal functions. First of all it establishes a quite original communication between political leaders and grassroots militants. This communication has an important teaching content since it is used by elected greens to explain, with symbols and illustrations, their political action to grassroots greens. Elected greens also try to justify their political failures, explaining all the constraints they are facing, and doing so they accentuate what they have realised. It is also very useful to the *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* and to *Les Verts* since it helps the parties to capitalise and to pass on the political knowledge learned in governments. Secondly, track records legitimise the elected partisan elites showing the difficulties of their work. And finally it has a role in the identity's preservation, in reinsuring the legitimacy of the action led and its faithfulness to the parties' decisions. If we can question the demagogical aspect of this procedure we must underline that this illustrates the internal democracy as well as allows the preservation of a real link between partisan elites and rank and file.

An other impact that we can analyse, and compare, on this governmental participation issue, is the evolution of established parties' perception of the Green Parties. Combating the continual attempt by traditional parties to describe the Greens, and more generally all *new*

²⁵ On this point see B. Villalba, 'L'usage politique du bilan, ou l'intégration assumée des Verts en France', in P. Delwit and J- M. De Waele, *Les Partis verts en Europe*, Edition complexes, Bruxelles, 1999, p.85-112.

²⁶ Let's note that in the city of Lille, in the north of France, the 'report on coalition action' was asked by 'simple voters' in a 2001 campaign meeting while local leaders were talking about building a coalition to run the city. So twice a year elected militant have a public and open meeting with grassroots activists but also with 'simple electors'. The agreement signed between the PS and *Les Verts* is at that time developed in the light of what is being done in the city hall.

parties, as not serious and unfit to govern. The various local and municipal experiences gained by the three studied parties have been very important. Thus in Sweden the experiences of local militants in Gothenburg have been identified as very significant in the internal perception of working with established organisations, but it has also changed the look of other parties towards *Miljöpartiet de Gröna*. In France the green presidency of the Nord-Pas-De-Calais region has also forced an evolution in the traditional parties' analyse of *Les Verts*. From a simple anti-establishment movement, *Les Verts* had become proposal force, able to conduct the public affairs. At national levels, it has been then easier to consider governing together. Once again, we can talk about institutionalisation of these partisan organisations. The British *Green Party* appears different since approximately same local experiences took place, but because of the partisan system the *Labour Party* has never had so far to envisage building an alliance with the ecologist. The 1993 *Green Party* evolution can be understand as a tactical translation of this reality.

Other analysable impacts of green behaviour and possibilities towards governmental representation are the evolutions of green perception in the media and in their respective national electorate. Green parties have for long been described in the media as '*unfit to be in office*' as '*post-materialist utopians*',... when being covered by the media which was not done enough according to activists²⁷. Their internal disputes, some of their positions (especially on societal issues), their 'democratic stubbornness' have often been made an object of ridicule. In the early years of their organisational growth no political credit were attached to their political positions. Once the greens faced responsibilities, their 'outsider aspect' declined and it has been easier for the media to talk about greens within their traditional analyse habits. Even if environmental issue appears to be the centre of European citizens' preoccupations, it has taken some time for voters to have confidence to the green parties. New parties have to prove their abilities, and to do so they have to gain elected positions to translate ideas, political propositions, into policies. Firstly, local experiences permitted to green parties to learn the specificities of the work of elected militant and to develop their policies. But to capture voters' preferences national levels seem to be the only ones that matter. The first local electoral successes , as well as in the European Elections, did not really impose the green parties on the electoral scenery. In France, participation to the 'gauche plurielle' government

²⁷ Interview 23rd January 2002 with a French activist : 'in the 1980's we had the choice, on the one hand the media really ignored us whatever we were doing or proposing; [...] on the other the media were making fun out of us, describing our party as a group of utopian adolescents, [...] only presenting our positions on drugs or consumerism in a very negative way'; or interview with a Green Party former militant, realised 23rd July 2003 said : 'in the early years of the party the media simply did not ever never mentioned anything about us'

definitely established *Les Verts*. In Sweden, specific green policies propositions, as well as the autonomous stance allowed the party to challenge the programmatic and organisational stands of major established parties. Defending its newness and originality in regards to cultural and economic changes.

