GREEN PARTIES IN GOVERNMENT
The cases of Western and Eastern Europe

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past twenty years we experienced the participation of the Greens in government not only at a local and regional level, but at a national and supranational level as well. What today seems quite normal, in the 1980's seemed unthinkable, given the radical nature of the Greens at the time, with the activist tendencies and the grass-root organization. The end of 90's found the Greens as part of government in five Western European countries (Finland, Germany, Italy, France and Belgium). Although it is quite unknown, Green parties had also been a governmental partner in countries of the Eastern Europe as well. In the early 90's, as well as, in the beginning of the new millennium, Greens were participating in government in Latvia, Ukraine and Slovakia, with the former boosting the first Green Prime minister in 2004!

Although there are several cases were the Greens participated in a government, the academic perception regarding Green politics have been changing really slow. So, in order to be able to understand contemporary parties, should we use the same methods and have the same view used in the 70's or 80's or we need a new methodology? "As Green parties in many countries have moved out of the niche of protest and fringe politics, the study of Green politics could be expected to become more interesting for mainstream political science" (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33). The entrance of Greens in government creates questions regarding the formation of coalitions involving Green parties, the conduct of policies while a Green minster is at office and the effect that the governmental experience will have on Greens, in terms of internal politics, as well as, in terms of electoral development. Moreover, is the participation of the Greens in governmental coalitions will affect their ideology? Will there be changes regarding the grass-roots democratic way of organization or in the level of activism? And finally, what happens to the links to social movements and to the behavior regarding the voters of the Greens?

Although the Greens have been into government since 1985 at a regional level in Germany and since the early 90's in Eastern Europe, still the literature regarding Greens in power is quite limited. Most of the attention has been paid on Greens in government at local and regional level, while the academic attention regarding comparisons at a cross-national level is still low. Most of the academic attention is paid in the development of the Green parties mainly in Western Europe, leaving the governmental experience analysis especially at a cross-national level quite out of concern. Rootes (2002) provided some research regarding Greens' involvement into government for Western European countries and Rudig (2002, 2004) made a worldwide analysis regarding Greens in power, including the cases of Eastern Europe.

The case which attracted the most academic interest is the one of the German Greens. Die Grunen is the usually the main comparative tool in this paper as well, mainly because they were the first to experience some situations while being in government, like the the office of the Foreign affairs, with Fischer at the chair. Although the cases of Eastern European countries with

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Greens in the government have several prototype characteristics, has not yet attracted any significant academic interest, especially in terms of comparison.

Another dimension of Greens being in power that is analyzed in this paper is the aspect of Greens losing their power. How do the Greens react after losing power? What caused their exit of government?
The purpose of this paper is to attempt a cross-national comparative analysis of Greens in power. First is presented the case of the German Greens mainly because they are uses as the main tool for comparison. Second, there is an overview of Greens in power in 14 countries that have so far experienced this phenomenon. Third, there is an examinations of how Greens managed to get into power. Fourth, there is an attempt to define the role of a Green party that participate in a governmental coalition. Fifth, there is an examination of the impact that being in government plays on Greens. Finally there are the factors which play a role regarding the exit of the Greens from the government.

2. DIE GRUNEN – THE CASE OF THE GERMAN GREENS

2.1 Introduction

One of the most interesting and characteristic case of a green party in the area of the Western Europe, as well as, in the whole world, is the one of the German green party. Although die Grunen were not the first green party with a parliamentary participation, not even the first of its type, they became an extended subject of studies in the field of political studies because of the speed that they achieved to overpass the threshold and thus become a parliamentary party in such a big European country. This early occurred political success moved them to the center of the interest in a global level, making die Grunen the international paradigm for the rest of the newly emerged green party family. Die Grunen's activism, organization and program have been emulated by parties and organizations beyond Germany, despite the fact that they benefited of several historical circumstances (Frankland and Schoomaker 1992, 15-37) and of the existing political opportunity which was favorable to them (Kitschelt 1986, 57-83). Although the Greens' founders' intention was to create a party characterized as amateur-activist, die Grunen started to move away from this original status. Their quick electoral success, their participation in governmental coalitions and the state funding transformed the initially amateur-activist party. The purpose of this extended analysis over the German Greens is to create a useful tool for further comparison between Western and Eastern green parties, because the most common references in the existing bibliography are die Grunen.

2.2 The creation and development of the German Greens

The years from 1977 till 1980 are characterized as the formative period for the Greens. This period involved two main phases: the first step was the formation and launching of lists with green candidates for the local councils, the second was the formation of an alliance at a national

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level, in order to run green candidates in the 1979 European parliamentary elections (Hulsberg 1998, 81-91). The main umbrella under which leftists, apolitical local residents, as well as, conservative environmentalists were mobilized, was nuclear power, which contrast to all the existing major parties, they opposed. The formation of green, multicolored and alternative lists in order to contest the state parliament elections was encouraged by the local electoral results. However, no seats were won during 1978, because these "proto parties" due to their tendency to form along left-right lines, split the votes.

The "final form" of the German Greens occurred after lots of attempts and coalitions between groups existing from the far left to the far right. Such groups were: A) Herbert Gruhl's GAZ (Grune Aktion Zukunft), which was an attempt for the local and state lists to integrate in a national level. B) August Haussleiter's AUD (Aktionsgemeinschaft Unabhangiger Deutscher), which was minor nationalist party, using environmentalism as an appealing populism method, tried to create coalitions with grass roots activists. C) Representatives of the Lower Saxony GLU (Grune Liste Umweltschutz), D) BBU (Bundesverband Burgerinitiativen Umweltschultz), which was an umbrella at a federal level, for citizen action groups.

