

Postcommunism and Postmaterialism? The Foundations of Green Politics in Estonia

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Abstract. The Estonian Green Party was re-established and entered the national parliament in 2007. The paper discusses the ideological foundations of Green politics in a post-communist setting. Unlike most Green parties in Western Europe, the Estonian Green party is only partly post-materialist in its orientation and is placed close to the centre on the ideological spectrum. In combining environmental values with some socially conservative ones and emphasising technological innovation over limiting consumption, the party comes across as "ultra-" rather than "post-modernist". These discrepancies can be explained by historical and contextual socio-political factors, especially the nexus between socialist industrialisation and environmental degradation.

The history of Estonian Greens goes back to late 1987 when the Green movement was at the forefront of democratic and independence movements. Two green parties were established in 1989 and 1990 that merged into the Party of Estonian Greens (*Erakond Eesti Rohelised*) in 1991. The party managed to send a single representative into the first post-independence parliament in 1992. After the defection of its single MP, unsuccessful attempt to get elected into parliament in a coalition with the Royalists and merger with the Centre Party (that alienated a good proportion of its members) the party disappeared from the Estonian political scene for a decade.¹

The Estonian Green Party (EER, *Erakond Eestimaa Rohelised*) was re-established and entered the national parliament in 2007 with six per cent of seats, making it the green party with the strongest parliamentary representation in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) at the time. It was even invited to coalition negotiations with the Reform Party, the Pro Patria & Res Publica Union and the Social Democrats and dumped only halfway through the talks. Interestingly, the Greens provided support for the centre-right coalition after it lost its parliamentary majority following the exit of centre-left Social Democrats in 2009.

However, the party's fortunes turned around later. In 2010, it was shaken by internal power struggle between the main initiator of the party (Marek Strandberg) and those disgruntled by the party's poor electoral results in 2009 European and local elections. In 2011 it did not manage to re-enter the parliament – its national vote almost halved (from 7.1% to 3.8%)

¹ For a more detailed account on the history of Green parties in Estonia see Sikk & Andersen 2009.

despite recruiting popular independent candidates (“free candidates”) on its list. It has to be noted, though, that the environmental credentials of the latter were not always clear (e.g. one of the most prominent “free candidates” was the country’s former national security coordinator) and most prominent members of internal opposition had left the party – often running as independent candidates or on other party’s lists. Despite the setback in popularity and loss of parliamentary representation, the Estonian Greens still remains one of the most popular green parties in CEE (see Table 1) and presents an interesting case for the study of environmental attitudes in post-communist settings.

This paper will profile the Estonian Greens ideologically, focussing mostly on the value orientations and attitudes of its voters.² That will be compared to the party manifestos in 2007 and 2011 elections and to other Estonian parties and other European green parties. It has been noted before (Sikk & Andersen 2009) that in strong contrast to their strongly leftist West European counterparts, green voters in CEE find themselves in the centre or even centre-right of the political scale. This paper will study the orientations of greens beyond that, looking at the post-materialist orientations in particular – the rise of which has often been linked to the emergence of green parties in Western Europe (Kitschelt 1988). It will be shown that CEE green supporters are *less* post-materialist in their orientations compared to their West European counterparts, yet *more* post-materialist than the supporters of other political parties in their respective countries. Furthermore, I use the European Social Survey (4th wave, 2008-9) to analyse the relationship between measures of post-materialism and environmental attitudes in European democracies included in the dataset, regardless of the presence of a green party.

The paper finishes with a discussion on the reasons why greens in CEE – based on the example of the Estonian party – come across as less post-materialist and less leftist than to their Western counterparts. A stream in Estonian green thinking combines environmental values with a range of socially conservative ones and emphasising technological innovation over limiting consumption; in a way the party comes across as *ultra-* rather than *post-*modernist. These discrepancies can be explained by particular historical and contextual socio-political factors, especially the nexus between socialist industrialisation and environmental degradation.

GREEN PARTIES IN WESTERN EUROPE AND CEE

As seen from Table 1, Green parties are generally weaker in CEE than in Western Europe. Only in four CEE countries – Hungary, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Latvia – have Green parties managed to be elected into the parliament; at the time of writing only the last two are represented in their countries’ parliaments. The Hungarian party “Politics can be

² Other, and equally legitimate, ways of studying (Green) parties are expert surveys or manifesto data (see e.g. Belchior 2010). However, the European Social Survey is the best comparative dataset available to date.

Different” (LMP, *Lehet Más a Politika*) was only established in 2009 and the Latvian Green Party has contested parliamentary elections in various coalition throughout its lifespan – since 2002 in the Green and Farmers’ Union. For determining green parties, their membership in the European Green Party (EGP) is used for classification, with two exceptions: (a) included is the Danish Red-Green Alliance that is a member of the Party of European Left (the Socialist People’s Party is an observer in EGP) and (b) LMP is an observer in EGP.

Table 1. Electoral support for Green parties in Europe

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Denmark (Socialists)	8.3				7.3				7.6			6.4				6.0		13.0				
Luxembourg					10.9				9.1						11.6						11.7	
Austria	4.8				7.3	4.8			7.4				9.5				11.0		10.4			
Germany	5.0				7.3				6.7				8.6		8.1						10.7	
Switzerland		6.1					5.0			5.0				7.4				9.6				
Finland		6.8					6.5			7.3				8.0				8.5				7.3
Hungary^a																						7.5
Belgium (Ecolo)		5.1				4.0				7.4				3.1				5.1				4.8
Netherlands^b						3.5				7.3				7.0	5.1			4.6				6.6
Sweden		3.4				5.0				4.5				4.6				5.2				7.3
Estonia			2.6															7.1				3.8
Belgium (Groen!)		4.9				4.4				7.0					2.5			4.0				4.4
France				4.1				6.8					4.5					3.3				
Czech Republic	4.1		6.5						1.1				2.4				6.3					2.4
Ireland			1.4					2.8					3.8					4.7				1.8
Denmark^b	1.7				3.1				2.7			2.4				3.4		2.2				
Italy			2.8		2.7		2.5					2.2						2.1				
Greece																		1.1			2.5	
Cyprus												2.0						2.0				
Latvia^c			1.2																			
Great Britain		0.5						0.2				0.6				1.0						1.0

Note: Green parties represented in national parliament. CEE countries shaded in blue, explicitly green-left parties in pink. a – liberal greens, b – green-left alliances, c – since 1996 in coalition with nationalists, Christians, and farmers.

