

Green policy change

How passing significant electoral thresholds affects
the nuclear power policy of green parties

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Abstract

During the last decades, green parties have gone from small protest parties with an origin in the new social movements to governmental participants. Existing research has been done on how these changes have affected their internal organization, but none have been done on how it affects their policy. With a starting-point in Mogens N. Pedersen *party lifespan approach* this study aims to answer this by studying how the passing of significant electoral thresholds affect the specific green party policy of nuclear power, a policy area that is of fundamental importance for the greens.

The study concludes that governmental participation and not parliamentary representation affects policy. This indicates that the *external stimulus* of being elected into parliament and the organizational adaptations shown to follow does not have an impact on party policy. Instead it is the need for compromises within a coalition, when a green party is in government, that leads to a change in a more pragmatic direction. Combined with the role of post-material values among its voters, a factor that influence the party policy at inception and decreases as a party gains *mainstream* acceptance, these two factors explain the differences and changes in nuclear power policy among green parties.

Key words: Green parties, Policy change, Electoral thresholds, Nuclear power, Coalition government

Words: 1000

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1. Introduction

In October 2014 *Miljöpartiet de gröna* followed the path set by other green parties, such as the *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* in Germany and *Vihreä liitto* in Finland, and entered government as a coalition partner (Lagergren & Oskarson, 2015; 1, Müller-Rommel, 2002; 6). This ascent into the halls of power was the *culmination* of a lengthy process in which political parties sprung from the new social movements born in the 1960s were *transformed* enough to gain access to the executive (Burchell, 2014; 8-174). This transformation signifies how long *Miljöpartiet de gröna* and other green parties have come since their inception in terms of institutional development and influence. Their change from grass-root organizations to fully developed political parties that do not only have seats in parliament, but that have also participated in government, have meant enormous changes for the greens (Ibid; 1-174).

Significant scholarly research has been done regarding these changes, with a strong focus on the changes of their internal organization, and how these changes correlates with the passing of significant milestones, such as being elected to parliament and getting cabinet positions. Born as organizations with grass-root democracy as an ideological tenant and with an aversion to professionalization of politics, green parties had to, in line with the *iron law of oligarchy* proposed by Robert Michels, change their organizations due to organizational needs and the nature of electoral competition. (Burchell, 2014; 8-174, Lucardine & Rihoux 2008; 1-18, Rihoux, 2006; 69-96, Rihoux & Rüdig, 2006; 1-28).

While green parties have become more pragmatic regarding their ideas of grass-root democracy and non-professional politics (Rihoux & Frankland, 2008; 259-289) no major research has been found that studies if these changes in party organization is parallel with changes in key green ideological policy positions such as de-growth, conservationism and nuclear power. A lack in research that this paper aims to fill with the ambition that this result will not only show how green parties act when marching through the institution, but also how the constrains of democratic institutions affect the policy of political parties in general and small non-traditional parties in particular.

A study that incorporates all relevant green policy positions is, however, too broad for the scope of this paper. It is therefore of key importance to limit the study to a specific policy area where green parties are in opposition to the view of more *mainstream* parties, as this makes it possible for the position to change as the party gains *mainstream* acceptance and becomes part of new institutions. Small *nuances* in changes should also be observable, this is necessary for small changes in policy to be observed empirically. The policy area of nuclear power will be used because it is an area of central concern for new social movements as

well as green parties (Poguntke, 2002; 140-141) where they are at odds with more *mainstream* parties (Kitschelt, 1988; 74-83) and where *nuanced* opinions can be found.

The paper will furthermore take its starting point in the *party lifespan approach* constructed by the Danish political scientist Mogens N. Pedersen as a “metaphor to conceptualize the evolution of [minor] political parties” (Deschouwer 2008; 3). The basic premise of this theory is that political parties go through several stages from birth to death where Pedersen identifies four thresholds that they pass, namely the *threshold of declaration*, the *threshold of authorization*, the *threshold of representation* and the *threshold of relevance*, which is reached when a party enters government (1982; 6-9).

1.1. Aim, purpose and research questions

The aim of this paper is, in other words, to study if passing these thresholds influence how green parties view nuclear power and the purpose is to study what this can show us about the relationship between party policy and institutional constrains. As the *threshold of declaration* and the *threshold of authorization* are usually passed at the same time (Müller-Rommel, 2002; 3-4) they will be used as one threshold that is passed when a green party becomes a political party. This makes it the starting point for when a green party goes from being a social movement (if it started out as one) to being a political party. The aim of the paper is also to identify additional variables that might impact the main relationship. As such the paper will answer the following research questions;

- Does the number of years since passing *threshold of declaration/authorisation* affect the view green parties have towards nuclear power?
- Does the number of years since passing *threshold of representation* affect the view green parties have towards nuclear power?
- Does the number of years since passing *threshold of relevance* affect the view green parties have towards nuclear power?
- What other variables could theoretically affect the view green parties have towards nuclear power and can this effect be empirically verified?

2. Theory

2.1. The concept of *party lifespan* – a framework for green party development

Pedersen's *party lifespan approach* as previously mentioned, deals with the evolution of minor political parties in terms of passing four different thresholds. The first two thresholds, that usually occur simultaneously, are, as presented in the introduction, the *threshold of declaration*, which is when "a political group declares its intention to participate in elections", and the *threshold of authorization* which is when a party follows the legal qualification to participate in an election (Pedersen, 1982; 6-7).

The third is the *threshold of representation*, which is reached when a party has at least one seat in a national parliament. These three thresholds can easily be operationalized as both the time when a party declares to be a party and the time it enters parliament are clearly defined and identified (Ibid; 6-7). This, however, cannot be said to be true for the fourth threshold the *threshold of relevance*. This threshold is passed when "parties have impact and become influential", ideally as part of a national government (Sundberg & Wilhelmsson, 2008; 122 & Pedersen, 1982; 7-9) which is how the studies found operationalizes this threshold (Müller-Rommel 2002; 3-4, Rihoux, 2006; 73-74).

Relevance, as Kris Deschouwer mentions is however, "not the same as governing". Political relevance can according to him have its source in either *blackmail* or *governing potential*. *Blackmail potential* occurs when a political party is needed for the survival of a government without being part of it and *coalition potential* occurs when a party has "been in government or is seen – by itself or others – as a likely governing party" (2008; 3-4). This difference can be illustrated by *Miljöpartiet de gröna* a party whose political support was needed for the social democratic party to remain in government. This due to the nature of the Swedish political system, where minority governments are common. The party was as a result politically relevant, without being in government or, at least at the time, being a realistic government partner (Burchell, 2014; 87-92).

The problem with operationalizing the *threshold of relevance* is dealt with by Deschouwer by adding the *threshold of government* where this is the threshold reached when a party enters a national government (2008; 3-4). This threshold exists separate from the *threshold of relevance* which Deschouwer defines as when a political party gains *blackmail potential*. In the context of this paper this problem, while theoretically relevant, will not be considered much further.

This for two reasons, one methodological and one theoretical. Firstly, it is easy to find the time when a party enters government, while identifying the time

at which it gained influence would require a more qualitative analysis than possible within the context of this study. And as most studies use governmental participation to operationalize the *threshold of relevance* this can be considered functioning. Secondly, the aim of the paper is not to study how green parties influence policy, but how their internal policy platforms are affected by being in government and there is, as will be mentioned later, a difference in being in government and having the possibility to blackmail it while in parliament. But before the effect of passing the *thresholds* will be discussed the origins of green parties and how this is related to the question of nuclear power will.