All these groups and people tried to form a left-right alliance of environmentalists, in order to be able to contest seats in the 1979 European Parliament elections (Mewes 1998, 2-36). The newly founded SPV-Greens (Die Grunen) won 3.2 per cent (nearly one million votes) in the European Parliament elections and managed to get 4.5 million Deutche Marks as campaign compensation. This electoral result along with the Bremen Green List (environmentalists, ex SPD members and independent leftists) which managed to clear the 5 per cent threshold and win four seats in the city-state parliament, was the motivation needed for the center of the SPV-Greens to prevail over the right in order to create an umbrella for left activists and alternative lists, having as a main goal the launching of a federal Green Party (Hulsberg 1988, 92-3).

Table   Bundestag election results (list votes) and seat distribution for the Greens 1980-2013

Year	Percentage	Total Seats
1980	1.5	0
1983	5.6	27
1987	8.3	42
1990*	3.8	0
1994	7.3	49
1998	6.7	47
2002	8.6	55
2005	8.1	51
2009	10.7	68
2013	8.4	63

*This percentage reflects the percentage won by the West electoral zone. The Alliance 90/Greens running in the East electoral zone won 6.1 percent and 8 seats.
Source: Wikipedia

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The Greens came into existence on January 1980, when a conference of activists took place. In the conference major cleavages occurred regarding the specific policies of the party's federal program. The main differences were about the depth of the commitment to grass-roots democracy, ecology and nonviolence. Finally the left prevailed over the right. The next June a conference in Dortmund took place, where the centre-left majority attempted to moderate the election platform, to be attractive to the conservatives, but they failed, so the most withdrew from the party. The electoral results were disappointing for the Greens (1.5 percent and no seats, table 1). Another reason for this result is that many of their supporters voted for the SPD, attempting this way to prevent the right-wing Franz Strauss (Christian Democrat) from becoming Chancellor (Frankland, Lucardie, Rihoux 2008, 19-41).

In the following state parliament elections the greens managed to win seats in four state parliaments. After this result the Greens started to participate in several mass demonstrations, especially against the deployment of US nuclear missiles in Germany. The result of these moves was the enlargement of the party membership and finally the beginning of conversations about joining in a coalition with the SPD in the Hamburg's city-state parliament.

In the 1983 federal elections, the Greens managed to be the first new party to ender the Bundestag after 30 years. The 5.6 percent of the votes has brought to the Greens committee representations, the chairmanship of one committee and the annual funding of 7.2 million DM (Frankland, Lucardie, Rihoux 2008, 19-41).

In the next federal elections (1987), the Greens increased their percentage of the votes to 8.3 (42 seats). Additionally, the Greens won 8.2 per cent in the 1984 European Parliament election and 8.4 in those of 1989.

Table European Parliament Election results, list votes and seats distribution for the Greens 1979-2009

Year	Percentage	Total Seats
1979	3.2	0
1984	8.2	7
1989	8.4	8
1994	10.0	12
1999	6.4	7
2004	11.9	13
2009	12.1	14

Source: Wikipedia

In the mid 1980's a conflict started among the Greens, with two major groups arguing about the strategy that the party should follow after their entrance in the parliament, regarding the government. The realists (Realos), who were the majority, favored a partnership, at a junior level, with the SPD, in order to bring up some reforms. On the other hand, the group of fundamentalists (Fundis), opposed the potential coalition with the SPD, so the party could use extra-parliamentary activism, having as a target to transform the society. As a result of this conflict at

the late 1980's the two groups began to hold separate national meetings. Additionally, the functional conflict that tented to be in favor of the fundamentalists, caused the hard Realos members to start talking openly about splitting the parliamentary group.

In 1989 the Duisburg conference elected a really pluralistic leadership including people from the left to counterbalance the moderate tendency and the realists. The year later the Greens won only 4.8 per cent (table 1) and as a result they won no seats in the Bundestag.

In the years followed the structure of the Greens changed in favor of the newly formed group (Realos, moderates and leftists), as they triggered the resignation of the fundamentalists after they asked for structural reforms. Another significant event that followed these reforms, as well as, the success in subsequent state elections, was the merge of the western Greens with those of the East (Alliance 90), which took place in April 1993 (Poguntke 1996, 4). In the 1994 federal elections the Greens managed to be the first party to re-enter the parliament after being voted out, receiving 7.3 per cent (table 1).

In the elections of 1998 the Greens won 6.7 per cent of the votes. This decrease in the votes won, had mainly to do with their weak campaign. However, due to the strong performance of the SPD, a solid SPD-Greens coalition occurred, providing this way a majority of seats. This coalition had as a result the control of three ministries for the Greens, including the foreign ministry, with Joschka Fischer as the minister. This, according to many theorists, remains a huge achievement for a small, activist party.

Another interesting fact is the support of this Red-Green government towards the military action in Kosovo and Afghanistan, especially for the Greens, because they declared themselves as an activist party, having grass-roots democracy as an organ of operation.
Since 2002 the Greens transformed into a more professional party, having the Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer, who by the time was the most popular politician (according to the polls) in the center of their electoral campaign.