III-What are the perspectives for the Green Parties?

New opportunities for partisan co-operation are naturally more and more numerous and possibilities of political influence more real thanks to green portfolios. Last 20th, 21st and 22nd of February, thirty two Green parties from across Europe became part of a single *European Green Party*. At a ceremony in Rome party leaders from 29 different countries gave their support to the new European party, which succeeds the Federation of European Green Parties, (EFGP), as the political voice of green issues in Europe²⁸. What are the links and dynamics between European Greens and governmental participation?

The three parties studied are embodying the various realities of the European Green family: the *Green Party* that concentrates its action on local levels; *Les Verts* that without gaining terrific electoral results participated to government from 1997 to 2002 and now have a very light representation in Parliament; *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* that from 1988 has maintained

²⁸ Daniel Cohn-Bendit, who will be standing for European Election in Germany next June, said: ‘ There are strong Green parties in Europe and relatively weak parties but the fact that we are forming a common party and running a common campaign is a sign of our overall strength- not weakness. The Greens are the only party to take Europe seriously. To take party fully in the European project it was no longer feasible for us to function as an ad hoc coalition of national delegations- like the socialists, the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives. It was necessary for us to become a united party- a step the other political groups in Europe are too scared and to weak to take.’

a group of around 20MPs²⁹ and has been successful in building itself a particular position within the Swedish system. How could the European Greens take some advantages of green ministers? We shall now question the link between the supranational partisan body and green ministers and the use that is made or could be made of ministers' visibility by a political family, still considered as 'new' and looking for opportunities 'to sell itself'.

Until 1997³⁰ there is no reaction of European green family to the first green ministers (in Finland, 1995, and in Italy, 1996). The idea of integrating green ministers within the EFGP's structure is not even discussed. The EFGP wants to concentrate its action on green parties development in Europe and do not give attention to green governmental participation. The '1997 EFGP Action Plan' evokes new challenges that the green family has to deal with '*...since member parties are facing new situations, that require new policies and new structures. The EFGP desires to get this in an European green perspective, facilitating exchanges of views and proposals between member parties*³¹'. The EFGP is so concentrating on partisan co-operation and development. Green governmental representation is perceived through this issue, not in terms of political action. Once D. Voynet became minister, the EFGP congratulated Les Verts, but no collective strategy towards the 3 green ministers of Environment has been developed. Let's note that the three ministers did not ask anything.

The first use of governmental capacities for green co-operation took place in July 1998, when after talks with Belgian, German, Finnish and Swedish greens, the French member of the comity managed to compose three workshops with the German Greens on ecotaxes, nuclear wastes and transports, in which were gathering one MP, one specialist from the Minister or from the party and one member of parties' directions. The goal was not to compare general ideas but to prepare possible collaboration between D. Voynet's Minister and Die Grünen, foreseeing the German Green's future governmental representation.

Developing a *network* between European Green Parties through green ministers became at that period a subject of competition between the EFGP and the Green Group in the European Parliament (GGEP), which wanted to co-ordinate green ministers activities. The EFGP wants to use the green governmental participation during the 1999 European Elections campaign, estimating that ministerial image should help to consolidate European green presence. Thus the comity organises a green ministers meeting before the Pan-European Conference of Ministers of Environment in Aarhus, Denmark. European Union agenda was

²⁹ If we expect the 1991 election in which with only 3.4% *Miljöpartiet de Gröna* lost its national representation.

³⁰ Meeting of EFGP's comity in November 1996, that decided 'the 1997 Action Plan'

³¹ Quoted by C. Van de Wall in his PhD Thesis, unpublished so far, on "La Fédération Européenne des Partis Verts", Bruxelles, 2003.

used as an opportunity to get the media talked about green ministers actions or even simple existence. This use of ministerial image and prestige can be analysed as a sign of green professionalization. A huge European green meeting is prepared in England. The principal aim is the media coverage, but green ministers' absence turned it into a media attention fiasco, the *Green Party* could not take any advantage of this meeting in its country. The GGEP managed in December 1998 to organise a meeting between militants coming from parties presented in governments plus Swedish and Austrian greens to develop co-operation. The Paris Congress in November 1999 had a great media impact, with the construction of a common manifesto and the underlined presence of all green ministers.