2.2. Before passing the *threshold of declaration/ authorization* –new social movements and nuclear power

Green political parties started to form in the Western world during the 1970s, with the first green party founded in New Zealand in 1972, and they “share common origins in the new social movement (NSM) milieu of the 1970s and 1980s” (Carter, 2013; 79). These movements, and therefore green parties, can be traced back to the political scientist Roland Inglehart’s idea that the cultural values in the West have shifted from material to post-material (1977; 177-290) leading to increased importance of new social and cultural issues, such as feminism and environmentalism with a significant anti-nuclear agenda (Inglehart, 1981; 881-882). This came to create a *new social cleavage*, on a dimension separate from the more *traditional* left-right economic one (Inglehart, 1977; 177-290).

This new cleavage had, according to Inglehart, a “crucial role in the rise” “of the new social movements” as such movements were dominated by individuals holding post-material values. Coming primarily from a middle-income background they, in the context of party politics, broke the old class based politics and formed groups that can be called new-left, including green parties (Inglehart, 1990; 371-380, Kitschelt, 1988; 194-197, Müller-Rommel, 1985; 494). Among the political questions on the material/post-material cleavage the “struggle over nuclear power” was “the most dramatic and emotional charged confrontation” and it came “to symbolize everything post-materialist oppose” (Inglehart, 1981; 896).

That green parties were negative towards nuclear power was empirically true for several green parties early at birth where Herbert P. Kitschelt mentions that “ecological parties have appeared and adopted the nuclear issue as a major plank in their political programs” (1986; 82-83). Thomas Poguntke, concurs and writes that that nuclear power is “the single most important issue for green parties” (2002; 140-141). As such nuclear power was central to green parties at inception, but has this changed with the passing of electoral thresholds?

2.3. The *threshold of declaration/authorization* – have green parties become more professional?

Important to the new social movements was also the grass-root decentralized anti-bureaucratic nature of the movement, an organizational form that was “not just instrumental for their goals”, but also “a goal in itself” (Lucardine & Rihoux, 2008; 3). This type of organization was incorporated into the organizations of green parties creating a *new* type of party organization, called a *grass-root* or an *activist* party. This organization made green parties, in terms of organization, *different* from traditional political parties (Ibid; 6-9).

Benoît Rihoux and Gene E. Frankland identifies several characteristics of the *grass-root party* that can be seen in the early organization of green parties. Examples include mandatory rotation of leadership and elected official (MPs for *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* could, for instance, only sit half a parliamentary term), shared leadership, an organization where the local organization and not the MPs is *in control* and where selection of leaders is local and regional (2008; 259-289).

If green parties have remained as *grass-root* parties both after passing several thresholds or after enough time then this strongly challenges “the iron law of Robert Michaels about the inevitable oligarchization of political parties” (Lucardine & Rihoux, 2008; 3). According to Michaels theory all political organizations, no matter how *democratic* in origin, will develop into oligarchies because a large political organization cannot function direct-democratically (1915/2009; 1-344).

He writes that as the organization grows the administration becomes larger, more complicated and more specialized so it requires a specialized party organization to function (Ibid; 11-14). An organization where the activities of the party, such as handling the bureaucracy are done by full-time professionals. These professionals influence over the party will as a result increase and they become the aforementioned oligarchy (Ibid; 1-344). This oligarchization should also happen to green parties if Michaels thesis holds true. They should move from being grass-root parties and become more *traditional* (Lucardine & Rihoux, 2008; 6-12, Rihoux & Frankland, 2008; 259-289) because of organizational disadvantages, something that should lead to professionalization of the party (Lucardine & Rihoux, 2008; 6-12).

Rihoux and Frankland observe that this organizational change holds true for some, but not all green parties. For instance, *The Green Party of the United States* and *The Green Party of Canada* have remained as *activist*, *The Green Party* in the UK have become more *activist*, and *Vihreä liitto* and *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* have become less *activist* while keeping elements from this ideal type (2008; 259-289). Other factors can, however, influence organizational adaptation as well, which will be described in later sections.

If it is assumed that parties exist in a vacuum then this would mean, in terms of policy, that the ideas of the leader will dominate and become the policy

of the party. As such a party becomes less pragmatic with time if the leaders are more pragmatic than the grass-roots, by for instance being less post-material.

This mechanism depends on the size of the party. Angelo Panebianco writes that “according to Michaels, the party’s magnitude is the primary independent variable explaining the formation of the oligarchy” (1982/1988; 185). When a party grows this puts internal pressure on the party organization which leads to increased complexity that in turn increases the influence of the leaders (Ibid; 193-194). Panebianco remains critical of this effect in all but exceptional cases and disagrees with Michaels in this regard. Instead he argues that “it is rather the relationship between the organization and its external environment”, a factor that will be discussed in the next section, that affects the organization (Ibid; 203). But for now, it can be argued, if Michaels’ theory holds true (I, like Panebianco, am skeptical) that party size and time since declaration could affect green parties’ *view on nuclear power* and the following two hypotheses can be postulated;

H₁: There is a significant correlation between more time since party formation and a more positive view on nuclear power in green parties.

H₂: There is a significant correlation between a high membership figure and a more positive view on nuclear power in green parties.

2.4. The *threshold of participation* – the external stimulus of being in parliament

Political parties, according to Panebianco, are not only affected by their internal environment but also by their external environment (Ibid; 203-219). Parties are therefore, according to Jon Burchell, affected by both “the internal concerns stemming from within the party organization” and “external changes in the larger political environment” (2014; 32). To analyze party development one needs to, as a result, incorporate both these aspects. A good theoretical starting point is a paper by Robert Harmel and Kenneth Janda in which they postulate “a theory that seeks to explain why parties change their political strategies, organizational characteristics and issue positions” (1994; 259).

They find several factors that can be broadly divided into four categories, of which the first three deal with *external stimuli*, according to Paul Lucardine and Benoît Rihoux. The first are changes to the political system with factors such as the electoral system. The second is the effect of the rise/decline of a directly competing party. The third is the consequence of passing and failing to remain above an electoral threshold as well as a strong electoral victory or defeat. The fourth one is internal effects, such as party size and leadership change (Harmel & Janda; 265-271, Lucardine & Rihoux, 2008; 9-11).

The third type of effect can be linked to Pederson’s theory about *electoral thresholds*. When a political party enters parliament or government this causes an

external stimulus that will affect the organization, as well as the policy of the party. This can be illustrated through the ideological conflict between *fundamentalists* (or *fundis*) and *realists* (or *realos*) in the often-studied case of *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* in Germany. Within the party it was a conflict regarding how the party should move forward with conflict issues such as their relationship with the social democrats (Frankland, 2008; 22-32, Burchell, 2014; 21-26 & Rüdiger, 2002; 82-108).

Realos believed that the party should “move away from a mass-movement focus and towards parliamentary politics”, as well as working towards a possible coalition government with the social democrats. The *fundis* in contrast believed that the original core of the party should not be lost due to tactical reasons and they lost the conflict. This because it was argued, after an election loss, that their organization needed to change so that they would work better in the context of parliamentary politics (Frankland, 2008; 28-33, Burchell, 2014; 21-26). This conflict exists in other green parties as well (Doherty, 1992; 95-115). While in some, like *Miljöpartiet de gröna*, the *realo* fraction won without conflict because there was consensus regarding the need to change (Burchell, 2014; 26-27).

The different institutional natures of parties and new social movements can theoretically be motivated to be the reason for the conflict because a political party must gain electoral support in order to influence policy-making, because of the competing nature of party politics, something not needed by social movements. This relates back Harmel and Janda as parliamentary representation and the possibility of being in government were important reason for why the *realos* came out on top (Ibid; 21-26). If political representation, due to for instance the electoral system, is not realistic there would be no reason for a party to become more pragmatic in order to better work in parliament. This is true for *The Green Party* in the UK (Roots, 1996; 174-175), that as mentioned before has become more *activist*.