3. GREEN PARTIES IN GOVERNMENT

3.1   Introduction

Nowadays it seems very reasonable for a green party to be represented in a national or even in a supranational level. Additionally, there are several cases of a green party participating in a government. This is something that was unthinkable twenty or so years ago. In the 1999, green parties were participating in governmental coalitions of five Western European countries (Germany, Belgium, Italy, Finland and France). Although it is largely unknown, green parties also joint governmental coalitions in the Eastern Europe, since 1990. In 2000 three Eastern European green parties were participating in the government of their countries (Ukraine,

Slovakia and Latvia), and the important fact is that the latter, for the first time in the green parties history, got the office of the Prime Minister in 2004 (Emsis)![1]

Now let's have a descriptive overview of the phenomenon of green in government. First of all there are many forms for a green party to participate in a government. In general, a different way of being in a governmental coalition may differentiate completely the politics of a green party. According to bibliography there are four main forms for a green party to reach a governmental office: a) toleration, b) cooperation, c) pre-election coalitions, and d) post-election coalitions, which can be further separated into surplus and minimum winning coalitions. The first category has to do with a coalition where the participation of the Greens is not necessary in order the government to maintain the majority in the parliament. On the other hand, the "minimum winning" situation, refers to a situation where the Greens' participation is required to keep the government in power (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33).

Table 3 Government experience of Green parties in Europe

					Portfolios (Cabinet rank)	
Country	Parties represented in Government	Entry Mode	Coalition Partners (party family)	Period in Government	Number	Policy areas
Belgium	Agelev/Ecolo	MW/Surplus	Socialists; Liberals	1999-2003	2	Mobility and Transport; Consumer Interests; Health and Environment
Bulgaria	Ecoglasnost; Conservative and Ecological Party	PEC/C	Conservatives	1990-1992	2 (1990-1991) 3 (1991-	Finance Environment; Prime Minister (1991-1992)

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[1]
     There is another opinion which claims that the first ever Green Prime Minister was the Bulgarian Philip Dimitrov, who became Prime Minister of the country in 1991, representing the coalition between the Green party and the conservatives (Walter 1995, 226). However, this party was not a member of the "European Federation of Green Parties", as well as, Dimitrov did not have any Green credentials, in contrast to the Latvian Greens, who are an old member of the European Federation and Emsis had a presence as politician, campaigner and environmental expert for more than ten years before getting the title of the Prime Minister of Latvia

					1992)	
Estonia	Estonian Green Movement	PEC/C	Anti-Communist Alliance	1990-1991	1	Environment
Finland	Green League	Surplus	Socialists; Ex-Communists; Conservatives; Swedish minority	1995-2002	1 (1995-2000) 2 (2000-2002)	Environment Health and Social Security (2000-2002)
France	The Greens	PEC	"Plural Left" (Socialists, Communists and other Socialist allies)	1997-2002	1 (1997-2000) 2 (2000-2002)	Environment and Spatial Planning; Social Economy (2000-2002)
Georgia	Green Party of Georgia	C/PEG	Pro-Schewardnadze	1993-1999	1	State Property Management and Privatization (1993-1995); Environment (1995-1999)
Germany	Alliance '90/The Greens	MW	Social Democrats	1998-2005	3	Foreign Affairs; Environment, Reactor Safety and Nature Protection; Health (1998-2000); Agriculture and Consumer Affairs (2000-2005)
Italy	Federation of the Greens	PEC	Centre-left Bloc (Socialists, Ex-Communists, Ex-Christian Democrats and	1996-2001	1 (1996-1998) 2 (1998-2001)	Environment (1996-2000); Equal Opportunities (1998-2000); Agriculture

			Liberals)			and Forests (2000-2001); European Affairs (2000-2001)
Latvia	Latvian Green Party	C/PEC/MW /Min	Centre Right; Farmers (2002-2011)	1993-1998 2002-2011	1 (1993-1998) 3 (2002-201)	Environmental Prime Minister (2004); Environment; Education and Science (2002-2011); Welfare (2002-2011)
Lithuania	Lithuanian Green Party	PEC	Nationalists	1990-1992	1	Deputy Prime Minister
Romania	Ecological Movement of Romania	C	Ex-Communists	1991-1992	1	Environment
Slovakia	Slovakian Green Party	PEC	Christian Democrats; Liberals; Other centre Right parties; Hungarian minority parties	1998-2002	0	Deputy Minister, Environment
Slovenia	Slovenian Greens/Ecological-Social Green party	PEC	Anti-Communist Alliance	1990-1994	4 (1990-1992) 2 (1992-1994)	Environmental Protection and Regional Development (1990-1992); Environmental Conservation and Land Use Management; Research and Technology (1990-1992); Power Engineering (1990-1992); Health,

| | | | | | | Family and Social Security (1992-1994) |
| Ukraine | Green Party of Ukraine | C | Ex-Communists; Nationalists | 1991-1992 2001-2002 | 1 | Environment |

Notes: Coalition Entry Types: C = Co-opted; PEC = Pre-Election Coalition; Surplus = Post-election coalition that does not need Greens to secure parliamentary majority; MW = Minimum Winning: Post-election coalition that relies on Green parliamentary votes to secure government majority; Min = Minority Government. Green parties are defined as parties with a predominantly ecological political orientation that are or were affiliated to or recognized by the European Federation of Green Parties (since 2004: European Green Party).All parties listed here are currently affiliated to the European Green Party with the exception of East European Green parties in Bulgaria, Lithuania, Romania and Slovenia that emerged during the transition phase for a brief period and disappeared or were absorbed by other parties shortly after their role in government. Sources: Rüdig (2002, 2004); European Federation of Green Parties/European Green Party (www.europeangreens.org).

