

Post-material green parties?

An evaluation of the green parties of Finland and Sweden

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Abstract

This thesis evaluates the political focus of the Swedish and Finnish green parties by examining their election manifestoes since year 2000. This is investigated through a content analysis with a coding scheme based on theories and previous research about post-materialism and post-material political issues. The theory of Inglehart regarding post-material value change, from material focus to post-material focus on subjects such as quality of life and self-actualization are used as context to my research purpose and as markers for the content analysis. The theory of the GAL-TAN scale is used to further determine the coding scheme of post-material politics. Furthermore, previous research on the importance of the German green party and their key characteristics are used for the coding scheme. The coding scheme contains four different themes: positive views on democracy, protection of individual rights, support for self-actualization and liberal views on social issues.

The results and analysis show that the Swedish greens have a higher general percentage of post-material political issues in their election manifestoes. The results also show that there are differences both between the parties and over time regarding which distinctive themes are focused on.

Key words: Green League, Miljöpartiet, green parties, post-materialism, GAL-TAN

Words: 9920

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1 Introduction

Political response to the global environmental challenges has been varying between different countries and regions, but one clear consequence of the increasing awareness of environmental issues is the rise of green parties. Green parties are relatively recently incorporated in some western countries, and their success is highly differing, both over time and between different countries. Analyzing and discussing the politics of a type of party that have recently gained influence over national politics is significant as it provides information and insight about the opinions of influential political actors.

This thesis will discuss two parties that are viewed as successful in the context of green parties; the Swedish greens (Miljöpartiet) and the Finnish Green League, two parties that have had influence in their national politics by, for example, being part of a coalition government. These parties will be evaluated through a content analysis examining to what extent they have incorporated post-material political issues in their election manifestos, as both parties are recently established and originally distanced themselves from the left-right scale of politics and its usual political issues (Bolin 2016, 166, 172). As post-materialism is discussed as variously relevant for green parties (Carter 2018, 95), the theoretical perspective can provide insight into the parties' political focus. The thesis aims to compare and discuss possible variations between the two parties and evaluate possible changes within the parties over time.

Post-materialism in the thesis is defined through three different theoretical perspectives: Inglehart's theory of value change defines it as focus on self-fulfillment and quality of life (Inglehart 1977, 5). Through the GAL-TAN scale it is defined as values and themes focusing on protection of individual rights and higher participation in democracy. Through the perspective of influential green parties, it is defined as liberal views on social issues, striving for non-violence and grassroot-democracy (Carter 2018, 109; Hooghe et al. 2002, 967). These themes can be prevalent in the political focus of parties, or in the values in the population of a society.

It is significant to study these two parties as they operate in similar party systems, have a similar history and have both participated in coalition governments. Hence, it is interesting to evaluate if they are also similar in their political approach regarding prioritization and positive view of post-material issues, especially as their election results differ, with the Finnish party receiving a higher vote-share and having had more experience in government. Studying the political orientation of green parties is also relevant as it can provide insight into why green parties are differently successful. Furthermore, by proceeding from previous research on green parties, I will work cumulatively within the research field to provide further insight into green parties.

The thesis will present a brief historical description of the green parties, a definition of green parties and a literature review of the research field to motivate the case-selection of the two parties and discuss key characteristics of post-material influential green parties. Moreover, I will present a theoretical framework discussing Ronald Inglehart's theory of post-material value change, followed by a discussion of the GAL-TAN scale and its description of post-material politics. The theoretical framework will be used to construct an analytical tool for the evaluation of the election manifestoes from the two parties.

1.1 Purpose and research question

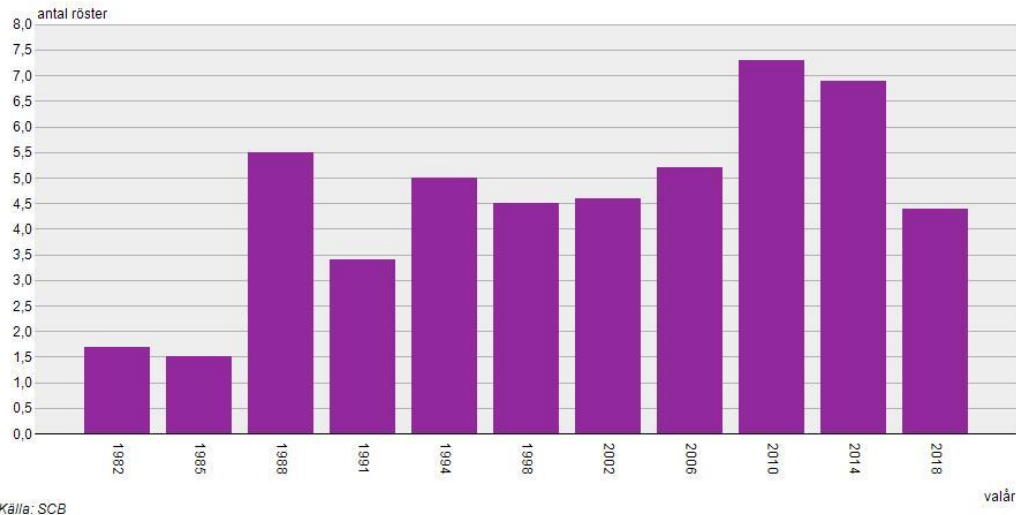
The purpose of the thesis is to evaluate two well-established green parties to determine key features of their political focus. By combining several theories with previous research on characteristics of green parties, this paper aims to produce an operational typology of a post-material political party. Subsequently, the paper aims to explore to what extent the green parties of Sweden and Finland have adopted post-material political issues and language in their election manifestos since the year 2000 and answer the research-question:

- To what extent has the Swedish and Finnish green party adopted post-material politics in their election manifestoes since 2000 and are there differences over time or between the parties?

2 Background

This chapter of the thesis will present a literature review of the research field, which also includes my motivation and argumentation for the case selection of the Swedish and Finnish green parties as focus for the thesis. Furthermore, it also includes a historical background of the two green parties and a segment presenting the two countries' political systems, which provides insight into the political climate the two parties navigate in. To understand the political manifestoes of the two green parties and why a comparison of the two Nordic parties is relevant, a brief description of the two parties is necessary. To further contextualize I also present the national election results for the two parties since year 2000.

Riksdagsval - valresultat, andel röster efter valår. Miljöpartiet.