Governmental participation and green transnational co-operation have become very linked issues. Thus is it clearly according to green ministers already in office that the Belgian Green tried to choose their portfolios when entering their national government, foreseeing possible co-operations. Just after 1999 European Elections, Per Gahrton, a Swedish Eurodeputy, proposed to hold a seminar to discuss green participations to governments in Europe, in order to pass informations, present realised achievements and drawbacks of these participations. The European green family tried to organise the coronations of green ministers. The European Parliamentary Group appeared to be the best political body to take this into account, because the EFGP could not adopt a strategy too pro-European Union and concentrating on green parties relevant enough to be in governments. The growing role of elected militants and partisan experts within the GGEP gives a deep sensation of European green family's maturation. Within the GGEP an appointment was created to coordinate green ministers' agendas.

By the end of 1999, we can say that ecologist governmental participation has been instrumentalised to develop green visibility and position all over Europe³². The Action Plan for the year 2000 proposed to debate about the various governmental participations. The following questions were underlined and developed:

- “- *Participation to a coalition or external support?*
- *How to keep in touch with the associations and political movements?*
- *How to organise relationships between grassroots militant, partisan leaderships, elected activists and ministers' staffs?*

³² Thus a press release is published by after the entry of FPO in the Austrian government: 'Green Ministers on setting Up Strategies to Avoid Contagion (4 February 2000', in EFGP, *Update*, February 2000, p.5

- *Is it possible to realise its political goals when we are a minority partner?*
- *Is the risk to loose credibility in the opinion of certain voters increasing because of political compromises?³³*

At this point European Greens wanted to elaborate two or three green ministers' common declarations each year. New green ministers multilateral co-operation initiatives have been developed. Thus, training courses on European environmental issues were proposed to parties from 2004 enlargement countries. French minister D. Voynet used the French Presidency of UE to make a synthese of environmental priorities in these ten countries which was used by local green parties to take advantage of having contacts with the European Union Presidency. Green ministers are a source of prestige and legitimacy for the entire European Green family and have been used as an evidence that Green Parties are relevant political forces.

Finally, having green activists who have become ministers has been a great opportunity for the European Green family to be analysed as a credible political force. Nevertheless the co-ordination of political benefits of governmental experiences is difficult to organise because of the heterogeneity of the Green Parties. Unlike other European federations of parties, the EFPG did not formally include green ministers within its activities. Small or emergent Green Parties have little profits from technical expertises made by Green governmental parties about negotiations on coalition government building or inside government. It is also surprising to note that expect a *Miljöpartiet de Gröna*'s proposal to discuss this issue (what finally had been replaced by the gender issue) no militant of a EFGP member party asked for a debate concerning the governmental participations. Actions of Green ministers are discussed but not the principle of being part of coalition governments. Green governmental parties have more facilities to negotiate with one another, since they are facing the same pragmatic and reformist stance. They also are the most pro-UE Green parties, and it is difficult for the Green family to give great importance to Inter Governmental Conferences without giving the impression that they work in favour of UE. Let's note that ministerial solidarity makes national interests more powerful than ideological or partisan interests.

³³ A. Cassola, *Action Plan For The Year 2000*, adopted in Larnaca, Cyprus, 24-26 march, p.1.

The way the new Europarty will deal with member parties part of national governments will be interesting when looking at the institutionalisation of the entire green family. The balance of power in the European green family between 'almost established' green parties, as in Sweden or France, and 'still anti-system' ones, as the *Green Party*, will be something to focus on in the building of this political organisation.

Concluding remarks

Not to be any longer, the rapid aim of this paper was to underline how difficult it is if not impossible for a partisan organisation to function in complete isolation.

To mention another question that could be raised, we can note the issue of partisan leadership and its links with institutionalisation of the parties. This might represent the next step of Greens' evolution.

Guillaume Duseigneur, ECPR Workshop, 6.

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