GREENS, POST-MATERIALISM AND THE LEFT

The initial rise of green parties in Western Europe in 1970s has often been linked to the rise of post-material values (Inglehart 1990, Franklin & Rüdiger 1995: 413).³ Also, despite their mantra “we are neither Left nor Right, we are out in front” (Dalton 2009) the ideological profile of such parties was obviously and increasingly leftists (Ibid.). Thus, terms such as “green”, “new politics”, “new left” and “liberal left” have been used in academic works to refer to green parties almost interchangeably (e.g. Kitschelt 1988, Kaelberer 1993)⁴.

Notably, the supporters of West European green parties place themselves clearly to the left of the average of national electorates on an 11-point scale (see Figure 1). In contrast, the

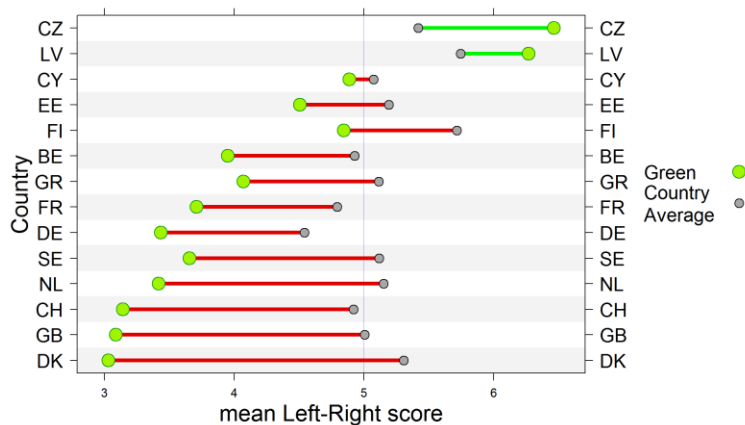
³ Interestingly, there is evidence of the opposite that the existence of a Green party in a country speeds up the uptake of postmaterial values (Tranter & Wester 2009).

⁴ Kaelberer 1993 acknowledges the existence of “conservative greens” but also notes that they have been very weak and only discusses the “New Left variant” (230).

Czech and Latvian⁵ green voters are clearly to the right of the placement of their countries' averages. Interestingly, the Estonian greens fall moderately to the left of the national average – that contrasts an earlier finding based on a survey results after their electoral breakthrough in 2007 (Sikk & Andersen 2009: 362). Still, compared to West European greens, the CEE greens are clearly less leftist compared to average voters in their countries.⁶

Interestingly, only very few green voters (3.6%) refused to place themselves on the L-R scale – slightly more often than supporters of other major parties (2.9%). In some countries, such as Greece, Cyprus, Great Britain and Estonia the figure was higher, but all four countries were characterized by relatively high overall levels of people who could not place themselves on the political scale. Indeed, the refusal rate amongst greens in Estonia (8.7%) was *lowest* amongst parliamentary parties.

Figure 1. Left-right self-placement of green voters and all respondents.



Source: European Social Survey, wave 4.

Note: countries ranked according to the difference between green voters' and total means, colours of connecting lines indicate the sign of the difference. The vertical line indicates the middle position on the scale.

For measuring the level of post-materialist value orientations – i.e. the prevalence of self-expression values – an index based on a 10 item battery from European Social Survey was used. The items were chosen to match as well as possible the variables that were used for measuring self-expression values in World Values Surveys (Inglehart & Baker 2000:24). Five questions were used for assessing the respondent's emphasis on self-expression and quality of life over economic and physical security (all employing a likert scale with five levels ranging from "very much like me" to "not like me at all"):

- *Important to make own decisions and be free;*
- *Important to think new ideas and being creative;*

⁵ The findings on Latvian "Greens" should always be taken with a pinch of salt as the survey data puts them together with the supporters of Farmers' Union – who might have a quite different profile.

⁶ That also applies for their nominal positions – with the somewhat puzzling exceptions of Cyprus and, in particular, Finland. However, the relative positions are more meaningful as the average national preference on a scale seems to vary non-systematically.

- *Important to be rich, have money and expensive things (reversed scale);*
- *Important to live in secure and safe surroundings (reversed scale); and*
- *Important that government is strong and ensures safety (reversed scale).*

In addition, the following five questions were used to account for other components of self-expression values:

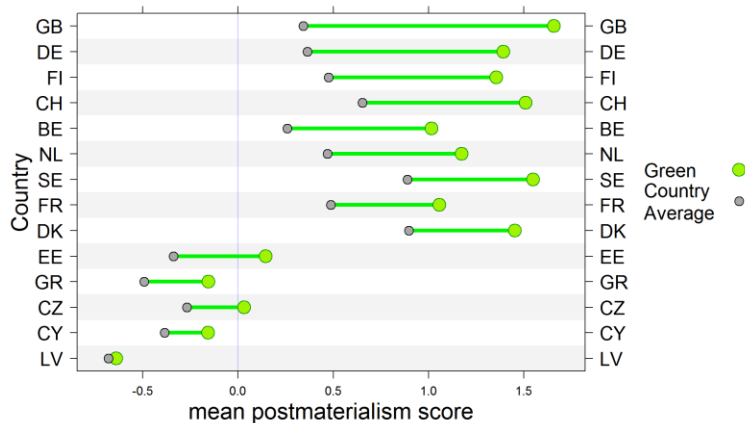
- *Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are? (0: extremely unhappy ... 10: extremely happy);*
- *Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own life as they wish (1: disagree strongly ... 5 agree strongly);*
- *Have you signed a petition / taken part in a lawful demonstration / boycotted certain products during the last 12 months? (all three included, 0: no, 1: yes).*

To account for differences in scale, the responses were standardized before adding together. Finally, the final score was standardized so that the mean equals 0 and standard deviation 1 to ease interpretability.