Källa: SCB

Figure 1: Showing the national election results of the Swedish green party from year 1982 to 2018 (SCB 2022)

Year	Percentage of votes
2019	11.5%
2015	8.5%
2011	7.3%
2007	8.5%
2003	8.0%
1999	7.3%
1995	6.5%
1991	6.8%
1987	4.0%
1983	1.5%

Table 1: Showing the national election results of the Finnish green party from year 1983 to 2019 (Statistikcentralen 2022)

To further understand why a comparison of the two green parties is fruitful, a brief presentation of the two countries political systems is necessary. It is also relevant as it discloses the system of party competition in the two countries, which is discussed as important to the success of green parties (Tilley & Zack 2019, 505-508).

2.1 Literature review

There has been substantial previous research on the occurrence of green parties, and the Swedish and Finnish parties, which influences the construction of this thesis. Previous research on green parties discusses how there is plenty of studies on other niche-parties, but less attention has been paid to the differing success of green parties (Tilley & Zack 2019, 496). It also discusses the extensive research on the establishment of green parties, and less so on the durability of green parties, their various success and differences between green parties (Smith 2005, 2). This points to the necessity in further examining and evaluating the green parties after their establishment in western political systems.

However, research that does discuss the varying success of green parties highlights several key factors that are described as affecting the parties after their establishment. Firstly, voter demand affects their success, where high economic development and production of nuclear power in the nation are key factors. The role of nuclear power is described as relevant due to the consistent green parties' opposition to it. Evidently, the conflict of nuclear energy creates voter demand for parties opposing it. This is described as corresponding with the theory of post-materialism (Tilley & Zack 2019, 498, 508). Secondly, research shows that green parties perform better in national elections in nations with decentralized systems (Tilley & Zack 2019, 505). Furthermore, research on the effects of mainstream parties for green party success shows dependence on the age of the party; when new, the strategies of other parties can affect the green party's success to a higher extent. However, once well-established, these negative effects do not appear to occur (Tilley & Zack 2019, 506-508). Moreover, research from 2005 also suggests the negative effects on the success of green parties due to party competition whilst the green parties are establishing themselves, with lessening effect over time (Smith 2005, 36).

Regarding the Swedish and Finnish green parties, comparisons of the two that underline significant similarities and differences. Firstly, both parties are discussed as relatively well-established and successful green parties (Bolin 2016, 172) and have consistently had seats in the parliament since the year 2000 (Bolin 2016, 161). Both parties have a strong stance on the issue of nuclear energy, as the Swedish Greens were initially formed because of it, and the Finnish Green League have dealt with conflict on that issue whilst in government (Bolin 2016, 167). Both parties are

from countries with high economic development and with relatively post-material societies (Bolin 2016, 158). Both countries have permissive electoral systems, as they have proportional elections with decentralized aspects, such as municipal elections as well as national elections. Other similarities are both parties' previous reluctance to place themselves on the left-right scale of politics (Bolin 2016, 166). Consequently, the parties are similar in the aspects that previous research has highlighted as decisive, such as acting in decentralized systems. The societies they act within also display high economic development as well.

In the article "Party competition, social movements and postmaterialist values: Exploring the rise of green parties in France and Germany" by Kaelberer (1998) the extent that the German greens has incorporated post-materialism in their political content in comparison with French green parties is discussed. Like previous presented research, the article highlights the role of party competition and election systems for the success of green parties, but also discusses how post-materialism is relevant in western countries (Kaelberer 1998, 299-300). The article discusses how the German greens has been characterized by the incorporation of a broader perspective by including issues described as "new left", such as focus on the women's movement, and not solely ecological issues (Kaelberer 1998, 303). The article also presents a distinction between purist green parties and "rainbow" green parties, which also include focus on feminism, minorities, youth and peace. The German greens are described as a typical "rainbow" green party (Kaelberer 1998, 307). Kaelberer's article thus highlights the post-material and alternative characteristics of the German green party. This, in combination with research discussing the influence of the German greens on green parties (Carter 2018, 109), clarify the reasoning for the inclusion of key characteristics of their politics in my typology of post-material green politics, as their political development and focus has affected the other green parties' emergence. Early research showing high prevalence of post-material values among active German green party members also highlights the relevance of their political focus (Carter 2018, 95).

Consequently, the previous research highlight similarities of the two parties that are discussed as significant for the stability in success for green parties. This demonstrates the favorability of a comparison of the Swedish and Finnish green parties. The argument for the choice of cases, the green parties of Finland and Sweden, is thus based on the logic of similar system design. This logic entails that one should choose cases which are similar on all aspects except one, for which one wants to find an explanation for. This method is used when the aim is explanatory, which this paper is not, but it can still provide useful guidance and argumentation for the choice of cases for this comparative paper (Teorell & Svensson 2007, 226). Thus, the Finnish and Swedish green party are very similar in several aspects that are crucial for green parties, and I therefore want to examine if they are also similar regarding the prevalence post-material issues. Therefore, my thesis will also provide new insights into what characterizes these two otherwise similar and successful green parties, and if there are differences between them. This is also relevant as previous research highlights the necessity of research on the green parties themselves, to further understand what distinguishes green parties and their politics (Tilley & Zack 2019, 508-509).

2.2 Definition of green parties

The most central concept of this thesis is green party. A nominal definition entails describing general characteristics of a concept as criteria that needs to be fulfilled (Teorell & Svensson 2020, 38). The concept of green parties in this thesis is defined as a political party that has a pronounced focus on green or environmental politics and has competed in at least two national elections. This definition is also connected with previous research of what constitutes a successful party, which discusses electoral success as contesting in at least two national elections and attracting on average at least 3% of the votes and representation in the national parliament (Carter 2018, 86-87).

2.3 Definition of post-material politics and its use in the thesis

Post-material politics are in the thesis defined by three separate perspectives as described in the introduction: the theory of value change by Inglehart focusing on self-fulfillment and quality of life, the GAL-TAN scale focusing on protection of individual rights and through previous research on the politics of the German Greens focusing on liberal views on social issues (Carter 2018, 109; Hooghe et al. 2002, 967; Inglehart 1977, 42). In the three perspectives, the key characteristics are described by different phrases. In the theory by Inglehart, only the concept of post-material values is used, and that term will be used throughout the thesis. However, in the research on the German Greens the political themes of self-expression and quality of life are described as post-material, but it is also said that they are often called “new politics” or “new left” (Kaelberer 1988, 301-303). Also, in the theory of the GAL-TAN scale the terms “new politics”, libertarian and post-materialism are used to describe the political themes (Hooghe et al. 2002, 967). However, as to create clear understanding and as the theory of Inglehart is the starting point of the thesis, I will only use the concept of post-materialism to describe the political themes that are analyzed. Therefore, these different definitions of post-material politics are in this thesis only described as post-materialism, which is further defined in the operationalization in my method of content analysis.