In table 3, we can have a look on 14 European countries that have experienced Greens as a part of the government.[2] It is more than clear from table 3 that the participation of Green parties in the government is not only a Western European phenomenon, but it happened several times in the Eastern Europe as well. The majority of the cases where a Green party joint the government in a post-communist country was in first phase of the transition and as the years passed the Green parties in the post-communist societies tended to be marginalized and often even removed of the political scene. The exceptions to this rule are the Slovak Greens who were part of the government from 1998 till 2002, the Ukrainian Greens whose deputy leader held the Environmental Ministry between 2001 and 2003 and the Latvian Greens who managed to reenter the government in October 2002.

Another difference between Central-East and Western Europe is the pattern of entering the government. Beginning with the transition phase, there were many cases where leading Green politicians were co-opted into government and in some cases they even remained in government without having a strong green presence in the parliament. Some examples are Estonia, Latvia, Bulgaria, Romania, Ukraine and Georgia. In the case of Estonia and Bulgaria leading Greens left behind their green identity and they involved in the creation of new parties. In other situations the Greens were absorbed into further and bigger parties after the political system consolidated. Pre-election coalitions were also a regular phenomenon. Thus, pre-election coalitions and co-optation were the dominant forms for a green party to enter the government in Eastern Europe.

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The table only includes cases of countries where the Greens' representatives were elected or appointed to national executive office. The table does not include Poland, where the faction of another party took place in a government, without though meeting the criteria of a green party. Also the case of Sweden is not included, because although the green party supported the minority government, they never took an office.

The path that was followed be Green parties in the Western Europe was different. The parties emerged as activist forces having as a goal the mobilization of the people. The line between party politics and movement was often an obstacle. Additionally, even the idea of participating in a government coalition which probably involved a ministerial office was a major step at the time. The only visible way of participating in a government for the Greens was to tolerate a minority government. An example of this toleration model, at a regional level, is the Hesse case in Germany, whose ending was a coalition. Furthermore, in Sweden we have another example of the Greens tolerating a minority government, but this time at a national level. After the toleration's model failure in Hesse, the path of minimum winning coalition was followed as a path in Germany, usually between the Greens and the SPD, which finally led to a "Red-Green" coalition at a federal level. In Finland, on the other hand, we had a surplus coalition, when the Green League was invited to join the government, in order to provide extra seats in the parliament (the majority of the government at the time was marginal). In the cases of surplus coalitions, the power of the Greens is not so great because there is not the possibility for the government to lose majority if the coalition fails, so the coalition did not bring the Green League in a pivotal position.

Another peculiar case is the one in Belgium. It is a cases which is closer to the German one, because although the government needed to form a coalition in order to maintain the majority, not both the Belgian Green parties (Agalev and Ecolo) were necessary to join the coalition.
The other two cases (France and Italy) have to do with pre-election coalitions. For both countries the only possible way for the Greens to enter the parliament was to join these alliances. In such cases the Greens have no real negotiating power and if they attempted to exit the government coalition it would be equal to a political suicide.
Summing up, the only case were the Greens have real power is the one of Germany, proving thus the relative weakness of Greens in government.

3.2   How Green Parties manage to get in power

To examine the entrance of the Greens to government we have to answer in two questions. First, why do the Greens manage to enter the government at a specific time and second why in some countries have the Greens overcome the threshold while in others they haven't? The answer to these questions, according to the literature, can be provided by two approaches. The first approach tries to interpret the development of the Green parties based on aggregate political data. Lots of case studies introduce a link between some country-specific factors, including institutional characteristics such as the electoral system of a country, as well as strong experiences at a national level, like a conflict over nuclear energy. These kinds of factors can influence the emergence and the development of strong Green parties in specific countries. The first who did this kind of analysis was Herbert Kitschelt (1988), followed by the most recent analysis of Muller-Rommel (1993, 1997, 1998, 2002).

The major problem with this method of data analysis regarding the development of Green parties at a cross-national level is that its product is static. The static models cannot include the changes

of institutional features. Moreover, the use of averages as depended or independed variables over long periods of time create difficulties regarding the anticipation of changes over a period of time. So can this approach contribute to the understanding of how Greens enter the government? Muller-Rommel (2002) in an attempt to analyze this process included the concept of "the party lifespan", introduced by Pedersen (1982).

There are lots of reasons to make us not to expect the existence of a linear relationship between governmental involvement and electoral power. It is more than obvious that a Green party is far from getting strong enough to form a government by itself, as well as, to be the major partner in a potential government coalition. The only chance for a Green party to be coalition partner in a government is the probability of being invited by another major party, which is willing and able to do so. Political and institutional conditions in different countries, can affect the probability and the manner of this potential invitation.