In all countries with green parties included in the survey, the greens are clearly more post-materialist than their fellow citizens (see Figure 2). However, West European countries are overall clearly more post-materialist in their value orientations. That particularly applies for the green supporters – in terms of the post-materialism of the greens and the difference between a green supporters and average citizens, there is a striking dividing line between Western and Eastern Europe. Interestingly, the Greeks and Cypriots (and their Green parties) clearly belong to the Eastern group. Looking at all major European parties, there is a rather clear correlation between their positions on the Left-Right scale and post-materialism – the more post-materialist the supporters of a party the more leftist they are (see Figure A1 in Appendix). Most outliers – i.e. non-post-materialist parties on the Left – are from the “fringes” of Europe – CEE, Cyprus, Greece, Portugal and Israel. The link between the Left and post-materialism (and the Right and materialism) is particularly clear within most West European countries. Interestingly, however, the relationship changes direction within two countries with strongest green parties in CEE.⁷ In summary, we can argue that *only in core West European countries is post-materialism is unambiguously linked to the Left*. Relatively post-materialist parties of the centre-right and non-post-materialist Left parties are quite common in post-communist (and post-authoritarian) Europe and in

⁷ However Slovenia, the CEE country with the highest prevalence of post-material values, is similar to Western Europe in that respect.

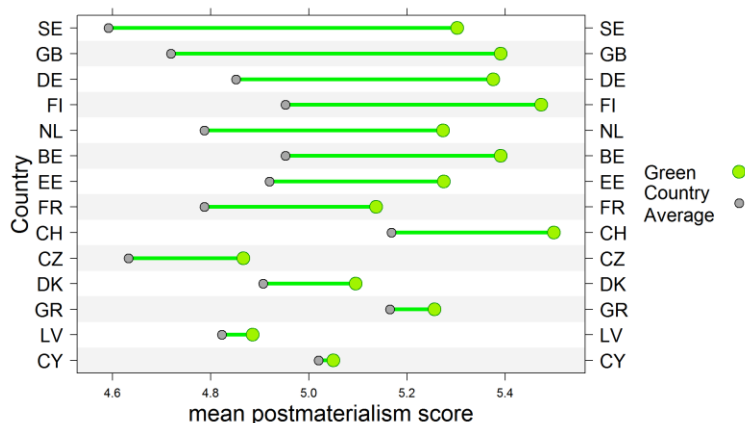
Figure 2. Post-materialism scores of green voters and all respondents.



Note: countries ranked according to the difference between Green voters’ and total means. The vertical line indicates European average.

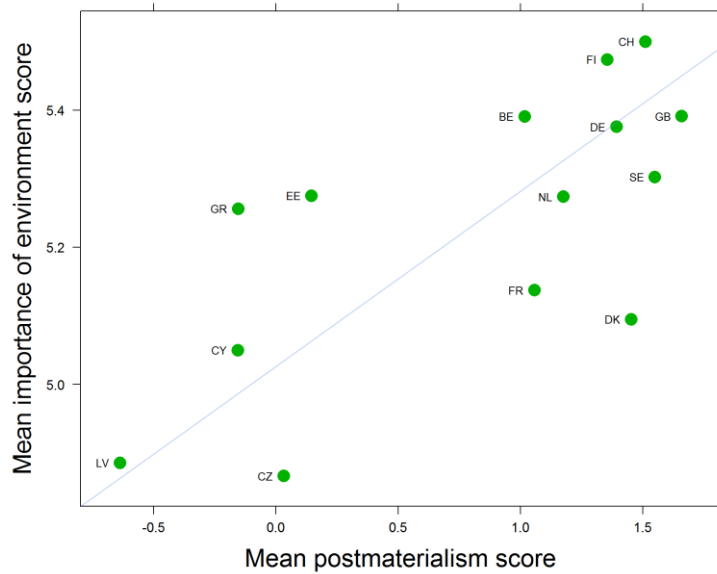
Unsurprisingly, the green voters do value care for the environment more than an average voter in all countries (see Figure 3); the partial outliers (Greece, Cyprus and Latvia) are not of interest for the purposes of this study. Interestingly, when looking at Green supporters across countries, post-materialism and importance of environment are correlated – West European countries score generally high on self-expression values and assign great importance to the protection of environment; the green supporters in CEE (and “Hellenic” democracies) score lower on both dimensions. However, there are interesting outliers. First, the Danish greens come across as strongly post-materialist – that is not surprising as both of the two parties included in the analysis are hybrids between strongly leftist and green parties (the Socialist People’s Party is an observer in EGP and a catch-all left-wing party; The Unity List is a far-left member of the Party of European Left). More interestingly for our purposes, the Estonian (and Greek) green supporters are relatively low on post-materialism given the high value they ascribe to the care for nature and environment. The contrast with the Czech greens at the same level of post-materialism is particularly striking.

Figure 3. Important to care for nature and environment: green voters and all respondents.



Note: countries ranked according to the difference between Green voters’ and total means.

Figure 4. Green party supporters: post-materialism and care for nature and environment (country means)



Note: The fit line is for *major axis regression* that is more appropriate than the more usual OLS regression when it is difficult to decide on the independent and dependent variable (see Taagepera 2008: 162).