2.4 Description of the Swedish greens and Sweden's election and party system

The Swedish green party originated out of the opposition to established political parties and to the referendum on nuclear power in Sweden in 1980. Thus, the resistance to nuclear power and the conflict with traditional political parties about the subject was significant to the formation of the party (Bolin 2016, 159-160). The party first contended in the election of 1982, and although they did not win any seats in the national parliament, they received seats in about 100 councils out of 290 municipalities in Sweden. In 1988 they received enough support to pass the 4% bar in Sweden (5.5%) but then lost all their seats in the election of 1991. In 1994, the party regained their position in the Swedish Riksdag and has consistently kept seats since (Rosén Sundström 2011, 938-939). In the election campaign of 2010, the Swedish Greens cooperated with the Social Democrats and formed a red-green alliance (Rosén Sundström 2011, 940). In 2010, the Swedish Greens received 7.3% of the votes and became the third largest party in Sweden but failed to enter government with the Social Democrats due to the center-right parties coalition receiving a higher total support (Rosén Sundström 2011, 942). In 2014 the Swedish greens entered government with the Social Democrats for the first time, and although their election results of 2018 showed a decrease, they entered government again with the Social Democrats (Nationalencyklopedin C). The party has since the 1980s had dual spokespersons, one man and one woman (Rosén Sundström 2011, 938). Another central aspect of the party is their prolonged resistance to placing themselves on the left-right scale (Rosén Sundström 2011, 938). Furthermore, the party has a history of EU-skepticism, but since 2013 they no longer strive for an exit from the EU (Bolin 2016, 167).

Since the year 2000 Sweden has held national elections every fourth year, with regional and municipal elections occurring the same day as the national election. (Nationalencyklopedin D). The different levels of power in Sweden demonstrates an aspect of decentralization. The elections in Sweden are proportionate, simplifying for numerous parties to be represented in the parliament (Valmyndigheten 2022). In Sweden, there has been a strong tradition of a bipolar system, with one block on the left and one on the right. During the majority of the 1900s the social democrats were in power in Sweden and usually opted for governing alone (Nationalencyklopedin D). Between 1973 and 1985 there were five parties in parliament: Vänsterpartiet, Socialdemokraterna, Centerpartiet, Folkpartiet and Moderaterna. Thereafter, several other parties have been elected, and since 2010 there has been 8 parties in the parliament (Statistikmyndigheten 2015).

2.5 Description of the Finnish Green League and Finland's election and party system

The Finnish green party originated from the radical environmental protests of the 1970s in Finland and received its first seats in the national parliament in 1983. It was named the Green League, adopted a traditional party structure and registered as an official party in Finland in 1988 (Paastela 2002, 17-18). However, the party did not want to place itself along the traditional left-right scale (Bolin 2016, 166). Throughout 1990s they received a stable vote share and received about ten seats out of 200. The Green League entered government for the first time in 1995 as one of several coalition parties, and the governmental experience is not described as having negative effects on the vote share of the party (Paastela 2002, 17-18). The Green League has participated in several Finnish governmental coalitions up until present day (Nationalencyklopedin A) and are also part of the current coalition government as of 2019 (Nationalencyklopedin B). However, the party has left the governmental position on several occasions due to conflicts over nuclear energy in Finland. Furthermore, the party has a clear focus on environmental politics and issues and have historically been mostly positive to the EU (Bolin 2016, 167).

Finland has elections every fourth year to a chamber of 200 seats and has a proportionate election system (Eduskunta Riksdagen). A proportionate system is more permissive to several parties represented in the chamber. Furthermore, Finland also has municipality elections (Nationalencyklopedin B). This demonstrates an aspect of decentralization of power in the country. In the article "Finland" by Paastela (2002), the political system is portrayed as relatively stable since 1945, with having had four major parties up until the 1980s: the Social Democrats, Agrarians, Communists and Conservatists, with the communists losing support during the 1980s. The governments have generally been stable, and it is described as a multi-party system where many different coalitions are discussed as possible (Paastela 2002, 19-20).

3 Theory

The theoretical segment of this essay will include a presentation of Ronald Inglehart's theory about value-change in western societies as context to explain its relevance to green parties' politics and to provide insight into the development and definition of post-material value change and politics. Moreover, I will introduce and discuss research on the GAL-TAN dimension, which is used to further define post-material political themes.

3.1 Post-material value change

In the publication *The Silent Revolution – Changing Values and Political Styles Among Western Publics* (1977) Inglehart presents a theory of causes and effects of value changes in western publics discussed through the results of mass surveys of the public (Inglehart 1977, 17-18). Inglehart's main assumption is that the long-standing high economic and physical security of western societies leads to value change within western societies, from a high focus on material well-being and physical security to a heightened focus on self-fulfillment and quality of life. Therefore, the material security of the public has led to a change in priorities. Inglehart's theory describes four system-level changes that lead to individual level changes: economic and technological development, leading to fulfillment of sustenance needs for a large portion of the population. Secondly, distinctive cohort experiences, meaning absence of "total" war during generations. Thirdly, rising levels of education. Fourthly, the expansion of mass communication leads to increasing geographic mobility. These systemic changes in western societies lead to individual-level changes in two areas: values and skills. The shift in values signifies an emphasis on needs for belonging, esteem and self-realization. Regarding skills, these changes will lead to an increase in the population with capabilities to understand and handle politics on a national scale. These individual-level changes will lead to system-level consequences. Firstly, there will be a change in prevalent political issues, with higher prevalence of political issues focusing on lifestyle. Secondly, it will cause a change in the bases of political conflicts, such as less focus on the social class conflict. Thirdly, it will lead to declining support for institutions, such as the nation-state. Fourthly, it will cause changes in political participation, such as higher prevalence of issue-oriented groups. These developments are the changes that the mass surveys examined in the publication aims to investigate (Inglehart 1977, 5).