2.4.1. The requirement of different party goals among party fractions

A party can, according to Kaare Strom have one of three *primary goals*, namely a party can be either policy, office or vote seeking (1990; 566-570). The last two can be categorized as *electoral goals* (Harmel & Janda 1994; 268) and a party with such goals is interesting in winning elections (Panebianco, 1982/1988; 5). As political office cannot be reached without an electoral victory (Harmel & Janda, 1994; 268) it holds true that “the minimal party goal of every party is accession to power through electoral victory” for parties with *electoral goals* (Panebianco, 1998; 4).

A policy oriented party, in contrast, is interested in affecting policy, and if this goal is primary, then they will not abandon key policies so that they can gain more political influence (Strom, 1990; 467-568). For the argument to work, the *realo* fraction of a green party must have an *electoral goal* as its primary goal as they must be willing to trade policy for government or votes and the grass-roots must be *fundi* dominated and refuse this trade-off.

This holds empirically true, as the core of the *realo-fundi* conflict was that the *realo* fraction was willing to do this trade, as they saw it as a way to get at least get some of their policies adapted. In other words, they were willing to become more pragmatic in policy, something that the policy-oriented *fundis* saw as a betrayal of green politics (Burchell, 2014; 21-26, Frankland, 2008; 22-32). A move to a more pragmatic organization and leadership therefore means a change in *primary party goal*, a process that leads to a more pragmatic policy. This is a change that will be affected by being in parliament, a causality that can be seen in *figure 1*. As such the following hypothesis can be postulated;



Figure 1: The mechanism for how passing the threshold of participation affect green parties view on nuclear power

H3: There is a significant correlation between more time spent in parliament and a more positive view on nuclear power in green parties

2.4.2. Other variables related to passing the *threshold of participation*

The organizational adaptations could have changed the ideological core of green parties and as Inglehart remarks that “it remains unclear as to what extent post-materialist ideals have survived the march through the institutions” (Inglehart, 2002; vi) this could mean that green parties have become less post-material as *realos* came to dominate the party. Consequently, green parties can have broadened their base and attracted new less post-material voters. For while post-material values dominated green party voters at inception, (Inglehart, 1990; 383, Müller-Rommel, 1985; 494) this might have changed. It is also possible that political parties and their policies are depended on the values of society and as such a green party will be more positive towards nuclear power if the country it is in is less post-material.

Other variables that could lead to party policy change are the factors identified by Harmel and Janda. It is beyond the scale of this paper to discuss all of them, but one such factor of consequence is the effect of an electoral victory or defeat, in terms of changes in parliamentary seats from earlier elections. According to Lucardine and Rihoux a significant loss tends to make green parties question their current strategy which due to the perceived advantages of a professional organization often result in an increased *realo* fraction and a significant victory increases the influence of the dominating fraction, which is usually the *realo* fraction after a successful election (2008; 4-16). As such the following three hypotheses can be postulated;

H4: There is a significant correlation between a strong prevalence of post-material values in a country and a more positive view on nuclear power in green parties in the same country.

H5: There is a significant correlation between a strong prevalence of post-material values among green voters and a more positive view on nuclear power in green parties.

H6: There is a significant correlation between a large electoral victory and/or a large electoral loss and a more positive view on nuclear power in green parties.

2.5. The *threshold of relevance* – the cost of government

The former German Green Foreign Secretary Joschka Fischer once remarked that the green “march through the institutions has tended to change the marches far more than the institutions” (Poguntke, 2008; xviii). This effect can, according to Deschouwer, be seen in two ways in relation to policy change and governmental participation. The first is the effect on the party organization, similar to the argument in the earlier section, and the second is the role of what Poguntke calls the *constraints of coalition politics* (Deschouwer, 2008; 27-39, Poguntke, 2002; 137).

2.5.1. Change in organizational structure

Becoming part of a coalition government constitutes, in theory, an *external stimulus* that affects the organization of a political party as it “reinforces the party in government to the detriment of the party machine” leading to increased professionalization (Rihoux, 2006; 71-72). The reason, according to Poguntke, being that a centralized leadership is needed for a political party to function while in government. This due to reduced *reaction time* because a government and its leaders needs the ability to act quickly and cannot consult the grass-roots in every question (2002; 136-137).

Rihoux studies if, empirically, this correlation between governmental participation and organizational change hold true. He finds that this correlation, while existing, is not very strong. However, he concludes that the organization of green parties, that have been in government, were somewhat transformed before they entered it (2006; 75-92). The interpretation of this is that it is possible that being in government does not affect the organization, but that the nature of the organization affects whether a green party will enter government or not. This is because a party must have what Patrick Dumont and Hanna Bäck calls *coalition potential* in order be part of a coalition government (2006; 39-40)

Paul V. Warwick has identified elements of a party organization needed to fulfill this. He argues that “the willingness of parties to trade off policy for office” and “the degree of leadership control over decisions to participate in government”

are important elements of a *potential coalition partner* (1996; 474-475). These elements are fulfilled by *realo* dominated parties because they are office-orientated and will see government membership as in the interest of the party. (Dumont & Bäck 2006; 37, 41). A *fundi* dominated party does not have *coalition potential* due to their policy-seeking focus and rejection of leadership domination.

Benoît Rihoux and Wolfgang Rüdig states that “in particular for the Greens the internal development of the party, from outsider groups rejecting established party politics to regular players of the party game, must be a central concern.” (2006; 11) This means that in order for a green party to be considered a possible *coalition partner*, it has to be internally developed into a pragmatic party that is capable “of being in government” and that can “accept compromises on key areas of Green political identity, such as nuclear energy.” (Ibid; 11-12). Poguntke argues that this can happen when a political party sees governmental participation as a possibility. The party will then change due to *anticipatory adaptation* in order to prepare for government (2002; 136-137) and as such a green party can have *coalition potential* before entering government.

Two mechanisms can as such be postulated. One is that the *realo* fraction will gain influence when a party enters government resulting in a more pragmatic organization and as a result a more pragmatic *view on nuclear power*. The other is that a party, due to its parliamentary role, can anticipate being offered a role in government and this will increase the influence of the *realo* fraction that can then lead the change towards a more pragmatic organization and a more pragmatic *view on nuclear power*.

2.5.2. The constrain of coalition politics

Before entering government, a political party can, according to Deschouwer, still have passed the *threshold of relevance* by possessing *blackmail potential*. If the support of a green party is needed for the survival of a government, the green party can threaten the government to follow its policy, but they are not obliged to concur with the individual policy proposals brought forth by the government (2008; 3-5). As such they can maintain a highly negative view on nuclear power themselves, while reaching compromises on the matter with the government. When entering a government, this situation changes and they become responsible for the collective actions of the coalition (Deschouwer, 2008; 9-10, Bolleyer, 2008; 27-28)

This changes the requirement for how the party operates. For while the organization might have changed due to the needs of parliament leading to a reinforcement of the parliamentary party and a more centralized *realo* controlled party this might not lead to a change in policy. By maintaining an outsider position a party can maintain a strong-anti nuclear policy while slowly gaining *coalition potential*. Not until that potential has been reached by actually being in government does the need to become more pragmatic, in terms of policy, become a reality.

The party must now show its coalition partner/s that it can compromise in practice, compromises that that can seem as a betrayal of green politics by *fundi* fractions where Rihoux and Rüdiger states that “the switch from a campaigning mode of political conduct to one of defending a government record including a range of difficult compromises was hard to stomach for many party activists” (1996; 12). This furthermore strengthens the party leadership and their more office-seeking nature and the party starts to work towards a more pragmatic party program to show that they are no longer a protest party but a realistic pragmatic governmental one.