Looking at the bigger picture – all parties included in the dataset on Figure 5 – we can see that West European greens occupy a particular corner – being *both* post-materialist and strongly environmentalist. That clearly distinguishes them from all other parties that score lower on both dimensions. The Estonian and Czech parties are average on both scores, yet in the right corner vis-à-vis their national competitors. Interestingly, Slovenia’s centre-left social liberal Zares occupies a very similar niche to the Estonian Greens. Different picture emerges when looking at Estonia only (Figure 6) – the greens occupy a similar niche as the greens across Europe; the same applies for the Czech Greens (Figure 7) and also Zares. Thus, to summarize, *the Estonian Greens are not post-materialist compared to West European green parties, but are equally environmentalist and are post-materialist in the national context.*

Figure 5. Post-materialism and care for nature and environment (party means)

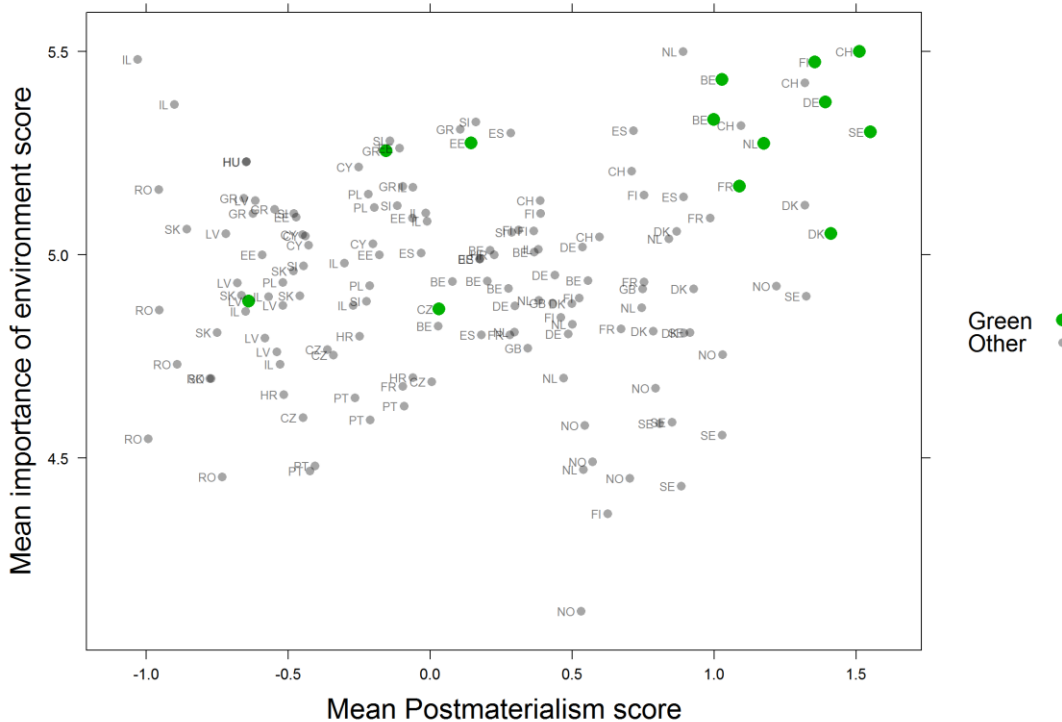


Figure 6. Estonian parties: post-materialism and environmentalism

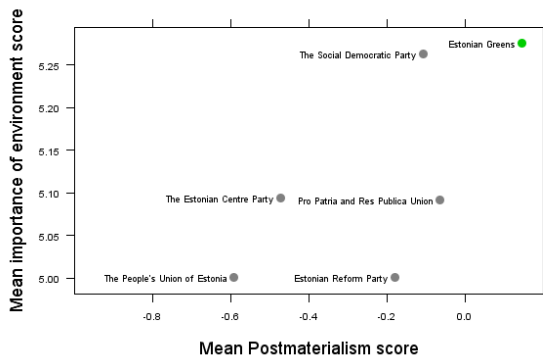
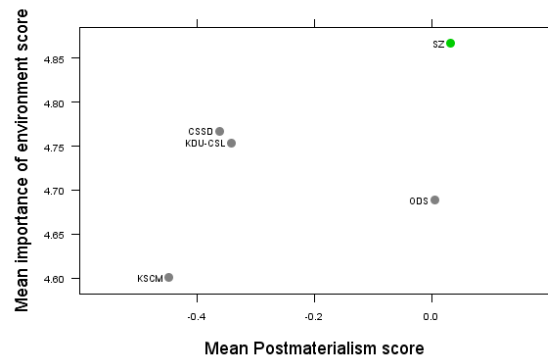


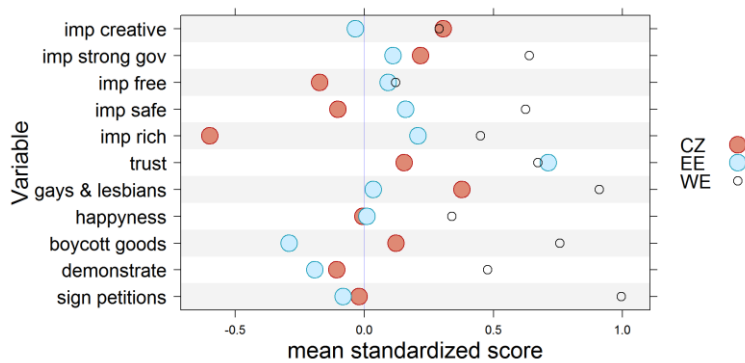
Figure 7. Czech parties: post-materialism and environmentalism



POST-MATERIALIST ATTITUDES AND ESTONIAN GREENS

What are the particular features that make the Estonian Greens less post-materialist than their counterparts in Western Europe? Their value orientations are relatively similar with regard to highly valuing personal freedom and trusting others (see Figure 8). However, they tend to be less socially active, value strong government and safety more, and are less tolerant of gays and lesbians. The Czech Greens are more tolerant towards sexual minorities while they are significantly less trustful of other people and put a greater value on material affluence (remarkably more so than Europeans on average).

Figure 8. Components of post-materialism: Estonian, Czech and West European greens



Note: reverse scales for importance of strong government, being safe and being rich. Higher values indicate a more post-materialist disposition. The vertical line indicates European average.

The following sections will briefly discuss the Estonian Greens' positions on individual policy issues related to environmentalism and post-materialism by looking at their election manifestoes and survey data.

Environment (unsurprisingly) features prominently in the manifesto, echoing the greater concern Green supporters have for the protection of nature according to European Social Survey (see Figure 3). Interestingly, however, their quite radical opposition to nuclear power – resulting in a prominent petition in 2008 (*Eesti Päevaleht Online* 2008) – seemingly relaxed by 2009, when the local election manifesto mentioned only halfway through the document. It rather weakly stated that the party was against building of nuclear plants based on contemporary technology (and the consumption of electricity from such sources) but favoured innovation on the field that would allow nuclear plants to be fuelled by nuclear waste and in turn produce less waste that is less dangerous (*Programm 2009*). Remarkably, the manifesto for 2011 parliamentary elections failed to mention nuclear energy altogether (*Valimislubadused* 2011), even though the party was still in principle opposed to it – especially in the wake of the nuclear disaster following the 2011 earthquake in Japan and the 25th anniversary of the Chernobyl catastrophe (see Strandberg 2011).