The publication presents evidence that value change is taking place and discusses why it is occurring, highlighting two factors: the prosperity and economic growth of since World War 2 and the absence of total war in western countries (Inglehart 1977, 21-22). The hypothesized value changes are examined through mass surveys, which is described as preferable method over in-depth interviews due to the possibility to include a high number of cases and conduct a large-N study (Inglehart 1977, 27). In the survey post-material values are discussed as social and self-actualization needs, and several different elements are examined: ideas count, free speech, a less impersonal society, more say on job or in community and more say in government. These are combined with a categorization of material values (Inglehart 1977, 43-44). It is the categorization of post-material values by Inglehart that will be combined with other theories discussing post-material politics to create my analytical tool for the empirical material.

Furthermore, Inglehart discusses that the evidence shows that a process of value change appears to be taking place according to the results of the surveys. The evidence also highlights that post-material values entail a focus on self-expression and more participant, less hierarchical, society (Inglehart 1977, 179). Evidence also suggests that post-materialists usually are well-off and vote for parties of the left (Inglehart 1977, 183). This theory provides insight into why post-material politics in this paper is assumed to have a prevalence in green party politics in Scandinavia, as Sweden and Finland are described as post-material societies (Bolin 2016, 158).

However, Inglehart's theory has been subjected to criticism on various points, such as if Inglehart's described causes of post-materialism are correct or that Inglehart's measurement of post-materialism in the public is inadequate. Inglehart measures post-materialism from a four-item inquiry which can be viewed as too narrow (Carter 2018, 93-95). As the theory in this thesis will mainly be used for context to examine the relevance for green parties, the causes presented by Inglehart are not discussed. Additionally, since there are studies showing various correlation between green voters and post-material values (Carter 2018, 95), the aim of my study becomes significant as it explores if post-materialism is prevalent in two examples of successful green parties. Regarding Inglehart's method, since I will use the categorization in combination with other theories to create my analytical tool, my typology of post-material politics will be more comprehensive than the typology by Inglehart.

3.2 GAL-TAN

The GAL-TAN dimension of politics is presented in the publication "Does Left/Right Structure Party Positions on European Integration?" (Hooghe et al. 2002). The article explores whether issues of European integration can be discussed through party positioning on the traditional left-right scale as well as the dimension of "new politics" (Hooghe et al. 2002, 965-966). The study uses expert interviews from different countries to determine the position on the two scales. The post-material/material dimension is defined as issues such as lifestyle, ecology, cultural

diversity, immigration and nationalism. GAL stands for green, alternative and libertarian and combines positivity towards ecology, alternative politics and libertarianism. TAN stands for traditional, authoritarian and nationalist (Hooghe et al. 2002, 976). In the thesis I will focus on the GAL-endpoint as it is relevant for the purpose of the study. Post-material politics is further defined as positive view on the expansion of democratic freedom and rights, which is expressed through support of abortion rights, doctor-assisted suicide and same-sex marriage rights. Other defined themes are support for freedom of speech and increased democratic participation. Post-material politics is also described as opposing discrimination (Hooghe et al 2002, 967). Consequently, an expansion of democracy and high degree of choice in lifestyle is described as post-material political views.

It is the definition of “new politics” and the markers are used to measure it, the operationalization of the concept in the article, that I will use to create my analytical tool for the empirics. The discussion in the article by Hooghe regarding the relevance of these issues for politics is also used as theoretical background to understand the relevance of examining post-material politics in green parties.

4 Method and material

The method and material section will present the research design of a coding scheme of post-material politics derived from Inglehart's theory of post-material value change. This will be further specified and combined with the definitions from the GAL-endpoint in the GAL-TAN dimension and the political issues that perspective underlines. Additionally, this will be combined with prominent focus areas of the German greens due to their influence on other green parties. Furthermore, this section will present the material of the thesis and motivation for relevant delimitations and a discussion about perspectives on reliability and validity of the study.

4.1 Research design

This thesis aims to examine the prevalence of post-material political issues and language in the political manifestoes of two green parties. This will be analyzed in the empirical material through establishing a typology of post-material politics which will be used as a coding scheme in a manual, qualitative, content analysis. Conducting a content analysis entails a systematic categorization of the content in a text material and often includes the counting of expressions or words in texts (Boréus & Kohl 2018, 49). The purpose of using a content analysis method is consistency in the analysis of texts. A qualitative content analysis means that more complex interpretations of the texts will be conducted (Boréus & Kohl 2018, 51). In practice this means that my coding scheme will require more interpretation than simply counting the occurrence of specific words. Moreover, a content analysis requires a coding scheme, which acts as an instruction of what should be noted and counted in the texts. To create a coding scheme requires decisions regarding what the recording units will be, which defines what aspect should be counted (Boréus & Kohl 2018, 58-59). In this thesis, different themes that are determined by previous research as post-material issues will be used as recording units. Furthermore, the sampling unit needs to be determined which is the part of the text that the notion of recording unit is counted from (Boréus & Kohl 2018, 60). In this thesis, sentences will be the sample units and will be counted if they contain an expression for any of the themes of post-material politics. In most cases, the prevalence of a certain theme will be used as evidence for post-material focus from the two green parties, but as themes could be discussed both positively and negatively, this thesis will measure the positive remarks of post-material issues. Using a content analysis to answer my research question has several reasons: firstly, the method is suitable for examining patterns in texts to create an overview and

evaluation of the content, which is the aim of this thesis. Furthermore, a content analysis is suitable for studying the prevalence of certain themes in texts, to compare between texts and to study changes over time (Boréus & Kohl 2018, 52-55).

The coding scheme of the thesis represents a combination of several theoretical perspectives and previous research. It is divided into three categories to distinctly declare which perspective provides which theme. The following chart presents the coding scheme for the thesis:

	Alternative/ Libertarian (GAL- TAN)	Post-materialism (Inglehart)	Key characteristics for green parties (Influences from the German greens)
Positive view of democracy	-Higher participatio n in democracy	-Higher influence over democracy and government	-Grassroot- democracy
Individual/ societal themes	Protection of individual rights: -Abortion rights -LGBTQ- rights -Euthanasia -Freedom of speech	Support for self- actualization -Capacity for development of one's own ideas -Capacity to decide over one's own career.	-Non-violence -Liberal view on social issues -Immigration -Women's rights

Table 2: Coding scheme for post-material politics (Carter 2018, 109; Hooghe et al. 2002, 967; Inglehart 1977, 42)

The coding scheme represents three different perspectives on post-material issues. The GAL-TAN dimension presents issues that are used to understand a party's positioning, and the GAL-endpoint describes post-material or libertarian viewpoints (Hooghe et al. 2002, 967). Inglehart's theory presents more abstract aspects of what a society should strive for according to post-material values (Inglehart 1977, 42). The previous research on the German green party that is presented in the literature review provides argument for the relevance to include their political focus in the typology, as they are described as post-material and has been highly influential in the formation of green parties (Kaelberer 1998, 307; Carter 2018, 109). Thus, the typology represents a combined perspective of previous research and theories that are relevant to the research question and aim.