The question that here arises is what this compromise means in terms of nuclear power policy. Green parties in government are in most instances a junior coalition partner under a social democratic party (Ibid; 5-7) and members of this party family tends to be relatively positive towards nuclear power (Kitschelt, 1986; 74-77). Meaning that if green parties have little influence they cannot maintain their critical nuclear power policy without losing their *coalition potential*. Poguntke, in relation, states that “green parties can only expect to play a relatively minor role in coalition government” and this is due to their lack of “capacity to blackmail its coalition partners”. When this is true, because of, for instance, an oversized coalition, green parties are in a relatively bad negotiation position (2002; 137-138).

In the case of nuclear power green parties have had little success in influencing the nuclear policy in government, according to Poguntke. In France they had no impact, in Germany they made an agreement for a decade long phase-out without a set end-date and in Finland they initially stopped further nuclear expansion (Ibid; 140-141), but they left the government in 2002 due to its policy of building new nuclear power plants (Paastela, 2008; 68)

The interpretation of this is that while green parties, in some case, had some impact on nuclear power policy they had to meet their coalition partner/s *halfway*, in other words they had to compromise. For this compromise to be feasible the organization of green parties had to change in the manner postulated earlier as only when a party has enough *coalition potential* and can accept compromises will they get into government and this will not happen to grass-root *fundi* dominated green parties. A change in organization does not itself mean that the policy will change, it will only result in a party that has the organization structure needed to *rapidly* change its policy. Only when entering government does policy change become a necessity.

As such the causal mechanism is that the organization is changed, when a green political party either enters or anticipated to be in government. This change increases a party’s *coalition potential* that in turn rises its chances of being accepted into government. But it is the compromises in government that result in policy change. This and the mechanism in previous subsection can be seen in *figure 2*. Party size, in terms of parliamentary representation is also important, as a larger party is likelier to enter government (Bäck, 2008; 73) and as such has more *coalition potential* and are therefore more likely to adapt before entering government. As such the following two hypotheses can be postulated;

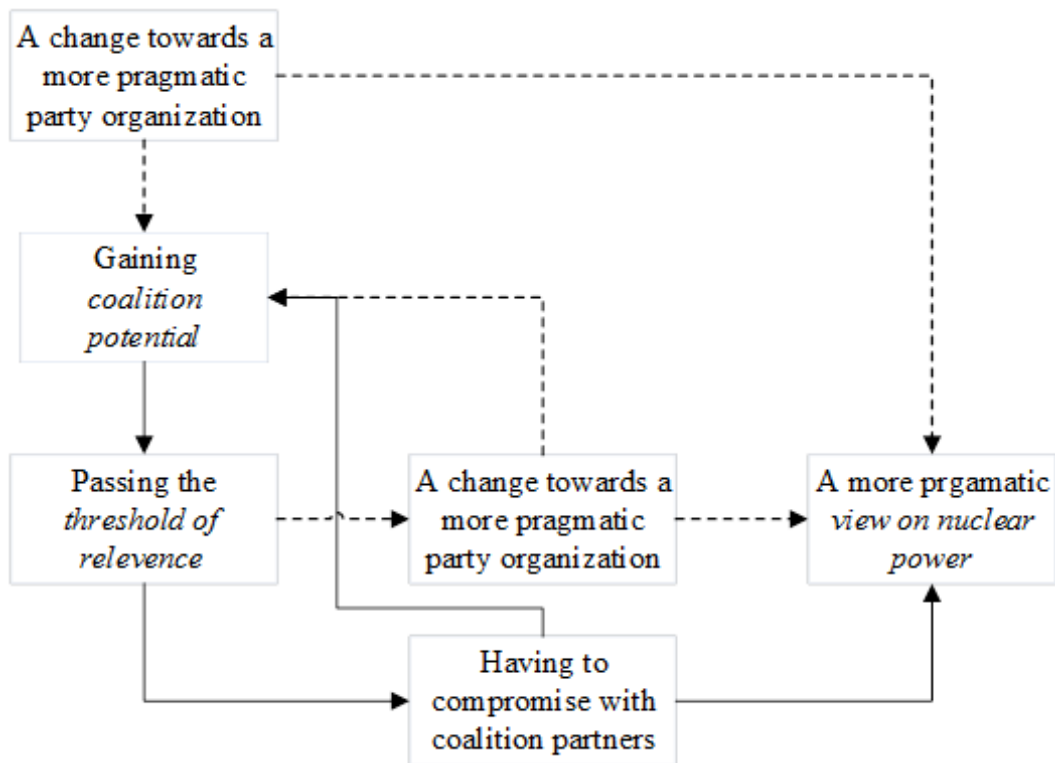


Figure 2: The mechanism for how passing the threshold of participation affect green parties view on nuclear power and what factors affect if it is passed

H7: There is a significant correlation between more time spent in government and a more positive view on nuclear power in green parties.

H8: There is a significant correlation between more seats in parliament and a more positive view on nuclear power in green parties.

2.6. Industrial factor – how much nuclear power

It is also relevant to theorize about the role of the scale of nuclear power. If nuclear power is a small source of energy for a country then strongly opposing it is not a major political statement. If, for example, a country only has one small reactor closing it down will not have any major impact on the country's energy supply. If nuclear power, on the other hand is a significant source of energy then closing them all down would have an impact on the energy grid making the abolition of it a major political statement. As such the following hypothesis can be postulated;

H9: There is a significant correlation between a high nuclear share of electricity production and a more positive view on nuclear power in green parties.

3. Method

3.1. The statistical setup

To study if the time green parties spent crossing a threshold affect their view on nuclear power multiple regression analysis will be used, using green political parties between countries and over time as data points. This with political party manifestos as the source for their *view on nuclear power* using the general statistical model below;

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1x_1 + \beta_2x_2 + \dots + e_i$$

Where y is the depended variable, $x_{1,2,\dots}$ the independent variables, β_0 is the constant and e_i is the standard error. The analysis will be split into two parts, in part one y will be the absolute *view on nuclear power* where every year for the parties and years available will be data points. This part will be divided into four subsections where the first three will have time since passing each *threshold* alone as the main independent variable and the last one will have all three. As control variables, seats in parliament, nuclear share of electricity, number of members and the prevalence of post-materiel values for all voters and green party voters (they will not be used in the same model) will be used to test the non-threshold hypothesizes.

In part two y will be the *change in view on nuclear power* between each data point for the same party with years of governmental participation during the same time-span as the main independent variable. This to study if there is a correlation between *view on nuclear power* and governmental participation and if these changes occurred while a green party was in government or at any other time. As the time between manifestos varies, this will be controlled for and so will seat change, both in absolute and total value in percentage. This section will also use descriptive statistics to describe the data regarding the difference in changes between parties that have participated in government and those who have not, as well as when these changes occurred. A final section will have additional statistics if this is needed, including motivations for why.

3.2. Case selection – which parties and years to use

The selection of parties for the analysis will be based on two criteria. The first is that only parties that operates in countries with nuclear power will be used. This is

because the presence of nuclear power in a country enables parties in that country to have more *nuanced* opinions on the matter. Parties in other countries, without nuclear power, can only be for or against building new plants. They cannot have an opinion on what to do with ones currently in operation, an opinion parties in nuclear power states have. Data regarding this will be obtained from the *International Atomic Energy Agency* (2015). The second criterium is that only political parties that primarily belongs to the green party family will be used. Other parties, such as broad left-libertarian or center/center-right parties with a green elements/focus will be excluded. The reason for this is that they do not share the same development history as green parties, as they do not originate in the new social movements, making the theoretical argument not applicable.