Democratic innovation and civic engagement have been also prominent in green manifestoes.⁸ In 2011 parliamentary election manifesto the party argued for the strengthening of local democracy, increasing the use of direct democracy (including provisions for more binding referendums), making it easier to establish political parties⁹, lowering the age of voting (from 18 to 16 in local elections) and the financing of political parties according to votes rather than seats won. The party also supported the lowering of national electoral threshold to three per cent (instead of five per cent) that was discussed in the run up to the election (*Postimees Online* 2011). While the party had stood for more democratic engagement before, some of these views were pragmatic and at least partly

⁸ The progressive democratic credentials (see especially Kitschelt 1988) of West European green parties have recently been called into question (Belchior 2010).

⁹ Estonian parties need at least 1,000 publicly listed permanent members in order to be registered and remain so.

guided by the realization that the party was struggling with passing the electoral threshold.¹⁰

Economic growth, consumption and taxation. The Estonian Green Party has been indisputably pro-growth, regardless of its genuinely environmental credentials. While the party often does stress the need to limit excessive and, in particular, environmentally detrimental consumption, it only vaguely mentions taxing consumption and its voters are no less consumerist than other Estonian voters (see the score on “importance of being rich” on Figure 9) and value affluence more than West European green voters.¹¹ From a traditional green perspective the reduction of consumption and avoiding economic growth at all costs can be seen as crucial for improving the state of environment and contradictions between growth and protection of environment are likely and pose problems for leftist greens (e.g. Dalton 2009). The key to the seeming puzzle lies in Estonian Green’s extreme faith in the role modern science and technological innovation can play in solving environmental problems. Not only is Marek Strandberg, the founder of the party, known for his wildly blue-sky technological thinking (sometimes bordering on techno-totalitarian, see below on sexual minorities); the Green party supporters have the highest level of trust in modern science (being able to solve environmental problems) amongst the supporters of all European parties – that clearly outstrips even the rest of the generally technology-savvy Estonians. Table 2 for compares the Estonian Greens to other green parties – there is significant variation amongst them – some green parties including the Czech are markedly sceptical while others are enthusiastic about the potential of modern science – but the Estonian Greens are on a league of their own.

¹⁰ Interestingly, the title of manifesto, “Electoral Pledges: We will Endure” probably intended to refer to sustainability but given the difficult times the party went through in 2009 and 2010, it sounded more like an assertion that the *party* intends to survive.

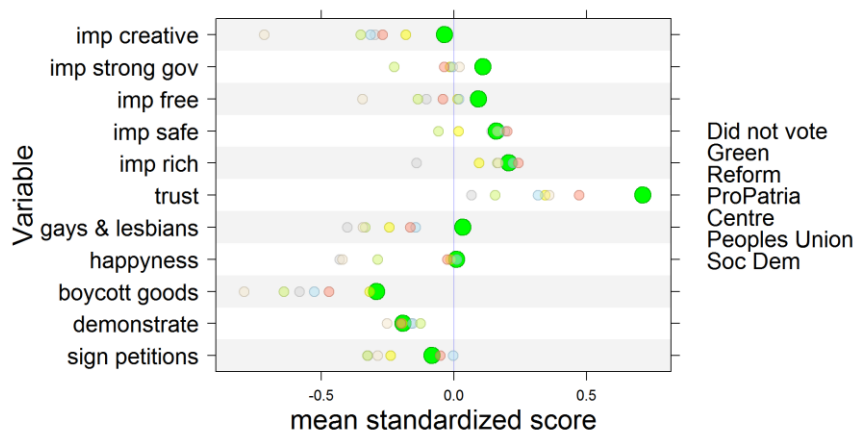
¹¹ Yet, interestingly, there is a striking difference between Estonian and Czech Greens – the latter finding the importance of being rich and having things much higher (see Figure 8).

Table 2. Green supporters and “Modern science can be relied on to solve our environmental problems”

Party	Agree/ agree strongly (%)	Disagree/ Disagree strongly(%)	N
EE:Estonian Greens	89.9	0.0	65
BE:Ecolo	64.6	12.3	45
CY:The Cyprus Green Party	60.0	20.0	103
FI:The Green League	54.2	20.6	20
FR:Les Verts	47.7	29.2	60
BE:Groen!	44.5	26.7	157
LV:Greens and Farmers Union	44.2	14.7	20
Average	40.9	31.7	1342
SE:Green Party	40.0	21.3	69
NL:Green Left	38.4	24.4	131
CH:Green party	36.9	44.7	15
FR:Autres mouvements écologistes	33.4	13.4	65
GB:Green Party	30.4	52.2	23
DE:Green Party (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen)	23.0	42.7	210
CZ:Green Party	18.3	55.0	86
DK:Enhedslisten	15.0	70.0	80
DK:Socialistisk Folkeparti	13.5	60.1	193

Source: European Social Survey 2008/9

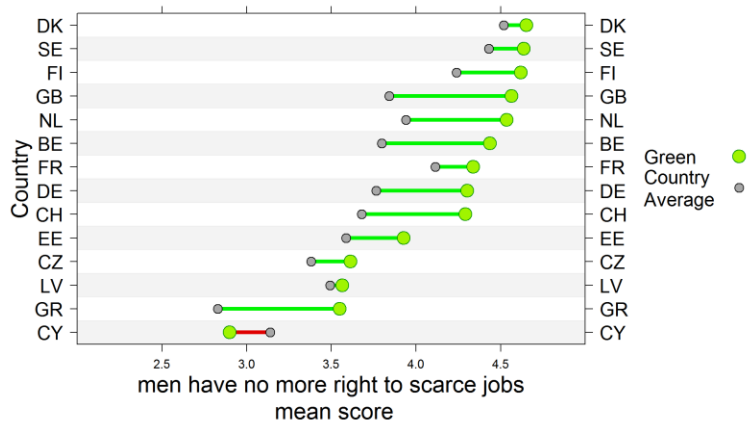
Figure 9. Components of post-materialism: Estonian Greens and other Estonian parties



Note: reverse scales for importance of strong government, being safe and being rich. Higher values indicate a more post-materialist disposition. The vertical line indicates European average.