The argument for defining a broader perspective on post-material politics is to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the two parties that allows for a nuanced analysis of what constitutes their political focus, and what does not.

The content analysis will be implemented manually. The first reason for this is the need for a more qualitative approach to understand the context of the empirical material. An example of this is that the manual approach allows for an analysis that can count sentences where specific words coherent with the themes are not present, but where the content still discusses the broader themes in the coding scheme. Thus, it allows for more aspects of the texts that are relevant to the thesis to be discussed. Hence, a manual approach is beneficial when conducting a qualitative content analysis, as it requires more complex readings and interpretations of the texts than a computerized method that, for example, counts the occurrence of specific words (Boréus & Kohl 2018, 51).

The results from the content analysis will be presented and analyzed by producing frequencies from the number of sentences of the different themes in comparison to the number of total sentences in the election manifestoes. Hence, the results will show to what percentage the different themes are prevalent in the manifestoes. I will also produce a total percentage of post-material prevalence. The percentages will be rounded off to one decimal. The individual/societal themes will be presented and coded separately, but as the indicators regarding positive view on democracy are highly similar, they will be coded and presented as one frequency. Thus, they will be presented as one broad indicator for positive view on the function of democracy and its expansion. The combined percentages will be interpreted as showing focus if there is an apparent occurrence in the manifestoes, as the themes examined does not concur with the classic left-right questions that tends to dominate the political debate.

4.2 Material and delimitations

The thesis will examine the prevalence of post-material language and issues of the Swedish and Finnish green party through analyzing the election manifestoes of the two parties between the year 2000 and 2019. This includes five manifestoes per party, which varies in length between 5 to 44 pages. The raw data on the counted sentences in the manifestoes will be presented in the appendix, but the number of pages and sentences are displayed here in a chart for each party to provide an overview. Firstly, the Swedish Greens manifestoes:

Publication year (election year in parenthesis)	Number of pages	Number of sentences
2002 (2002)	5	150
2006 (2006)	5	175
2010 (2010)	16	218
2014 (2014)	32	449
2018 (2018)	32	506

Table 3: showing the publication year and number of pages and sentences for the Swedish Green's manifestoes

Secondly, the Green League manifestoes:

Publication year (election year in parenthesis)	Number of pages	Number of sentences
2003 (2003)	11	364
2006 (2007)	11	351
2010 (2011)	18	611
2014 (2015)	45	736
2018 (2019)	44	1088

Table 4: showing the publication year and number of pages and sentences for the Green League's manifestoes

The choice of starting from year 2000 is based both on the history of the two specific green parties as well as previous research on green parties in general. The two green parties both originated in the 1980s from social movements, with low formality. Both parties also adopted unusual organizational structures, with both parties being skeptical of hierarchies and power concentrations (Bolin 2016, 168). After the parties' parliamentary experience, they have adopted a more formalized party organizations during the 1990s (Bolin 2016, 169). Thus, the history of the parties shows a more formalized party structure developing over time, and points to both parties being well-established by 2000. This makes the choice of time-period for the material appropriate as it then examines the political focus of the parties after their initial process of forming a consistent party structure. Furthermore, both parties have consistently retained seats in the national parliaments since the year 2000, which further argues for both parties being well-established by the year 2000.

Moreover, previous research indicates a research gap on green parties after their formative years, regarding for example the various success of green parties, but also about variance between different green parties (Smith 2005, 2). Therefore, examining the political focus of the green parties once they are established provides new insight in the research field. Previous research also discusses how the success of green parties often is affected by party competition, hence the political opportunity structure, meaning how other parties in the political system respond to the green party (Tilley & Zack 2019, 500). However, research shows that the party competition has less relevance for green parties once well-established (Tilley & Zack 2019, 508). This also shows the relevance of starting from year 2000 when the parties are well-established as their success and political focus should not be as dependent on the strategies of other political parties in the system.

Although the parties also have manifestoes on the local level, such as for municipalities, this paper has been delimited to the national manifestoes. This is because of the cohesion with the focus on the parties on a national level, both regarding the discussion of their national election results as well as the theories of post-material politics and of green parties also focuses on the national perspective.

4.3 Validity and reliability

In relation to my thesis, several aspects of validity and reliability requires discussion to ensure understanding of my method and the interpretation of the results. The validity of the thesis can be discussed from the perspective of both my method and choice of material. The validity is determined by the correspondence of theoretical definitions and the method of measuring them, hence the operational indicators, and raises the questions of whether we measure what the aim is to measure (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 57-58). The choice of content analysis to answer my research question implicates a focus on aspects of texts that can be measured, whilst aspects that are unexpressed in the texts will not be included in the evaluation (Boréus & Kohl 2018, 79). This raises questions if the method can adequately measure what the research question asks, but as I will conduct a manual coding of the material, I have higher possibilities for examining specific themes in the texts. Furthermore, as I wish to examine the political focus of the parties, a focus on their expressed opinions is appropriate. Another possible validity problem for the thesis regards the choice of material, election manifestoes, for the analysis. A critique of analyses of election manifestoes is that parties do not state their actual opinions or preferred action in the texts (Boréus & Kohl 2018, 81). However, as the political manifestoes communicates to voters and society what the parties aim to be viewed as focusing on, it is relevant to analyze to understand the political orientation of the parties. The possible issue will also be handled through a segment in my final discussion regarding which conclusions can be drawn from my results, thus reasoning about how the results should be interpreted, with the question of validity in mind. Moreover, I aim to suggest possible further research which could strengthen the results of my evaluation and increase the validity.

My choice of content analysis as method for the analysis affects the reliability of the thesis. A high reliability entails the absence of random or unsystematic errors in the analysis (Esaiasson et al. 2017, 64). Defining a coding scheme for analysis of the material for my study that is specified strengthens the reliability of the study as it minimizes risks for random errors due to difficult interpretations of the material. Furthermore, the reliability of my results will also be strengthened by the choice to perform the coding twice, as to detect and avoid random errors.