Data regarding which parties belong to the green party family will primarily be taken from the *Comparative Political Data Set* (Armingeon et.al., 2016a) with additional data from the *Manifesto Project Database* (Volkens et.al., 2016). Both will be used as the green parties in the US, the UK and Japan as well as all parties in Mexico were not included in the *Comparative Political Data Set* (Armingeon et.al., 2016a) but existed and were defined as green parties in the *Manifesto Project Database* (Volkens et.al., 2016). The case selection will furthermore be limited to green parties with manifestos that mentions nuclear power and the years for which such manifestos are available in the *Manifesto Project Database*. The exception will be for *The Green Party of the United States* (2016) and for *Miljöpartiet de gröna* (1988 & 1997) where manifestos have been found on their respective webpages for the years above.

These criteria leave the following parties to be used in the study; *Ecolo* in Belgium (Wallonia) *Groen* in Belgium (Flanders), *The Green Party of Canada*, *Strana zelenýck* in the Czech Republic, *Vihreä liitto* in Finland, *Les Verts* in France, *Génération Écologie* in France, *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* in Germany, *Lehet Más a Politika* in Hungary, *Midori no To* in Japan, *Partido Verde Ecologista de México* (PVEM), *GroenLinks* in The Netherlands, *Miljöpartiet de gröna* in Sweden, *Grüne Partei der Schweiz*, *Grünliberale Partei* in Switzerland, *The Green Party* in the UK and *The Green Party of the United States*.

3.3. The dependent variable - how the code for *view on nuclear power*”

The *view on nuclear power* needs to be coded in such a way that it can be used in a statistical study and through material that can be obtained. As there can exist more opinions on nuclear power, that for or against, different opinions will be coded on an ordinal scale that will be coded as followed. 1: Against the use of all nuclear power where plants currently in operation should be closed as quickly as possible. 2. Against building new nuclear power plants where specific plant/s should be closed as quickly as possible, while others should be phased out. 3: Against building new plants, but for phasing out of ones currently in operation. 4:

Against building new plants, but current ones can remain in operation. This while being explicitly critical of nuclear power as an energy source. 5: Against building new plants, but current ones can remain in operation. This while not being explicitly critical of nuclear power as an energy source. 6: Pro building new plants, but old ones build on obsolete technology should be renovated or shut down. 7: Pro building new plants and using ones still in operation.

The information will be obtained through party programs from the *Manifesto Project Database* (excluding the ones previously mentioned from Sweden and the US) where the parts about nuclear power will be interpreted using the coding scheme and given a number between 1 and 7 by the researcher. If the manifestos are not in English or Swedish they will be translated before being coded. The reasoning behind using this coding scheme is practical. In theory, a more abstract operationalization would be better (for instance political parties *self-described* opinion on nuclear power from a scale of 1 to 10), as this would give an insight into green party's *general* view on nuclear power in practice, not what it is on paper. This is however not practically possible to do for parties over time.

3.4. The independent variables – time passing thresholds and control variables

3.4.1. Passing the threshold of declaration/authorization, representation & relevance

As independent variables time since declaration in years, as well as the total number of years in parliament and government will be used. The motivation for this operationalization is that the research questions are about the effect of passing thresholds. The longer a threshold have been passed the likelier it theoretically is that the postulated mechanism occurs. Data regarding time since declaration will for the major parties in Western Europe be taken from Müller-Rommel (1994; 4-10 & 2002; 3-4) with the following additional data; Swish Federal Council for *Grünliberale Partei* (2011; 20), *The Green Party of Canadas* webpage (2017), Justin McCurry for *Midori no To* (2012), Green pages, the newspaper of *The Green Party of the United States* (2014), Dan Marek and Michael Baun for *Strana zelenýck* (2010; 43), Katalin Fábíán for *Lehet Más a Politika* (2010; 1006), Florence Faucher and Brian Doherty for *Génération Écologie* (1996; 108) and Soledad Loaeza, for *Partido Verde Ecologista de México*, (2006; 45)

The *Comparative Political Data Set* will be used to find data regarding the number of years that a party has been in parliament. (Armingeon et.al., 2016a). A supplement to the *Comparative Political Data Set* about government composition will be used for data regarding the number of years in government as well as for what years they were in government (Armingeon et.al., 2016b). The exception here is PVEM in Mexico as Mexico is not included in that database or the supplement. Here the *Global Election Database* will be used for years in

parliament (Brancati, 2017) and the *Database of Political Institutions* for years in government (Beck et al., 2001).

3.4.2. Control variables

The *Comparative Political Data Set* will be used to obtain data regarding the number of seats in parliament (Armingeon et.al., 2016a), again excluding Mexico where the *Global Election Database* will be used (Brancati, 2017). Data from the *Member and Activist of Political Parties* database will be used for the number of members by party and year (van Haute, 2016), with the following additional data; Swiss Federal Council (2008; 10 & 2011; 20), McCurry for *Midori no To* (2012), Ballet Excess News for *The Green Party of the United States* (2016) and Thomas Poguntke et.al for *The Green Party of Canada* (2016). Some data will not be for the exact year and data from the nearest year will then be used. Data regarding the percentage of nuclear power will be taken from *The World Bank* (2017).

For the prevalence of material and post-material values Inglehart's *Post-Materialist Index (4-item)* will be used with data obtained primarily from the *European Values Study* (2015) and when they lack a country or a year the *World Value Survey* (2015). The data consists of interviews of several individuals assessed as either *materialist* (coded as 1), *mixed* (coded as 2) or *post-materialist* (coded as 3). The mean for each country and the voters for each specific party will be calculated and used as variables. Some parties were not included and therefore data points are missing for the variable *Post-Materialist index 4-item (green party voters)*. The data is divided into several waves where all years in one wave for a country or party will be given the same value. This as the interviews conducted are made between these years with no data on the exact year/interview.

4. Result

4.1. Result description

Figure 3 contains a graph of view on nuclear power with party and year. The figure also contains a graph with info regarding the years of parliamentary and governmental representation as well as which years manifestos were coded. Parties with only one manifesto available were excluded.