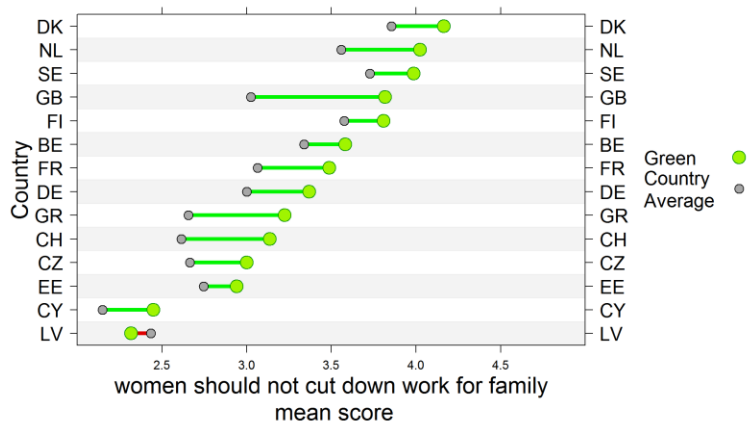
Attitudes on gender correlate generally very strongly with post-materialist value orientations (Inglehart & Baker 2000: 27). Green parties generally value gender equality more highly than the rest of their national electorates on average, regardless how progressive the general opinion is (see Figure 10-11). The same applies for CEE Greens, yet their distance from average is smaller and, most importantly, they clearly lag behind West European greens. In the national and CEE context, the Estonian Greens are rather progressive, especially regarding the issue of men and women having equal rights to jobs even when these are scarce, where it is the most progressive of Estonian parties. Despite that, the Green party failed to mention of women or gender issues in its 2011 parliamentary electoral manifesto altogether. The only reference to these issues in 2009 local elections manifesto was the right of women to choose the suitable form and place of giving birth (*Programm 2009*).

Figure 10. Attitudes on gender issues 1: Gender and right to jobs



Note: 1: strongly disagree, 3: neither disagree nor agree, 5: strongly agree (inverse scale and question in the original).

Figure 11. Attitudes on gender issues 2: Women between work and family



Note: 1: strongly disagree, 3: neither disagree nor agree, 5: strongly agree (inverse scale and question in the original).

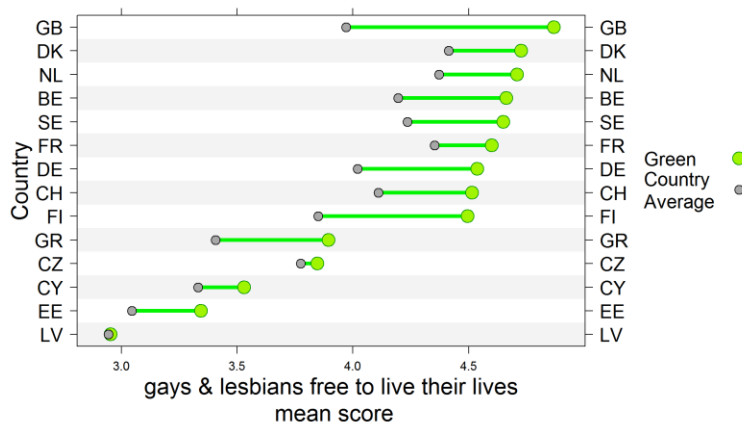
West European Greens' position on drugs has traditionally been very permissive – they have often propagated the legalization of soft drugs (Blühdorn & Szarka 2004, Ingle 2008: 158). According to data from World Values Surveys the green voters have been much more liberal than national average.¹² According to a survey conducted after 2009 local elections by the Institute of Government and Politics of Tartu University, the supporters of Estonian Greens seem to share this position – those intending to vote Green found the use of soft drugs most acceptable bar the supporters market-liberal Reform Party. Interestingly, those who reported *having voted* Green in 2007 parliamentary elections were much less liberal than the national average.¹³ Given the more liberal than national average stance of Green supporters it is interesting to note that the party has always been actively against the legalization of soft drugs as well as limiting the availability of alcohol and tobacco (*Programm 2009, Vastused küsimustele 2007*).

¹² Interestingly, the difference is much smaller in the Czech Republic. Evidence is available on request from the author.

¹³ Admittedly, the number of reported Green voters was quite small (15) and the difference in the position between Green voters and others was not statistically significant.

Across Europe, green parties tend to be liberal compared to average national attitudes on sexual minorities (see Figure 12). Yet, as there are very big differences in average attitude across the subcontinent, the positions of green voters also differ a lot. In Western Europe, the greens tend to be very liberal even at the face of their overall liberal populations, whereas the Czech Greens are close to the average position – that is clearly highest amongst CEE countries. The Estonian Green supporters are clearly more liberal than their fellow citizens, yet lag far behind West European standards. In its manifestoes, the Green party has not discussed sexual minority policies in depth, yet the position of its leaders on the question of legalising homosexual partnerships in the run-up to 2011 elections was generally positive.¹⁴ The attitude of Marek Strandberg was one of somewhat reluctant acceptance: “The nature of love and intimacy cannot be changed or shaped by an individual. Neither does it have much to do with upbringing. Newest research shows that sexual preferences develop already before birth.”¹⁵ Yet, that was a change from the party position when the party was established: “Homosexual relationships will not be regulated by the state. It is a private matter and such relationship will not be considered a marriage and consequently no rights for adoption will be granted to such co-habiting people.” (*Rohelise Erakonna* 2006: 1.3). Strandberg himself had even proposed biological engineering solutions to the “phenomenon”: “[The definition of homosexual relationships] presupposes a clear understanding of the biological and cultural nature of the phenomenon. If its nature is genetic-chemical, we would prefer finding solutions that bring the nerve function and anatomical-biological gender into accordance at as an early age as possible or even before birth.” (*Vastused küsimustele* 2007)¹⁶

Figure 12. Attitudes on sexual minorities



Note: 1: strongly disagree, 3: neither disagree nor agree, 5: strongly agree (inverse scale in the original).