5 Results and analysis

The results of the analysis of the Swedish and Finnish parties will be presented in three parts: Firstly, a segment that presents the results of the Finnish party's manifestoes, with a discussion of themes and changes over time that the results implicate. Secondly, an equivalent chapter on the Swedish green party. Lastly, the third part will include a comparison of the two parties with a discussion of implicated differences or similarities.

5.1 The Finnish Green League

The evaluation of the Finnish Green League is firstly presented through a compilation of total percentages from the election manifestoes from year 2000 to 2019, and then further nuanced through a discussion of the prevalence of the different themes.

Year	Combined percentage
2003	9%
2007	15.1%
2011	10.9%
2015	13.7%
2019	13.5%

Table 5: combined percentage of the different themes of post-material political issues in the election manifestoes of the Green League.

The results show a relatively stable results since the year 2000, starting with the lowest results of 9%, followed by the highest results thereafter of 15.1%. Thereafter, the results show a relatively stable development, with the latest two manifestoes showing highly similar total percentages. These results thus show that the total prevalence of post-material political issues of the Green League neither clearly increases nor decreases in the five election manifestoes since year 2000.

Themes/year	2003	2007	2011	2015	2019
Positive views of democracy	1.6%	1.1%	3.4%	3.3%	2.8%

Protection of individual rights: -Abortion rights -LGBTQ-rights -Euthanasia -Freedom of speech	2.2 %	0.6%	1.8 %	4.2 %	3.3 %
Support for self-actualization -Capacity for development of one's own ideas -Capacity to decide over one's own career.	1.1 %	2%	1%	0.8 %	0.6 %
Non-violence Liberal view on social issues -Immigration -Women's rights	4.1 %	11.4 %	4.7 %	5.4 %	6.8 %

Table 6: Showing percentages of the prevalence of the different post-material political themes in the election manifestoes of the Finnish Green League since the year 2000.

The evaluation of the prevalence of the different themes of post-material politics in the manifestoes by the Finnish Green League show several interesting results that indicate the expressed political focus of the party. Firstly, the results show an increase from the starting point of 2003 in the prevalence of expressions regarding the positive view on expanding and participating in democracy, showing a relatively high, stable level in the last three manifestoes. Furthermore, the expressions regarding protection of individual rights show a high level in the last two manifestoes, whilst the levels of support for self-actualization is mostly

decreasing in the manifestoes over time. Lastly themes of non-violence and liberal views show a relatively stable prevalence, although a high increase can be seen in the manifesto from 2007. These themes also have the highest prevalence out of the different areas in the results, showing a high focus on issues such as immigration, non-violence and women’s rights throughout from year 2000 to 2019 when the last manifesto was published.

The results of the evaluation of the Finnish Green League can also be related to the previous research and my theoretical perspectives. The surge of the protection of individual rights shows that the party has an increased focus in the perspective that the GAL-endpoint of the GAL-TAN perspective provides. This signals that the indicators used to examine green, alternative and libertarian political views are relevant in the evaluation of the Finnish Green League and indicates that the Finnish Green League would be placed close to the GAL-endpoint in the GAL-TAN scale. Furthermore, the results regarding Inglehart’s perspective on post-material politics as self-actualization show a stable level throughout all the results, which indicates a relevance to the party that neither increases nor decreases. Lastly, the results indicate that the previous research discussing key characteristics for the German Greens, focusing on liberal views on social issues as post-materialist politics (Kaelberer 1998, 307), has the highest prevalence in the political manifestoes of the Finnish Green League, followed by the GAL-TAN perspective and lastly the perspective of Inglehart.

In conclusion, the results of the evaluation of the Finnish Green League shows relatively stable total percentages of post-material political issues in the election manifestoes since year 2000. The lowest results are from 2003, and the highest from 2007, with results fluctuating between 9% and 15.1% percent without a clear pattern. Hence the results show neither a clear increase nor decrease, but a significant prevalence of post-material political issues in all the manifestoes examined in the thesis showing a prioritization of several of the themes in the politics they wish to show as important to the party to the voters. Thus, the results show that the party through their election manifestoes has adopted post-material political issues, with percentages of at least 9% of the manifestoes since year 2000, but no clear patterns of increase or decrease can be determined over time.

5.2 The Swedish greens

The evaluation of the Swedish greens is firstly discussed through the combined percentages of all themes of post-material issues in the manifestoes, with the purpose to discuss possible patterns and conclusions. This will be followed by a more nuanced discussion regarding the prevalence of the different themes in the individual results, with the aim to differences of focus between the different themes.

Year	Combined percentage
2002	15.3%
2006	21.8%

2010	13.8%
2014	18.2%
2018	15.6%

Table 7: the combined percentages of different political themes from the analysis of the election manifestoes of the Swedish greens.

The combined results show an apparent prevalence of post-material politics in all the manifestoes of the Swedish greens since year 2000. The results do not show a consistent pattern of decrease or increase, instead it fluctuates on a relatively high level throughout. Thus, the results indicate a prioritization about post-material politics issues of the Swedish greens in their election manifestoes.

Themes/year	2002	2006	2010	2014	2018
Positive views of democracy	4%	2.3%	0.9%	0.7%	1.2%
Protection of individual rights: -Abortion rights -LGBTQ-rights -Euthanasia -Freedom of speech	0%	2.9%	0.9%	3.3%	2.8%
Support for self-actualization -Capacity for development of one's own ideas -Capacity to decide over one's own career.	4.6%	4.6%	1.4%	2.4%	1.9%

Non-violence	6.7%	12%	10.6%	11.8%	9.7%
Liberal view on social issues					
-Immigration					
-Women's rights					

Table 8: the results of the analysis election manifestoes of the Swedish greens in percentages of the specific themes.

The result of the separate themes provides more insight into the political focus of the Swedish green party. Expressions of positive views on expansion of democracy shows a decrease and a rather low general level since 2010, thus indicating a lesser focus on the theme over time. The expressions for support of individual rights instead show a fluctuation of higher and lower results over time, but with high results in the last two manifestoes. The results of the support for self-actualization show a general decrease over time in comparison to the first two manifestoes, but still a relatively high prevalence throughout. The themes of non-violence and liberal view on immigration and women's rights are the most prevalent in all the manifestoes of the Swedish greens, which reflects a focus on these political issues in all the manifestoes since year 2000.