Another theoretical view which can provide some answers is the coalition theory. Although coalition theory was one of the hottest topics in the past decade, it also comes with a number of weaknesses. The main disadvantage of coalition theory is that one of its basic assumptions is that a coalition in a government is usually a post-election product. Although this applies for the most of the Northern and Western Europe, things are different in Southern and Eastern Europe where a pre-election coalition is an often phenomenon, as well as, a co-opted government. So how can we manage these cases? First of all we have to examine the origin of a pre-election alliance. To begin with, both pre-election, as well as, post-election coalitions usually have to do with the opportunities and also with the perception of interests, on the side of different parties (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33). On the side of the Greens, in particular, a central concern should be the internal development of the party, because of outsider groups that reject established party politics to regular players of the party game. Thus, in order to start the discussion over a coalition, the Greens should accept some key policies, especially regarding economic and foreign policy areas, because rejecting to compromise will make the coalition with a major party unwilling to enter a coalition. On the other hand, a major party should be ready and willing to accept some compromises in other policy areas, like nuclear energy. Another factor which can affect the capability of being in government for the Greens is the organizational practices. The organizational apparatus of the Greens is usually based on grass roots democracy. This way of decision making usually makes them unappealing as coalition partners. However, some Green parties, especially after experiencing an electoral success, tend to change their organizational behavior, becoming this way "more professionalized", making them to be consider more capable of being in government by their potential partners.

There are also other factors which can explain the phenomenon of Green parties which came in a position to be considered as possible coalition partners, that coalition theory fails to take into account. First of all there are the cases of some Green parties which were considered as weak in the 80's, but in the 1990's they managed to enter coalitions. In some cases, it was some key institutional changes that happened, like a new electoral system (Italy) that gave the Greens the opportunity to join a coalition. Additionally, the party's internal changes played a role, shifting their position from a marginal and unsuccessful, to one of political relevance (France). There are

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also cases, where happened a little bit of both. So, it is hard to try to give an explanation on the phenomenon which turns the Greens into a potential coalition partner using a static model that comes from the coalition theory. Although it appears to be a lot of stability, lots of factors are changing, making thus the use of dynamic models essential in order to be able to explain the development of the Greens.

Concluding, coalition theory cannot on its own explain the wide range of the phenomena which lead to government coalition that includes a Green party. There are other elements which should be taken under account too, in order to complete the picture. One of them, which coalition theory usually fails to cope with, is the formation of a post-election coalition, as well as, the co-optation of Green leaders by the Government. Moreover, coalition theory fails to explain the phenomenon of Greens parties, which are considered to be outsider parties and incapable of taking part in a government, transforming to parties able to join a governmental coalition. The rise of a Green party to power may not reflect the change of the party itself, but a change in the perception of Green parties by the established parties (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33).

3.3 What is the role of a Green Party in government

After entering in a government a Green party has to face major challenges. The main challenge is the change of the behavior from trying to succeed politically and enter the parliament to defending the government which often includes lots of compromises, thing that is usually difficult for activists. And here another question emerges: Do we expect the Greens to behave differently as coalition partners than other parties? Greens' tradition of decision making includes openness, high degree of internal party democracy and high accountability. In order to be able to answer this question we should combine different theoretical traditions.

Coalition theory is one of the approaches, but it mainly focuses on the genesis and survival of coalitions (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33). So how do actually coalitions work? What is the decision making process? Can small coalition partners influence the agenda? Coalition theory can answer only a proportion of these questions. There is a relationship between the power of small coalition partners and the payoff that could be expected as a return for the provided support to the government. One of the key payoffs is the Portfolio allocation. According to Browne and Franklin (1973): "The share of ministerial portfolios is proportional to the share of parliamentary seats contributing to the governmental majority, with small parties doing slightly better than large parties". However it is obvious that some of the small parties perform better than other. The answer here is the notion of the "pivotal party". As mentioned above there is the form of coalition where if the small coalition partner withdraws its support to the government, the government will lose the majority. Usually in the status of the pivotal party is given to a party which is placed in the center, so it can cooperate either with the centre left or with the centre right (FDP is probably one of the best examples).

The only example of a green party being in a pivotal position is the one of the German Greens. One can argues that the Belgian situation is another example, but in this case only one of the two existing Green parties was needed in order to maintain majority. In the rest of the cases when the

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Greens entered the parliament under a pre-election coalition, their presence in the parliament was not large enough in order to create governmental difficulties. On the other hand, the probability of being excluded from the coalition at the next elections, created a disincentive. According to the literature of pivotal parties, it is underlined that the Greens' role in a government was always weak.

It is obvious from table 3, that in Eastern Europe the greens collaborated several times with parties outside the left spectrum (Ukraine, Slovakia, Lithuania). This type of collaboration which stands for Eastern Europe is not a usual phenomenon in the Western Europe. In most of the cases the Green parties in Western Europe grounded as grass-roots/activist parties belonging in the left spectrum. As a result the main ally is in the most of the cases the main party of the left. The only exceptions are the cases of Belgium and Finland where parties that not belong to the left joined the coalition. And here another question occurs, should the Greens widen their potential allies tank and become open to coalitions with parties of the moderate right as well? Will such a move strengthen their negotiation power? The answer is yes. However, a coalition between the Greens and the moderate right is not a popular idea in Western Europe. A typical example is that of the German greens who denied to join the "Jamaica" coalition with CDU/CSU and FDP in 2005 (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33). The Austrian Greens were not so reluctant when they entered the talks with the conservatives of OVP (Austrian People's Party) in 2003. Although the talks failed at a national level, coalition was eventually formed between the Greens and OVP in Upper Austria in the end of 2003.