¹⁴ Based on candidate surveys conducted by daily *Postimees*, see <http://poliitika.postimees.ee/?r=622> (accessed 10.5.2011).

¹⁵ Ibid. Translated from Estonian by the author.

¹⁶ It must be noted, though, that this section was soon removed from the Questions & Answers section of the party website.

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC DETERMINANTS OF GREEN VOTE, ENVIRONMENTAL AND POST-MATERIALIST ATTITUDES

(More work on model specification and a more detailed discussion needed).

Studies on Western Europe have shown that education, younger age, employment in the public sector, living in cities and ideological placement on the left have been associated with the support for Green parties (Franklin & Rüdig 1995, Birch 2008, Hooghe et al 2010).

Individual-level evidence from European Social Survey (see Table A1–A3 in Appendix) shows that people with higher education are more likely to vote Green and have more environmentalist and post-materialist attitudes in Western Europe, Estonia and the Czech Republic alike. Younger voters have a more post-materialist orientation and in Western Europe and the Czech Republic are also more likely to vote green. In Estonia, there is also evidence that increasing age lowers the propensity of voting green but the effect is not statistically significant. Environmentalist attitudes, on the other hand, become stronger with age everywhere, even though the effect is quite weak in the Czech Republic. While city dwellers in Western Europe are more likely to vote green, they do not seem to be more post-materialist; the type of domicile does not affect the likelihood of voting green in CEE. Interestingly, though, urban voters in Estonia come across more post-materialist than the rest of the population and they tend to be more environmentalist both in Estonia and the Czech Republic. Religiousness only seems to have a negative impact on the level of post-materialist and positive effect on environmentalist attitudes in Western Europe, in other regards, its impact is negligible.

Those with public sector jobs in Western Europe have a more environmentalist outlook, are more post-materialist and also more likely to vote green; there is only a marginal effect on voting Green Estonia and no impact in the Czech Republic. Yet, in the latter public sector workers have a clearly more environmentalist disposition than those working in private sector and not working. The difference between Western Europe and CEE as regards public sector workers is notable; amongst CEE countries only in Romania did they have a more post-materialist outlook than others while the impact was strong in Western Europe with just four exceptions – Great Britain, Finland, Norway and Portugal.¹⁷ Subjective deprivation (i.e. lack of satisfaction with household financial situation) had a negative effect on post-materialism everywhere and no effect on environmentalism. Yet, the effect on voting Green was not statistically significant in either Estonia or the Czech Republic.

Finally, when controlling all the above factors, placement on the left of the political scale increased post-materialism and likelihood of voting Green in Western Europe. Exactly the opposite was the case in the Czech Republic – being on the right was associated with both voting Green and more post-materialist views. The picture was more complex in Estonia –

¹⁷ Excluding Greece and Cyprus (see above).

while being on the right was associated with post-materialism (like in the Czech case), voting for the Greens had a positive association with being on the left. Similarly differing was the association between placement on the political scale and environmentalism – it was associated with being on the left in Western Europe and with being on the right in Estonia.

The evidence from regression models emphasizes the *complex relationship in the nexus between post-materialism, environmentalism and voting Green – Western Europe, Estonia and the Czech Republic present us with rather puzzling points of divergence.*

CONCLUSION

Different historical origins can explain why the Estonian Greens – in contrast to strongly post-materialist and left-leaning West European green parties – are not particularly post-materialist and close to the centre of the political landscape. The socialist experience in Estonia was coupled with practices highly detrimental to the environment. The transition to market economy, on the other hand, has brought along significant environmental improvements. The Soviet era was a period of mass industrial and agricultural production and army bases that paid scant attention to the well-being of the environment. In many places it left a long-lasting legacy and even though the memories of Soviet era are perhaps slowly starting to wane – especially among the younger generations – destroyed environment constitutes a lasting reminder of the adverse relationship between socialism and ecology.

Interestingly, the transition to capitalism saw a weakening of the pressures on the environment. Heavy industries were either dismantled or subjected to new and much stricter pollution standards. There was also a general slump in agriculture accompanied by movement towards smaller-scale production and a decline in the use of mineral fertilizers. In many ways, the culprits for destruction of natural habitats have been very different in Estonia compared to Western Europe. Only more recently have the objectives of economic efficiency and protection of environment started to clash more visibly. There is some evidence that an element of global or cross-border awareness has started to take off, indicated by the higher than average willingness of green voters to purchase or boycott goods for a cause (see Figure 9). That, together with the adverse effects of economic recession, may also help to explain the leftward shift in the self-placement on green voters between 2007 and 2009. Yet, even if the green voters or post-materialists in Estonia may no longer fully believe that economic as well as political and personal freedoms are favourable to the well-being of environment (and themselves), they are unlikely to become as left-wing as most West European greens. Indeed, as shown above, *post-materialism in both Estonia and the Czech Republic remains clearly the preserve of the centre-right* rather than that of the left.

Also notable is the extreme trust in the role modern science could play in solving environmental problems, both amongst the party program and the statements of its leaders – when it comes to furthering the ecological cause, the party prefers technological innovation (or at best ways of saving energy) over the idea of constraining economic growth and consumption. In other words, rather than fighting the *modern* disease with *post-modernism*, the Estonian Greens try to take a less confrontational stance and believe that *ultra-modernism* offers a positive-sum solution that makes both the consumers and the environment better off.