The results of the evaluation of the Swedish greens can also be related to the previous research and my theoretical perspectives. The surge of the protection of individual rights shows that the party has an increased focus in the perspective that the GAL-endpoint of the GAL-TAN perspective provides. This suggests that the indicators used to examine green, alternative and libertarian political views are relevant also in the evaluation of the Swedish greens. It also indicates that the Swedish greens would be placed close to the GAL-endpoint in the GAL-TAN scale. Furthermore, the results regarding Inglehart's perspective on post-material politics as self-actualization shows decreasing results over time, which suggests that post-material politics as defined by Inglehart lessens in importance for the Swedish greens. Lastly, the results indicate that the previous research discussing key characteristics for the German Greens, focusing on liberal views on social issues as post-materialist politics (Kaelberer 1998, 307), has the highest prevalence in the political manifestoes of the Finnish Green League, followed by the GAL-TAN perspective and lastly the perspective of Inglehart.

In conclusion, the results of the analysis of the Swedish greens election manifestoes demonstrates to what extent the party has adopted post-material political issues in their election manifestoes since year 2000, showing a clear focus on the issues throughout all manifestoes. The combined percentages vary between 13.8% to 21.8% without clear decrease or increase over time, which indicates a

fluctuating but persistent focus on post-material issues. Regarding the specific political issues, the themes of positive views on democracy and support for self-actualization decrease over time, whilst protection of individual rights and liberal view on social issues such as immigration and women’s rights increase over time. This indicates that whilst the combined percentages remain high throughout, which specific aspects of post-material political issues are focused on shifts over time.

5.3 Comparative discussion

The analysis of the election manifestoes since year 2000 show commonalities and differences between the two green parties, both regarding the total percentages and the specific political themes.

Combined percentages Finnish Green League	Combined percentages Swedish greens
9% (2003)	15.3% (2002)
15.1% (2007)	21.8% (2006)
10.9% (2011)	13.8% (2010)
13.7% (2015)	18.2% (2014)
13.5% (2019)	15.6% (2018)

Table 9: showing a comparison of the combined percentages of the two parties.

The comparison of the total percentages presents a difference between the two parties. The Swedish greens have consistently had higher total percentages since the year 2000, which presents the conclusion that the Swedish greens has had a higher focus on the post-material political issues throughout the manifestoes. Although the percentages do not display a large difference regarding percentage points, it is prevalent that the Swedish greens has a consistently higher total percentage of post-material political issues in their manifestoes. Thus, the results of the thesis show that the Swedish greens have a higher focus on post-material issues in their manifestoes. However, both parties’ results indicate a high level of focus on the themes in the manifestoes, which suggests a similarity between the two parties: both do discuss the post-material issues consistently in the manifestoes.

Other commonalities in the manifestoes are the expressions of non-violence. This is expressed in several different ways by the parties, such as through statements regarding the need for peace-work globally. A distinct similarity between the two parties relating to the issue of non-violence is their view on weapons exports. Both parties express in the majority of the manifestoes a demand for the country to stop or restrain weapons exports to other countries, especially to conflict zones, which suggests that both parties prioritize non-violence over economic gains from weapons exports.

There are also differences in the focus on other issues. An example of this is the issue of euthanasia, which is coded as protection of individual rights. Although both parties’ results show a significant focus on the general theme, the specific issue of

euthanasia is only discussed in the election manifestoes from 2015 and 2019 of the Finnish Green League. This demonstrates a difference between the parties regarding political issues, which is interesting as it could point to a difference between the parties' political focus, or a difference between the political discussions in the two countries. Another difference between the parties regarding a specific theme is the focus on the theme of positive expressions of democracy. The Swedish greens show a relative decrease of the theme, from a starting point of 4% to levels around 1% in the last two manifestoes. This is also interesting as the manifestoes become more extensive with time, which implicates the possibility to include more and less limitations, and despite this the Swedish greens focus on the theme of democracy lessens. This differs from the Finnish Green League, which instead display an increase over time, starting from around 1% in the first two manifestoes, and the later three showing percentages around 3%. Thus, the theme of democracy highlights a difference between the two parties. This is also interesting as the theme of democracy is not derived from a single theoretical perspective, but a combination of emphasized aspects regarding democracy from all three. The GAL-TAN perspectives highlight focus on higher participation in democracy, the perspective of Inglehart focuses on higher influence over democracy and government and the key characteristics of green parties in previous research highlight focus on grassroots democracy (Carter 2018, 109; Hooghe et al. 2002, 967; Inglehart 1977, 42). Despite the broad scope of the theme of democracy and its prevalence in all chosen perspectives for the thesis, the Swedish greens focus less on it over time and in comparison to its Finnish counterpart, despite more extensive manifestos over time. Thus, the results showing a decrease in the focus on the theme of democracy of the Swedish greens both display a difference between the Swedish and Finnish party, but also shows an area of post-material politics where the Swedish greens does not appear to focus.

Furthermore, the results of the theme of self-actualization also display a difference between the two parties. The results from the Finnish Green League show results around 1%, with no drastic increases or decreases over time, whilst the Swedish greens results start at 4.6% but ends at 1.9%, with the two first manifestoes displaying higher results than the remaining three. It is thus interesting that the Finnish Green League results are generally lower but stable, showing a consistent focus, whilst the Swedish greens results are consistently higher, but displaying a decrease over time. This could point to a difference in prioritization by the party or a difference in society. The indicator of self-actualization is derived from the theory of Inglehart regarding post-material value change in society. Thus, self-actualization as an indicator for post-material political focus does not show consistency neither in prevalence of the parties or over time, which is consistent with previous research showing various correlation between post-materialism as described by Inglehart and green parties (Carter 2018, 95). However, as both countries are described as relatively post-material societies (Bolin 2016, 158), it is interesting that my results display such a difference. It can either spark discussion regarding different levels of post-materialism in the society or regarding Inglehart's theory and methods' possibility to display this, or its relevance to green parties, as

it is not obvious that more post-material societies lead to that being displayed in the political focus of green parties specifically.

In summary, both parties have adopted post-material political issues in their election manifestoes since year 2000, but the Swedish green party have consistently higher combined percentages. However, the results of the individual themes also emphasize other similarities and differences between the two parties. They appear similar in focus on themes such as non-violence, even in the specific expressions and focuses, and both parties have a consistently high prevalence of liberal views on social issues. The Swedish party's levels are higher, but for both parties this is the theme that consistently has the highest results. However, there are also differences, such as that the theme of democracy and self-actualization decrease for the Swedish party over time, but not for the Finnish, pointing to possible differences in the parties or the societies they act within. Concludingly, the two parties display a focus on the themes of post-material political issues throughout all the manifestoes, but with focus on different specific themes, both over time and between the parties. The results of the parties also highlight the relevance of the different theoretical perspectives and the results from previous research.