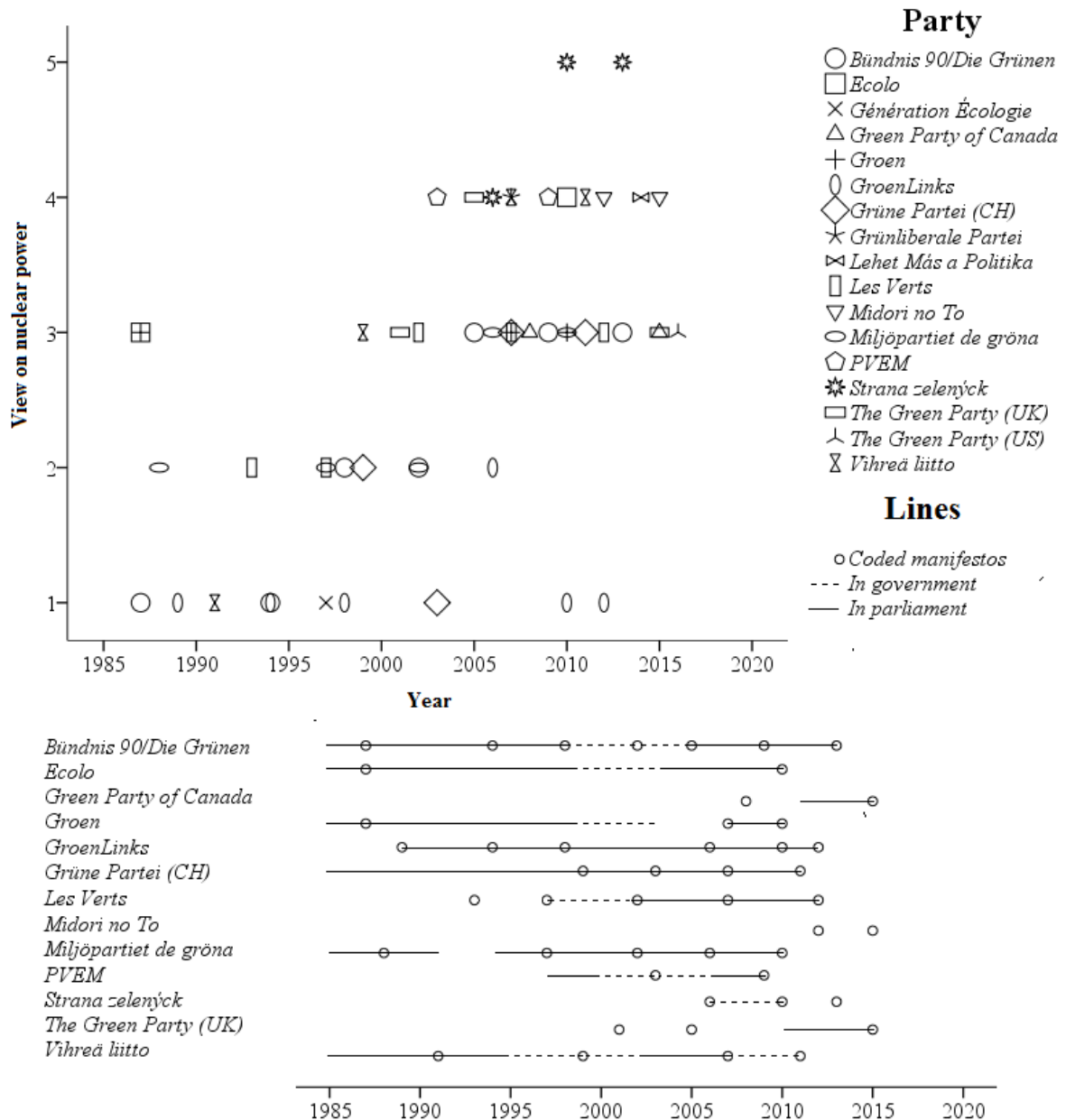


Figure 3: Description of data

4.2. The absolute view on nuclear power and the passing of thresholds

4.2.1. The *threshold of declaration/authorization*

In *figure 4* it can be observed that there is a statistically significant correlation between *years since declaration* and *view on nuclear power* in model 1-2, but not in model 3, this to a 5 % significance level and that there is a negative correlation between a high post-materialist index and a more positive *view on nuclear power*. This for all and green party voters to a 5 and 0.1 % level respectively. As a high post-materialist index means that material values are prevalent a negative correlation means that there is a positive correlation between post-material values and *view on nuclear power*.

	Model (1) View on nuclear power	Model (2) View on nuclear power	Model (3) View on nuclear power
Years since declaration	0.0340* (2.02)	0.0414* (2.47)	0.0223 (1.31)
Seats in parliament (%)		-0.0606 (-1.25)	-0.0284 (-0.60)
Nuclear share of electricity generation (%)		-0.0114 (-0.90)	-0.0132 (-1.16)
Number of members		0.00000194 (0.86)	0.00000146 (0.48)
Post-Materialist index 4- item (all voters)		-2.813* (-2.52)	
Post-Materialist index 4- item (green party voters)			-4.118*** (-4.23)
Constant	2.001*** (5.11)	7.632** (3.43)	11.57*** (4.90)
N	52	52	45

t statistics in parenthesis
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Figure 4: Models with *years since declaration* as the main independent variable.

4.2.2. The *threshold of participation*

In *figure 5* it can be observed that there is no statistically significant correlation between *years in parliament* and *view on nuclear power* in models 4-6. The only significant effect that influence the *view on nuclear power* is post-material values for all and green party voters. This to significance levels of 5 and 0.1 % respectively.

	Model (4) View on nuclear power	Model (5) View on nuclear power	Model (6) View on nuclear power
Years in parliament	-0.00470 (-0.32)	0.00410 (0.16)	-0.00460 (-0.20)
Seats in parliament (%)		-0.0445 (-0.51)	-0.000481 (-0.06)
Nuclear share of electricity generation (%)		-0.0112 (-0.83)	-0.0156 (-1.26)
Number of members		0.00000258 (1.06)	0.00000130 (0.54)
Post-Materialist index 4-item (all voters)		-2.519* (-2.12)	
Post-Materialist index 4-item (green party voters)			-4.661*** (-4.87)
Constant	2.786*** (11.96)	7.814*** (3.26)	13.23*** (5.99)
N	52	52	45

t statistics in parenthesis
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Figure 5: Models with years in parliament as the main independent variable.

4.2.3. The *threshold of relevance*

In *figure 6* it can be observed that there is a statistically significant correlation between *years in government* and *view on nuclear power*. This to a 1 % level in model 7, to a 0.1 % level in model 8 and to a 5 % level in model 9. Model 8 also shows a 5 % negative significant correlation with percentage of seats in parliament. The prevalence of post-material values, for all and for green party voters is statistically significant to a 5 and a 1 % level respectively.

	Model (7) View on nuclear power	Model (8) View on nuclear power	Model (9) View on nuclear power
Years in government	0.173** (3.24)	0.212*** (3.97)	0.145* (2.66)
Seats in parliament (%)		-0.105* (-2.23)	-0.0554 (-1.33)
Nuclear share of electricity generation (%)		-0.0121 (-1.04)	-0.0123 (-1.16)
Number of members		0.00000114 (0.54)	0.00000643 (0.30)
Post-Materialist index 4-item (all voters)		-2.393* (-2.35)	
Post-Materialist index 4-item (green party voters)			-3.534*** (-3.76)
Constant	2.428*** (14.39)	7.481*** (3.66)	11.53*** (4.89)
N	52	52	45

t statistics in parenthesis
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Figure 6: Models with years in parliament as the main independent variable.

4.2.4. All thresholds

In *figure 7* it can be observed that apart from *years in parliament* in model 10 to a 5 % level, the only significant variables are *years in government* and the prevalence of post-material values. *Years in government* is significant to a 1 % level in model 10, a 0.1 level in model 11 % and a 5 % level in model 12. The prevalence of post-material values, for all and for green party voters is statistically significant to a 1 % level.

	Model (10) View on nuclear power	Model (11) View on nuclear power	Model (12) View on nuclear power
Years since declaration	0.0270 (1.51)	0.0343 (1.89)	0.0186 (1.01)
Years in parliament	-0.0389* (-2.61)	-0.0442 (-1.80)	-0.0265 (-1.12)
Years in government	0.203** (3.47)	0.197*** (3.45)	0.141* (2.45)
Seats in parliament (%)		0.00313 (0.04)	-0.00431 (-0.06)
Nuclear share of electricity generation (%)		-0.0138 (-1.22)	-0.0130 (-1.21)
Number of members		0.000000100 (0.05)	9.39e-08 (0.04)
Post-Materialist index 4-item (all voters)		-2.885** (-2.84)	
Post-Materialist index 4-item (green party voters)			-3.466** (-3.55)
Constant	2.255*** (6.30)	7.955*** (3.96)	10.15*** (4.36)
N	52	52	45

t statistics in parenthesis
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Figure 7: Models with years since declaration, time in parliament and time in government as the main independent variable.

4.3. Changes in the view on nuclear power and being in government

In *table 8* a statistically significant correlation between a *change in view on nuclear power* and *being in government* can be observed, this to a 1 % level in model 13 and 14 and a 5 % level in model 15. The change in seats is statistically significant to a 5 % level. That only seats change and not absolute seat change is significant indicates that an electoral victory is significant while the combined effect of an electoral victory or loss in absolute terms is not.