A major ideological and not only obstacle for a Green party to turn into a more central one is whether this turn, which probably will produce a better outcome in being in office, will affect the ideology of the party. Is there a chance that this shift of ideology will alienate the voters, risking this way the presence in the parliament? Small parties have greater difficulties in managing, and balancing, the policy-office-vote conumdrum (cf. Müller & Strøm 1999). According to Harmel and Janda (1994): "Greens should find it even harder as they also have to negotiate a fourth party goal: internal democracy." Thus it is obvious that is difficult for a green party to get relatively strong "payoffs" in terms of cabinets, as well as, the influence in the government is expected to be weak because of their non pivotal party character.

In the theory of political parties, green parties are classified as "policy seeking parties". According to this the major purpose and ability of a green party is to influence the agenda setting or to influence and even change policy discourses. If someone tries to measure the magnitude of influence of a green party to the government, only by taking into account the parliamentary power (seats), he will be wrong. The question is that if a green party's participating in government will affect its agenda setting power?

In an attempt to capture every possible way of influencing the government, for sure one must take into account the potential influence of Green parties to the government as representatives of social movements. An interesting example here is the one that has to do with the German Greens and their position to the nuclear case. So, in this case die Grunen have distanced their position from their former allies in the anti-nuclear and peace movement and also have moved away from

any association with new movements regarding the anti-globalization protests (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33). Although the Greens shifted away from their old allies in some areas, there are other aspects, like the food industry, agriculture or other policies of similar interest, where the position of the Greens seemed to represent the public opinion. Finally, are these coalitions between the Greens in government and other environmental groups (not directly related to the government), important in order to promote changes in policies across a relatively large range of policy sectors. If we extent this specific territory of potential influence to the government, it worth to mention what arose in the case studies of Muller-Rommel & Poguntke (2002): "The lack of expertise is one element that shows up in many cases and as a key problem to overcome". Thus, the Greens can offer something that governments usually lack. They can offer experience and professionalism in environmental areas/issues.

Another element that affects the agenda setting power of small party is the interests this party represents. It is easier for a small party to exert influence if it represents dominant interests than for a party which represents marginal interests. In the case of the Greens, the interest represented is not well defined, it is not consistent. Thus it is more difficult to mobilize the voters. The main supporters of the Greens are people working in "caring" sectors like education or health, usually young and high educated people (Muller 1999).

Concluding, is the presence of a Green party to the government crucial regarding the influence to the policy making? Would the decision making process or the agenda setting be different if the Greens were not a member of the coalition? According to literature not every policy change which agrees with the demands of the Greens that happened during the period of them being in power, is linear related to their influence to the government. Moreover, according to several case studies, the best outcomes on environmental policies are from countries with a "neocorporatist" way of decision making, without being influenced by factors like social movement activities or party politics, which do not appear to make any difference. On the other hand, an analysis by Neumayer (2003) argues that Green parliamentary strength is an important predictor of environmental improvements.

4.THE EFFECT OF BEING IN POWER

It is expected for any party and ever more for a Green party which is usually a small and young, to be affected significantly when it participate in a government for the first time. The continuous presence in power, especially for some Green parties that stayed in this position for a whole legislature and even more (Latvia, Finland, Germany), have an impact on several dimensions of

the political parties. Especially for the Greens this impact seems to be more and more expected because of their ideological profile. First of all, the Greens are seemed to be quite radical (especially in the first years of their existence), additionally, the Greens are linked to a specific electoral public and finally, their internal organization is directly linked to grass-roots democracy. In order to be able to analyze the changes that happen to the Greens after their access to power, one should identify these changes and later on assess to what extent there is a relation (if there is one), between these changes and the participation in power.

4.1 Changes regarding the internal organization and membership

The changes that happen to the internal organization of the Greens after being in power is an important topic. Is the governmental experience affect the "iron law of oligarchy" which is of major importance to Green identity (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33)? Is it a prerequisite to be abandoned in order to remain a coalition partner? The German case provide some answers regarding this topic. Internal party reform was a topic that was placed repeatedly in the party's conferences after their participation in government.

The majority of Green party organizations have been transformed through the years, before even the Greens got access to power (Rihoux 2001). This transformation process is, in general, a product of many changes in the organizational structure of the parties. Another factor that pushed the Greens away from the grass-root democratic model that was their initial tool, to a more conventional, professional and electoral logic, is a number of organizational reforms that happened to the party. And here a major question arises: is the internal organization of the Greens is further affected by their presence in power?

Green parties usually face difficult strategic choices which are linked to internal organization. There is a dilemma often posed to the Greens and they have to choose between the logic of "constituency representation" and the logic of "electoral competition" (Kitschelt 1989). Additionally, as mentioned above, Green parties are mainly classified as "policy seeking parties". Is the participation in a governmental coalition a reason for the Greens to shift away from this status and turn into "vote" or "office seeking parties"?

Another reason that can create internal organizational changes after a Green party gain power is the public funding. After a party manage to overpass the threshold and become parliamentary, it gains public funding. According to bibliography there are many differences in the internal organization of Green parties which managed to get access to public funding, becoming thus more professional, in contrast to those that didn't manage to enter the parliament. Moreover, in the German case, there are changes that took place after the exit of Greens from the parliament and then entering again. Additionally, turning professional usually create differences in the way of decision making in the intra-level of the party, moving away from an amateur, grass-root linked way, to a more professional one. Even more the access to office creates differences in the way of the pre-election campaigns, where specific politicians of the Greens turn to be in the center.