6 Conclusion

This chapter will discuss the most prominent conclusions and connect it to the previous research and the theories applied in the thesis, as well as point to further research that my results could inspire. Although the conclusions of the analysis of the election manifestoes cannot be directly translated to what the political party strives for in practice or about how the Swedish and Finnish societies value post-material political issues, they give a strong indication of how the two parties want to be perceived by the public and their possible voters. Both parties display a focus on post-material political issues in all their manifestoes since year 2000, and almost all combined percentages are over 10%. This indicates that the two parties wish the public and their voters to perceive this focus as well as it is put in documents created to highlight their political direction.

Furthermore, the conclusions of the thesis relate to the theories and previous research regarding both green parties in general and the two specific parties. The theory of post-material value change in connection to the conclusions of the thesis shows that the prevalence of Inglehart's definition of post-materialism is varied between the parties, in line with previous research (Carter 2018, 95). However, the fact that all three perspectives that the thesis uses to determine post-material political issues are prevalent argues for the influence of post-material political issues in the two green parties and shows the relevance of the perspectives. Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates that two political parties that have had significant effect on the national politics of the two countries are influenced by post-material politics, which also is in line with previous research both discussing a value shift in western societies as suggested by Inglehart (Inglehart 1977, 179) as well as research discussing the societies of Finland and Sweden as relatively post-material (Bolin 2016, 168). Thus, the prevalence of the three perspectives in the content analysis show that the two green parties represent post-material issues as presented by Inglehart to a certain extent. However, it also shows changes over time and differences between the countries. It also shows that both parties would be placed close to the GAL-endpoint in the GAL-TAN scale and that they display a high level of similarities to the influential key characteristics of the German Greens as determined in previous research.

The results of the thesis have provided an evaluation of the political focus of the two green parties as displayed in their election manifestoes and provides insight into how the parties' wishes to be viewed by society and their voters. The results can also give an indication of several other aspects: as discussed above it provides insight into the relevance of theoretical viewpoints of post-materialism for green parties, where some are demonstrated as more prevalent than others. Furthermore, it also provides indications for the political direction of two parties from a relatively new party family, green parties, that has previously distanced themselves from the

left-right scale. The results indicate a few other focus-areas that are prioritized by the parties, such as social issues or individual rights. By evaluating the political focus of the parties through their political manifestoes, the thesis also provides indications about the politics of two parties that has had considerable influence over national politics in Sweden and Finland.

In summary, this thesis has examined the political focus of the Swedish and Finnish green parties through analyzing their election manifestoes since year 2000 and putting that in context with my elected theories and previous research. The results of the thesis highlight a focus on post-material political issues of both of the parties, with a prevalence of all three approaches to post-material politics being represented in the results. However, there are differences between the two countries, both regarding the combined percentages of all themes, where the Swedish greens have consistently higher results, and between the themes, where the Finnish Green League for example to a higher degree focuses on the theme of democracy. The Swedish greens instead show a decrease in both the theme of democracy and self-actualization. However, the fact that the election manifestoes varies in proportion also requires discussion regarding the results. In the shorter manifestoes, more prioritization of content must be made by the parties, which affects the prevalence of different themes and thus the implication of my results as well. It is therefore especially interesting when the results show decreases despite the increasing scope of the manifestoes over time. Concludingly, both parties have adopted post-material politics to a rather high extent, but there are also differences both over time and between the two parties

My results also emphasize the need for further discussion regarding influential post-material focused parties and its implications for the societies of Sweden and Finland. The results also implicate further need to research if the existence of parties with post-material focus also indicate a post-material society in general, which cannot be determined by the scope and focus of my thesis. Therefore, the results of the thesis and the possible conclusions that can be drawn from the evaluation also has limitations, as my methodological approach does not answer questions of why the parties political focus is as described by my results.

6.1 Suggestions for further research

The results highlight the necessity of further research of the topic of post-material politics within green parties. For example, comparisons to other types of parties and research regarding why some themes differ between similar parties and possible impact on the political focus of parties caused by political culture in a country or external crises in the national or global situation. The results of the evaluation of the political focus of the Swedish and Finnish green parties that this thesis highlights can provide insight into further relevant research on green parties from several perspectives. An interesting path for further research would be the comparison of the analysis of the two green parties with other green countries, but also to other party families, such as conservative or liberal parties, to create a clearer

point of comparison. The argument of this thesis is that the percentages produced demonstrate a clear focus from the two green parties, but this conclusion would be strengthened with further comparisons to other parties.

Furthermore, the results of the thesis indicate a need to continue examining the two green parties, to discover why the differences exist in two parties which in many regards are very similar, such as why democracy has higher prevalence in the analysis of the Finnish party or why the theme of euthanasia occurs in the analysis of the Finnish party but not the Swedish. Thus, the results could also inspire to research regarding the effects the political climate in a country or system has on the political focus of individual parties. Furthermore, as both parties have participated in coalition governments, it would be interesting to examine and evaluate the political focus of the parties in relation to that position. In my thesis the results are only compared over time and between the parties to discover the relevance of post-material political issues for these two green parties, but they could also be used to examine and discuss possible changes due to collaborations or governmental position to discover if that affects their political direction and communication to society. Lastly, the results of this thesis would also be interesting to compare to other green parties, both ones that have been successful in their countries, and those who have seen less success. This could provide further insight into if the political focus of the party affects the success, or if other external aspects have a higher impact.

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8 Appendix 1

The counted sentences from the Finnish Green League:

Year/theme	Democracy (combination of the three perspectives)	Alternative/Libertarian (GAL-TAN) (protection of individual rights)	Postmaterialism (Inglehart)	Key characteristics for green parties (Previous Research)
2003 (2003)	6	8	4	15
2006 (2007)	4	2	7	40
2010 (2011)	21	11	6	29
2014 (2015)	24	31	6	40
2018 (2019)	30	36	7	74

9 Appendix 2

The counted sentences of the Swedish greens (Miljöpartiet):

Year/theme	Democracy (combination of the three perspectives)	Alternative/Libertarian (GAL-TAN)	Postmaterialism (Inglehart)	Key characteristics for green parties (Previous Research)
2002 (2002)	6	0	7	10
2006 (2006)	4	5	8	21
2010 (2010)	2	2	3	23
2014 (2014)	3	15	11	53
2018 (2018)	7	11	10	49