	Model (13) Change in view on nuclear power	Model (14) Change in view on nuclear power	Model (15) Change in view on nuclear power
Years in government (since last found manifesto)	0.180** (2.77)	0.213** (3.02)	0.189* (2.73)
Number of years between manifestos		-0.0297 (-1.04)	-0.0188 (-0.68)
Change in seats in parliament (%) (absolute value)		0.122 (1.73)	
Change in seats in parliament (%)			0.107* (2.09)
Constant	0.124 (0.95)	0.0561 (0.27)	0.121 (0.65)
N	35	35	35

t statistics in parenthesis
* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Figure 8: Models with change in nuclear power as dependent variable and governmental participation as independent variable.

The effect of governmental participation is strengthened by the result in *table 9*. Here it can be seen that a *change in view in nuclear power* has happened in 71.43 % of parties that have been in government, but only in a third of parties that have not. When a green party was in government, this resulted in a change in view 60 % of the time. This if all gaps between manifestos are considered as individual times in government. *Ecolo* and *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* have been in government during more than one manifesto-span, of which one each did not lead to policy change. As such all parties that have been in government and that did change their view did this in government. For *Ecolo* and *Vihreä liitto* some manifestos did not exist or did not mention nuclear power so it could not be concluded if the changes occurred while in government or not. If they are excluded change occurred in 60 % of the parties.

	From first to last manifesto		Between manifestos
	Has been in government	Has not been in government	The party is in government
Change in view on nuclear power	71.43 %	33.33 %	60.00 %
No change in view on nuclear power	28.56 %	66.67 %	40.00 %
The percentage of change in view on nuclear among parties that have been government Excl. parties where exact manifesto of change is not known			100.00 % 60.00 %

Figure 9: Descriptive statistics about changes from first to last and between manifestos

4.4. Additionell statistical analysis

In the data seven data points are missing for the post-material index of green party voters. The lack of these seven cases can theoretically be the reason for why the significance of post-material values in terms of green party voters is higher than

for all voters. From *figure 10* it can be reasoned that this is not likely. This because if the seven data points missing are dropped then the significance disappears for all voters. Because model 19 shows that there is a correlation between post-material values among all and green party voters this means that the countries dropped are likely to make the result in model 17 less significant than it otherwise would have been. As such the level of post-materialism among green party voters is more important than that of all voters in a country regarding how it affects green parties *view on nuclear power*.

	Model (16) View on nuclear power	Model (17) View on nuclear power	Model (18) View on nuclear power	Model (19) Post-Materialist index 4-item (all voters)
Post-Materialist index 4-item (all voters)	-2.392* (-2.09)		-2.135 (-1.60)	
Post-Materialist index 4-item (green party voters)		-4.513*** (-5.17)		0.666*** (4.21)
Constant	7.209** (3.28)	12.85*** (6.50)	6.924* (2.59)	0.926*** (2.91)
N	52	45	45	45

t statistics in parenthesis

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Figure 10: The effect of post-materialism with all voters, green party voters, all voters when missing case for green party voters are excluded and the correlation between green party voters and all voters in the country of each party.

5. Discussion

5.1. Why government and not parliament matters

In the result, it can be observed that the effect of being in government is significant, but not the effect of being in parliament. This is true in all models in the first case and in all but one in the second. In model 10 when time spent passing all thresholds are used and no control variables, there is a significant negative correlation between *time in parliament* and *view on nuclear power*. The conclusion that can be deduced from this is that passing the *threshold of relevance* affect the party on a fundamentality different level than passing the *threshold of participation*. This because the first leads to a more pragmatic policy while the second does not.

5.1.1. The *threshold of participation* – a negative correlation?

The negative correlation between *time in parliament* and *view on nuclear power* is in contrast with the theory where a political party should become more *pragmatic* as it adapts to the institutional necessities of being in parliament. That this correlation is negative is likely due to the cases selected. For while many individual parties have, in general, become more *positive* towards nuclear power, while in parliament, some political parties started out as more positive than others. These parties, of which examples include *The Green Party of the United States* and *Midori no To*, tended to be more *positive* towards nuclear power than ones that entered parliament something that skews the result.

This means that it is likely that other factors, such as the prevalence of post-material values among green voters, caused this correlation and affected the policy of each individual party. This conclusion is strengthened by the fact that most parties that changed in parliament were also in government, meaning that it is hard to conclude if the changes are due to governmental and/or parliamentary representation. As the correlation is only significant in one model H₃ is nevertheless disproven.

5.1.2. The *threshold of relevance* – entering government matters

The number of *years in government* correlates significantly with a more positive *view on nuclear power*. This result could itself mean two things; firstly it could mean that when a green party enters government it will change its policy due to

the *constraints of coalition politics* and secondly it could mean that parties that have been in government have more *coalition potential*. In the first case it is the participation in a coalition that causes the change in policy as the constraints are due to the need for compromises while in a coalition. In the second case this correlation is due to that parties that enters government have more *coalition potential* than parties that has not and parties with more *coalition potential* tend to be more pragmatic than ones with less.

If the first case is right than a change in policy should occur when a political party is in government, while in the second it should occur before. As there is a correlation between being in government and a *change in view on nuclear power* this indicates that it is the presence of being in government that causes this change. That the changes for all parties that were in government did this during governmental participation increases the support for this deduction. Only *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* changed while not in government, even if they changed further after entering it.

A relevant problem here is that the change for *Vihreä liitto* and *Ecolo* occurred between two manifestos where the parties were only in government for some years. As such it cannot be pinpointed if these changes occurred before, during or after a period of governmental participation. *Vihreä liitto* did however change three ordinal steps in 18 years so some change likely occurred during a period of governmental participation. Because of this, that *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* changed a step before entering government and that the change for *Miljöpartiet de gröna* occurred while supporting the government, it is possible that a change in policy also happens when a green party *anticipates* being in government and that Poguntkes idea of *anticipatory adaptation* holds true. The consequence of this is that the exact mechanism cannot be concluded.

What can be concluded, however, is that parties that have been in government are more pragmatic towards nuclear power and that this is linked to governmental participation. If a party anticipates being in government it might change its views, on nuclear power, as it sees itself as having *coalition potential* and being in government increases this. If a party changes their policy due to *anticipatory adaptation*, this change might disappear if a party does not enter a coalition and loses its *coalition potential*. For *The Green Party* in the UK, *Grüne Partei der Schweiz*, and *GroenLinks* a more pragmatic change was reversed, possible because of this. Both mechanisms are likely relevant but the *constraints of coalition politics* is likely the dominating mechanism and hypothesis H₇ is proven true.

5.2. The role of the organization

As it empirically has been shown, in other studies, that both entering parliament and government affect party organization the fact that only entering government affect nuclear power policy indicates that there is no link between a change in organization and a change in policy. Theoretically this means that when a *realo*

fraction starts to dominate the organization they do not change the policy of the party. This because it is not a necessity for handling the institutional environment of being in parliament. This because green parties can internally remain critical of nuclear power by both not angering the *fundi* elements of the party and while negotiating with the government without changing their formal policy.

One of the larger problems with this study is the lack of an empirical operationalization for *organizational change* that could be used as a control variable in the statistical analysis. The causal effect can as a result not be controlled for and it cannot be concluded, empirically, if passing a threshold results in organizational change, it can only be deduced from the result that organizational change does not affect policy.

5.2.1. The *threshold of declaration* – time and members

This argument can be strengthened by putting it into contact with Michael's *iron law of oligarchy*. That the significant correlation between *time since declaration* and *view on nuclear power* disappears when governmental participation is included can be interpreted to mean that the correlation is significant because parties that have existed longer are likelier to enter government and not because the time of existence itself is relevant. As this factor, as well as the number of members theoretically contributes to a more complex organization, that in turn increases the influence of the leadership, their lack of effect strengthens the argument that organizational changes does not affect policy.