APPENDIX

Figure A1. Left-Right placement and post-materialism

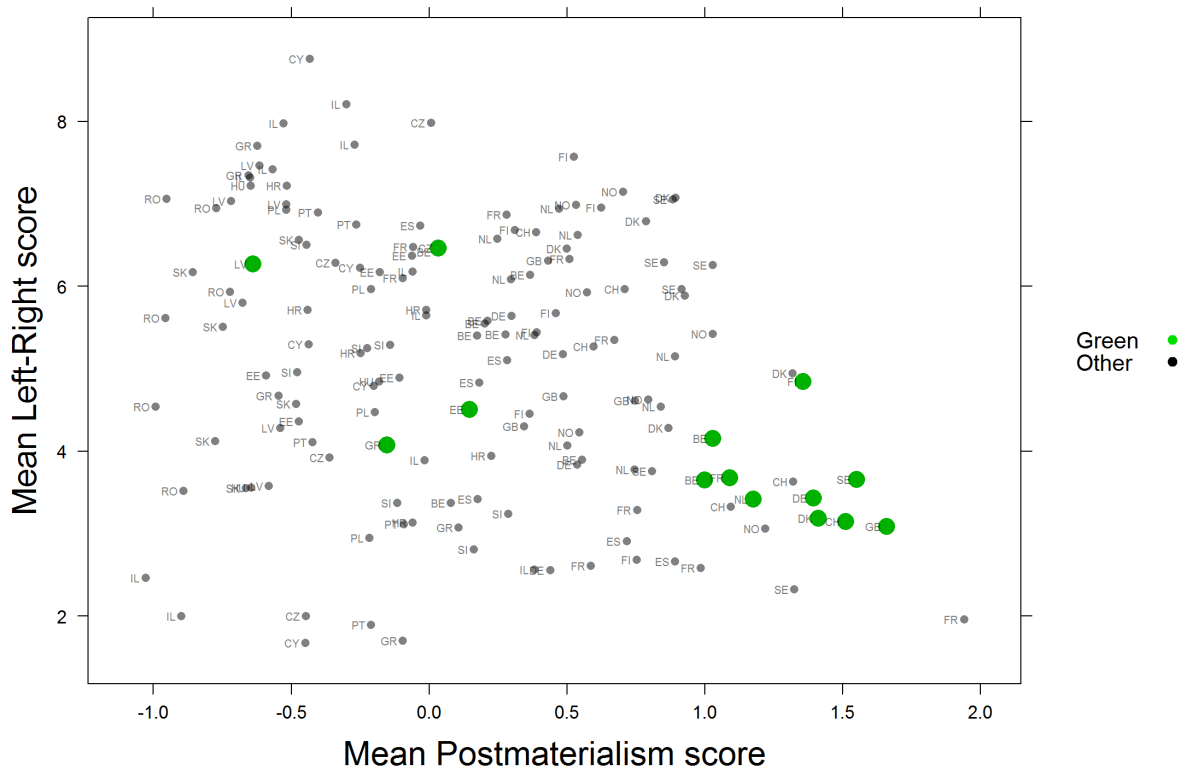


Table A1. Logit models of Green party support

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Green vote	WE	se	Estonia	se	Czech R	se
Higher education ^D	0.820***	(0.0740)	1.224***	(0.286)	0.949**	(0.411)
Religiosity	-0.0173	(0.0118)	-0.00582	(0.0472)	0.0662	(0.0404)
Age	-0.00965***	(0.00190)	-0.00308	(0.00748)	-0.0221***	(0.00759)
Public sector job ^D	0.396***	(0.0750)	0.556*	(0.284)	-0.0150	(0.373)
Left-Right	-0.339***	(0.0155)	-0.198***	(0.0594)	0.135***	(0.0428)
City ^D	0.379***	(0.0705)	-0.117	(0.282)	-0.354	(0.336)
Subjective deprivation	-0.263***	(0.0504)	0.182	(0.205)	-0.0596	(0.181)
Constant	-1.050***	(0.171)	-2.800***	(0.718)	-3.314***	(0.694)
Observations	19,584		1,258		1,736	
Pseudo R-squared	0.105		0.0683		0.0449	

Note: reference category = all other respondents; ^D – dummies
Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A2. OLS models of strength of post-materialist value attitudes

	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
Postmaterialism	WE	se	Estonia	se	Czech R	se
Higher education ^D	0.404***	(0.0168)	0.371***	(0.0519)	0.248***	(0.0738)
Religiosity	-0.0362***	(0.00258)	0.00777	(0.00781)	0.00667	(0.00895)
Age	-0.00402***	(0.000395)	-0.00721***	(0.00112)	-0.00637***	(0.00134)
Public sector job ^D	0.227***	(0.0181)	0.0654	(0.0530)	0.0600	(0.0531)
Left-Right	-0.0639***	(0.00378)	0.0359***	(0.0117)	0.0510***	(0.0105)
City ^D	0.0126	(0.0156)	0.133***	(0.0453)	-0.0412	(0.0458)
Subjective deprivation	-0.280***	(0.00955)	-0.169***	(0.0316)	-0.150***	(0.0321)
Constant	1.414***	(0.0347)	0.0502	(0.110)	0.0588	(0.132)
Observations	18,454		1,170		1,599	
R-squared	0.168		0.147		0.102	

Note: ^D – dummies
Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A3. OLS models of the strength of environmental attitudes

	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)
Importance of environment	WE	se	Estonia	se	Czech R	se
Higher education ^D	0.109***	(0.0172)	0.170***	(0.0645)	0.197**	(0.0971)
Religiosity	0.0380***	(0.00277)	0.0151	(0.0111)	-0.00171	(0.0139)
Age	0.00744***	(0.000474)	0.0122***	(0.00152)	0.00391*	(0.00204)
Public sector job ^D	0.0354*	(0.0183)	-0.0141	(0.0750)	0.307***	(0.0697)
Left-Right	-0.0360***	(0.00386)	0.0355**	(0.0161)	0.00465	(0.0153)
City ^D	-0.0261	(0.0167)	0.113*	(0.0583)	0.144**	(0.0651)
Subjective deprivation	0.0140	(0.0103)	-0.0290	(0.0442)	-0.0106	(0.0448)
Constant	4.488***	(0.0383)	4.132***	(0.160)	4.366***	(0.177)
Observations	18,938		1,245		1,711	
R-squared	0.038		0.065		0.029	

Note: ^D – dummies
Standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

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