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Regarding the members of the Greens, there is often a group of activists who feel alienated from the party, due to some compromises which are hard to be accepted. "On the other hand, being more moderate as a party, the Greens may attract new voters and become more attractive from an elitte recruitment perspective" (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33). However there is lot of work to be done on the field of membership and the effect that being in power have on it.

4.2 Changes regarding the ideology

Green parties initially identified themselves as activists with grass-root ideology. The governmental experience creates a huge challenge to such an ideology. Does the governmental participation forces the Greens to change their ideological status? The majority of the literature focuses on the German Greens, but it is quite safe to say that this case applies to the majority of Green parties that participated in a governmental coalition. Die Grunen replaced their founding document of the 1980 during their first period in office. Talshir (2001) claims that "this was a major step towards a neo-liberal political approach, rejecting the statist, Green-Socialist ideological orientation of the 1980's.

Although this is the German case, it is applicable to other parties which crossed the threshold and gained parliamentary access, have gone through ideological moderation, especially in terms of tactics and strategy, as well as, program and goals. Rihoux and Rudig (2006) pose the question of how extended and significant shifts towards left-right dimensions took place. Are the Greens still place their ideology in the left of Socialists/Social Democrats defending the welfare state, or they consider themselves as modernizers who try to break up long established patterns? Another issue that tends to separate the Greens in Europe is the question of the European Union participation.

Here some assumptions arise. First of all, the participation in power itself creates a stabilization of a reformist perspective, regarding the program of the Greens. Furthermore, there is a shift of goals, the initial policy seeking status, tends to become vote or office seeking, especially for the party leaders, as well as, for the professional cadres. If these assumptions hold, this means that the participation in government causes ideological modifications. Additionally, as mentioned above, its probable that the Greens will seek for a strategy/ideology that will make them more appealing as potential coalition partners. Moreover, as it is shown especially by the German case, as well as, by the Latvian, the leaders of the Greens who experience the presence in governmental positions get more influence and power within the party. Finally, will the Green governmental parties which experience a move towards a pro European as well as, a pro neo-liberal position manage to retain a specific ideological identification?

5. GREEN PARTIES EXITING GOVERNMENT

Is a coalition that involves a Green party stable and durable? Before the 1990's when the Western Europe experienced governmental coalitions which involved Green parties, the Greens were believed to be rather unstable, because of their attachment to grass-roots democracy. This attachment led the Greens to reject any traditional form of leadership and this led to the

perspective that they are not reliable coalition partners. The German Greens were the example that made the belief that Green parties are unreliable governmental partners to fade, after their participation on some regions' government. But what happens at national level? In order to analyze that we should first examine the circumstances under which the Greens became a partner in the government. For example there are many differences in terms of staying or leaving between Greens who entered in the government through co-optation and Green parties that participated in government after a pre-election coalition. Moreover there are differences even in cases of the same "type" of governmental participation. Starting with the co-optation method, it is observed that the participation in the government of a Green party does not last long. In the cases of Bulgaria, Estonia, Ukraine and Romania, the office period of co-opted Green ministers did not last for more than a year. Latvia and Georgia are the exception. In both cases the co-opted ministers either arose out of a pre-election coalition (the case of Georgia), or ended in a formal government coalition (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33).

On the other hand, regarding the Greens that became governmental partners through a pre-election coalition their presence in government depends deeply with the coalition stability itself. Most of the cases of pre-election coalitions in Eastern Europe arose under a specific reason such as: the defeat of an authoritarian regime (Slovakia), an attempt to achieve independence (Slovenia and in the Baltic countries) and in general the transition from communism into a more liberal regime. These coalitions lasted usually only for one election period and after the basic project was accomplished they quickly disintegrated. "Green parties that had achieved parliamentary representation and a seat at the cabinet table through such broad pre-election coalitions usually faced the brutal wind of the first post-transition election on their own and most of them vanished" (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33). Moving on with the cases of pre-election coalitions in Western Europe and mainly in Italy and France, the agreement between the Greens and their partners was not in order to achieve a temporary object, but as an attempt of a bloc that tried to win power in a bipolar system. Despite the fact that there were political differences, these coalitions were highly stable, due to the cost of leaving the government for small parties was really high, as well as, the large parties wanted the coalition to be as broad as possible in order to maximize their chances of wining the majority. In both French and Italian cases, the Greens remained in government for a full legislative period and their exit was not a result of breaking-up the coalition but it was associated with their electoral defeat.

Regarding the cases of post-election coalitions it is expected that such kind of governmental partnership would be more vulnerable, especially in the cases of surplus coalitions. There are only two cases where the Greens left a surplus coalition. The first was in Finland, where after a major political difference the Finish Greens left the coalition. The other case is the one of Ecolo in Belgium, who left the coalition two weeks before the new elections, but the other Belgian Green party, Agalev, remained in power. In Western Europe only in two out of five cases Green parties left the government prematurely and in both cases this was in a surplus coalition.

Coalition theory is often used in order to analyze the durability an the survival of governmental coalitions (Warwick 1994, Mueller 2003). However the results of such studies are difficult to be useful in formulating hypotheses regarding the survivability of Green parties in a government.

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There are many reasons but only two major ones are mentioned. First of all, the models of government survivability tend not to predict the impact of the involvement of specific party families (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33). Only in some of these models some specific types of parties are involved, like central or pivotal parties, which are more likely to be part of a governmental coalition. Thus there is a tendency that places Greens at non central/pivotal position, with a small chance to be a coalition partner. Secondly, these models focus mainly on parliamentary systems of the Western Europe, excluding this way the co-optation coalitions or the post-election ones.