This is however under the assumption then Michael's theory holds true. Panebianco as stated in the theory section, remains critical and instead agrees with Harmel and Janda that it is *external stimuli* that affect party organization. It can nonetheless be concluded that neither age or membership size impact green parties nuclear power policy and as such H₁ and H₂ are disproven, something the puts the *iron law of oligarchy* into question.

5.2.2. The effect of *external stimuli*

According to Harmel and Janda *external stimuli* are factors that causes changes in party organization and/or policy. Entering government or parliament as well as a significant electoral victory/defeat are examples of such stimuli that were used in this paper. Both entering government and a significant electoral victory were shown the impact policy but not the total impact of an electoral victory/defeat nor entering parliament. What happens when a party enters government is that it must compromise and an electoral victory enables the dominating fraction, often the *realo* fraction, to move forward towards pragmatic policy change. It is also possible that it is a sporadic correlation where a huge victory makes it likelier for a party to enter government something that in turn affect policy. That an electoral loss/victory did not lead to a change in policy indicates that a *realo* fraction will not be the victors in an electoral loss.

Other such *stimuli*, both internal and external, exists in theory and it is possible that those also influence policy change. A clear example would be the effect of leadership change. This is a variable for which data could not be obtained and as such it was not possible to control for. That entering parliament does not affect the *view on nuclear power*, might mean that entering parliament does not constitute an *external stimulus* in relation to policy change. As such there is a difference between organizational change and policy change. For while factors such as size might affect the organization these changes might not result in policy change.

For that to happen the leadership of the party will have to initiate it. This occurs when the right *stimulus* occurs. *Stimuli* that includes entering government or winning an election. As such organizational change is not the factor that leads to a change in policy, but it might be a requirement for it to change. This as a *fundi* dominated grass-root party is unlikely to initiate a change towards a more positive nuclear power policy. Such a party is also less likely to enter government or win an election. This all leads to that hypothesis H₆ is true only for an electoral victory and not a loss.

5.3. Post-material values and *view on nuclear power*

Of the control variables used in part 1 of the result the only one that had a significant effect was the role of post-material values and this both for all but especially for green party voters. The effect that these values have on the result is two-folded. Firstly the values of political parties are a reflection of their base so a green party that starts out in a country with significant post-material values will most likely incorporate these values into its politics. So in a country, such as Germany, where these values are relatively common the green party will incorporate more post-material questions than a political party in a less post-material country, such as Hungary.

This can be seen in the data where less *negative* manifestos tended to be found in less post-material countries. This can be motivated further as the correlation between post-material values for all voters disappeared when more material countries with small green parties were dropped indicating that the existence of these countries was needed to for the result for all voters to be significant.

Secondly when a green party becomes more *mainstream* it starts to move away from its *new social movements* background. As it does so it loses some of its old voters, but more importantly it gains new and less post-material ones. This indicates that if the ideological core of the party changes due to the institutional constraints of being in government then so did its voter base. So hypotheses H₄ and H₅ are proven true. The other control variables, *seats in parliament* and *nuclear share of electricity generation* are not statistically relevant and hypothesis H₈ and H₉ are disproven.

5.4. Theoretical relevance and further research

The question that arises from this result is if it can be assumed to hold true for other types of parties and in other policy areas? As green parties, at least ideally, belong to the most direct-democratic party family a change towards a more pragmatic policy here should be less likely than among other party families. As nuclear power is one of the family's key questions it should be a policy area in which they should be more reluctant to change than in others. This case can as such be considered to be of the *least-likely* nature. If green parties changed their nuclear policy when entering government so should other types of parties in other policy areas. This under the assumption that a party's opinion is outside the *mainstream* and that the party is a small coalition member. This as there is no need to compromise on a question on which there is consensus and larger parties will have to compromise less or might govern by themselves.

The same logic could apply to far-right parties on immigration or far-left parties on wealth redistribution and so on. As the relationship between governmental participation and policy change is an area that lacks significant research it has a lot of potential for further research by studying other party families and/or other policy areas that could not be included in this study. The paper also opens up other questions that could not be dealt with in a quantitative study, due to lack of data. An example is what the relationship between party organization and policy is. While this paper deals with this theoretically a qualitative study with this focus would add to the field. And so would the effect of other types of stimuli on policy. This paper has dealt with some, but how does leadership change and the impact of the rise or fall of a competing party affect policy change?

6. Conclusion

So to conclude the paper. The only threshold that have been shown to influence green parties *view on nuclear power* is the *threshold of relevance*, this because it leads to compromises with its coalition partner/s. Other *external* or *internal stimuli* can also affect the *view in nuclear power*. In the study only the effect of an electoral victory/loss was included and only an electoral victory was statistically relevant, but it is possible that other stimuli, such as leadership change are as well. Green parties get into government when they have *coalition potential*, possibly due to organizational changes and combined with different stimuli this makes green parties more *mainstream*.

This leads to the attraction of new, less post-material voters to the party that are less against a change in nuclear power policy making the change more electorally viable. As such it can be concluded that green parties have, just as Inglehart wrote, lost some of their post-material new social movement elements. In *figure 11* a graphic depiction of the presented mechanisms is shown with the full lines being ones tested in this study and the dotted ones deduced form the theory section.

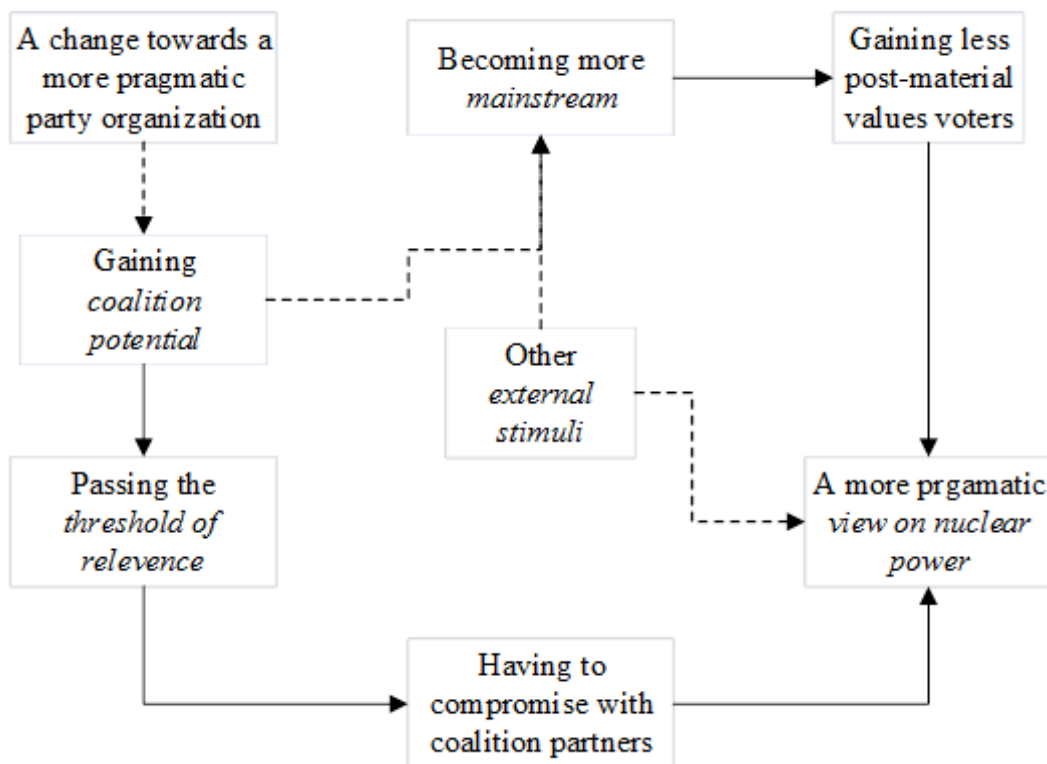


Figure 11: The mechanism on what effect green parties view on nuclear power.

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