Another attempt to define the survivability of Greens in government is made by the lifespan model (Pedersen 1982,1991), which is not really helpful. According to this model, parties have to cross some "lines", like the threshold to be in parliament, in order to survive. Otherwise they will "die".

The observations differ between Western and Eastern Europe. In Western Europe, Green parties' death is a rare phenomenon. On the other hand, things are quite different in Eastern Europe, where lots of Green parties which managed to get into government in their very early years, they finally fell in decline, became politically marginal and finally "died".

The main point here is that there is something in common for all the Green parties that experienced governmental participation. This common bond of Green parties is the main "object" between them and their coalition partners. In Easter Europe this object is related to the transition from communism to liberal democracy. Green parties in Eastern Europe could play a major role in this transition after they gained high legitimacy during the last years of communism. But once this "project" was accomplished, other main issues, like economic reform, become dominant and there was not place for Green involvement. In Western Europe the "project" was different. The origins of the Greens in the 1970's and 1980's was as a part of the "new left". This made the position of the Social Democrats weak. Furthermore, the rise of the right and ultimately their dominance in government, brought together the main forces of the left with the Greens, forming the Red-Green coalitions that finally formed governments, making thus the maintenance of the majority the "object". Although there was a shift regarding the ideological "project" of the Red-Green alliances (from anti-nuclear, pro-peace, pro-ecological concerns and the protection of the welfare state, to the moderation of the welfare state), this shift does not necessarily saps the cooperation of the parties.

Another dimension of the coalition duration is the willingness of the major partners to maintain the partnership. If the partners of the Greens does not believe that the presence of them is useful any more, the coalition cease to exist. Moreover, the institutions of a country play an important role regarding the durability of a coalition. Especially the electoral institutions play a major. The notion of pivotality is provided to the Greens by the electoral game that predominantly reflect the interest of the large parties (Rihoux and Rudig 2006, S1-S33). In bipolar systems for example, the two major blocs (the main left or right-wing parties), have the power, if they join up, to impose a system that either allows the presence of small parties or not. Usually this choice depends on the perception that the tow major parties have regarding their chances in a two-party

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system. As an example, in Germany SPD and CDU had the opportunity to change the FPD's pivotal status in the late 60's, but they failed.

6. CONCLUSION

In the late 90's the participation of the Greens in government was a recent phenomenon both in Western and Eastern Europe. No one could be sure about the sustainability of this new situation. At the time the question was if their presence in temporary or it was the beginning of a new phase for the left in the following years? In the early 2000's the question was answered. The Greens did survive in government and there wasn't a case of premature withdrawal from the government. This happened only partially in two cases: in Finland where the Greens left the government but still after they have served a full period in office and in Belgium where Ecolo left the government two weeks before the new elections. Generally, there is no evidence of Greens being linked with governmental crisis, but still their period in office was short.

The range of situations regarding the withdrawal of the Greens from the government depends highly on the way the joined a governmental coalition. There are two cases of post-election coalition in Germany and Belgium with the two cases differing a lot. In both cases the Greens entered the government in the first parliamentary elections. In the following elections, the Belgian Greens lost heavily and dropped out of the government, while the German Greens strengthened their position. The end of governmental period for the German Greens in 2005 was not a result an electoral failure, but a weakness of their coalition partner to maintain the alliance. In the cases of pre-election coalitions the presence of Greens in the government heavily depends on the electoral performance of the coalition, as well as, on the survivability of the alliance itself. The electoral performance of the Greens on their one is not of major importance regarding their presence in government, although a very poor electoral result may force their allies to exclude them from future coalitions. The fate of pre-election alliances in Eastern Europe differ dramatically. The main reason for this difference is that in Eastern Europe the purpose of these alliances was to promote the transition from communism to liberal democracy. After their "project" was achieved, their reason of being coalition partners ceased to exist and they disintegrated. The Greens in Eastern Europe were left to fight for themselves. Moving on to the countries were the method of co-optation led the Greens in government, the end of governmental participation was not usually linked to electoral results. Although some co-opted ministers survived in office for years, while others stayed in office only for a brief period of time. Staying in government in this cases is rather thin: either some other pattern replaces co-optation, like in the case of Latvia where the co-optation replaced by governmental coalition, or held in power reflects a mixture of usefulness for the regime and personal standing.

The future of the Greens inside a government, as well as, outside of it will be determined by factors both within and outside of their control. A major element will be their decisions regarding their position over ecological issues, creating thus an identity. At the moment the ecological challenges they face, like the climate change, has not the mobilization power of the nuclear energy. A huge asset that they should rely on is the environmentally concerned voters. The other major question regarding their identity is the economic liberalism, the reform of the welfare

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state, the "Third Way". In some countries the Greens from being defenders of the welfare state, changes their position defining themselves as modernizers, trying to promote economic reforms, as well as, reform of the welfare state.

The history of Greens shows so far that their future in government will be strongly affected by factors outside their control. The Greens' presence in government is strongly related to the perspective of how useful they are to their coalition partners. Although the Greens had been strong enough in order to be invited in coalitions by other parties, they still have not managed to gain significant political consideration. As long as the Greens will be able to mobilize enough support in order to be considered as useful, they will still be invited in governmental coalitions.

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